

News from Senator

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
THE GENEVA SUMMIT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION  
NOVEMBER 18, 1985

DURING OUR LAST SESSION, I BEGAN A SERIES OF STATEMENTS ON ISSUES LIKELY TO ARISE AT THE GENEVA SUMMIT. AT THAT TIME, I DISCUSSED SDI. TODAY, I'D LIKE TO SPEND A FEW MOMENTS TALKING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION.

THERE ARE SOME ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE DISCUSSED SUBTLY AND SOME WHICH DEMAND BLUNTNESS. THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION IS ONE OF THE LATTER. SO LET ME BE BLUNT.

USSR A TOTALITARIAN STATE

THE USSR IS A TOTALITARIAN STATE. IT SUPPRESSES ITS CITIZENS, DENYING THEM MANY FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS. IT PERSECUTES THE RELGIOUS AND MANY MINORITIES. IT JAILS THOSE WHO DISSENT, AND WON'T PERMIT THOSE WHO WANT TO LEAVE TO DO SO.

THE SOVIET UNION DOES NOT HAVE GULAGS -- IT IS A GULAG. ITS PERFORMANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS IS INCONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED STANDARDS. ITS PERFORMANCE IS UNACCEPTABLE TO US. IT IS UNACCEPTABLE TO DECENT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION DETERIORATING

BECAUSE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WILL BE VERY MUCH ON THE PRESIDENT'S AGENDA IN GENEVA, IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT WE TAKE A FEW MOMENTS NOW TO REVIEW THE RUSSIANS' SORRY HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONAL HOPEFUL SIGNS, IN GENERAL IT IS ACCURATE TO SAY THAT THE OVERALL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN DETERIORATING SINCE AT LEAST THE LATE 1970'S.

THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL AND GLARING SHORTCOMING OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM, OF COURSE, IS THAT IT IS UTTERLY NON-DEMOCRATIC. IT IS A SYSTEM OF THE STATE, BY THE STATE AND FOR THE STATE. ALTHOUGH VIRTUALLY REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN PERIODIC SHAM ELECTIONS, THE AVERAGE SOVIET CITIZEN IS DENIED THE RIGHT TO HAVE ANY REAL SAY IN THE WAY HE IS GOVERNED OR THE WAY HIS GOVERNMENT CONDUCTS ITS BUSINESS. IN THAT SENSE, ALL SOVIET CITIZENS ARE PRISONERS OF THE GULAG.

BUT SOME ARE MORE "EQUAL" THAN OTHERS

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THOUGH, YOU REALIZE THAT WE HARDLY EVER TALK ABOUT THIS FUNDAMENTAL, SYSTEMIC DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS ANYMORE. AND THE REASON WE DON'T IS AS SIMPLE AS IT IS TRAGIC. FOR THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE IN THE SOVIET UNION SO SPECIALLY AND BRUTALLY SUPPRESSED THAT THE EVERYDAY SUPPRESSION UNDER WHICH ALL CITIZENS SUFFER JUST PALES IN COMPARISON. THE SOVIET SYSTEM MALTREATS SOME PEOPLE SO BADLY, AND THEIR PLIGHT SO DEMANDS OUR ATTENTION, THAT WE JUST DON'T HAVE TIME TO TALK MUCH ABOUT THIS FUNDAMENTAL "ROUTINE" DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS. GEORGE ORWELL HAD IT RIGHT -- SOME ARE MORE "EQUAL" THAN OTHERS, AT LEAST IN THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEY ARE PERSECUTED.

THESE CASES OF ESPECIALLY HARSH DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS FALL INTO THREE GENERAL CATEGORIES: (1) POLITICAL DISSIDENTS; (2) ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES; AND (3) EMIGRATION CASES.

POLITICAL DISSIDENTS

TO DISSENT IN ANY WAY FROM OFFICIAL SOVIET POLICY -- AND ESPECIALLY TO VOICE THAT DISSENT IN SUCH A MANNER THAT IT BECOMES KNOWN OUTSIDE THE SOVIET UNION -- IS TO INVITE ECONOMIC REPRISAL, INTERNAL EXILE, IMPRISONMENT (ON TRUMPED-UP NATIONAL SECURITY CHARGES OR PATENTLY PHONY "PSYCHIATRIC CONFINEMENT") OR WORSE.

