

Bob Dole

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS



NEWS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

DOLE SETS RECORD STRAIGHT ON ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

I want to join today with President Clinton and with all of America in honoring the 157 law enforcement officers who were killed last year in the line of duty. These brave men and women paid the ultimate sacrifice so that all Americans may continue to live in freedom and peace. Today, and every day, our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families.

Unfortunately, President Clinton couldn't resist the temptation to score some political points when he chose today's memorial ceremony to criticize congressional efforts to enact meaningful anti-terrorism legislation. In his remarks, the President claimed he sees "disturbing signs of the old politics of diversion and delay." And just yesterday, the White House Chief of Staff made the untenable statement that anti-terrorism legislation isn't moving in Congress "because there is this diversion going on to try to create attention on the Waco incident." Mr. Panetta even went so far as to describe as "despicable" the idea that congressional oversight should be brought to bear on the Waco tragedy.

I know there has been a lot of talk recently about "paranoia." But, judging by these remarks, it appears that the paranoia bug has infected the White House. Contrary to what President Clinton may believe, there's no hidden conspiracy on the Hill to divert or delay consideration of anti-terrorism legislation. And Mr. Panetta may be disappointed to learn that we haven't concocted a secret plot to focus attention on Waco as a means of diverting attention from the administration's own anti-terrorism plan.

Just look at the record: we have had three days of hearings, including hearings on the administration's controversial proposal to amend the posse comitatus act. We have introduced comprehensive legislation that incorporates many of the administration's own anti-terrorism proposals. And we continue to press ahead. In fact, my staff has been meeting regularly, even today, with White House and Justice Department officials to review--and perhaps improve--all of the various anti-terrorism proposals that are now on the table. So, as we move ahead on an ambitious legislative agenda here in the Senate, including an historic plan to balance the federal budget by the year 2002, I would hope the President and his chief of staff would show some restraint and patience.

Yes, we will give the administration's proposal every consideration. Yes, we will pass tough anti-terrorism legislation. But our resolve to confront the terrorist threat must also be tempered with wisdom and restraint. What we do this year must withstand the test of time. After all, nothing less than our constitutional liberties are stake.

One would think and hope that the President of the United States would understand this simple, but immensely important, point.

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* Remarks delivered on the Senate floor approximately 6:10 p.m.