

DECEMBER 28, 1981

STATEMENT BY SENATOR BOB DOLE

THE CRISIS IN POLAND

THE CRISIS IN POLAND STILL COMPELS OUR ATTENTION  
FROM DAY TO DAY AND FROM HOUR TO HOUR.

FOR MORE THAN A YEAR, THE POLISH PEOPLE HAVE BEEN  
ENGAGED IN AN HEROIC STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE AT LEAST SOME  
MEASURE OF THOSE PRECIOUS HUMAN AND POLITICAL RIGHTS  
ON WHICH THIS COUNTRY OF OUR OWN WAS FOUNDED AND WHICH ARE  
THE HIGHEST ACHIEVEMENTS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THIS HISTORIC MOVEMENT, IT  
WAS CLEAR THAT A PROFOUND CONFLICT EXISTED BETWEEN THE  
LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF POLAND--GIVEN  
LIFE BY THE ORGANIZATION OF SOLIDARITY--AND THE ARBITRARY  
AUTHORITY OF THE POLISH COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE POLISH  
GOVERNMENT UNDER THE DOMINATION OF THE SOVIET UNION.  
EVEN IF CERTAIN MODERATE ELEMENTS IN THE POLISH GOVERN-  
MENT OR PARTY MIGHT HAVE SOUGHT FURTHER COMPROMISES WITH  
SOLIDARITY, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN DETERRED FROM THAT PATH  
BY THE FLAGRANT INTIMIDATION COMING FROM MOSCOW.

TWO WEEKS AGO, THAT CONFLICT EVIDENTLY BECAME  
INTOLERABLE FOR THE POLISH GOVERNMENT. TANKS ROLLED  
THROUGH TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND MILITARY OFFICERS

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APPEARED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION TO LEAVE NO DOUBT IN THE MINDS OF TERRORIZED CITIZENS THAT THE END OF AN ERA HAD COME. EVEN NOW SOME MINERS ARE STILL BARRICADED IN THEIR MINE, RESISTING THE GOVERNMENT'S CALL FOR THEM TO GO BACK TO BUSINESS AS USUAL OR FACE THE MOST SEVERE PENALTIES. OTHER FORMS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUE. AT THE SAME TIME, SHORTAGES OF FOOD AND EVEN MEDICINES ARE BECOMING CRITICAL.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO JUDGE TO WHAT EXTENT THE HARSH CRACKDOWN ON SOLIDARITY AND THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW WERE SPURRED DIRECTLY BY THE GOVERNMENT'S FEARS FOR ITS OWN SURVIVAL, AND EVEN FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE POLISH NATION ITSELF, AND TO WHAT EXTENT THESE ACTIONS WERE TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURES FROM MOSCOW. BUT THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT IT HAS BEEN THE SOVIET UNION'S CRUEL REGIME THROUGHOUT EASTERN EUROPE, SINCE THE LAST WORLD WAR, THAT IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE UNBEARABLE POLITICAL REPRESSION THAT THESE NATIONS HAVE SUFFERED AND WHICH THE POLISH PEOPLE HAVE SO BRAVELY ATTEMPTED TO THROW OFF.

THEY AND WE, ALONG WITH ALL THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE WHO HOLD FREEDOM AND SECURITY DEAR, MUST COUNT THE FATE OF POLAND TODAY ESPECIALLY BITTER BECAUSE THE POLISH GOVERNMENT'S BRUTAL STEPS WERE TAKEN DURING THE SAME DAYS



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AND HOURS THAT ITS REPRESENTATIVES, ALONG WITH THOSE OF THE UNITED STATES, THE SOVIET UNION, AND ALL THE NATIONS OF EUROPE, WERE MEETING IN MADRID TO REVIEW EACH OTHER'S BEHAVIOR UNDER THEIR PLEDGES AT THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE. THOSE PLEDGES INCLUDED A COMMITMENT TO PROTECT FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND TO REFRAIN FROM INTERVENTION IN THE AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES.

NOW WE MUST ASK WHAT STEPS WE CAN TAKE, TO HELP THE POLISH PEOPLE TO RESIST THE PRESSURES THEIR GOVERNMENT IS IMPOSING ON THEM. WE MUST VOICE, LOUDLY AND CLEARLY, OUR FIRMEST SUPPORT FOR THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE POLISH PEOPLE TO LIVE IN FREEDOM AND DIGNITY, WITHOUT DISCOUNTING AS MERE RHETORIC THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS OPEN DEFENSE OF THE VALUES FOR WHICH AMERICANS ALSO HAVE SUFFERED AND DIED.

WE MUST MAKE PLAIN TO THE SOVIET UNION THAT WE WILL NOT GRANT ANY LEGITIMACY WHATSOEVER TO ITS REPRESSION OF PEACEFUL STEPS TOWARD LIBERALIZATION OF THE HARSH SYSTEM IT SUSTAINS THROUGHOUT EASTERN EUROPE, ESPECIALLY WHEN THESE STEPS ARE TAKEN WITH THE GREAT MEASURE OF COURAGE, RESPONSIBILITY AND RESTRAINT DEMONSTRATED BY A LEADER LIKE SOLIDARITY'S LECH WALESIA, FOR WHOSE RELEASE WE MUST ADAMANTLY CALL.

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BUT WE MUST ALSO TRY TO FIND WAYS TO DETER FURTHER  
SOVIET-INSPIRED TERROR IN POLAND--AND INDEED THROUGHOUT  
EASTERN EUROPE--WITHOUT CONTRIBUTING TO THE VERY GREAT  
HARDSHIPS THAT THE POLISH PEOPLE NOW FACE. IT IS  
ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE WHATEVER SUPPORT WILL REACH THE  
PEOPLE OF POLAND DIRECTLY, WITHOUT PROVIDING YET ANOTHER  
LEVER THAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN USE AGAINST THEM.

FINALLY, WE MUST HOPE AGAINST HOPE THAT THE COURAGE  
OF THE POLISH PEOPLE ENDURES AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT SOON  
TURNS BACK TO THE PATH OF REFORM. WE MUST TAKE THE  
GREATEST CARE, WHATEVER MEASURES WE PURSUE, TO PRESERVE  
THE BEST HOPES OF THE POLISH PEOPLE FOR FREEDOM.