



JESSE HELMS
UNITED STATES SENATE

March 11, 1974

A handwritten signature in dark ink, possibly reading "Jesse Helms", written diagonally across the top right of the page.

PERSONAL

Dear Bob:

Last Friday evening I received a personal letter from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Although it was addressed to me, it really ought to be shared with all those who have co-sponsored S. J. Res. 188, the resolution to declare the great Russian patriot and author an honorary citizen of the United States.

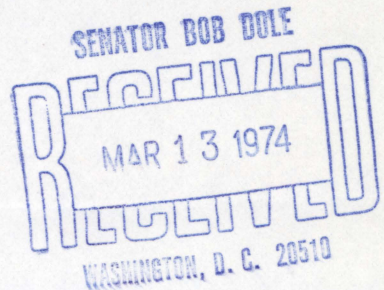
In his letter, Mr. Solzhenitsyn says that he is deeply touched by the proposal. But more important, he says that it is "a high honor for me and a great support in my position as an expellee from my homeland." This is the crucial point, and it should reinforce all of our efforts to lend dignity and importance to his fight for freedom and human rights.

The rest of the letter is a product of his great talent, highly suggestive of the role which has been thrust upon him, and of the shortness of life and the length of the task. A copy of the Russian original and the English translation is enclosed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jesse", written in a cursive style.

JESSE HELMS
Enclosure



5 марта 1974

Высокоуважаемый господин Джессе Хелмс!

Я глубоко тронут Вашими действиями, Вашим предложением Сенату и Палате Представителей Соединенных Штатов декларировать присвоение мне почетного гражданства Вашей страны, не упуская в аргументации, что моя судьба не есть частная судьба, но остается навек связанной с судьбами моей родины.

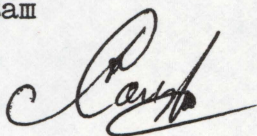
Разумеется, это — высокая честь для меня и немалая поддержка в моем положении изгнанника с родины, в той недобровольно избранной борьбе, которую много лет приходится мне, выходя за пределы художественной литературы, вести за права человека, его внутреннее достоинство, его трезвое осознание грозящих нам всем опасностей.

В своей сенатской речи 19 февраля (и повторно в письме ко мне от 1 марта) Вы называете меня "гражданином мира". Это — тем более обязывающее звание, которого я еще никак не заслужил, ибо жизненный опыт не дал мне возможности вместить задач и нужд всего мира. Однако то здесь правда, что нынешнее тесно-связанное состояние мира не может не вести к появлению подобного уровня сознания и обязанностей, — и, очевидно, будет распространяться в XX и XXI веке.

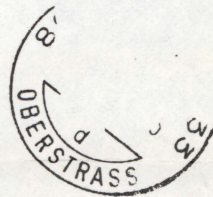
И лишь Ваше гостеприимное приглашение посетить сейчас Соединенные Штаты и лично Ваш дом, встретиться с представителями американской общественности, — я, к сожалению, не смогу принять в обозримое время: именно сейчас, в непривычных новых условиях я должен с особенным усердием и вниманием сосредоточиться на моей основной литературной работе, на моем главном литературном замысле, которому может не хватить целой жизни, — и поэтому никакие вообще поездки и никакая энергичная общественная деятельность невозможны сейчас для меня.

С благодарностью и добрыми пожеланиями

искренне Ваш



12
Jesse Helms
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
USA



A. Solshenitsyn
Zürich
Schweiz

5 March 1974

Highly Respected Mister Jesse Helms!

I am deeply touched by your actions and your proposal to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States to declare me an honorary citizen of your country, especially in view of your argument that my fate is not just a private fate, but remains forever tied up with the destiny of my homeland.

Obviously, it is a high honor for me and a great support in my position as an expellee from my homeland in this involuntarily chosen struggle, which for many years I have been compelled to conduct outside of the framework of art and literature, for the rights of man, his inner dignity, and his calm assessment of the dangers threatening us all.

In your Senate speech of February 19 (and again in your letter to me of March 1), you called me "Citizen of the World." This is all the more exacting a title inasmuch as I have in no way deserved it yet, since my life-experience has not yet given me an opportunity to include the tasks and needs of the entire world. However, the truth is that the closely intertwined condition of the world today cannot but lead to the emergence of such a level of understanding and responsibilities--which, obviously, will expand in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Regretfully, it is only your hospitable invitation to visit the United States, and your own house, to meet with the representatives of American society, which I cannot accept at the present time. In particular now, in my unaccustomed new situation, I must with special diligence and attention concentrate on my principal literary work, on my main literary design, for which my entire life may not be long enough. And because of this, no travel at all and no extensive social activity are possible for me now.

With gratitude and good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

(SOLZHENITSYN)

JESSE HELMS
NORTH CAROLINA

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

March 1, 1974

Dear Mr. Solzhenitsyn:

I had the pleasure of speaking today to your lawyer, Dr. Fritz Heeb. I am sorry that I could not speak to you personally--first of all, to greet you in the free world in my own name, and also in the name of my friends in the United States Senate. I congratulate you on the threshold of a new phase in your struggle for truth and freedom in your own native land and in the entire world.

The ideas of truth, freedom and justice as human rights are indivisible. And human rights are equally valid in all countries and on all continents. I think of you now as one in our ranks, but I hope that you will continue your rich, creative life, and will be able to return to your own homeland--as a free homeland--some day.

On February 19, I offered a resolution in the United States Senate directing the President of the United States to declare by proclamation that you are an honorary citizen of the United States. This is the highest honor which we can offer; in the history of our country, it has been bestowed only on two distinguished foreigners. We want to stress by this act our full support of your struggle on behalf of human rights on earth. This is a purely honorary gesture, and does not impose any obligations upon you, or prejudice your status. So far, already, twenty-four Senators have joined me in sponsoring the resolution, and I hope others will join us soon.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn, we are very glad to see you here with us in the West. You are a citizen of the world. I know that soon you will feel at home in any country of the globe, where millions of people have read your books, and know and respect you not only as a great writer, but as a symbol of freedom.

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Mr. Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn
March 1, 1974
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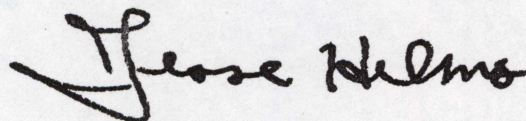
You would do us an honor if you would visit this country to meet with the cosponsors of this resolution. I would like to extend to you an invitation to come first to my State of North Carolina, where you could rest in a private villa in the mountains for a few days, and then come to Washington to meet with your Senate supporters. The United States has about two million of your countrymen within its borders. We are therefore the largest Russian country outside of Russia, and it is fitting that you should visit us.

I am attaching a translation of this letter to avoid any misunderstanding, and as an invitation for you to respond in your native tongue.

I hope to hear from you soon, and then to meet you personally. Meanwhile, I wish you happiness and full success in this new phase of your life.

God bless you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jesse Helms". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

JESSE HELMS:ck

P.S. Enclosed you will find a copy of my speech on the Senate Floor explaining the resolution to my colleagues.