



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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BOB DOLE TO SPONSOR UNA HUMAN RIGHTS RECEPTION AT CAPITOL, OCTOBER 5, 1978

WASHINGTON -- On Thursday, August 9, 1978; Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) met with the Vice President of the Ukrainian National Association, Dr. Myron Kuropas and with UNA Advisor Taras Szmagala. Also present at the meeting were Eugene Iwanciw, former UNA Advisor and now Legislative Assistant to Senator Jack Schmitt (R-N.Mex.) and Andrew Fedynsky, Legislative Assistant to Sen. Dole. At the meeting, various concerns of the Ukrainian-American community were discussed, but the number one priority of Ukrainians, according to Dr. Kuropas, continues to be human rights. Kuropas and Szmagala expressed approval for the initiative taken by Senators Dole and Schmitt in circulating a letter addressed to Volodymyr Shcherbytsky appealing on behalf of Helsinki Monitor, Lev Lukanenko, and encouraging the implementation of the Helsinki Agreement in Ukraine. The letter was signed by 33 senators. Senator Dole stated that the Ukrainian community has done a very good job in the past year or two in educating the Senate and Congress about the human rights problems in Ukraine, making it easier to get support for efforts like the Dole-Schmitt letter. Fedynsky explained that the UNA Human Rights reception in May 1977, where lawmakers had an opportunity to meet Ukrainian human rights activists, was important in acquainting many senators and congressmen with the issues and facts for the first time. According to Iwanciw, a healthy flow of letters and telegrams to congressional offices helped to further reinforce the defense efforts of Ukrainians on behalf of activists in Ukraine. Copies of the Dole-Schmitt letter were presented to the UNA officers.

Dr. Kuropas and Mr. Szmagala gave Senator Dole an invitation from the UNA to sponsor another UNA human rights reception to give Ukrainian-Americans an opportunity to update U.S. lawmakers on recent events in Ukraine, where six Helsinki Monitors have been sentenced to long prison and labor camp terms for their efforts to aid implementation of the Helsinki Agreement in Ukraine. Senator Dole, a member of the joint Congressional Helsinki Commission, agreed that such a reception would be very useful and suggested an October date for the reception since the UN Political Prisoner Day falls in October.

Thursday, October 5, 1978 from 5:00 to 8:00 was settled as the best date. Iwanciw and Fedynsky will work out the details with the UNA.

During the 45-minute meeting, Taras Szmagala and Myron Kuropas also discussed other concerns of the Ukrainian community--inflation, rising taxes, urban decay, social security, etc. The meeting was highlighted by a lively exchange of ideas and was quite useful.