



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE PROTESTS SOVIET ARRESTS OF DISSIDENTS

Washington, D.C. --- Senator Bob Dole(R-Kansas), issued a statement today protesting the arrest of three members of the Helsinki Monitoring Group. UPI disclosed that Felix Serebrov was arrested in Moscow and Viktoras Pyatkus and Antonas Tyerlaytskac were apprehended in Vilnius, Lithuania. Their arrests were announced at a press conference given by Pyotr Grigorenko, a leading dissident and former Soviet Army general. The press conference was also attended by Andrei D. Sakharov and his wife.

Upon hearing the news, Senator Dole issued the following statement denouncing the arrests by the Soviet Union.

I was very disturbed to read of the arrest yesterday of three more human rights activists by the Soviet Union.

Felix Serebrov was arrested in Moscow while Viktoras Pyatkus and Antonas Tyerlaytskac were apprehended in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Their crime, as in the cases of other arrested members of the Helsinki Monitoring Groups, is no more than trying to make sure that the Soviets comply with the Helsinki Final Act which they signed in good faith.

This blatant violation of a international agreement on which the ink is scarcely dry is another disgraceful example of the Soviets continued disregard for human rights and their inability to accept criticism. This extreme sensitivity could be understood if the Soviet Union had only just been established. But it has been around a long time now.

Frankly, this kind of vulnerability does not bode well for the Soviet Union. One mark of a great nation is its ability to accept criticism and, if it is justified, modify its actions. Suppressions and arrests are practiced by weak, unsure, and uncivilized nations. That kind of a nation is not built on a firm foundation and its vulnerability is open for the whole world to see. The Soviet Union cannot be happily anticipating the resumption of the talks in Belgrade in October. These arrests are one more piece of evidence against their human rights record and compliance with the Helsinki Final Act.