

TESTIMONY OF

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BEFORE THE

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION  
COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS/PLATFORM/  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

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# HUNGARIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS' FEDERATION

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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am Istvan B. Gereben, Co-Chairman of the Hungarian Freedom Fighters Federation U.S.A. and an oceanographer by profession.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here today and present my views on national security and foreign policy issues. I am particularly thankful for the invitation to testify on behalf of my fellow Americans of Hungarian descent before the National Security and Foreign Policy Subcommittee of the Republican National Committee Resolutions/Platform/Committee.

In 1956, a heroic struggle of the oppressed, impoverished and cruelly humiliated Hungarian Nation was launched against the occupation forces of the Soviet Army and a treacherous puppet government in Budapest.

The youth of Hungary, which once again has carried the torch light of true search for freedom into the hearts of hundreds of millions of people around the globe, has injected the chill of final defeat and the vision of ultimate annihilation into the minds of the overlords of the world Communist movement. As an inevitable consequence of the unmatched struggle, in which teenagers, university students, workers and intellectuals of a country of 10 million have sacrificed their lives against the onrushing air and land forces of the Soviet Union nearly 200,000 Hungarians had to seek refuge in the countries of the Free World. About one fourth of these Hungarian refugees, mostly young people, or persons in their prime of life, were admitted to the United States and became, in due course, new citizens of this country. On their behalf I am here today. I will limit my comments to United States foreign policy concerning East-Central Europe.

## THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEOPLES OF EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

The imperialistic policies of Communist Russia have led, through direct and indirect aggression to the subjugation of the national independence of countless nations, and people in East-Central Europe. These nations and people - looking to the United States, as the citadel of human freedom, for leadership in bringing about their liberation and individual liberties - constitute a powerful deterrent to war and one of the best hopes for just and lasting peace.

It is fitting that in 1972, the Republican Platform clearly manifest to ourselves and to the people of East-Central Europe the fact that the people of the United States share with them their aspirations for the recovery of their freedom and independence.

At the outset of this eight decades of this century, the face of Europe is changing. The changes are rapid, pervasive and it would seem profound. No one can forecast with certitude the future pattern of relationships which will emerge among the thirty ancient nations which collectively command so much of the world's resources - military, economic, technological and intellectual. It is only certain that Europe has passed from post-war era of rather rigid definition to a period of transition in which relationships are being adjusted to new realities.

The changing atmosphere in which international relations are now developing in Europe creates opportunities for peaceful achievements. It also carries the seed of danger should we become careless of our own vital interests.

In search for meaningful achievements, we cannot fail the people of East-Central Europe by muting our expressions of concern and solidarity as elements of an overall "bargain of convenience" with the Soviet Union. To do so would be a betrayal of ourselves and the freedom for which men and women have fought and sacrificed for centuries and which is the base of our own freedom.

The recent far reaching diplomatic achievements in developing better relationships between East and West is hailed by us. But normalization must not be allowed to mean acquiescence in the perpetual denial of human freedom in one half of an artificially divided Europe. In our own search for stability in our relationship with the U.S.S.R., we must not sacrifice our own dedication to the principles of freedom and human dignity.

In this spirit, I ask this committee to consider our recommendations for inclusion into the Platform of the Republican Party.

#### CENTRAL EUROPE AND SOVIET ASPIRATIONS ON THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Few aspects of Soviet foreign policy in recent years have attracted as much attention as the enormous increase in both the quantity and quality of Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean Sea.

Recognition of the strategic value of direct and unimpeded access to the Mediterranean Sea has been one of the most constant themes of Russian foreign policy in both Tsarist and its Communistic forms.

The recent developments in Egypt seems to curb Soviet access to, and unlimited use of the Mediterranean ports. This fact serves as an incentive to the Soviet leadership to aim at the re-establishment of control over Yugoslavia and Albania. The presence of Soviet naval bases on the Adriatic Sea, with direct land access to Mother Russia would be a historic accomplishment and increase immeasurably the influence of the U.S.S.R., especially in the Middle East.

The doctrinal base for such re-establishment of Soviet power in Yugoslavia and Albania has already been laid down in the Brezhnev Doctrine. Thus far, the Soviet Union has refrained from taking such a serious step

as the invasion of these states for the risks involved have seemed out of all proportions to the gains. However, the situation now is new. The internal disputes between the Croats and the Serbs living in a fragile federation of their states are too well known to expound them. The recent developments in the United States cannot fail to encourage the Soviet Union to take advantage of this internal friction. The quasi-isolationist tendencies stemming from the Vietnam war have produced an atmosphere which makes the probability of direct, actual U.S. involvement in a struggle between opposing brands of Communism virtually non-existent.

We, Americans of Hungarian descent, are afraid that Hungary will be used by the Soviets - as she was used by the Germans in the early 1940's - as a springboard to launch attack on neighboring Yugoslavia.

The fact, that a real possibility exists that the Yugoslav state can collapse, will be a major factor governing the policy of the U.S.S.R., concerning East-Central Europe and its attitude towards the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. This imposes enormous problems for the United States in the very near future.

Persistent, imaginative U.S. diplomatic actions are required to defuse nationalistic disputes and prevent Russian intervention in Yugoslavia.

Presentation of viable alternatives to invite the Soviet Union to settle the dispute between the two contending nationalities of Yugoslavia, backed up with determination to manufacture success of those alternatives is a must, in order to accomplish lasting stability in East Central Europe. One alternative is neutralization and possible establishment of a loose economical and political cooperation of the people in this area.

#### CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE AND THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE

Recently, efforts of the Soviet Union to get agreement from the Western European Powers and the United States to participate in a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe have increased. This conference has been proposed by the Warsaw Pact countries, and has a name which somewhat of a misnomer, if one considers the agenda proposed by its proponents. It would consist of two principal items: steps to improve economic and cultural relations, and conclusion of an agreement to renounce the use of force in resolving issues between states. This second point constitutes the principal content of treaties which the Soviet Union and Poland have already signed with the Federal Republic of Germany.

Since all member countries of the United Nations have already solemnly renounced the use of force, and West Germany, not a member, has done so on its own, one wonders how a conference with such an agenda might improve the existing state of European security.

If one considers the Warsaw Pact proposal in connection with the Brezhnev Doctrine - a doctrine of limited sovereignty which states that the integrity of what Moscow calls the Socialist Commonwealth transcends any purely national interest of its member countries - we come to perhaps a truer definition of European security, as the concept is understood in Moscow.

We are drawn to the conclusion that the real purpose of the Warsaw Pact security conference proposal is to secure western acquiescence in the permanent division of Europe along present lines and to prescribe any acts which might tend to weaken the primacy of the Communist parties and the hegemony of the Soviet Union in Eastern-Central Europe, while of course, preserving its freedom to work through the Communist parties in Western Europe to destroy the governments of the free half of Europe.

This is not a proposition that recommends itself to the United States or to its European partners. It is offensive to the principles on which relations among free nations are based. Viewed pragmatically, the conference - if it is held under Soviet domination of the agenda - would tend to perpetuate, not end the division of Europe.

Any genuine and lasting improvements in East-West relations in Europe - and as a matter of fact, anywhere else - must be based on the respect of sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity of each state; noninterference and nonintervention in the internal affairs of any state, regardless of its political or social system; and the right of the people of each state to choose freely its own form of government. The United States must insist that the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, if held, be based on these principles.

The Conference should formally reject the Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty/Brezhnev Doctrine and reaffirm the right of self-determination for each participating nation. The simultaneously held Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks should accomplish the withdrawal of Soviet troops occupying Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland.

The acceptance of the status-quo in Europe must be avoided by the western participants of the Conference. The United States must fulfill the international responsibilities incumbent on any great power, and must creatively modify the situation in Europe, in the direction of restoring lost freedoms and rectify past injustices forced on the people of Central Europe.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

We suggest that the road to accomplish the establishment of lasting stability in East Central Europe and the restoration of freedom for the people of this area, have to lead through voluntary and guaranteed neutralization of the states populated by them. Thus, this will create actually three Europes: the Western European powers, the buffer area of East-Central Europe, and the East European superpower, the Soviet Union.

We propose the promotion of such a Europe by a bold, imaginative and effective U.S. foreign policy.

Our search for bilateral improvements of economic, political and cultural relations with the individual countries of Communist ruled Europe must be guided by the need to ensure that the beneficiary of those improvements will be the people and not the rulers of that particular country.

We should never loose sight. The fact that the Soviet Union is not just Brezhnev, it is also Solzhenitsyn. Hungary is not just Kadar, it is also the young who went to jail just a month ago for reciting the nintienth century poet Petofi: "We have been slaves until now, No more".

We are convinced that the functions performed by Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty are essential and especially useful at the present time, when America must keep all of the options at her disposal open to succeed in the series of delicate negotiations with Russia and the Iron Curtain countries to which these stations beam the voice of freedom and information. We recommend the maintenance of these radios by public funds under public supervision.

Cultural exchange became a propaganda tool in the hands of well trained and highly skilled agents of Communist government, especially the government of Hungary. We suggest a U.S. policy which does not curb the free flow of information and literature and people between the two countries, but widens it to allow two way traffic on this very valuable and effective road to understanding, which until now, is traveled only in one direction with a force blocking the way towards Hungary for American information, news, ideas, and in many cases - people.

We would like to see a U.S. policy which promotes the observation of the principle of reciprocity in matters of cultural, intellectual and information exchange.

In the course of recent diplomatic negotiations, it has become apparent that a possiblity exists that the Holy Crown of St. Stephen may be released into the hands of the Communist government of Hungary in an effort to promote American - Hungarian relations. The Crown was entrusted to the U.S. government for safekeeping until such time as Hungary became free one again to function as a constitutional government established through free choice.

Hungary is still occupied by Russian troops. The government is kept in power by Soviet bayonetts. The "improvements" in Hungary are superficial and not substantive. We strongly state that the United States in its search for finding solutions for the settlement of the outstanding financial, economic and political issues between the two governments should follow a policy which does not require the abandonment of her sacred trust.

The past year was signified with bold and imaginative moves by the United States on the chess board of world affairs. We cannot agree with all of them, as a matter of fact, we very strongly oppose a few. However, the fact that the United States emerged as the initiator on this highly contested field, abandoning the 25 year old role of passive, rigid responder, is welcomed.

We strongly recommend the maintenance of this newly assumed role. Not all concepts proposed by the United States will materialize, but an aggressive presentation of multiple solutions to the problems of the world will keep our adversaries on the defensive and off balance, a situation which we became accustomed to, for so long. This exchange of roles can be made permanent only by assuring the security of our nation.

Security is provided by strength - military, spiritual, and moral. But above all, it requires strength of will to be strong. We want to be strong. We want the United States to be strong. As our President said:

"We must be more resourceful than ever in the pursuit of peace and at the same time more determined than ever in the maintenance of our defense. American strength is the keystone in the structure of peace. The strength that commands respect is the only foundation on which peace among nations can ever be built."

We want and support a strong defense policy to ensure and safeguard the economic, political and military supremacy of the United States.

Thank you