

**DECLARATION OF THE CROATIAN COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF
HUMAN RIGHTS -- HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR. (Extension of Remarks
- April 07, 1992)**

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HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.
in the House of Representatives

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 1992

- Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following declaration by the newly formed Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights to the **Congressional Record** for the consideration of the Congress:

Zagreb, February 24, 1992.

- Setting forth the fact that the history of mankind is in fact an incessant struggle for the realization of elementary rights and freedoms and continuing the struggle for the affirmation of civil, political, economic, social, cultural, religious and other personal rights, the parliamentary parties represented in the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia declare that on February 24, 1992 they have formally inaugurated the Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights with its headquarters in Zegreb, Trg Hrvatskih velikana 2/I.
- This Committee's purpose is to promote, further and protect fundamental human rights proclaimed in Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, i.e. freedom, equality, equality between national groups, social justice, respect of human rights, inviolability of ownership, preservation of nature and the environment, and the reign of justice and a multi-party democratic system.
- It is natural for a responsible person to fight for his natural rights and to broaden the area of articulation of his rights. As far back as 1679, in the Habeas Corpus Amendment Act do we find the first legal rulings concerning the protection of the citizens of England from arbitrary arrest and prison detention, such that the Bill of Rights in 1689 would extend that protection to also include other rights of ordinary citizens. The American Declaration of Independence proclaims that all are created equal and that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are inalienable rights, and after the French Revolution, the Constitutional Congress of 1789 brings about the first European Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen which begins with the famous Article 1: `Men are created and remain free and equal in

rights' and wherein Article 2 the four fundamental rights are enumerated, 'freedom, ownership, security, and resistance to tyranny'.

- The General Assembly of the United Nations, at its meeting in Paris on December 10, 1948, accepted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which were carried over from the French Declaration of the Rights of Man elementary rights, though broadened to include protection of new human rights which, with the passing of time, have been affirmed. The United Nations' Declaration prohibits every racial, sexual, religious, social, political and property discrimination.
- All human rights' principles from the UN Declaration were carried over into the Constitutions of democratic states and into the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia. This, however, at the same time does not mean that human rights are always being universally respected. To the contrary! We are witnesses to repeated violations of human rights on the territory of Croatia, due to the insufficient and ineffective functioning of a lawful state. War is not and cannot be an excuse for illegal arrests, unacceptable maltreatment of prisoners, breaking into people's apartments, the suspension of parts of the criminal-judicial process which determine the fundamental protection of man as an individual, for bringing about authoritarian statutes which imperil elementary human rights and which bring into question the protection of citizens from the arbitrariness of state organs and opens the door to a dictatorship and police state.

Protecting human rights should be stopping the executive branch from meddling with the judiciary, stopping citizens from being subjected to verbal lynchings and public threats by those responsible in public life and similarly. Everything must be done to free this land from unprofessional and incompetent people who have taken up the biggest offices and from there, because of their own hypocrisy, unscrupulously violate fundamental human rights. Their rise is the fall of our soul. To not do anything against that is destruction and defeat in an of itself.

Due to this, the opposition's recently founded Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights has assigned itself the following priority duties for which to fight:

For holding free elections without the imposition of election laws;

For insuring the continuity of rights and of a lawful state;

For confirming an independent judiciary as the sole institution which makes determination about people's freedom;

For ending censorship of printed material and statutes on censorship empowered by law;

For cancelling military courts;

For changing citizenship laws;

For protecting victims;

For protecting new rights--ecological, health and others;

For independent television and radio.

The Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights is the association of representatives in parity (2 each) of distinguished representatives of parliamentary parties. The Committee may have honorary members as well from the ranks of those so deserving for their defense of human rights in or outside of Croatia. By way of this declaration, those persons are invited to join the work of the Committee thereby contributing to the success of this Committee with their knowledge and moral support. The Committee is independent in its work but is authorized to cooperate with all such or similar committees in the world--Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Helsinki Watch and many others.

The opposition's Committee for the Defense of Human Rights is a completely different association from the Parliament's Committee for Human Rights which, unfortunately, has remained in a capacity of protecting the existing government and not the citizen.

That is why all citizens of Croatia are called upon to inform the Committee about observed violations of human rights at the following address: Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, Zagreb, Trg Hrvatskih velikana 2/I, either in writing or directly through a Committee representative.

The Croatian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights: Ljubomir Antic, Slobodan Budak, Dr. Filip Culo, Silvije Degen, Ante Djapic, Gordana Grbic, Dr. Jure Juras, Ivan Juricic, Drago Kastratovic, Dr. Asim Kurjak, Dr. Slobodan Lang, Mladen Mesic, Zvonimir Nikolic, Dobroslav Paraga, Zeljko Perokovic, Zlatko Seselj, Dafinka Vecerina and Gordan Nidovic.

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