the Turkish troops forced nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, over one-quarter of the Cypriot population at the time, from their homes, making them refugees in their own country. The equivalent in the U.S. would be around 80 million people. For the last 33 years, 36.2 percent of the island continues to be under occupation by 43,000 Turkish forces.

The July 8, 2006, agreements reached under the auspices of the United Nations Under Secretary General Ibrahim Gambari, by President Tassos Papadopoulos and Turkish-Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat establishes a set of negotiating principles that will lead to a unified Cyprus.

The July 8 agreement supports the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot efforts to find common ground for the peaceful reunification of their country within the framework of a federal bi-zonal and bi-communal nation state. These agreements call for the implementation of specific confidence-building measures, starting with the practical steps of establishing bi-communal working groups and technical communities to examine and discuss issues affecting the day-to-day lives of the people of Cyprus.

Mr. Speaker, there is no viable justification for the continued division of Cyprus. The people of Cyprus have every reason to seek out reconciliation. They aspire to a reunified homeland. In the last 4 years, there have been more than 13 million peaceful crossings across the Green Line by Greek and Turkish-Cypriots, a remarkable achievement for an island whose total population is less than 800,000 people. Turkish-Cypriots cross into the Republic of Cyprus to go to work every day. Approximately 35,000 Turkish-Cypriots have applied for and received passports from the Republic of Cyprus. On the ground, there is clear momentum for peace and a desire on both sides to work together.

Today, Cyprus has evolved into a dynamic country, endowed with a robust economy and incredible democratic institutions. Its qualitative capacities are showcased by its recent entry to the European Union and its imminent membership in the Eurozone. Located off the western shores of the Middle East, Cyprus has the capacity to be a vigorous participant in the wider NATO security architecture.

For us in the United States, therefore, there is great purpose in facilitating peace and unification beyond any moral and altruistic imperatives. As expressed by the House last week, the July 8 agreement lays the groundwork for accomplishing this goal.

I commend the House for its passage of H. Con. Res. 405 and implore our government to continue its support for the full and immediate implementation of the July 8, 2006, agreements.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LIMITING EARMARKS ON APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, in a couple of weeks, it is likely that we will be addressing the Labor-HHS bill. We have passed the bill in the House. I believe they have passed the bill in the Senate, but conferees have not been named. We will be asked to approve a large bill that I believe is over the President's budget. But, more significantly, this is the first test of actually doing a conference under the new earmark rules.

We had new earmark rules passed at the beginning of the year that provide a little more transparency than we have had before, and that is a good thing; but it hasn't done much to cut down the number or dollar value of earmarks, because we haven't gotten through the process now.

Some people have said in the House we have fewer earmarks, the dollar value is down, and that is a good thing. Certainly it is a good thing. But we are only halfway through the process. Typically, when you get to the conference process, that is where a lot of the mischief happens, where earmarks are added in the middle of the night and you aren't given a chance to vote on them. You simply vote on the bill, either up or down.

Just to give you a flavor of what is in this Labor-HHS bill, the House bill included about 1,342 earmarks. These earmarks were added in the conference report of the bill that came to the House. They were added just days before the bill came to the house. We had very little opportunity to actually look at the earmarks to find out which Member had offered them and to offer amendments to strike those earmarks. A few amendments were offered here on the floor, but that is hardly a process that can pass for due diligence to actually see what is in these earmarks.

Now, I hasten to add that this is not a partisan issue. There are both Republican and Democrat earmarks in this bill. When Republicans were in charge of this body, typically Republicans got about 60 percent of the earmarks, the Democrats got about 40 percent. Now that has switched.

But, really, I wish it were a partisan issue. I wish, as one of my side of the aisle, that Republicans were right on and Democrats were wrong on. But we haven't seen that. We have seen both parties continue to earmark in this fashion.

There are 1,342 earmarks in the House bill. Let me just read through a few to give people a flavor of what is there.

I wish we didn't have to do this. I wish there was another way. But as I mentioned, when these bills come to the floor, the committee report will accompany the bill. It will only come a few days before the bill passes, and we aren't given a real opportunity to vet these earmarks and look at them.

Let me read a few of them. For example, $300,000 goes to the American Air Power Museum in Farmingdale, New York, for exhibits and educational programs. This may be a great museum, but why the Federal taxpayer should be on the hook to fund it, I don't know.

And $200,000 in this bill goes to the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, for exhibits and education programs. It may be a great museum, but why is the Federal taxpayer paying for?

$200,000 for the American West Heritage Center in Wellsville, Utah, for a lifelong learning initiative.

$125,000 for the Children's Museum in Indianapolis, Indiana, for exhibits and equipment.

$200,000 for a Children's Museum in Los Angeles for exhibits and educational programs.

$150,000, College Park Aviation Museum in College Park, Maryland.

If you are recognizing a theme here, the Federal Government is funding a lot of museums. Why is this the case? Why, when we are running massive deficits, when we have a big debt and other obligations that are crying out to pay down the debt, to lower the deficit, why are we funding programs like this? Why are we on the hook for these programs yet again? You have to remember, whenever you are funding a museum, because we have a deficit, we are borrowing money to do that.

$250,000 for the Discovery Center in Idaho. This is in Boise, for a science center.

$350,000 for an aerospace museum in McClellan, California, for exhibits.

$350,000 for the George and Eleanor McGovern Library in Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota.

$75,000, Monterey Bay Aquarium in Monterey, California.

Here is another theme. We fund a lot of aquariums. There are great aquariums that educate a lot of people, but why we are doing it at the Federal level, I don't know.

$350,000 for the Museum of Aviation Foundation in Warner Robins, Georgia, for educational programs.

Let's pay attention to the Labor-HHS bill as it comes along.

□ 1830

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)