

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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FOREIGN POLICY

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE ON PRESIDENT CLINTON'S FOREIGN POLICY ADDRESS

In a speech on the importance of bipartisanship in foreign policy this morning, President Clinton made a case for his foreign policy successes.

I agree with much of what the President said. "In Bosnia as elsewhere, if the United States does not lead, the job will not be done." I would add that it was Congress -- after 2 and a half years of inaction and indecision -- that led the White House by decisively rejecting the Clinton Bosnia policy. With a veto override looming in Congress, President Clinton finally decided to lead and NATO finally acted.

The Middle East

I agree with the President that in the Middle East, "the credit here belongs to the peacemakers." But I would add a little credit to those who supported the use of force to liberate Kuwait and defeat Iraq. Operation Desert Storm is what led to the complete realignment of Middle East politics.

Isolationism

I agree with the President Clinton that "the isolationists are wrong." But I would remind the administration that it is misguided interventionism that strengthens American isolationism. It is letting the United Nations call the shots that disillusion Americans. The tragic events in Somalia in October 1993 did more to strengthen isolationism than any budget cut in the 104th Congress. And I have to say I am disappointed that this President seems more concerned about sending money to the United Nations than to maintain American military readiness. Balancing the budget is a question of priorities, and this is one case where mine are very different from the President's.

Haiti

I have to disagree with the President on Haiti. Haiti may be an example of American leadership, but is no success. In Haiti, the political process has broken down. All but Aristide's political party have called for new elections. President Aristide is well on his way to consolidating a one party state. Credible evidence points to political killings and death squads being run by members of the Haitian government. No one knows what will happen when American forces leave next year, but we do know it is far too soon to claim victory.

Cuba

On Cuba, the President has once again made a decision to ease sanctions on Cuba. All signs point toward normalization -- secret negotiations with Castro, allowing Castro to visit the U.S., returning Cuban refugees, and now easing travel restrictions. This latest action makes it even more important for Congress to move ahead on legislation tightening the embargo. The President says he wants to toughen the embargo, so I hope he will endorse our legislation.

Bipartisanship & Bosnia

Finally, on bipartisanship and cooperation between the branches of government, this administration has done a poor job. Only after we spoke up did the President invite groups to the White House last week to discuss Bosnia. If the President believes he has already made his case to send 25,000 Americans to Bosnia, he is mistaken. I have asked a group of senators led by Ted Stevens to go to Europe next week to assess plans for any American deployment. There will be hearings in the Senate and the House. Four key questions will dominate -- why send Americans, how many, how long and how much. We and the American people will see if the President and his advisers can answer these basic questions.

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