

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 36

Expressing support for equal and fair access to higher education in the Albanian language in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 1997

Mr. GILMAN submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing support for equal and fair access to higher education in the Albanian language in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Whereas failure to achieve fair and cooperative inter-ethnic relations often leads to governmental repression and conflict between peoples of different ethnic backgrounds;

Whereas the achievement of fair and cooperative treatment of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, is a serious challenge for all of the states of the Balkans region, including those states that gained their independence after the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia faces important issues involving the fair and equitable treatment of all of its citizens, regardless of their ethnic background;

Whereas the extraordinary census conducted by the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in June 1994 determined that those citizens of Albanian descent constitute at least 23 percent of the total population;

Whereas Macedonia's citizens of Albanian descent are increasingly concerned to ensure fair and equitable treatment as citizens of the state of Macedonia, including appropriate opportunities for education at all levels of instruction;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a member of the Council of Europe, an organization that encourages its member states to provide the opportunity for educational instruction in the languages of minority groups that constitute the citizenry of those states;

Whereas the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is a member of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, an organization that, in the "Copenhagen Document" of its 1990 Conference on the Human Dimension, noted the need for adequate opportunities for educational instruction in the native languages of citizens from minority groups;

Whereas international documents and conventions recognize the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish their own educational institutions within the framework of and in conformity with the legislation of the state within which they live;

Whereas levels of admissions of ethnic Albanian citizens of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the Universities at Skopje and Bitola are far below the 23 percent of Macedonia's population that is composed of ethnic Albanians;

Whereas higher education for ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia is made more difficult by the lack of general usage of the Albanian language at that level of instruction;

Whereas there are increasing reports that ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia are concerned that efforts to ensure access to higher education in the Albanian language have met with little success;

Whereas an application was filed with the Ministry of Education of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in October 1994 seeking permission to open an Albanian-language university as part of the established system of education;

Whereas, in the absence of a response to the application filed with the Ministry of Education of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in October 1994, attempts were made in December 1994 to begin university classes in the Albanian language at Tetovo, Macedonia and were prevented by the intervention of police forces; and

Whereas in February 1995 renewed attempts to open an Albanian-language university at Tetovo, Macedonia were again prevented by police forces, with the death of one ethnic Albanian citizen of Macedonia and the wounding of 28 other persons occurring as a result of the related violence: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) the Government of the Former Yugoslav
4 Republic of Macedonia should take all appropriate
5 measures to ensure the fair and equitable treatment
6 of all of its citizens, regardless of ethnic background;

7 (2) while steps taken by the Government of the
8 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to ensure
9 instruction in the Albanian language and the lan-
10 guage of other national minorities in Macedonia at
11 the primary and secondary levels of education and
12 the adoption of a law permitting Albanian language
13 instruction at the University of Skopje are com-
14 mendable, the ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia
15 continue to suffer from the lack of opportunity for
16 higher education in their native language;

17 (3) the Government and Parliament of the
18 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should
19 therefore consider all means by which higher edu-
20 cation conducted in the Albanian language can be
21 provided, including the establishment of an Alba-
22 nian-language university;

23 (4) the efforts by the High Commissioner for
24 National Minorities of the Organization on Security
25 and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe,

1 and the Working Group on Ethnic Minorities of the
2 International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia,
3 to offer guidance and mediation to the Government
4 of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and
5 representatives of the Albanian minority in resolving
6 the issue of higher education in the Albanian lan-
7 guage, are commendable;

8 (5) the President should express to the Govern-
9 ment of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
10 the strong support of the Government of the United
11 States for measures that will contribute to democ-
12 racy and stability in the Former Yugoslav Republic
13 of Macedonia, including efforts to ensure access to
14 higher education in the Albanian language;

15 (6) the President should offer appropriate sup-
16 port for the efforts of the High Commissioner on
17 National Minorities of the Organization on Security
18 and Cooperation in Europe to resolve the issue of
19 access to higher education in the Albanian language;
20 and

21 (7) the President should offer appropriate sup-
22 port for efforts by the Government of the Former
23 Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to ensure access to
24 higher education in the Albanian language, including

- 1 assistance for the establishment of necessary curricula and the provision of textbooks and related course materials.
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