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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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Immediately

DOLE URGES SUPPORT FOR RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 2, 1972 ---- Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty are the "most effective and appreciated sources of fact and information available to the peoples caught in the Soviet Union's grip in Eastern Europe," U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.) said today in the Senate.

A complete text of the Kansas Senator's remarks follows.

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SUPPORT FOR RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

I rise to support the resolution introduced by the Senators from Illinois and Minnesota and to urge that the Senate carefully consider the implications of terminating United States support for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

These radios are the most effective and appreciated sources of fact and information available to the peoples caught in the Soviet Union's grip in Eastern Europe. Yet, we have heard these radios called "relics of the cold war," "inexcusable wastes of money," and "inconsistent with our desire for agreement /at SALT/."

In the interest of freedom it has been suggested that the existence of these radios might jeopardize the President's diplomatic efforts in the Far East, and that, somehow, the existence of these semi-autonomous radios reduces the credibility of the United States government---- both with its own people and with the governments of the Soviet Union and China. The Senator from Kansas cannot accept these assertions; rather, he would suggest that in fact, these

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radios serve the best interests of our nation and the cause of freedom in Europe and around the world.

Radios Provide Vital News of Current Affairs

Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe beam informative broadcasts into the Soviet Union and the Eastern European nations. They are staffed by uniquely dedicated and personally committed individuals who in many cases have devoted virtually their entire lives to the cause of freedom in Europe. The content of these broadcasts is almost exclusively concerned with events in the nations receiving them. United States and NATO propaganda is not contained in their programs, for their purpose is to inform an isolated and shut-off world of events within its borders.

These radios cut through blankets of censorship and news control to provide the peoples of Eastern and Central Europe an awareness of current affairs about which they hear only distortions or silence. It is hoped that such awareness will enhance the desire of these people to participate in guiding their own destinies and result in a gradually strengthened force of nationalism in Eastern Europe, which will lend itself to detente with the West and increased trade and communications with all of the outside world.

It has been suggested that the proof of these radios' ineffectiveness lies in the fact that our NATO allies do not fund them. But the absence of Western European funding may be one of the radios' strong points. We must take into account the sensitivity which Eastern Europeans might have toward broadcasts beamed at them in the name of NATO or its European member nations, most of which have had historic ---- and not always benign ---- interests in the countries to the east. These broadcasts are free from any influence that could be construed as selfishly promoting the past or future ambitions of any neighboring country and thus gain the strength that comes from objectivity and freedom from vested interest.

Consistent with President's Policy

The Senator from Kansas cannot find himself in accord with this rationale suggesting that while President Nixon was in China

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these radios should have been permanently silenced to be consistent with the President's foreign policy. Such an assertion indicates that if we are to build bridges to the peoples of China we must abandon the peoples of Eastern Europe. Nothing could be further from the thrust and underlying philosophy of President Nixon's view of global harmony. The United States seeks contact and concord with all nations, but it does not seek to foster greater contact with one nation or group of nations at the expense of any other.

Dangerous Implications

In light of the continuing efforts of the United States to negotiate a meaningful limitation of strategic arms we should consider the likelihood that termination of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty would weaken America's position in the tough give and take of those bargaining sessions. A primary effect would be to undercut the position of our government by giving the Soviets and their leaders in Eastern Europe a valuable concession with absolutely nothing in return. The Russians could hardly interpret such a move as an indication of America's determination to bring about arms control. Instead, they would surely see it as evidence of American weakness and vulnerability to the willfulness of a determined few who would quench the credibility of the United States as a source of hope for the oppressed peoples of Eastern Europe.

Those who attack these radios suggest that they are ineffective because they require funding from the United States government. They imply that, because these funds once came from the Central Intelligence Agency, the radios must be hopelessly tainted. But are the peoples of Eastern Europe not the best qualified judges of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty? And does their devotion to and dependence upon their broadcasts not stand as the firmest testimony to the value and importance of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

Sustain Hope and Vision

The United States must not cut off our friends in Eastern Europe. We believe and hope that one day in the not too distant

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future they will, once again, manage their affairs and freely pursue their destinies as they, themselves, view them. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty will be remembered by the people whose vision and hope was sustained by their broadcasts over the years.

The quality and effectiveness of these radios has been carefully documented in the Library of Congress' research report. If these radios are disliked by the leaders of Eastern Europe it is because their broadcasts have moved the people there to demand more freedom and greater expression of their individual and national identities. These radios merit the support of this nation. They have received it in the past, and they shall in the future.

Break Conference Impasse

I was pleased to join as a cosponsor of the resolution introduced by the Senator from Illinois (Mr. Percy) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. Humphrey.) It expresses the overwhelming sentiment of Congress ---- as reflected in previous votes authorizing support for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty ---- and it surely reflects the views of the American people. It would be my hope that this resolution will make the will of the Senate clear and unmistakable ---- and that the conference committee can resolve its impasse without further unnecessary delay.

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