

UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY SENATOR BOURKE HICKENLOOPER
UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AT A PLENARY MEETING
OF THE ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN
NATIONS COMMEMORATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
AT THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT INTERNATIONAL CENTER

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Ten years ago the United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That Declaration expressed the world's revulsion at the crimes against mankind committed by aggressor governments in World War II. It expressed also the hopes of the world's peoples to be free of the indignities against individuals and nations by which police states maintain themselves.

Today, on the balance sheet of human rights, we see heartening gains and tragic losses. We can rejoice that since the Declaration won approval eleven nations have achieved independence and now exercise their right to the pursuit of happiness.

But there is also a minus side to the ledger. There we have continued cause for revulsion. The Soviet Union, in its cynical contempt for all morality, holds nations of Europe captive under a brutal reign of terror.

Having again and again seen the ugly truth of Soviet policies fully exposed, we cannot be surprised at the nature of the Soviet dictatorship. Nor, above all, can we be discouraged. Daily we see new evidence that hope still lives in the captive nations. Two years ago the people of Hungary arose in a triumph of the human spirit that will be a beacon light as long as men love freedom. And for free men everywhere it is a sacred duty to keep alive always our support for the hope which still burns underground in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania.

We meet today to voice, in the words of the Universal Declaration, the "outraged conscience of mankind." We are strengthened in our outrage by the knowledge that the conscience of mankind is engraved in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its thirty articles can, in fact, be taken as a bill of particulars in framing our indictment of Soviet imperialism. Before this assembly of free spokesmen of the captive European nations it is fitting to recall Article 21. Its third paragraph states that, "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government."

This article states the principle by which we accuse the Soviet Union of maintaining the most inhuman kind of imperialist oppression. In our accusation we cite the testimony of the millions upon millions who have risked their lives to escape from Soviet rule, to live abroad like human beings, and to seek the freedom of their homelands. And we also cite the judgment passed by the sixty Members of the United Nations which voted to condemn the Soviet oppression of Hungary's freedom.

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In accord with its principles and its international responsibilities, the United States has sought every opportunity to keep before the world the issue of independence for the captive nations. The United Nations General Assembly has kept the question of Hungary in the spotlight of the conscience of mankind. The credentials of the Hungarian Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly since the Soviet overthrow of the Imre Nagy Government in 1956 have been kept in suspense and the Hungarians have only been seated provisionally. This rebuff is unique in the history of the United Nations.

Early this year, before Nikolai Bulganin was removed from grace, President Eisenhower wrote to him about some of the unfinished business which stands between the United States and the Soviet Union. He reaffirmed the position which he stated in Geneva in 1955. The President then said:

"There is the problem of respecting the right of peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and of restoring sovereign rights and self-government to those who have been deprived of them. The American people feel strongly that certain peoples of Eastern Europe, many with a long and proud record of national existence, have not yet been given the benefit of this pledge of our United Nations wartime declaration, reinforced by other wartime agreements."

Today, before this group, I want to repeat that the American people, regardless of party, have never wavered in their determination to see the captive peoples of Eastern Europe free to direct their own affairs. It is with faith and purpose that we look ahead to the day when the peoples of the captive nations will again reclaim the first of human rights -- the right to be the rulers of their own national destinies.
