

BARNEY FRANK
4TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

2252 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2104
(202) 225-5931

29 CRAFTS STREET
SUITE 375
NEWTON, MA 02458
(617) 332-3920

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

September 5, 2001

558 PLEASANT STREET
ROOM 309
NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740
(508) 999-6462

222 MILLIKEN PLACE
THIRD FLOOR
FALL RIVER, MA 02721
(508) 674-3551

89 MAIN STREET
BRIDGEWATER, MA 02324
(508) 697-9403

D. Margaret Drury
Office of the City Clerk
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Ms. Drury:

Because you have contacted me in the past concerning Lori Berenson, I'm sending you a copy of a letter I wrote to President Toledo. In my view, this is the best way to make the argument to him for releasing Lori Berenson.


BARNEY FRANK

BF/ksa
ENCLOSURE

2001 SEP 10 A 10:34
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

July 28, 2001

The Honorable Alejandro Toledo
Palacio de Gobierno
Plaza Mayor
S/N Lima, Peru

Dear Mr. President,

I write to join many other Members of Congress in urging you to release Lori Berenson from imprisonment and allow her to return home. As the newly elected President of a country which has fought hard to preserve its democratic traditions in the face of some difficulty, you are entitled to feel proud of what you have done, and of your countrymen's response. As a Member of Congress, I believe America should reach out in support of your efforts in this regard. But the continued imprisonment of Lori Berenson will be an obstacle to full cooperation.

I am in no position to know exactly what Ms. Berenson did or didn't do. But it is clear that the trial which condemned her to a harsh imprisonment was an entirely illegitimate one in the first instance, and no subsequent trial can be free of the negative influence of that initial miscarriage of justice. Beyond that, the fact that she has for years now been imprisoned in very harsh conditions argues strongly for her release. People can differ as to whether or not she was culpable to some extent in efforts that the Peruvian government has a right to oppose, but it does not seem to me there is any ground for difference over the fact that she has already served an extremely tough penalty. To the extent that the Peruvian government believes it needs to deter foreign visitors from various activities, surely that purpose has been accomplished fully with regard to Ms. Berenson. To continue to punish in so drastic a fashion a young woman for non-violent action she took years ago, whatever your government's opinion of them, serves no valid purpose and will have the negative affect of perpetuating an obstacle to the fully cooperative relations between Members of Congress and the Peruvian government from which we would otherwise both benefit.


BARNEY FRANK

cc: The Honorable Colin Powell

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Consent Communication #4

A communication was received
from Representative Barney Frank,
regarding the release of Lori
Berenson.

In City Council September 24, 2001

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