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NEWS from

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
60TH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTONIAN INDEPENDENCE
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Mr. Jaakson, Mr. Simonson, ladies and gentlemen. I am pleased to be with you today to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the independence of Estonia. While most of you came here to escape the Soviet forces advancing into your homelands, and you fled with nothing more than what you could carry, you have all worked hard in the United States and have asked for nothing more than to make a decent living and the opportunity to contribute to the growth and strength of America. You have succeeded admirably in this, and, in addition, have played a particularly important role in the area of foreign policy. You bring to it an insight and personal experience which many other Americans have never had.

ESTONIAN CULTURE UNDER RUSSIFICATION PRESSURES

For this, your former countrymen and relatives in Estonia can be thankful, for they must depend on you for the support that is so essential for them to persevere in their fight for human rights, freedom, and self-determination. This, of course, goes hand in hand with their battle to maintain the Estonian language and culture against the ever-increasing pressures of Russification.

I am aware that the Soviets are constantly attempting to undermine the use of the Estonian language by making Russian the official language in all government agencies. Employees are hired who are from the far regions of the Soviet empire and who do not speak any Estonian. Similar attempts are made to Russify the beautiful songs and dances which are such a unique part of the Estonian culture.

NATIONAL RESOURCES PLUNDERED

The valuable natural resources of Estonia are also being plundered and exported to benefit the Soviet economy and the Estonian countryside is laid bare in the process. The extent of this waste and disregard for the conservation of the country has come to our attention in a letter from 18 naturalists from various institutions of higher learning in Estonia which found its way to the West. In addition to devastating the landscape on a vast scale, the Soviets introduce thousands of Russian immigrants from other outlying republics of the Soviet empire who further upset the precarious national balance and Russify the country by diluting the Estonian language and ethos.

ESTONIAN NATIONALISM INCREASING

But the history of Estonia has always been marked by the coming and going of different masters, and Estonians have countered these influences in their own way. So it is now. The nationalistic feelings of Estonians have not decreased. In fact, there are signs that there is an ever-increasing number of people taking a firm stand against their Soviet oppressors. Sometimes this takes the form of a spontaneous demonstration as occurred in Tartu in 1976, when Estonian students sang nationalistic folk songs in place of a cancelled concert. I am sure there have been other such demonstrations and outpourings of nationalistic feelings, but news of them does not always reach the Western press.

Another indication of the growing nationalistic involvement was the fact that the Soviets had to hold the biggest political trial of the Estonian post-Stalin era in Tallinn in 1975. Matik, Soldatov, Kiirend, and Yuskevick were accused of so-called anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, namely of sending a memorandum to the U.N. General Assembly asking for the restoration of Estonia's national independence and organizing free elections. The trial was undoubtedly held as a deterrent for all would-be future nationalists, but that has not deterred either those in Estonia or in other parts of the Soviet Union. Today there are many Estonian political prisoners in Soviet prison camps and psychiatric wards. Some have been identified and their names are known. But there are others whose "crimes" and fates will never be known. And they are on the increase.

CONCERN WITH THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE

It is on behalf of all these brave men and women that you and I have taken such a keen interest in the Belgrade Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is in support of their aspirations for national self-determination, freedom and human rights that I spoke before the Plenary Session in November in Belgrade. I would like to repeat to you now what I stated then to the U.S.S.R. and other nations gathered there:

"I have met with representatives of organizations such as the National Federation of American Ethnic Groups, The Czechoslovak National Council of America, The Congress of Russian Americans, The Polish American Congress, The Hungarian Organization of North America, The Ukrainian National Association, and the Joint Baltic American National Committee -- and many others. They have expressed their concern not only about the human rights provisions of Basket II and Principle VII, but also about the right of self-determination of all peoples.

It is a fact that the United States has never recognized the Soviet incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and U.S. official policy of non-recognition was not affected by the results of the European Security Conference. This long-standing principle is the policy of the United States and is supported by the Congress of the United States."

When I finished my speech, Mr. Vorontsov, the Soviet Ambassador, asked for the floor and pointed out that it was just a matter of time before the U.S. official policy would change, just as it had on so many other issues. Exercising his right of reply, U.S. Ambassador Goldbert again restated the U.S. official position of non-recognition. For my part, I would like to pledge to you today that I will do everything within my powers to see that this policy is never changed.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DEFENSE MUST BE STRONG

But there are several other duties that we have. One of these is to provide information to the captive nations. Funding for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America must be continued since it is essential for the dissident movements to know what is happening in the Soviet Union as well as in the United States and the rest of the free world. Their own media is censored. Ours must remain loud and clear.

Our defense posture must also be strong and unchanging. A serious commitment has to be made to a spending program that ensures our flexibility and vitality. The SALT II agreement which we negotiate must give the United States the freedom to pursue the strategic programs necessary to prevent the achievement by the Soviets of the capability to destroy our land-based deterrents in a pre-emptive strike.

The defense effort of the Soviet Union is continuing to expand and modernize major components of its strategic forces. Some Soviet equipment is reportedly now equal to that of currently deployed U.S. systems in technology and sophistication. There is controversy among serious analysts that the Soviets are engaged in a formidable, steady, sustained military effort. The United States must be no less steady, sustained, and effective in maintaining its superiority.

We know that one of the most important aspects in dealing with the Soviet Union is the stance we present and how consistent it is. While we mustn't fear to negotiate with our adversaries, we must firmly delineate the limits beyond which we will never go.

Our principles must be clearly and unequivocally drawn so that there can be no misunderstanding of our goals and objectives. We must firmly and unflinchingly restate our goals and principles, our support for human rights, for self-determination for all peoples.

U.S. FUTURE STAND IN MADRID

The reports now coming out of Belgrade regarding the final sessions of the CSCE are not encouraging. The Soviets have adamantly refused to have a final document which is to include any reference to human rights. Some analysts and diplomats are suggesting that the hard stand taken by the United States is responsible for the Soviet intransigence and we should therefore soften it. I say we should do nothing of the sort. We must make abundantly clear to the Soviet Union that when we return to the diplomacy table in Madrid in 1980 we will discuss Soviet violations and non-compliance with all the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act then, as we have up to now. I cannot think of one instance where a weak stance by this country has brought about positive results. It has not worked in the past and certainly will not in the future.

Many difficult problems and decisions lie ahead. It will not be easy to resolve them, for there are many who would rather make the present path easier at the expense of our future. I know that you do not feel this way, and that I will be able to count on your help for the future. Thank you.