

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-1601

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 27, 1992

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

KOSOVA

THREE YEARS OF MARTIAL LAW NIGHTMARE

THIS WEEK MARKS THE THIRD YEAR OF MARTIAL LAW IN KOSOVA, A PROVINCE IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA WITH A POPULATION THAT IS OVER 90% ALBANIAN. WHILE DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM HAVE TRIUMPHED IN THE REST OF EASTERN EUROPE, THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM IN KOSOVA IS UNCERTAIN -- INDEED, IT IS ONLY A FADING HOPE IN THE HEARTS OF THE TWO MILLION ALBANIANS WHO LIVE THERE, IN THE POLICE STATE CREATED BY HARDLINER SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC.

FOR MORE THAN A THOUSAND DAYS, THE ALBANIANS OF KOSOVA HAVE SUFFERED GREAT HARDSHIP UNDER THE CRUSHING WEIGHT OF MILOSEVIC'S REPRESSION. FOR MORE THAN A THOUSAND DAYS, ALBANIANS HAVE BEEN FORBIDDEN TO MEET, TO SPEAK THEIR MINDS, TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES POLITICALLY OR EVEN CULTURALLY, TO WORK PEACEFULLY, TO EARN A DECENT LIVING. FOR MORE THAN A THOUSAND DAYS, THE ALBANIANS HAVE LIVED WITH MINIMAL FOOD AND VIRTUALLY NO MEDICAL CARE. BUT, WORST OF ALL, FOR MORE THAN A THOUSAND DAYS, THE ALBANIANS OF KOSOVA HAVE HAD TO LIVE IN A STATE OF ABSOLUTE FEAR AND TERROR.

1000 DAYS OF TERROR & REPRESSION

YOU MAY ASK, WHAT HAS LIFE BEEN LIKE FOR THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE IN KOSOVA DURING THESE PAST THREE YEARS? WELL, I'D LIKE TO SHARE SOME FACTS WITH MY COLLEAGUES:

- ALBANIAN CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BARRED FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KOSOVA, AND ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF ALBANIAN CHILDREN MAY ATTEND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL;
- OVER 100,000 ALBANIANS HAVE BEEN FIRED FROM THEIR JOBS ON POLITICAL GROUNDS;
- OVER 2000 ALBANIAN MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS, DOCTORS AND NURSES HAVE BEEN FIRED;
- NEARLY 250 CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN WOUNDED BY POLICE DURING PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS;
- 105 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED BY POLICE SINCE JANUARY 1, 1989, INCLUDING 16 CHILDREN;
- THE ASSEMBLY OF KOSOVA WAS SHUT DOWN AND KOSOVA LOST THE POLITICAL AUTONOMY IT HAD ENJOYED FOR NEARLY 3 DECADES.

WHEN I VISITED KOSOVA IN JULY OF 1990, I WAS SHOCKED BY THE INHUMANE TREATMENT OF THE ALBANIANS BY THE SERBIAN AUTHORITIES. I SAW THE POLICE IN ACTION; PEOPLE WERE BEING TEAR-GASSED AND CLUBBED BY POLICE. AT THE TIME, I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SITUATION COULD WORSEN; BUT, MR. PRESIDENT, I WAS WRONG. IT HAS WORSENED AND TERRIBLY SO.

THE KOSOVA NIGHTMARE

LIVING IN KOSOVA IS LIVING IN A NIGHTMARE. THE SITUATION HAS SO DETERIORATED -- POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY, PHYSICALLY --

(MORE)

THAT I DOUBT ANY OF US CAN IMAGINE THE TRUE EXTENT OF THE ALBANIANS' SUFFERING.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHY THE ALBANIANS ARE SUFFERING. THE ALBANIANS OF KOSOVA ARE SUFFERING BECAUSE THEY WANTED, AND STILL WANT, DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM. AND, UNDER SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC'S RULE, WANTING DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM IS A CRIME PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

THE DEATH OF YUGOSLAVIA

KOSOVA'S POLITICAL LEADERS -- DR. RUGOVA, BUJAR BUKOSHI -- HAVE PURSUED THE GOAL OF DEMOCRACY PEACEFULLY, SOMETIMES CLANDESTINELY; THEY HAVE NOT RESORTED TO VIOLENCE. NEVERTHELESS, THESE EFFORTS TO BRING DEMOCRACY TO KOSOVA HAVE BEEN MET WITH BRUTAL VIOLENCE AND SYSTEMATIC REPRESSION.

ALBANIAN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE NO VOICE IN KOSOVA OR OUTSIDE IT. BECAUSE OF MILOSEVIC'S OPPOSITION, ALBANIAN REPRESENTATIVES FROM KOSOVA ARE BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY SPONSORED PEACE CONFERENCE ON YUGOSLAVIA -- DESPITE THE FACT THAT ALBANIANS CONSTITUTE THE THIRD LARGEST ETHNIC GROUP IN WHAT USED TO BE YUGOSLAVIA.

EVENTS IN SLOVENIA, CROATIA, BOSNIA AND MACEDONIA HAVE BROUGHT YUGOSLAVIA TO AN END. YUGOSLAVIA IS DEAD. THAT IS WHY IT IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL THAT ALBANIAN REPRESENTATIVES FROM KOSOVA BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS THAT WILL DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE TWO MILLION ALBANIANS IN KOSOVA.

U.S. ACTION

TWO WEEKS AGO, THE DISTINGUISHED SENATOR FROM NEW YORK, SENATOR D'AMATO, INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION, S.RES. 257, REGARDING THE PLIGHT OF THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE IN KOSOVA; I AM PROUD TO BE A COSPONSOR.

IN MY VIEW, THIS RESOLUTION IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT CALLS ON THE UNITED STATES TO:

- (1) PRESS FOR THE IMMEDIATE INCLUSION OF AN ALBANIAN REPRESENTATIVE FROM KOSOVA AT THE EC PEACE CONFERENCE;
- (2) CONDEMN THE GOVERNMENT OF SERBIA ON THIS OCCASION OF THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW ON KOSOVA;
- (3) URGE THE UNITED NATIONS TO IMMEDIATELY SEND OBSERVERS TO KOSOVA TO MONITOR THE SITUATION THERE;
- (4) STRONGLY SUPPORT THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE IN KOSOVA FOR DEMOCRACY AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

I URGE MY COLLEAGUES TO COSPONSOR S.RES. 257. THE UNITED STATES MUST GET MORE INVOLVED ON THE SIDE OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN WHAT USED TO BE YUGOSLAVIA. AMERICA IS THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD AND THE ALBANIANS OF KOSOVA ARE LOOKING TO US TO HELP LEAD THEM TO FREEDOM.

###