



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE CONDEMNS SOVIET INCORPORATION OF BALTIC STATES

Washington, D.C. -- Following is the text of a statement Senator Bob Dole made in the Senate on Friday, June 17:

Mr. Dole. Mr. President, the month of June marks the anniversary of two tragic events for the states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. During a 3-day period in 1940 -- specifically on June 15, 16, and 17 -- the Soviet Union invaded these three Baltic Republics and forcibly annexed them into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. One year later, again in June, the Soviet regime began the first mass deportation of Baltic peoples to Siberia.

SOVIET INCORPORATION NOT RECOGNIZED

The United States has remained steadfast in its refusal to recognize the Soviet incorporation of the Baltic States, a position which was reaffirmed by the U.S. Senate as recently as 1976 when Senate Resolution 319 was unanimously passed by this legislative body.

SOVIET VIOLATIONS

Today, however, as the U.S. delegation at Belgrade sits at the conference table with the signatory nations of the Helsinki Final Act, it is important that we remember these infamous acts of aggression and inform the Soviet Union that their actions, both past and present, are the only criteria upon which they shall be judged. Our delegation should not be fooled by rhetoric.

We must remind the Soviet Union of the plight of the Baltic States and the exploitation, Russification, and suppression of human rights and national freedoms which the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have had to endure. We must not forget that in committing these acts, the Soviets have violated not only the humanitarian principles contained in the Helsinki Final Act, but other international agreements which they have signed including the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A COURAGEOUS PEOPLE

We share with the Baltic people their passion of liberty. Who among us cannot sympathize with those who, against overwhelming odds, have courageously maintained their ethno-national integrity. Even after 40 years of ruthless domination, the citizens of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania still strive for independence and a release from the Soviet yoke. Their just aspirations will never die. They will pass them on to their children, and, if necessary, to their grandchildren, until someday they too will celebrate their freedom.

Let us pray that their day of deliverance comes soon.