

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BALKAN UPDATE

DOLE LETTER TO CLINTON URGES NO LIFTING OF SANCTIONS ON SERBIA NOW: DON'T REWARD MILOSEVIC FOR HIS PROMISES, RATHER THAN HIS DEEDS

WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today sent a letter to President Clinton urging him to reconsider diplomatic initiatives which would involve lifting sanctions on Serbia without achieving and implementing a comprehensive settlement which includes Kosova. The text of the letter follows:

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my deep concern about reports regarding U.S. diplomatic initiatives being presented by U.S. representatives to Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian officials. Of greatest immediate concern are the reports that the United States supports fully lifting sanctions on Serbia in the event that Serbia recognizes Bosnia and Croatia and supports a settlement that would result in a 51%-49% partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Such an approach, if adopted and agreed to by Serbian President Milosevic, would in my view reward his pariah regime without requiring real results on the ground in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, and as importantly, it would not address the critical issue of the status and rights of the Albanian majority in Kosova who have been under martial law for over six years now. At this very moment, thousands of Serb refugees are being resettled in Kosova -- which will likely exacerbate the situation there and could lead to conflict. As your administration and the Bush administration have publicly recognized, a conflict in Kosova can be expected to draw in Albania and our NATO allies. Therefore, the issue of the rights and future of the majority Albanian population in Kosova must be addressed as part of any settlement in the former Yugoslavia.

I believe the United States should pursue a long term, comprehensive approach, rather than the apparent short term, piecemeal approach being pursued by your administration. One of America's key objectives should be stability in the region, and this goal cannot be achieved without a military balance in Bosnia and Croatia, and without addressing the status of Albanians in Kosova. The bottom line is that sanctions are the only real leverage the international community has been willing to use on the Belgrade regime. These sanctions should not be lifted until a comprehensive settlement which includes Kosova, is not only agreed to, but implemented.

If we lift sanctions now for what are clearly minimal returns, such a comprehensive settlement will be virtually impossible to reach and implement. Moreover, it will be extremely difficult to reimpose sanctions if and when necessary. In short, your administration's approach would yet again reward President Milosevic prematurely -- for his promises, rather than his deeds. Therefore, Mr. President, I strongly urge you to reconsider this position. In the event that the administration does not change its position on sanctions, my colleagues and I will have to explore all legislative options.

Sincerely,

Bob Dole

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