

SENATOR BOB DOLE
901 15TH STREET, N.W.
SUITE 410
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

275728

August 5, 1998

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to you to express my deepest concern regarding the evolving catastrophe in Kosova. We stand on the brink of regional war and humanitarian disaster.

Although we had our differences during the war in Bosnia, once NATO launched its airstrikes under your leadership, I offered my public support. Soon after Dayton, I also offered my assistance and helped to build a coalition in the Senate to support the deployment of US troops as part of a NATO led peacekeeping force -- despite the fact that I viewed the Dayton agreement as flawed. I did so because of my belief that this deployment would stabilize the situation, not only in Bosnia, but in the rest of the former Yugoslavia and eventually help bring about the conditions for a genuine peace.

I also believed that any steps by Slobodan Milosevic to pursue ethnic cleansing and aggression in genocide would be met with force, as you had pledged by repeating President Bush's Christmas warning. The combination of the deployment of a NATO-dominated force in Bosnia and the credible threat of force in Kosova was the only appropriate and realistic policy to prevent another outbreak of war.

However, over the past few months we have witnessed precisely the same genocidal attacks in Kosova that we saw in Bosnia. Already the death rate is in the thousands and more than 263,000 Albanians have been forced from their homes. UN aid teams have found houses burning and reports indicate that Serb forces are burning fields and livestock. Just this week, one

AUG 5 1998

The Honorable William J. Clinton
August 5, 1998
Page 2

mass grave was found estimated to contain a thousand people; already the remains of 430 children have been recovered.

In late spring, Kosovar President Rugova recounted to me his meeting with you and your pledge that you would not allow a second Bosnia to happen. That is the right policy. But, the time for action is now. A second Bosnia is happening at this very moment. The Kosovar Albanians cannot wait much longer for you to fulfill this commitment.

I understand that Milosevic promised US envoy Chris Hill last week that he would stop. Characteristically, he has not. Today, I read a news report that quoted Department of Defense officials as saying that NATO will intervene if "intolerable levels of atrocities" occur. Mr. President, what constitutes "intolerable?" Are not the bodies of 430 innocent children intolerable?

As Chairman of the International Commission on Missing Persons, I have witnessed the exhumation of mass graves in Bosnia. Too many innocent men, women and children died unnecessarily. Without your leadership and immediate action, countless more will die. Should this tragedy occur, history will recount that this slaughter happened not because the US and NATO did not have the means, but because the US and NATO did not have the will.

Mr. President, I urge you to lead NATO in delivering to Milosevic the only message he understands -- force. I stand ready to support you in any way I can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Dole', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

BOB DOLE