

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 21, 1991

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

YUGOSLAVIA

DIRECT AID FOR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICS

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

I APPRECIATE HAVING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE SUBJECT OF YUGOSLAVIA. I THINK THIS HEARING ADDRESSES A VERY IMPORTANT POLICY ISSUE FOR THE UNITED STATES. IN MY VIEW, THE UNITED STATES URGENTLY NEEDS TO REVIEW ITS POLICY TOWARD YUGOSLAVIA TO DETERMINE THE BEST MEANS FOR ENCOURAGING THE GROWTH OF DEMOCRACY AND THE RESTORATION OF FULL HUMAN AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL OF THE PEOPLE IN YUGOSLAVIA.

CERTAINLY THIS MORNING'S NEWS REPORTS ON THE STEPS TAKEN YESTERDAY BY SLOVENIA'S PARLIAMENT TOWARD SELF-RULE AND DISASSOCIATION FROM THE YUGOSLAV CENTRAL GOVERNMENT UNDERSCORE THAT URGENCY. NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLICS AND THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY ON THE FUTURE OF YUGOSLAVIA HAVE TO DATE NOT YIELDED ANY RESULTS; I THINK THAT IS BECAUSE THE DIVISIONS WE SEE IN YUGOSLAVIA TODAY ARE NOT ONLY ETHNIC, BUT POLITICAL AS WELL--AND THESE POLITICAL DIVISIONS ARE DEEP. OLD-STYLE COMMUNISM IS PITTED AGAINST NEW-BORN DEMOCRACY AND AT THIS POINT, WE DON'T KNOW WHICH SIDE WILL WIN.

DEMOCRACY THREATENED

WHILE MANY PEOPLE THINK OF THE CURRENT PROBLEMS IN YUGOSLAVIA PURELY AS OUTGROWTHS OF HISTORICAL ETHNIC SQUABBING, I WOULD ARGUE THAT SUCH A VIEW IS OVERLY SIMPLISTIC. SURE, THERE HAVE BEEN AND ARE HISTORICAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS NATIONS THAT MAKE-UP YUGOSLAVIA; WE CAN'T FORGET THAT THESE NATIONS DID NOT JOIN TODAY'S YUGOSLAVIA VOLUNTARILY. BUT, THE CURRENT CRISIS IN YUGOSLAVIA IS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRACY TO EASTERN EUROPE: THE PROBLEM IN YUGOSLAVIA, HOWEVER, IS THAT DEMOCRACY DID NOT SPREAD FAR ENOUGH. THE LARGEST AND SMALLEST REPUBLICS, SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO ELECTED COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS LATE LAST YEAR, AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA IS STILL IN COMMUNIST HANDS (ALTHOUGH SOME OF THESE COMMUNISTS NOW CALL THEMSELVES SOCIALISTS). THE OTHER FOUR REPUBLICS DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS.

WHILE BRUTAL REPRESSION BY SERBIAN AUTHORITIES IS STRANGLING THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT IN THE PROVINCE OF KOSOVA, THE NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS ARE ALSO UNDER SIEGE, BUT BY THE YUGOSLAV ARMY WHICH IS STAUNCHLY PRO-COMMUNIST AND HAS THREATENED A MILITARY CRACKDOWN.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY WITH RESPECT TO YUGOSLAVIA PROMOTES UNITY, AND I CAN SEE THAT WE DO NOT WANT THE UNITED STATES TO BE A FORCE FOR DISUNITY. BUT, WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE THAT THERE CANNOT BE UNITY IN A FUTURE YUGOSLAVIA UNLESS IT IS DEMOCRATIC--UNLESS IT REPRESENTS THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IN ALL OF THE REPUBLICS. IT WOULD NOT BE IN OUR INTEREST TO HAVE A YUGOSLAVIA DIVIDED WITHIN, BUT UNITED BY MILITARY FORCE.

BELGRADE HARDLINERS

RECENTLY I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FIRST-HAND THE EXTENT OF THESE POLITICAL DIVISIONS. SIX MONTHS AGO I LED A SENATE DELEGATION TO YUGOSLAVIA. WHILE WE WERE THERE ONLY A COUPLE OF DAYS, WE TRAVELLED TO ZAGREB, BELGRADE AND PRISTINA. WE MET WITH THE DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED LEADERS OF THE REPUBLICS OF CROATIA AND SLOVENIA, WITH THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA. WE ALSO MET WITH THE LEADER OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE OF KOSOVA, DR. RUGOVA, LEADERS OF THE ALBANIAN COMMUNITY AND LEADERS OF THE SMALL SERBIAN COMMUNITY IN KOSOVA.

