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DOLE CITES ISSUANCE OF CAPTIVE NATIONS PROCLAMATION

Senator Bob Dole said today he was pleased that President Carter had responded to requests that he and others throughout the country had made urging issuance of a Captive Nations Week Proclamation. The annual tradition, begun in 1959 through Joint Congressional Resolution, has been observed by every President since Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The Joint Resolution authorized and requested that the third week of July be designated as Captive Nations week each year, in tribute to those countries which have fallen victim to Communist domination. When no Proclamation was issued this year, Senator Dole sent a telegram to President Carter on July 18 urging him to "continue the tradition initiated and followed by your predecessors." Dole suggested in his telegram that "there is no more propitious time to reaffirm your strong commitment to human, religious and national rights" than during the current period, immediately preceding the Helsinki Accord review session in Belgrade.

On Wednesday of this week, President Carter issued a Proclamation. Senator Dole said he was pleased the action was finally taken, but noted that the Proclamation's text was "much more terse and reserved in tone than in previous years." Dole said he hoped that the tardy Proclamation, "which appeared to be issued more or less as an afterthought", was not indicative of a new attitude towards the plight of captive nations. "Three nations--Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam--have come under complete Communist domination within the past three years," Dole said. "With the continuing threat to peace and freedom in Africa and elsewhere, it is as important as ever before that the United States extend moral support to those who would resist the yoke of Communist oppression."

Senator Dole said there is "a clear contrast in the tone of Mr. Carter's Proclamation, compared to that issued by President Ford last year." Texts of both Proclamations are attached.