



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE SENDS LETTER OF PROTEST TO POLISH GOVERNMENT CONCERNING 'JOURNALIST TAX'

WASHINGTON-- Senator Bob Dole today said attempts by the Polish government to impose a \$350 fee on foreign journalists visiting that country to cover the June visit of Pope John Paul II "are in violation of the Helsinki Agreement."

Dole, a member of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which produced the Helsinki Agreement of 1975, today wrote a letter to Polish Ambassador Ronuald Spasowski concerning what he calls Poland's "journalist tax."

The text of the letter is as follows:

Dear Ambassador Spasowski:

I am writing to you in connection with the forthcoming visit to Poland in June of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II.

I should like to register with your government my strong protest over the \$350 tax that it intends to levy on foreign journalists, who will be travelling to Poland to cover this event of international interest.

As you know, such a tax is in violation of Basket III of the Helsinki Accord, in that it impairs the free flow of information as well as the working conditions of the press.

From a practical point of view, the extra financial burden will be especially felt by many free-lance journalists who are paying their own expenses, and for whom such a sum might make the trip to Poland prohibitive.

I am asking that you intervene with your government to express my concern. Your reply would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

BOB DOLE

Senator Dole also sent a letter to the Apostolic Delegation to the United States and its leader, the Most Reverend John Jadot, informing the Vatican of his letter of protest.

According to Dole, "This tax is a terrible precedent and should not go unchallenged. Obviously the Poles have as a motive a need for hard currency, but we should not ignore the chilling effect such a tax could have on the ability of Western journalists to travel freely and frequently in Eastern Europe. Nor should we think that such a taxing scheme can only be used in Eastern Europe. Surely it will be an attractive rip-off for any nation seeking to make a few extra dollars and/or restrict access by overseas newsmen."