

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE QUESTIONS CONTINUING DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH AFGHANISTAN

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS.) TODAY JOINED A BIPARTISAN GROUP OF SENATORS IN SENDING A LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE SHULTZ, URGING THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO REVIEW EXISTING U.S. POLICY TOWARD AFGHANISTAN. IN PARTICULAR, THE LETTER QUESTIONS WHETHER CONTINUED FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH KABUL STILL SERVES U.S. STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THE EVOLVING SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN.

"There's some intense maneuvering underway now in Southwest Asia," Dole noted. "The democratic resistance forces are making very effective use of American help and have upped the military ante considerably. The Soviets are floating new proposals, which might just be more propagandabaloney, but which have to be looked at. And the Pakistanis are also active diplomatically. So it's important to send this message, reflecting the intense Senate interest in what's going on.

"I recently talked directly to Secretary Shultz about the Afghan situation, and stressed to him the strong feelings of support for the resistance in the Senate," Dole continued. "I think he realizes how important the Senate feels it is that any settlement gets all the Soviet troops out in very short order and preserves the political rights of the resistance."

Simultaneously, Dole joined in cosponsoring new legislation offered by Senator Gordon Humphrey (R-N.H.), which would ban U.S. trade with Afghanistan. "While our trade with Afghanistan is at a very low level, there is no justification for continuing any trade at all with a regime that has been charged by the UN with perpetrating genocide."

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