



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, MAY 14, 1979

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AMERICANS HAVE 'SPECIAL OBLIGATION' TO DISSIDENTS LIKE GINZBURG

WASHINGTON -- Chairing a special ad hoc session of the Helsinki Commission Friday which heard testimony from recently released Soviet dissident Aleksandr Ginzburg, Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) stated that Americans "have a special obligation towards men such as Aleksandr Ginzburg to persevere in our efforts" to release all dissidents "who are held unjustly and denied basic human rights."

"It is my belief that the inherent need for freedom of thought, of speech and of worship has been a powerful driving force throughout the history of mankind," Dole said. "Men such as Aleksandr Ginzburg and many others, whose existences have been sacrificed and dedicated to the fight for a freedom they may never live to see realized, are a symbol of this drive. Their courage and resilience are a tribute to the struggle that has been going on for as long as tyranny has existed, and will persist for as long as governments and regimes choose to ignore that there will always be men who, along with Patrick Henry, question whether 'life is so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery.' This question has long been answered by those the Soviet government calls 'dissidents.'

"During the Helsinki Commission meeting at Belgrade, we made every effort to persuade the Soviets to abide by the accord, and to impress upon them the need for all participant nations to respect the provisions to which they had agreed to be signatory.

"As a continuing testimony of our belief in freedom, we have a special obligation towards men such as Aleksandr Ginzburg to persevere in our efforts, so that others like him, who are held unjustly and denied basic human rights, can be free in the knowledge that their battle was not fought in vain."

Dole has been an active member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Helsinki Commission), and has been a constant supporter of human rights efforts worldwide.