



February 24, 2004

**Colman and Fellow Senators Write to Sec. Powell
Proposing a Firm U.S. Policy toward Iran**

Senators Oppose Engagement until Tehran Fundamentally Changes Behavior

WASHINGTON, DC – Simultaneous with the sham parliamentary elections in Iran last Friday, Senator Norm Coleman (R-MN), joined by fellow Senators Sam Brownback (R-KS), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Jon Kyl (R-AZ), sent a letter to the honorable Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice, proposing a firm U.S. policy toward Iran, the most active state sponsor of terrorism.

Senator Coleman in his letter expressed his deepest sympathies with the Iranian people over the tragic earthquake in city of Bam and the recent train explosion. Mr. Coleman also applauded the “swift American response to the tragedy at Bam, including the deployment of disaster response personnel and donations of relief supplies.”

The Senators stressed that “we are concerned that those who seek to improve relations between the United States and Iran have mistakenly viewed this as a moment of opportunity to press for closer ties with the Islamic Republic.”

“Our biggest concern is the message such overtures would send – and is already sending – to the overwhelming segment of the Iranian population who truly desire democracy and look to the U.S. as the world’s champion of freedom. Particularly at a time when the regime in Tehran is so discrediting itself through obvious electoral charades, a U.S. signal of support for any member of that regime is at best a mistake and at worst a blow to the cause of freedom in Iran.”

Senators listed measures Tehran should take before they would support engagement, such as release of all political prisoners, real progress in human rights, ceasing all support for terrorism, and complete dismantling of its nuclear weapons program in a verifiable fashion.

Senator Coleman wrote that until Iran changes its course, U.S. policy toward Iran should:

- State clearly the U.S. position that Iran is not a democracy and that the U.S. supports those elements in Iran who favor freedom.
- Pursue publicly all links between the government of Iran and the Al Qaeda plotters of September 11th and all other terrorists;
- Encourage, rather than discourage, talks between U.S. officials and Iranian dissidents;
- Support private broadcasting by Iranian-Americans to their native country;
- Reinstate sanctions against Iran after a reasonable time for earthquake relief efforts;
- Oppose vigorously all efforts by Iran to interfere in the politics of Iraq or Afghanistan;
- Push for a real and verifiable dismantling of Iran's nuclear programs; and
- Seek to work with the international community to ensure the safety of those brave Iranians willing to voice their opposition to the regime, including students, intelligentsia and anti-fundamentalist clerics.

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