

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

HEARINGS ON REVEREND GEORGY VINS

HELSINKI COMMISSION

"Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to welcome Reverend Vins here today. It is my hope that the reunion between him, his wife and his five children who are still detained in the Soviet Union at this time, will be forthcoming in the near future.

"It is difficult for us in the West to accept the cruelty of a government who imposes separation upon husbands and wives, parents and children, a separation that has become a fact of life in the Soviet Union for those who are persecuted on the basis of their ideologies or their religious beliefs, as in the case of Reverend Vins. It is one of the great tragedies of our time that lives should be thus broken, and the destiny of men and women at the whim of a government who has assumed the divine right of life and death over its citizens.

"That the absence of lawfulness is the essence of tyranny has been confirmed by the Soviet Union's refusal to abide by the principles of the Helsinki Agreements on family reunification and freedom of movement. It is a long established fact that totalitarian regimes can only function within a system where individuals are superfluous and their personal lives of no interest to rulers. In view of this, it is doubtful that the basic conditions that now prevail in the Soviet Union can change under the present form of government--unless--we continue to apply those pressures which the C.S.C.E. has used as a means to focus the attention of the international community, and to publicize the outrageous display of human rights violations that the Soviet Union has repeatedly been guilty of committing," Dole said.

"The efforts made by the United States and other nations to force the Soviet Bloc to comply with the Helsinki provisions will be renewed at Madrid in 1980. Our commitment to the observance of human rights has not diminished. It has been strengthened by the gains that we have made, and by the courageous example of men such as Reverend Vins.

"My hope is that continued and relentless pressure, economic--as well as moral--will eventually succeed in bringing those changes to which we are all committed.

"Before concluding, I should like to share with you the personal feeling of admiration with which I have come away each time I have had the privilege of meeting with men such as Reverend Vins and Aleksandr Ginzburg, who appeared before this commission only weeks ago. It is not only their courage as a group that is to be admired, but also the qualities of humor and even with that many of them have shown and managed to maintain in spite of the often unconceivable horrors that they have been subjected to. The secret of their resilience and integrity can perhaps be found in the word hope--or faith. Their dedication to life, to justice and to freedom are examples for us all to follow. Their refusal to give up the fight is an inspiration to all of us," concluded Dole.