

Rep. Zeliff Lauds Albanian Elections and Meets Kosova Leaders

"Dr. Sali Berisha, leader of the Democratic Party in Albania, is striving for freedom and democracy in his beleaguered country, and the United States needs to support this effort," said Rep. Bill Zeliff (R-NH) upon his return from a fact-finding and election-monitoring mission to Albania, Kosova, Macedonia, and Serbia in late March.

On March 22, election day in Albania, an overwhelming 80 percent of the vote went to the opposition parties, with the Democrats capturing 60 percent.

Although heartened by the pace of democratization in Albania, Rep. Zeliff's delegation remained concerned about ongoing Serbian oppression in Kosova, where hundreds of Albanian dissidents have been killed, beaten, or jailed, and where Albanian-language media and educational institutions have been shut down.

In Kosova the delegation met with ethnic Albanian leaders-- Ibrahim Rugova and Alush Gashi-- and the Democratic League of Kosova. In Belgrade, meetings were held with members of the Serbian Renewal Movement and the Democratic Opposition.

Supported by private sponsors, Rep. Zeliff's delegation comprised media, political and human rights representatives, including the Congressional Human Rights Foundation. The Foundation previously organized the Washington, D.C., visits of Albanian leaders, Dr. Sali Berisha, Ibrahim Rugova, and Nevzat Halili.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONGRESS: THE MONTH AHEAD

AFGHANISTAN: The House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs is likely to hold a hearing on the prospects for peace in Afghanistan. (May 13)

AFRICA: The House Subcommittee on Africa may hold a hearing on Islamic fundamentalism in Africa.

BRAZIL: Rep. George Miller (D-CA) is likely to issue a "Dear Colleague" letter regarding the violence against street children in Brazil.

BURMA: The House Subcommittee on Asia and Pacific Affairs may hold a hearing on Burma. (May 20)

CIS: Introduced by Sens. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and Jesse Helms (R-NC),

legislation authorizing foreign assistance to the former Soviet Union is scheduled to be marked up by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in early May.

HONG KONG: The House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and the House Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade are likely to hold a joint hearing on the implications of Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese rule in 1997. (May 6)

INDONESIA: Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH) is likely to introduce legislation terminating U.S. foreign assistance to Indonesia in response to the violation of human rights in East Timor. ■

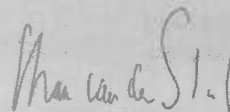
Iraq Rapporteur Calls for Monitors

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

In June last year, I was appointed Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights with the task of making a thorough study of the human rights situation in Iraq.

Since then, I received a constantly growing stream of information concerning human rights violations by the government of Iraq, in the form of testimonies, written documents, photographs, videotapes and audio cassettes. In addition, I received important further evidence during a trip to Iraq (including the area controlled by the Kurds) and Iraqi refugee camps in Iran and Saudi Arabia. On the basis of all this information, I had to conclude that the violations of human rights which have occurred in Iraq are so grave and are of such a massive nature that since the Second World War few parallels can be found. The arguments advanced by the Iraqi Ministers in Baghdad to demonstrate that most allegations were untrue, were totally unconvincing.

In my view, the exceptionally grave human rights situation in Iraq demands an exceptional response: the sending to Iraq of teams of human rights monitors who should remain in Iraq until the human rights situation has drastically improved.



MAX VAN DER STOEL

Special Rapporteur on Iraq

RECENT HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES: APRIL

Hearings

AFRICA (HORN): The House Subcommittee on Africa and the House Subcommittee on International Organizations held a hearing on the crises in the Horn of Africa, including wholesale violence in Somalia, human rights abuses in Sudan, and uncertain democratization in Ethiopia. (Apr. 8)

CIS: The House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East held a hearing on U.S. policy toward newly independent republics in Central Asia. (Apr. 28)

CIS: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing with Secretary of State Baker regarding aid to the former Soviet Union. (Apr. 9)

CSCE: The House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and State reviewed the yearly budget request for the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission). (Apr. 1)

CUBA: The House Foreign Affairs Committee held hearings regarding prospects for a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. (Apr. 2, 8)

EUROPE: The House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East held an oversight hearing regarding developments in Europe, including aid to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. (Apr. 9)

EUROPE (CENTRAL): The House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East held a hearing regarding U.S. assistance to democracies in Central Europe. (Apr. 7)

HAITI: The House Subcommittee on Legislative and National Security held a hearing regarding U.S. repatriation of

Haitian refugees. (Apr. 9)

HONG KONG: The Senate Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs held a hearing on the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese rule in 1997. (Apr. 2)

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: The House Subcommittee on Armed Services Readiness held a hearing regarding Department of Defense humanitarian assistance, particularly in Bangladesh, Haiti, and Kurdistan. (Mar. 31)