THE PREEMINENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT, ANDREI SAKHAROV, REMAINS CONFINED IN THE ISOLATED CITY OF GORKY, ALONG WITH HIS WIFE, YELENA BONNER. ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS HAVE RECENTLY PERMITTED SAKHAROV TO CONTACT FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE WEST AND AGREED TO PERMIT BONNER TO TRAVEL ABROAD TO SEEK SORELY NEEDED MEDICAL ATTENTION, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE REMOVING ANY OF THE BASIC RESTRICTIONS ON SAKHAROV.

YURIY ORLOV, THE FOUNDER OF THE HELSINKI MONITOR MOVEMENT, IS IN EXILE IN YAKUTIA.

FORMER HELSINKI MONITOR ANATOLIY SCHARANSKIY HAS BEEN IMPRISONED FOR MORE THAN EIGHT YEARS. HE IS NOW AT THE LERM LABOR CAMP 35, WITH SIX YEARS REMAINING ON HIS SENTENCE.

PSYCHIATRIST ANATOLIY KORYAGIN LANGUISHES NEAR DEATH IN A SOVIET PRISON, SOLELY BECAUSE HE PROTESTED THE MISUSE OF PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSES TO IMPRISON PEOPLE.

THE LIST OF DISSIDENTS -- A FEW PROMINENT LIKE THESE, BUT MOST ANONYMOUS, ORDINARY SOVIET CITIZENS -- COULD GO ON AND ON. ALL OF THEM, ULTIMATELY, ARE GUILTY OF ONLY ONE "CRIME" -- THEY SPOKE OUT FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVED, IN A SYSTEM WHICH DEMANDS ONLY SILENT ACQUIESCENCE.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

THERE IS WIDESPREAD MISTREATMENT AND DENIAL OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS TO MANY ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION.

THE SPECIAL CASE OF SOVIET JEWRY. NO GROUP SUFFERS MORE SERIOUS SUPPRESSION THAN SOVIET JEWS. I WILL SPEAK IN A MOMENT ABOUT THE RUSSIANS' FAILURE TO PERMIT THOUSANDS OF JEWS WHO WISH TO EMIGRATE PERMISSION TO DO SO. BUT ALL JEWS WHO WISH TO PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION OR JUST STUDY THEIR HERITAGE, WHETHER OR NOT THEY WANT TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION, FACE STATE-SPONSORED SUPPRESSION.

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JEWES ARE ROUTINELY ARRESTED AND INTERROGATED FOR ALLEGED ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES. MANY HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS AND HAD THEIR APARTMENTS SEARCHED, MAIL SEIZED AND TELEPHONES DISCONNECTED. SOME HAVE ALSO BEEN BEATEN, EITHER BY SECURITY OFFICIALS OR BY STATE-ORGANIZED THUGS. THE SOVIET PRESS PUBLISHES FREQUENT ANTI-JEWISH ARTICLES, UNDER THE RUBRIC OF AN ON-GOING CAMPAIGN AGAINST "ZIONISM" (WHICH THE SOVIETS FORMALLY EQUATE WITH RACISM AND NAZIISM).

SINCE JULY 1984, AT LEAST 16 JEWISH CULTURAL ACTIVISTS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, IN A CAMPAIGN TO STAMP OUT A REVIVAL OF INTEREST AMONG SOVIET JEWS IN THEIR CULTURAL HERITAGE. TO DATE, 14 OF THOSE ARRESTED HAVE BEEN CONVICTED ON CRUELY TRUMPED-UP CRIMINAL CHARGES. AT LEAST TWO HAVE BEEN BADLY BEATEN, ONE OF THEM TO THE POINT THAT HE HAS LOST NEARLY ALL OF HIS EYESIGHT.

OTHER ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS. NOR ARE OTHER GROUPS, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS, SPARED STATE REPRESSION. THE DOMINANT CHRISTIAN CHURCH, THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, AND ALL OTHER LEGAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS OPERATE UNDER TIGHT CONTROLS. SECTS CANNOT, FOR EXAMPLE, OWN THEIR OWN CHURCH BUILDINGS BUT MUST RENT THEM FROM THE GOVERNMENT. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CHURCHES BUT MUST BE TAUGHT RELIGION AT HOME. ALL RELIGIOUS MATERIAL MUST BE APPROVED BY THE STATE.

