

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 83

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic release the three illegally detained United States servicemen and abide by the Geneva Convention protocols regarding the treatment of both prisoners of war and innocent civilians.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 12, 1999

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (for herself, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. TURNER, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. HOYER, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. FILNER, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHOWS, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WEINER, Mr. FROST, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. HAYES, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, and Ms. WATERS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic release the three illegally detained United States servicemen and abide by the Geneva Convention protocols regarding the treatment of both prisoners of war and innocent civilians.

Whereas United States Army Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, 24, of Los Angeles; Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, 25, of Smiths Creek, Michigan and San Antonio Texas, and Spc. Steven M. Gonzales, 21, of Huntsville, Texas were abducted from Macedonian territory by Serb forces on March 31, 1999, while patrolling the Kumanovo area 3 miles from the southern Yugoslavia border;

Whereas these 3 honorable United States soldiers, serving in noncombatant status, are now in the custody of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic;

Whereas the Geneva Convention, the 1949 treaty setting forth international protocols for the treatment of both civilians and military personnel during armed conflicts and declared wars, stipulates that prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated, provided any necessary medical assistance, protected against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity and evacuated from any area of danger;

Whereas the Geneva Convention also prohibits putting prisoners of war on trial for engaging in ordinary acts of warfare for which the capturing country's own soldiers would not be charged;

Whereas under the Geneva Convention, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has the right to nonsupervised visits of prisoners to ensure they are being treated well;

Whereas the Yugoslav Government has as yet not responded to the ICRC's requests; and

Whereas sanctions can be applied to signatories of the Geneva Convention for failing to abide by the convention:
Now, therefore, be it:

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the United States Government should com-
4 mend the 3 detained United States soldiers for their
5 exemplary service, bravery, duty to their country,
6 and part in helping to ensure a peaceful multiethnic
7 democratic Kosovo on the basis of the Rambouillet
8 Accords;

9 (2) the United States Government should con-
10 tinue to forcefully press the Yugoslav Government
11 and its president Slobodan Milosevic for the uncon-
12 ditional release of the 3 detained United States serv-
13 icemen and, in the interim, demand their health and
14 safety, and that the International Committee of the
15 Red Cross be allowed to visit the servicemen and
16 verify their condition without supervision;

17 (3) the United States Government should con-
18 demn any move on the part of the Government of
19 the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to put the three
20 detained United States servicemen on trial—an act
21 expressly forbidden by the Geneva Convention;

22 (4) the United States Government should hold
23 the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugo-

1 slavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic person-
2 ally responsible for the welfare of the 3 detained
3 United States servicemen;

4 (5) the United States Government should con-
5 tinue to condemn the atrocities committed by the
6 Yugoslav Army or paramilitary forces against civil-
7 ians in Kosovo, particularly crimes associated with
8 “ethnic cleansing”; and

9 (6) the United States Government should sup-
10 port the prosecution under the Geneva Convention of
11 all commanders of the Yugoslav Army or para-
12 military forces taking part in acts of ethnic cleaning
13 against civilians.

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