

REMARKS TO REPUBLICAN HERITAGE
COUNCIL IN CALIFORNIA

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 1977

AS YOU ARE AWARE, I AM A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE. ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS IN 1975, THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION IS TO MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, ESPECIALLY THOSE PROVISIONS WHICH RELATE TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE COMMISSION HAS HELD A SERIES OF HEARINGS. TESTIMONY WAS PRESENTED BY WITNESSES WHO HAD FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING GROSS VIOLATIONS OF NOT ONLY HUMAN RIGHTS BUT RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL RIGHTS IN SUCH COUNTRIES AS LITHUANIA, LATVIA, ESTONIA, UKRAINE, POLAND, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, HUNGARY, AND ROMANIA.

LAST WEEK I WAS IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA, TO MEET WITH REFUGEES AND DISSIDENTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION THERE.

THE MOST RECENT EMIGRE WAS ZDENEK MLYNAR WHO LEFT CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON JUNE 13. A HIGH RANKING COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIAL DURING THE DUBCEK ERA, MR. MLYNAR WAS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SIGNERS OF CHARTER 77, A DOCUMENT

(2)

CALLING FOR GREATER RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS BY ONE OF THE MORE REPRESSIVE REGIMES IN EASTERN EUROPE. HE ASSURED ME THAT CHARTER 77 REPRESENTED THE SENTIMENTS OF MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THEY ALSO SUPPORT AMERICA'S CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS CRUSADE AND THEY LOOK TO BELGRADE WITH GREAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

A REFUGEE COUPLE FROM HUNGARY, WHERE THE REGIME IS SOMEWHAT LESS REPRESSIVE THAN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, INFORMED ME THAT THEY LEFT THEIR HOMELAND TO IMPROVE THEIR SPIRITUAL AND NOT THEIR MATERIAL CONDITION.

SINCE BOTH ARE ENGINEERS, THEY OWNED THEIR OWN APARTMENT AND AN AUTOMOBILE. STILL, THEY WERE NO LONGER ABLE TO LIVE IN A COUNTRY WHERE THEY WERE ALWAYS AFRAID TO SPEAK THEIR MIND, EVEN WITH THEIR CLOSEST FRIENDS.

PAVILS BRUVERS, A BAPTIST DISSIDENT FROM SOVIET LATVIA, INDICATED THAT DESPITE A STRONG ANTI-RELIGIOUS AND RUSSIFICATION CAMPAIGN, MORE AND MORE YOUNG LATVIANS ARE BEING CONVERTED TO THE BAPTIST FAITH AND THE LATVIAN NATIONAL HERITAGE IS FAR FROM DEAD. "THE RUSSIANS TRY TO INTIMIDATE OTHER NATIONS," BRUVERS, TOLD ME, "BUT THEY RESPECT STRENGTH. THAT'S WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR THE UNITED STATES TO STAND FIRM AT BELGRADE."

(3)

A POLISH REFUGEE ECHOED BRUVER'S WORDS. THE DISSIDENT MOVEMENT IS ON THE RISE IN POLAND AND THE INTELLECTUALS ARE JOINING WITH THE WORKERS IN AN EFFORT TO REFORM THE SYSTEM. MOST POLES, HE TOLD ME, ARE RELATIVELY UNFAMILIAR WITH THEIR RIGHTS UNDER POLISH LAW. THANKS TO RADIO LIBERTY, HOWEVER, THEY'RE LEARNING ABOUT THEM AND THEIR DISSATISFACTION IS GROWING.

JURIJ MNUKH, ONE OF THE LAST MEMBERS OF THE HELSINKI WATCH COMMITTEE IN MOSCOW, INFORMED THAT WHILE THE SHORT-TERM FUTURE OF DISSENT IN THE SOVIET UNION APPEARS TO BE GRIM, THE LONG-TERM GAINS ARE BOUND TO BE BENEFICIAL. "THE UNITED STATES MUST BE PREPARED FOR A LONG HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN," HE TOLD ME, "BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION WON'T CHANGE OVERNIGHT."

ALL OF THE DISSIDENTS AGREED THAT A HELSINKI PROCESS WHICH CONTINUES TO CALL ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS MUST BE PRESERVED AND CONTINUED AFTER BELGRADE.

