



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
BAL TIC HUMAN RIGHTS RALLY
LINCOLN MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 24, 1977

It is a great honor to be with you to draw public attention to the violations of human rights which have occurred in the Baltic States ever since Soviet forces swept through your former homelands over thirty years ago. In spite of treaties signed to the contrary, the Soviets incorporated the Baltic States into the Soviet Union. To our credit, the United States has never recognized this illegal incorporation, and we must not in the future.

ORIGINS OF THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE

It is important not to forget the origins of the Helsinki Conference. It was the Soviet Union that so eagerly pushed for the Conference. They wanted to gain recognition of their postwar boundaries without a formal peace conference at which they would have to answer for their illegal seizure of the Baltic States as agreed to in the secret and infamous Molotov-Ribentrop Pact in 1940.

PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

I would like to read to you Principle VII in Article I of the Helsinki Act which states that: All peoples always have the right, in full freedom to determine, when and as they wish, their internal and external political status, without external interference, and to pursue as they wish their political, economic, social and cultural development.

This principle has received little attention either from the State Department or the official delegations. It is for this reason, that I introduced S.Res 224, which calls upon the U.S. delegation at Belgrade to:

Reaffirm the universal significance of respect for an effective exercise of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples for the development of friendly relations among ourselves, as among all States.

With the opening of the Belgrade Conference just weeks away, I would like to call upon the U.S. delegation to raise this question in clear and unequivocal terms. If the Soviet government wants to make this Conference a substitute peace conference, then the principle of self-determination must be discussed for the Baltic States.

33 YEARS AGO BALTS FLED THEIR HOMELANDS

It is almost 33 years to the day that Estonians and Latvians were making their last desperate attempts to flee their homelands by sea in face of the ever advancing Soviet forces. I know that you commemorate this date in your various communities with prayers and vigils and it is therefore appropriate that we have gathered here today.

As we stand here before the majestic statue of Lincoln, it is appropriate that we remember his words:

We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not mean the same thing. With some, the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men and the product of other men's labor.

While these thoughts were written well over a century ago, they sum up very clearly the difference between the United States and the Soviet Union today.

WHAT LIBERTY MEANS IN THE U.S.

Liberty to us means being able to pursue our chosen profession, our particular way of life, choosing the town, or city or country we want to live in, staying here if we want to, emigrating elsewhere if we so desire. We voice our thoughts openly, whether they are critical or supportive of a particular policy in our country. We visit friends and relatives in distant lands, send and receive letters, converse by phone, all with ease and without interference from anyone. We join church groups and church choirs. We worship in the churches of our