

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOLE SAYS SOLIDARITY DEMONSTRATIONS SHOW POLAND WILL NOT GO BACK

Washington, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kansas) today condemned "the continuing repression and government-sanctioned violence against the Polish labor union Solidarity by General Jaruzelski's martial law regime. Today in Poland, only Solidarity speaks for the people, and only the union and the Church are trusted by the population," Dole said. "The new military government, still controlled by the Communist Party, is discredited as much as the old Communist regime.

"It is ludicrous for Jaruzelski to claim that the wholesale suspension of fundamental human rights and freedoms under martial law is in the best interest of the Polish people," Senator Dole said. "The Polish people have made it clear that the best expression of their interests can be found in the Gdansk Agreements signed two years ago by the government after the first Solidarity demonstrations. These most recent demonstrations show that Poland will not accept a return to the old ways. Progress can be made," Dole said.

Dole's comments were occasioned by the second anniversary on August 31 of the signing of the historic Gdansk Agreements. Dole went on to say that "the Gdansk Agreements represented a social contract between the Polish Government and its people. The Agreements established the right of free and independent trade unions, such as Solidarity, to exist and were to pave the way for sorely-needed economic and humanitarian reforms in Poland. From the moment of its signing, the Polish authorities took steps to break that contract."

DOLE CALLS FOR NEW DIALOGUE WITH SOLIDARITY

Dole observed that "the large and overwhelmingly peaceful demonstrations of the last couple of weeks marking the Gdansk Anniversary have been met by clubs and watercannons. Such efforts to impose stability by brute force are ultimately self-defeating. Social accord can only be achieved in Poland," Dole said, "by going back to the letter of the Gdansk Agreements and the opening of a genuine dialogue between the government, Solidarity and the Church. The Polish people have a long tradition of resistance to tyranny imposed from without. General Jaruzelski will learn that tyranny imposed from within will be met with equal fortitude and determination."

Senator Dole is Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, otherwise known as the Helsinki Commission, and serves as a Vice-Chairman to the U.S. Delegation to the Helsinki Review meeting in Madrid. The suspension of the basic rights of the Polish people under martial law constitutes an egregious violation of virtually all the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Accords, an international agreement designed to foster security and cooperation in Europe, that was signed in 1975 by 33 states of Western and Eastern Europe, including Poland and the USSR, plus Canada and the United States. The imposition of martial law led to a breakdown in negotiations last winter. The talks are scheduled to resume on November 9.

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Senator Dole made the following remarks today to the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in New York:

Tomorrow marks the Second Anniversary of Solidarity, a union of freedom-loving people that has temporarily been crushed by a government fearful of freedom. The heroes of Gdansk, who drew up a social contract between the Polish government and working Poles, were men and women who stepped forward from the ranks of everyday life, supported by their faith, imbued with the unshakeable conviction that people must work for themselves and not for a totalitarian regime, the organizers of Solidarity bowed to God and no one else.

Do we need another example of responsibility to guide our actions? Can we find a more poignant bank of heroes to remind us that we, too, stand on the frontline of freedom? Now as in the days of old, you and I are the shock troops of democracy, the governed and the governors, the lawmakers and the law-abiding. As the founder of my party said more than a century ago, "We, even we here, hold the power and bear the responsibility."

As adversaries, we can do little as partners, each with his own outlook and priorities, we can do much. As Americans, united in the desire to put this country to work and let everyone keep more of what they work for, we can move the mountains of cynicism and doubt that block the path to better days.

Together, we can complete the job of economic renewal. We can continue to make our taxes lower and fairer. We can safeguard the promise our fathers made on Social Security - and we can insure for our children a world - secure for the Lech Walensas and Solidarities.

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