

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 104

Concerning the crisis in Albania.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 20, 1997

Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Ms. MOLINARI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Concerning the crisis in Albania.

Whereas during March 1997 United States Armed Forces personnel evacuated approximately 500 Americans from Albania;

Whereas no Americans were injured in the evacuation;

Whereas the military operation was at times risky and dangerous, with helicopters of the United States Armed Forces occasionally receiving fire;

Whereas several United States diplomats, including Ambassador Marisa Lino, have remained in Tirana during these unsettled and perilous times;

Whereas the evacuation is the result of a rebellion in Albania which followed the collapse of several pyramid investment schemes;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of Albanian citizens lost large portions of their life savings in the pyramid investment schemes;

Whereas more than 100 people in Albania have died in the rebellion;

Whereas with the almost complete collapse of central governmental authority, Albania remains in a state of near-anarchy;

Whereas many weapons depots were raided by the general population of Albania and many small arms were taken by the citizenry;

Whereas the proliferation of weapons in Albania has made the situation very dangerous;

Whereas on March 9, 1997, Albania's political parties agreed to a nine-point agreement on political reconciliation;

Whereas under the nine-point agreement, President Sali Berisha, a member of the ruling Democratic Party, has appointed a broadly based unity government, led by an opposition socialist, former mayor of Gjirokaster Bashkim Fino;

Whereas under the nine-point agreement, President Berisha and opposition parties have agreed to hold general elections by June 1997; and

Whereas the solution to the crisis in Albania cannot be found through further recourse to violence or any challenge to Albania's international borders or territorial integrity:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

1 (1) United States Armed Forces personnel are
2 to be commended for the evacuation operations in
3 Albania;

4 (2) the United States diplomatic corps are to be
5 commended for their service in Albania during these
6 dangerous times;

7 (3) the nine-point agreement of March 9, 1997,
8 among all Albanian political parties represents a key
9 step toward lifting Albania out of the current crisis;

10 (4) Albania's new multiparty leadership is
11 strongly urged to implement in good faith the terms
12 of the nine-point agreement of March 9, 1997, and
13 to do all possible to reinspire the trust of the Alba-
14 nian people;

15 (5) the Albanian people are strongly urged to
16 afford their new government an opportunity to gov-
17 ern by laying down weapons and making any
18 changes to the government through peaceful means,
19 particularly the upcoming elections;

20 (6) the United States should support the new
21 Albanian Government as it attempts to reestablish
22 calm and achieve political reconciliation and should
23 urge the new government to guarantee human
24 rights, free and fair elections, and freedom of ex-
25 pression;

1 (7) the United States must remain closely en-
2 gaged in the diplomatic efforts to ease Albania's cri-
3 sis and should strongly support similar efforts by
4 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in
5 Europe and the European Union;

6 (8) the United States and the international
7 community should work with the new Albanian Gov-
8 ernment to ensure that upcoming elections will be
9 free and fair by supplying political inducement, tech-
10 nical advice, and large numbers of observers; and

11 (9) the international community should consider
12 ways to assist Albania with the financial crisis
13 brought about by the collapse of the pyramid invest-
14 ment schemes, including the convening of a financial
15 donors' conference if there is full cooperation in in-
16 vestigating the schemes and their role in the crisis.

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