THE WORDS WHICH I HEARD FROM THE DISSIDENTS AND THE REFUGEES ONLY CONFIRMED A CONCLUSION I HAD REACHED DURING COMMISSION HEARINGS EARLIER IN THE YEAR. PRESIDENT FORD WAS CORRECT WHEN HE TOLD US THAT THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT WAS A MORAL VICTORY FOR THE WEST. THE SOVIET UNION COMPLETELY UNDERESTIMATED THE IMPACT THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT WOULD HAVE ON THEIR PEOPLE AND REPRINTED THE FULL TEXT IN THEIR NEWSPAPERS.

(4)

TODAY, THERE ARE SOVIET CITIZENS WHO WALK THE STREETS OF SOVIET CITIES WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT IN THEIR POCKETS.

TODAY, WE HAVE HELSINKI WATCH COMMITTEES IN RUSSIA, UKRAINE, LITHUANIA, AND GEORGIA.

TODAY, WE HAVE A SOVIET UNION WHICH IS LOSING FACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD BECAUSE OF ITS REPRESSION OF DISSIDENTS. WITH THEIR PRESENT ACTIONS, THE SOVIETS ARE DEMONSTRATING ONCE AGAIN THAT NO COMMUNIST SYSTEM CAN LONG ENDURE WITHOUT REPRESSION OF ITS CITIZENRY.

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT I SHALL ALWAYS REMEMBER FROM MY TRIP TO EUROPE, IT IS THE GREAT LOVE FOR AMERICA EXPRESSED BY THE REFUGEES AND DISSIDENTS WITH WHOM I MET. THEY BELIEVE WE ARE STILL THE GREATEST NATION IN THE WORLD, AND THEY REJOICE THAT WE ARE WILLING TO CHAMPION THEIR CAUSE.

WE CANNOT LET THEM DOWN.

WE CANNOT TURN OUR BACK ON THE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO ARE ALSO SUPPORTIVE OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AND WHO EXPECT US TO BE FIRM IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

(5)

LAST MONTH I INTRODUCED LEGISLATION WHICH CALLED FOR A STRONG STAND AT BELGRADE. I AM PLEASED TO TELL YOU THAT THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE SENATE.

AS A MEMBER OF THE HELSINKI COMMISSION AND A MEMBER OF THE U.S. DELEGATION TO THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE THIS FALL I SHALL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ALL ACTIONS WHICH RESULT IN A THOROUGH AND FRANK DISCUSSION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT BY ALL SIGNATORY NATIONS.

IN CLOSING, LET ME STATE ONCE AGAIN THAT I SUPPORT MR. CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AND WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT IT AS LONG AS I THINK HE IS SINCERE. LIKE MANY OTHER AMERICANS, HOWEVER, I AM FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE MR. CARTER'S WORDS WITH HIS ACTIONS.

MR. CARTER TOLD THE UNITED NATIONS THAT EVERY NATION HAD AN OBLIGATION TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS ON ONE DAY AND A FEW WEEKS LATER HE SUGGESTED THAT THE UNITED STATE NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA, AND CUBA.

(6)

MR. CARTER WROTE A LETTER TO SAKHAROV WHEN IT APPEARED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ARREST SAKHAROV BUT HE NEITHER SAID NOR DID ANYTHING WHEN RUDENKO AND TYKI WERE ARRESTED, TRIED, AND SENTENCED TO HARD LABOR FOR THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE KIEV HELSINKI WATCH COMMITTEE.

MR. CARTER STATED DURING THE CAMPAIGN THAT HE WAS A GREAT FRIEND OF THE CAPTIVE NATIONS BUT AS OF TODAY, TWO DAYS BEFORE CAPTIVE NATIONS WEEK OFFICIALLY BEGINS, THE WHITE HOUSE HAS STILL NOT ISSUED THE ANNUAL CAPTIVE NATIONS PROCLAMATION.

THESE AND OTHER REVERSALS BY PRESIDENT CARTER DISTRESS ME AND IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT I SHALL CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT STRONGLY IN OPPOSITION TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ON ISSUES WHERE I DISAGREE.