

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. CON. RES. 116

Concerning the New Tribes Mission hostage crisis.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 10, 1998

Mr. SPECTER submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was
referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Concerning the New Tribes Mission hostage crisis.

Whereas Mark Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff of the Sanford, Florida, based New Tribes Mission were abducted on January 31, 1993, from the Kuna Indian village of Pucuro in the Darien Province of Panama;

Whereas the wives and children of these American citizens, Tania Rich (daughters—Tamra and Jessica), Nancy Mankins (son—Chad, daughter—Sarah), and Patti Tenenoff (son—Richard Lee III, daughters—Dora and Connie), have lived the past 5 years without knowledge of the safety of these 3 men;

Whereas Mark Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff presently are believed to be the longest held United States hostages;

Whereas this kidnapping represents a gross violation of the 3 missionaries' human rights and is not an isolated incident in Colombia where, since 1980, 83 innocent Americans have been held hostage by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN);

Whereas the FARC and the ELN guerrilla groups in Colombia have both been designated terrorist organizations by the Department of State;

Whereas Colombia is engaged in a high-level conflict with these guerrilla insurgency groups, a number of whom are protectorates of the deadly drug trade;

Whereas the FARC has recently threatened officials of the United States Government and kidnapped additional United States citizens in Colombia;

Whereas the region of Colombia where the 3 American missionaries are believed to be held is controlled not by the Colombian Government, but rather by the FARC;

Whereas on December 9, 1997, the President of Colombia stated on an internationally televised episode of Larry King Live that the FARC "in some ways have admitted indirectly that they have the missionaries";

Whereas Human Rights Watch has stated that "The FARC has an obligation to unconditionally free the 3 missionaries, with all necessary guarantees" and Amnesty International has declared their "request that the FARC respect international humanitarian norms, guarantee the life and physical safety of the missionaries and unconditionally free them and all other hostages";

Whereas congressional inquiries regarding the 3 missionaries have been made to United States Government entities,

including, the White House, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

Whereas congressional inquiries regarding the 3 missionaries have been made to Amnesty International, Pax Christi, His Holiness the Pope John Paul II, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has provided assurances that their Colombian delegation “is still actively working in favor of the missing members of the New Tribes Mission”;

Whereas 58 Members of Congress and Senators signed letters to 8 different heads of state, including Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Spain, Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, and Portugal, in attendance at the Iberian-American Conference in Venezuela in November of 1997, requesting any and all assistance in order to bring about a favorable outcome to this unfortunate event;

Whereas no official confirmation of life or death has been made by any United States Government entity, non-governmental organization, foreign government, or religious institution;

Whereas the distinction between a “terrorist activity” and a “criminal activity” perpetrated on an American citizen traveling abroad should not be a limiting factor in terms of United States governmental investigation; and

Whereas every consideration to safety and prudence regarding action by the United States Government, foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations, international institutions, and other groups in this matter should be of the highest priority: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the President of the United States and his
4 emissaries should raise the kidnapping of Mark
5 Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff of the New
6 Tribes Mission and other American victims in Co-
7 lombia to all relevant foreign governments, non-
8 governmental organizations, and religious institu-
9 tions at every opportunity until a favorable outcome
10 is achieved;

11 (2) the President of the United States and the
12 Secretary of State should offer reward money for in-
13 formation leading to the release of the named hos-
14 tages;

15 (3) the President of the United States and his
16 emissaries should urge the cooperation of the new
17 President of Colombia to assist in the publication of
18 the reward information;

19 (4) the international community should encour-
20 age any and all groups believed to have information
21 on this case to come forward to help the families of
22 the kidnapped missionaries;

23 (5) all appropriate information obtained by the
24 United States Government, foreign governments,
25 international institutions, nongovernmental organiza-

1 tions, and religious institutions should be turned
2 over in a timely basis to the New Tribes Mission cri-
3 sis response team;

4 (6) a copy of this resolution shall be transmit-
5 ted to the President, the Secretary of State, the Na-
6 tional Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense,
7 the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation,
8 the Director of Central Intelligence, the President of
9 the Republic of Costa Rica, the President of the
10 United Mexican States, the President of the Repub-
11 lic of Panama, the King of Spain, the President of
12 the Republic of Venezuela, the President of the Re-
13 public of Guatemala, the President of the Republic
14 of Colombia, the President of the Republic of Por-
15 tugal, and His Holiness Pope John Paul II; and

16 (7) a copy of this resolution shall be transmit-
17 ted to the New Tribes Mission, Amnesty Inter-
18 national, Pax Christi, and the International Commit-
19 tee of the Red Cross.

○