

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 149

Expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives in response to the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic of Serbia, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2003

Mr. BEREUTER (for himself, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HYDE, Mr. LANTOS, and Mr. WEXLER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives in response to the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic of Serbia, and for other purposes.

Whereas Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic symbolized the hopes of a new generation of Serbs exhausted by decades of war and turmoil until he was felled by 2 sniper bullets in front of his office in the center of Belgrade on Wednesday, March 12, 2003;

Whereas Djindjic's killing was a heinous attack on democracy;

Whereas Zoran Djindjic was born on August 1, 1952, in Bosnia and became politically active during his student years at the University of Belgrade;

Whereas after spending several months in jail for attempting to create an autonomous noncommunist student organization with fellow students from Croatia and Slovenia, Zoran Djindjic moved to Germany, where he earned a doctorate in philosophy under Jürgen Habermas in 1979, and returned to Yugoslavia in 1989 to teach philosophy at Novi Sad University;

Whereas in 1989, Djindjic joined a group of Serb dissident writers and intellectuals to found the Democratic Party;

Whereas one year later, Djindjic was voted the Chairman of the Democratic Party Executive Board and in January 1994, he was elected the party's president;

Whereas Djindjic became a member of the Serbian Parliament in 1990, serving as the party's parliamentary group whip and a member of the Republic's Council at the Federal Parliament 3 years later;

Whereas following 88 days of mass protests over electoral manipulation during local elections in 1996, Zoran Djindjic was elected Belgrade's first noncommunist mayor since World War II;

Whereas Djindjic is widely believed to be the chief strategist and main organizer behind the Yugoslav presidential elections of September 24, 2000, and the uprising of October 5, 2000, that resulted in the overthrow and delivery of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), that was investigating atrocities committed during the tragic and violent breakup of Yugoslavia;

Whereas subsequent cooperation with the ICTY has been judged to be less than optimal, but in recent months

Prime Minister Djindjic moved forcefully to fight the organized criminal structures that Serbia inherited from the Milosevic era and to arrest war criminals who have remained at large;

Whereas Djindjic is also credited with masterminding the Serbian elections of December 2000, in which the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), a coalition of 18 parties spanning a broad range of the political spectrum, won 65 percent of the popular vote;

Whereas the DOS elected Djindjic to be Prime Minister of Serbia on January 25, 2001;

Whereas during his 2-year tenure as Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic sought to advance democracy, human rights, free market reforms, and the rule of law;

Whereas Djindjic's leadership raised desperately low living standards and advanced the integration of Serbia into Europe; and

Whereas Prime Minister Djindjic managed to maintain a disparate 17-party coalition government with a narrow majority in order to achieve these urgently needed reforms: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) the House of Representatives offers its con-
3 dolences and deepest sympathy to the people of Ser-
4 bia and the family of Zoran Djindjic following the
5 assassination of Prime Minister Djindjic;

6 (2) the House of Representatives understands
7 that organized criminal groups within Serbian soci-

1 ety continue to threaten the free and democratic
2 government of Serbia and Montenegro;

3 (3) the House of Representatives recognizes
4 that while implementing necessary reforms and co-
5 operating with the International Criminal Tribunal
6 for the former Yugoslavia may carry significant
7 risks for the leadership of Serbia and Montenegro,
8 these reforms and this cooperation are necessary and
9 must continue; and

10 (4) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
11 tives that the United States should support contin-
12 ued democratic reforms initiated by Zoran Djindjic,
13 should urge his successors to dedicate themselves to
14 continue to support his road to reform, and should
15 pledge to assist Serbia and its new leadership in ac-
16 complishing these necessary reforms, including ef-
17 forts to fight organized crime and corruption.

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