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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY BANQUET
UKRAINIAN CONGRESS COMMITTEE 'MAN-OF-THE-YEAR AWARD'
PICK-CONGRESS HOTEL
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

It's a real pleasure for me to be here today and accept the Man-of-the-Year Award from you. I deeply appreciate this honor, especially as it is presented to me on this date, the 60th anniversary of Ukrainian independence.

It was on this day in 1918 that the Proclamation of the Independence of Ukraine and the Ukrainian National Republic took place. Although the Ukrainian National Republic was recognized by a number of states, including the government of Soviet Russia, it was short-lived. The Soviets broke their promises to respect and honor Ukrainian independence by brutal oppression and military domination. The suffering and hardship has continued for the Ukrainian people ever since. Yet despite the persecutions, the Ukrainian people have never accepted the foreign domination and are continuing to struggle for human rights, freedom, and national independence.

It is for these reasons that the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe has been so important. When I spoke before the Belgrade Review Conference in November, I stressed the fact that organizations like yours had expressed their concern not only on the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, but also the right of self-determination of all peoples. And that is very important because human rights and self-determination are so closely linked as to be inseparable.

I believe that many of your political prisoners and dissidents are even now suffering such very harsh sentences because they have espoused both these principles. Yet with such men of strength and faith as Moroz, Tykhy, Rudenko, Romaniuk, Matsuevych, and Marynovych, the spirit of Ukraine will never die. One day, Ukraine will be free and independent again. For our part, we must make certain that the U.S. delegation in Belgrade this year and in the follow-up conferences in future years stands firm on these principles so that this dream can indeed become a reality.

Americans of East European background are intently interested in American foreign policy, and I would like to touch on several areas.

PRESERVING OUR DEFENSE INTERESTS

Many of you have written to me about the S.A.L.T. negotiations. Although much of what is going on is veiled in secrecy, enough has been learned to make it clear that our negotiators have made unilateral concessions on some very vital strategic weapons. According to press reports, Paul Warnke, the President's representative, has been compromising with the Soviets by accepting Moscow's position whenever we have run into disagreements with the Soviets. For example, in discussing land-based ICBM's, President Carter proposed a ceiling of 550. The Russians insisted on 820, and the reported compromise has been the Soviet figure of 820. Similarly, in placing a ceiling on multiple warhead vehicles, the U.S. has proposed a ceiling of 1100. The Soviets have insisted on 1320, and the reported "compromise" is 1320.

You and I know that this is not the way to achieve a strong and safe future for ourselves and our children. Unilateral concessions on our part will not end the arms race but only legitimize the Soviet race to superiority. However, when the Treaty comes to the Senate for discussion, I intend to do all in my power to see that the agreement is either strengthened substantially or else defeated. Above all, we must maintain a strong national defense. Fortunately, there are many Democrats and Republicans in the Senate who feel the same way.

-2-

PROTECTING THE PANAMA CANAL

We confront much the same type of problem with the proposed Panama Canal treaties. There again, the Administration seemed determined to reach an agreement, no matter what the price. And our defense interests were given second-place priority.

To straighten out the defects, I have proposed a number of Treaty amendments to insure that the vital interests of the free world are fully protected. Even before the so-called "Carter-Torrijos Understanding" was announced last October, I had introduced amendments to ensure our rights to priority passage through the Canal against any threat. Recently, I introduced amendments to authorize the United States to maintain military installations within Panama after the year 2000, and to prohibit the stationing of troops or bases in Panama by any country except Panama or the United States after the Treaty is ratified. Given our continuing concern about the threat of Soviet or Cuban military influence in the area, these guarantees are vital.

A SERIES OF CONCESSIONS

The S.A.L.T. and Panama Canal treaties, as negotiated, reflect inexperience and unrealistic expectations on the part of this Administration.

Unfortunately, these policy blunders have not been isolated instances. Instead, they are only part of a disturbing trend of concessions and retreats in foreign policy that have, in my opinion, seriously weakened our image as a resolute force for freedom.

In Asia, confusion and concession seem to be the essence of our policy. We are pulling all our troops out of South Korea. We have Taiwan wondering just how much longer they can rely on our commitments of friendship and support. And our relations with Japan are at their lowest point in years.

In Southern Africa, our friends are asking whether we intend to give away the hopes and security of not only the White minority, but the moderate Black majority as well.

In the Caribbean, our naivete in the Panama Canal negotiations has been surpassed only by our gullible effort to cuddle up to Castro while he was sending thousands of Cuban troops to prey on Africa.

And in Europe and the Middle East, our long-time friends now wonder just how far they can count on our traditional resolve and support. And with good reason. If we did not have the strength of conviction to keep the Crown of St. Stephen out of Communist hands, how is it we can commit ourselves to the defense of Israel and all of Western Europe? Clearly, the strength of our determination is under close examination by our allies.

How has this all come about? How is it that America, once the bastion of strength against the forces of tyranny, has become so identified with the policy of retrenchment? Much of it has been due to poor preparation and coordination by inexperienced policymakers. Much of it has been due to unrealistic initiatives and naive expectations. It is long since time that we return to the sober thinking and steadfast policy that gave this nation worldwide respect.

On many of these issues, you and I have very similar views. On other topics we might disagree. However, I believe we are all interested in having a strong America, both economically and militarily. But to achieve this, we must be ever vigilant. We cannot take our freedom for granted, as you well know. We must be prepared to sacrifice and fight for it. Too many people in the world depend upon us. We must not let them down and we must not let our future generations down. It is a heavy responsibility, but with God's help, I think we will succeed.

Thank you.