IRAQ: The House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East and the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations held a joint hearing regarding the U.N. role in monitoring post-war agreements in Iraq. (Apr. 1)

MALAWI: The House Subcommittee on Africa held a hearing with John Tembo, the second-ranking official of the nation's only party, regarding the human rights situation in Malawi. (Apr. 29)

MALAYSIA: Sen. Al Gore (D-TN) chaired a briefing on destructive logging practices and indigenous peoples' rights in Sarawak. (Apr. 2)

SOUTH AFRICA: The House Subcommittee on Africa held a hearing regarding the recent referendum on the transition to majority-rule in South Africa. (Mar. 31)

SOUTHEAST ASIA: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on the situation in Indochina and East Timor. (Mar. 31)

Legislative Initiatives

AFRICA (HORN): "The Horn of Africa Recovery and Food Security Act

of 1991," introduced in the Senate by Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL) and in the House by Rep. Byron Dorgan (D-ND), passed both chambers on April 7-8 and was signed by President Bush on April 21. This legislation consolidates U.S. humanitarian efforts into a coherent policy to promote peace and food security in the Horn of Africa.

BALKANS: On the same day that U.S. recognition was officially extended, the House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East approved a resolution introduced by Rep. Elton Gallegly (R-CA) urging President Bush to recognize the independence of Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. (Apr. 7)

BURMA: Sens. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), Paul Simon (D-IL), and Jesse Helms (R-NC) introduced a resolution calling for an international arms blockade and a U.S. trade embargo against the government of Burma (Myanmar) for its ongoing human rights violations. (Apr. 7)

BURMA: Ambassador Parker Borg, whose nomination was delayed due to ongoing human rights concerns, was confirmed by the Senate as the new U.S. Ambassador to Burma (Myanmar). (Apr.)

CIVIL LIBERTIES: Action on a resolution introduced by Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) calling for protection of the civil liberties of all U.S. citizens, including Arab-Americans, particularly during times of international conflict, was postponed indefinitely. (Apr. 9)

CIVIL/POLITICAL RIGHTS: Originally issued by the United Nations in 1977, the Senate ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, which requires signatories to protect the basic human rights of their citizens, including freedom of speech, association, and political affiliation. (Apr. 2)

CIS: Foreign Relations Committee co-chairmen, Sens. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and Jesse Helms (R-NC), introduced legislation authorizing foreign assistance to the former Soviet Union in support of the development of democracy and a free-market economy. (Apr. 7)

EL SALVADOR: Congress passed a continuing resolution which transfers military aid to the Demobilization and Transition Fund and provides support to the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces in El Salvador. (Apr. 1)

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE: The House Foreign Affairs Committee redrafted the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to eliminate obsolete provisions, provide more effective foreign assistance, and redesignate the Arms Export Control Act to the Defense Trade and Export Control Act. No further action is expected this year.

FOREIGN AID: Congress passed legislation, signed by President Bush, extending foreign aid at current levels. (Mar. 31-Apr. 1)

HAITI: Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) introduced legislation which supports democratic developments in Haiti by designating \$25 million for Organization of American States missions to restore democracy. (Apr. 2)

INDIA: The Senate confirmed former U.N. Ambassador Thomas Pickering as U.S. Ambassador to India. (Apr.)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: The Senate passed a resolution introduced in the House by Rep. Dante Fascell (D-FL) urging President Bush to attend the

CONGRESS has responded to staggering levels of violence and the ongoing threat of famine in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Somalia, with hearings, resolutions, and legislation that enables more effective humanitarian aid to the region.

U.N. Conference on Environment and Development, where the rights of indigenous peoples will be considered. (Apr. 7)

KURDS: Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL) introduced a resolution, originally submitted in the House by Rep. James Bilbray (D-NV), calling for the Turkish government to allow continued Allied protection of Iraqi Kurdistan and to press the government of Iraq to lift its economic boycott of Kurdish regions. (Apr. 9)

LIBERIA: Introduced by Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS), legislation reprogramming foreign aid funds for U.S. assistance in the Liberian elections, scheduled to take place in the next six months, passed the Senate on March 13 and the House on April 7 and was signed by President Bush on April 16.

MALAYSIA: Sen. Al Gore (D-TN) introduced a resolution regarding the

destruction of the Malaysian rainforest and the rights of the indigenous peoples of Sarawak. (Apr. 2)

SOMALIA: Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-NY) introduced a resolution condemning the actions of Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Fara Aideed and calling upon all parties to curb the violence and participate in U.N.-sponsored efforts to achieve a complete ceasefire. (Apr. 7)

TORTURE: President Bush signed the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991, which provides torture victims or their heirs, including non-U.S. citizens, legal recourse to seek damage compensation. Introduced by Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) in the Senate, the legislation was originally submitted by Rep. Gus Yatron (D-PA).