THE SECOND LARGEST RELIGIOUS GROUP IN THE SOVIET UNION, THE MUSLIMS, NUMBERING ABOUT 45 MILLION STRONG, ARE UNDER PARTICULARLY CLOSE SCRUTINY, AS MANY LIVE NEAR SENSITIVE BORDER AREAS, E.G., WITH AFGHANISTAN. REFLECTING STATE CONCERN OVER THEIR LOYALTY AND ACTIVITIES, THEY ARE NOW LIMITED TO SEVERAL HUNDRED MOSQUES NATIONWIDE, COMPARED TO THE 25,000 WHICH EXISTED AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

A NUMBER OF SMALLER CHRISTIAN GROUPS ARE OUTLAWED ENTIRELY, AMONG THEM THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (WITH AN ESTIMATED ONE MILLION BELIEVERS), MANY OF THE EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTS (BAPTISTS, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND PENTACOSTALS) AND THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES. SOME ETHNIC GROUPS ARE SIMILARLY SUPPRESSED. ETHNIC ARMENIANS AND KURDS, FOR EXAMPLE, MANY AGAIN RESIDENT IN THE BORDER AREAS, ARE KEPT UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY AND HAVE THEIR CULTURAL ACTIVITIES STRICTLY LIMITED.

#### EMIGRATION

AN ESPECIALLY NOXIOUS PROBLEM IS THE SOVIET FAILURE TO PERMIT THOUSANDS OF ITS CITIZENS WHO WISH TO EMIGRATE THE RIGHT TO DO SO. ALTHOUGH THE PROBLEM AFFECTS MANY THOUSANDS FROM VARIOUS GROUPS, THREE CATEGORIES ARE ESPECIALLY TROUBLING: (1) AMERICAN-INTEREST CASES; (2) SOVIET JEWS; AND (3) DIVIDED GERMAN FAMILIES.

AMERICAN-INTEREST CASES. THESE FALL INTO THREE GROUPS. ONE GROUP IS THE MORE THAN 20 AMERICAN CITIZENS -- LET ME REPEAT THAT, SO IT IS CLEAR -- THE MORE THAN 20 AMERICAN CITIZENS WHOM THE SOVIETS WILL NOT PERMIT TO RETURN TO THIS COUNTRY. LET ME CITE JUST ONE SUCH CASE, THAT OF KARO CHROVIAN, WHO LEFT CORNELL UNIVERSITY IN 1932 FOR A TWO YEAR ENGINEERING JOB IN THE SOVIET UNION AND WHO HAS BEEN TRYING UNSUCCESSFULLY TO RETURN FROM THE SOVIET UNION FOR A HALF CENTURY. OUR MESSAGE TO THE SOVIETS ON THE CHROVIAN CASE, AND THE OTHERS, IS SIMPLE -- LET THEM COME HOME.

A SECOND CATEGORY ARE THE SEPARATED SPOUSES CASES. THESE ARE THE TWO DOZEN OR SO CASES WHERE A SOVIET CITIZEN SPOUSE OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN IS NOT BEING PERMITTED TO LEAVE RUSSIA TO JOIN HIS OR HER FAMILY IN THE WEST.

IT IS ENCOURAGING THAT THE SOVIETS, APPARENTLY AS PART OF THEIR PRE-SUMMIT PUBLIC RELATIONS BLITZ, HAVE AGREED TO ALLOW ABOUT HALF OF THESE SPOUSES TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES. BUT IT OUGHT NOT TAKE AN EVENT LIKE A SUMMIT TO TAKE THE SIMPLE, DECENT STEP OF ALLOWING HUSBANDS, WIVES AND CHILDREN TO LIVE TOGETHER IN THE PLACE OF THEIR CHOOSING.

FINALLY, THERE ARE THE SEPARATED FAMILY CASES. THERE ARE WELL OVER A HUNDRED OF THESE CASES, INVOLVING THE SEPARATION OF NON-SPOUSE BUT IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS -- PARENTS, SIBLINGS, ETC. THERE IS NO REASON WHY ALL THESE CASES COULD NOT BE RESOLVED SOON.

