



# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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## DOLE URGES CARTER TO ISSUE PUBLIC APPEAL FOR SAFETY OF IRANIAN RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

WASHINGTON-- Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas) today appealed to President Carter to "do all we can, within our means, to reduce the possibilities for tragedy" in strife-torn Iran.

Dole voiced a special concern for the fate of the Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i communities in Iran, which have reportedly been subjected to increased harassment and persecution in recent weeks.

Senator Dole sent the following letter to the President:

Dear Mr. President:

It has come to my attention that members of various Iranian minority religions are currently being subjected to harassment, both verbal and physical, and that we may be witnessing the beginning of a wave of religious persecution in that strife-torn nation.

Of special concern is the fate of Iran's Christian, Jewish, and Baha'i communities. The latter two are especially vulnerable. Already, inflammatory statements have been issued concerning the Baha'is, who are considered to be heretics by the followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Also, overt anti-Semitic activity, coupled with anti-Semitic speeches and writings in the anti-Shah press over recent months, has generated a great deal of fear among the estimated 70,000 Jews living in Iran.

In view of the uncertainties concerning the fate of minority groups in Iran, we must do all we can, within our means, to reduce the possibilities for tragedy.

There has already been great tragedy this century involving members of minority religions suffering persecution. The massacre of the Armenian Christian population in the Middle East and the tragic fate of Europe's Jewish population during the period of Nazi terror are but two examples.

Mr. President, I urge you to issue a public appeal to the Ayatollah, asking that a proclamation be made to assure minority groups of all creeds that they will be granted protection from violence and be allowed freedom of religion. Such action on your part would be in keeping with your position on human rights and would aid in focusing world attention on this potentially tragic situation.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Dole  
U.S.S.