UNITED NATIONS: The Senate confirmed Ambassador Edwin Perkins as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

UKRAINE: Ambassador Roman Popadiuk was confirmed by the Senate as U.S. Ambassador to the Ukraine.

Other Initiatives

CHINA: Sens. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and David Boren (D-OK), long-time critics of China's human rights record, were denied visas to visit China and Tibet because Chinese officials claimed their visit "was not convenient." (Apr. 6)

CIS: Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ), co-chair of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), led a delegation, including Sens. Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and James Jeffords (R-VT), to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan,

welcoming the republics as new members of the CSCE and monitoring the human rights situation in the region. (Apr. 10-18)

IRAQ: Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and six other Senators issued a letter to President Bush calling attention to human rights abuses against the Kurds

in northern Iraq and the Shi'a Muslims in the south. (Apr. 14)

SYRIA: In numerous floor statements, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress continue to draw attention to the plight of the Syrian Jews, who in late April finally received official permission to dispose of personal

property and emigrate freely from Syria.

(To list Congressional items, please contact Konrad J. Huber, Director, Congressional Relations, Congressional Human Rights Foundation, 202-333-1407.) ■

INTERPARLIAMENTARY HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK: *Actions and Initiatives from Around the World*

CIS: Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) led a Helsinki Commission delegation, including Sens. Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and James Jeffords (R-VT), to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, where they met with the heads of states and parliaments to welcome the republics' recent membership in the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. (Apr. 10-18)

BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA: The Parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina appealed for international support in the face of attacks on Sarajevo by Serbian irregulars and the Yugoslav Federal Army.

CAMEROON: The Interparliamentary Union sponsored a conference in Cameroon on issues of democracy and "the expression of ethnic diversity" as a means of ensuring political stability and economic development. (Apr. 6-10)

KOREA: Members of parliament from Korea, Australia, Thailand, and United States met for the first Asian-Pacific Parliamentary Leaders' Forum in Hawaii. (Apr. 23-25)

KURDS: In the wake of Baghdad's

relinquishing of authority in Kurdish areas of northern Iraq, the parties of the Kurdistan Front are holding their first parliamentary elections on May 17.

PERU: Leaders of Peru's recently dissolved Congress have called repeatedly for the restoration of democracy in their country.

SERBIA: The Muslim National Council of Sanjak and two Members of the Serbian Parliament, Dr. Alija Mahmutovic and Professor Rizah Gruda, issued a statement describing harassment by Serbian special police at the border of Kosova.

TIBET: British Member of Parliament Giles Radice continues to urge the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to call attention to human rights violations in Tibet.

TOGO: In the wake of the past year's democratic transition, which included the ratification of a new constitution in March, Togo will hold parliamentary elections in June and presidential elections in July.

WOMEN: The Interparliamentary Union released a study of women in parliaments worldwide. (Copies of this study are available from the Congressional Human Rights Foundation.)

Interparliamentary Network

Represented in almost 50 countries, IPN has recently recruited new members from Belize, Mauritius, Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands. In the past month, IPN hosted a parliamentary delegation from Nepal, where the protection of minority rights, economic development, and democratic institution-building are among the most urgent issues. Upcoming meetings are scheduled with MPs from Namibia, Pakistan, and Yemen. A date will soon be set with the Chairman of the Slovenian Parliament's Human Rights Committee for a regional conference on human rights in the Adriatic-Balkan region.

(For more information regarding the Interparliamentary Human Rights Program, please contact Paul W. Meek, Director, Interparliamentary Relations, Congressional Human Rights Foundation, 202-333-1407.)

Congress Considers Plight of Iraqi Kurds, Shi'a

WITH the United Nations Security Council due to consider extending protection for the Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan, the Congress has again focused its attention on human rights violations committed by Saddam Hussein's regime.

Well-documented by non-governmental monitors such as Amnesty International and Middle East Watch, the Iraqi government's human rights record is described by U.N. Special Rapporteur Max van der Stoel's report as one of the worst in modern times. Submitted to the U.N. Human Rights Commission on February 18, his report details "massive violations of human rights of the gravest nature," including summary executions, forced disappearances, and the systematic and widespread use of torture.

The report also characterizes the notorious Anfal Operations, in which chemical weapons and other means of mass killing were used against the Kurds, as "genocide-type activities," opening up the possibility of action against the Iraqi regime under the U.N.'s Genocide Convention. Finally, there remains serious concern about the condition of southern Iraq's Shi'a Muslims, whose leaders, civilian population, and religious and cultural sites have recently been the targets of severe government attacks.

The Kurds

In response to the plight of the Kurds, Rep. James Bilbray (D-NV) and Sen. Connie Mack (R-FL) have introduced parallel resolutions urging the U.S. to work for continuation of the

international security zone in Iraqi Kurdistan and for an end to Baghdad's economic blockade of the region. Conventional wisdom suggests that as long as the current regime retains power, the Kurds remain threatened by further military action.