SOVIET JEWS. AS I NOTED EARLIER, THE SOVIET UNION HAS SYSTEMATICALLY DENIED PERMISSION TO TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SOVIET JEWS TO EMIGRATE. MOST OF THEM WISH TO GO TO ISRAEL, SOME TO THE UNITED STATES. NONE OF THEM HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO JUSTIFY THE SOVIETS' REFUSAL TO GRANT THEM EXIT VISAS.

IN THE LATE 1970'S, THERE WERE SIGNS THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PREPARED TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE, AT LEAST PARTLY IN RESPONSE TO OUR REPEATED DECLARATIONS THAT THE PROBLEM CONSTITUTED AN IMPORTANT BARRIER TO BETTER BILATERAL RELATIONS. THAT YEAR, MORE THAN 50,000 JEWS WERE PERMITTED TO EMIGRATE.

SINCE THAT TIME, THOUGH, THE RUSSIANS HAVE CALLOUSLY RESTRICTED THE FLOW, TO THE EXTENT THAT LESS THAN A THOUSAND HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO DEPART ANNUALLY OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

THE SOVIETS EXPLAIN THESE DRASTICALLY REDUCED LEVELS BY CLAIMING THAT VIRTUALLY ALL JEWS WHO WISH TO EMIGRATE HAVE ALREADY DONE SO. THAT CLAIM JUST WON'T WASH. THOUSANDS MORE WOULD LEAVE TOMORROW, IF GIVEN THE CHANCE. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS WOULD LEAVE ULTIMATELY, IF GIVEN THE CHANCE TO DO SO IN AN ORDERLY WAY AND WITHOUT RISKING THEIR JOBS, THEIR PEACE OF MIND, THEIR FREEDOM AND EVEN THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY BY THE ACT OF APPLYING FOR A VISA.

DIVIDED GERMAN FAMILIES. BECAUSE OF DECADES-OLD PATTERNS OF POPULATION MOVEMENT IN EUROPE AND THE EVENTS OF WORLD WAR II, NEARLY TWO MILLION ETHNIC GERMANS, ABOUT HALF WHO CONSIDER GERMAN THEIR NATIVE TONGUE, NOW LIVE IN THE SOVIET UNION. MANY OF THEM, PARTICULARLY THE MOST CULTURALLY ACTIVE, SUFFER SPECIAL SUPPRESSION. INFORMED OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT PERHAPS 100,000 OF THEM WOULD EMIGRATE TO WEST GERMANY IF THEY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY.

#### CONCLUSION

MR. PRESIDENT, THIS IS THE RECORD OF THE SOVIET UNION -- A RECORD INCONSISTENT WITH THE PLEDGES THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE REPEATEDLY UNDERTAKEN; INCONSISTENT WITH THE TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE SIGNED: THE UN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS; THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS; AND THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

THE SOVIET UNION BLATANTLY VIOLATES ALL OF THESE TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS. IT BLATANTLY SUPPRESSES ITS OWN CITIZENS. IT BLATANTLY MAKES A MOCKERY OF ITS OWN CLAIM TO BE A DEMOCRACY -- A "WORKERS' DEMOCRACY."

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AND WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT.

AND YET THE SOVIET UNION IS A REALITY -- A POWERFUL REALITY. WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT, EVEN THOUGH WE FIND ITS SYSTEM AND ITS CONDUCT ABHORRENT. IN FACT, WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT EVEN MORE BECAUSE WE FIND ITS SYSTEM UTTERLY INIMICAL TO OURS AND BECAUSE WE FIND ITS CONDUCT ON THESE ISSUES AND OTHERS UNACCEPTABLE.

AND YET, AS WE TALK TO THE SOVIET LEADERS, WE CAN NEVER FORGET THIS RECORD. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, WE CAN NEVER LET THE SOVIETS FORGET THAT THEIR RECORD REMAINS A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEIR SYSTEM AND OURS AND A FUNDAMENTAL BARRIER TO NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES.

I KNOW THE PRESIDENT UNDERSTANDS THIS VERY WELL. AND I KNOW THAT HE WILL ACT ON THIS UNDERSTANDING AS HE PURSUES HIS IMPORTANT, AND BROADLY BASED, DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV.

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