(MORE)

KOSOVA NIGHTMARE

WHILE THESE MEETINGS WERE INFORMATIVE, I BELIEVE WE LEARNED MORE ABOUT THE SITUATION IN YUGOSLAVIA FROM OUR OBSERVATIONS. TRAVELING FROM ZAGREB TO BELGRADE TO PRISTINA WAS LIKE TRAVELING THROUGH A TIME-WARP, FROM FLEDGLING DEMOCRACY BACK TO FIFTIES-STYLE COMMUNISM. THE HOPE WE HAD FELT DURING OUR MEETINGS WITH THE NEW NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS OF SLOVENIA AND CROATIA--WHO ARE ON THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY AND A FREE MARKET ECONOMY--WAS DAMPENED ONCE WE LEFT ZAGREB. IN FACT, WITHIN THE FIRST MINUTES OF OUR ARRIVAL IN PRISTINA WE COULD SEE THE UNDENIABLE SIGNS OF A POLICE-STATE. THE COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES TRIED TO PREVENT US FROM GOING TO KOSOVA AND WHEN WE ARRIVED WE LEARNED WHY-- IN PRISTINA WE SAW THE HORRIBLE AND TRAGIC RAMIFICATIONS OF THE POLICIES INITIATED BY HARD-LINE COMMUNISTS IN BELGRADE.

SERBIAN CRACKDOWN

OUR DELEGATION, IN ONE AFTERNOON, GOT A REAL TASTE OF WHAT LIFE IN KOSOVA IS LIKE--THE SERBIAN POLICE AUTHORITIES DIDN'T BOTHER TO CLEAN UP THEIR ACT FOR OUR VISIT. FROM THE WINDOWS OF OUR BUS, WE COULD SEE TEAR GAS AND CLUBS BEING USED AGAINST ALBANIANS WHO TURNED OUT TO SEE US, TO WAVE TO US, AND TO CHANT, "USA, USA." ABOUT 10,000 ALBANIANS WAITED TO GREET US, BUT WERE MET WITH BRUTAL VIOLENCE BY POLICE AUTHORITIES. THAT DAY, A YOUNG AMERICAN WAS ARRESTED, TOO. HE SPENT 30 DAYS IN PRISON UNDER TRUMPED-UP CHARGES.

WHAT WE SAW IN PRISTINA HAPPENS EVERY DAY **THROUGHOUT** KOSOVA. THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND HELSINKI WATCH HAVE THOROUGHLY DOCUMENTED THE EGREGIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN KOSOVA, AND HAVE NOTED THAT THE SITUATION IS STEADILY WORSENING.

SO, THE FACTS ARE CLEAR. THE ISSUE IS WHAT WE CAN AND SHOULD DO ABOUT IT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE MUST KEEP UP DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON THE YUGOSLAV CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA. IN ADDITION, I THINK OUR EMBASSY OFFICIALS NEED TO GET OUT OF BELGRADE MORE -- TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, AS OUR DELEGATION DID, AND TO KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH DEMOCRATIC LEADERS IN THE OTHER REPUBLICS.

DIRECT AID - BYPASS THE HARDLINERS

BUT, THE UNITED STATES MUST DO MORE THAN JUST REACT DIPLOMATICALLY. WE NEED TO PROVIDE DIRECT AID TO THE NON-COMMUNIST REPUBLICS IN YUGOSLAVIA, THEREBY BYPASSING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA. WE DO NOT WANT TO REWARD EITHER GOVERNMENT FOR ITS POLICIES OF COERCION AND REPRESSION.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS SESSION, I INTRODUCED THE DIRECT AID FOR DEMOCRACY ACT, S.9, WHICH WOULD GIVE THE UNITED STATES THE FLEXIBILITY TO PROVIDE AID TO REPUBLIC LEVEL GOVERNMENTS THAT ARE ON THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY, BUT EXIST WITHIN COUNTRIES THAT HAVE GOVERNMENTS AT THE REPUBLIC LEVEL OR FEDERAL LEVEL THAT ARE COMMUNIST CONTROLLED. THIS BILL WOULD APPLY TO YUGOSLAVIA, AS WELL AS TO THE SOVIET UNION. UNDER TODAY'S FOREIGN AID SYSTEM, WE ARE BOXED IN; HELP ALL OR HURT ALL. IN YUGOSLAVIA, WE CAN ONLY SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATS, IF WE ARE WILLING TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNISTS. IF WE WANT TO WEAKEN THE COMMUNISTS, WE CAN ONLY DO SO BY WEAKENING THE DEMOCRATS.

THESE ARE THE KINDS OF CHOICES WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE, SO WE END UP SITTING ON THE SIDELINES, HOPING FOR DEMOCRACY, BUT NOT HELPING IT. BUT, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SIT ON THE SIDELINES WITH RESPECT TO YUGOSLAVIA-- DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN LIVES ARE AT STAKE. YUGOSLAVIA, LIKE THE SOVIET UNION, IS A PLACE WHERE THE DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS AND PRINCIPLES WE BELIEVE IN ARE UNDER SERIOUS ATTACK.

HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

BUT, AS I SEE IT, THIS IS A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD DEMOCRACY AND MAKE DEMOCRACY PERMANENT. ONLY A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM CAN ENSURE THAT THE HUMAN AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS OF ALL CITIZENS ARE PROTECTED.

ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT PREDICT TODAY THE FUTURE OF YUGOSLAVIA, WE DO KNOW THAT WE WANT THAT FUTURE TO BE A DEMOCRATIC ONE AND A PEACEFUL ONE. SO, NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE UNITED STATES TO COME OFF THE SIDELINES AND COME DOWN ON THE SIDE OF DEMOCRACY IN YUGOSLAVIA.

###