To this end, the resolutions focus on extending Allied overflight protection and U.N. humanitarian operations in the region, both of which are due to expire in late June. With the Security Council's resolve still unclear, the Congressional resolution specifically urges the U.S. to negotiate with Turkey the extension of Operation Provide Comfort, under which the Allied airforce has run overflight missions of southern Kurdistan to the 36th Parallel from bases in southeastern Turkey. However, after mounting violence in the Kurdish regions of Turkey, the continued cooperation of the Turkish government is also unclear. Any new agreement must be ratified by the Turkish parliament.

With senior members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, including Reps. Dante Fascell (D-FL), Lee Hamilton (D-IN), Stephen Solarz (D-NY), and Benjamin Gilman (R-NY), as original co-sponsors, Rep. Bilbray's resolution is likely to be moved expeditiously to a hearing and further action by the committee.

In the Senate, Sen. Mack's resolution is bolstered by an April 14 letter to President Bush from Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee expressing support for U.S. efforts to extend Operation Provide Comfort.

The Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Sen. Pell, has long been an outspoken critic of Baghdad's human

rights record, particularly with regard to the plight of the Kurds. In November the Committee released a report on its own fact-finding mission to southern Kurdistan, a report which details conditions in the region and the atrocities committed under Iraqi rule. Similarly, the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs, chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), issued an investigative report in January, describing the humanitarian crisis and urging U.S. support for the security and development of Kurdish regions.

Finally, the prospect of history-making parliamentary elections in the Kurdish-controlled areas of northern Iraq on May 17 may afford Congress an additional opportunity to undertake initiatives in support of the Kurds.

The Shi'a

In addition to highlighting the situation of the Kurds, the recent Foreign Relations Committee letter to President Bush focused on the Shi'a, who have also suffered systematic violations under Baghdad's rule, particularly in the aftermath of their own failed rebellion last spring.

Congressional attention on the plight of the Shi'a has been limited due to the international community's lack of access to southern Iraq; however, increased monitoring of Iraq may encourage greater advocacy on their behalf. U.N. Special Rapporteur van der Stoel has, in fact, recommended the deployment of human rights monitors throughout the country, a recommendation which has yet to be fully considered by the United Nations. ■

April Reports on Human Rights and Democratization

Albania: "Democratic Promise: Albania's Transition" (NDI).

Bangladesh: "Bangladesh: Reports of Torture and Possible Extrajudicial Executions" (AI).

Brazil: "Brazil: Human Rights Violations Against Indigenous People--Ticuna Four Years On" (AI).

Burma (Myanmar): "Myanmar--Human Rights Violations Cause Thousands to Flee" (AI).

Cambodia: "State of Cambodia: Human Rights Developments, 1 October 1991 to 31 January 1992" (AI).

Cameroon: "Cameroon--Up to 70 Deaths From Malnutrition Reported at Prison Camp" (AI).

Chile: "Pisagua--Reopening of Investigations into the Identity of Human Remains Recovered from a Clandestine Grave" (AI).

Cuba: "The Politics of Psychiatry in Revolutionary Cuba" (FH).

Cuba: "Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America: The Case of Cuba" (IRI).

Dominican Republic: "Dominican Republic: Torture of Professor Felipe de Jesus Medrango Garcia" (AI).

El Salvador: "El Salvador: El Mozote Massacre: The Need to Remember" (HRW).

Israel: "Israeli Interrogation Methods Under Fire" (HRW).

Israel: "Israel/South Lebanon: The Kham Detainee--Torture and Ill-Treatment" (AI).

Kurds: "Asylum Under Attack: Protest of Iraqi Kurds and Displaced Persons Since the Gulf War" (LCHR).

Paraguay: "Voting for Greater Pluralism" (NDI).

Somalia: "Somalia: No Mercy in Mogadishu" (HRW).

Sudan: "Sudan: A Continuing Human Rights Crisis" (AI).

Syria: "Syrian Human Rights Monitors Jailed" (HRW);

Syria: "Syria: Human Rights Workers on Trial" (HRW);

Syria: "Syria: Lawyers and Human Rights Workers After Unfair Trial" (LCHR).

Togo: "Togo: AI Calls for Thorough Investigations and Reforms a Year After Massacre" (AI).

Worldwide: "World Refugee Survey" (USCR).

Worldwide: "Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties" (FH).

Zambia: "The October 31, 1991 National Elections in Zambia" (NDI).

To order, please call the following offices: Amnesty International USA (AI), 202-544-0200; Freedom House (FH), 202-296-5101; Human Rights Watch (HRW), 202-371-6592; International Republican Institute (IRI), 202-408-9450; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (LCHR), 202-547-5692; National Democratic Institute (NDI), 202-328-3136; and U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR), 202-347-3507.

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