IN OPPOSITION TO FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over the detonation by the Chirac government of a nuclear device in the South Pacific.

The French have blatantly and egregiously ignored the environmental sovereignty of the region. I strongly object to the fact that France carried out these tests more than 10,000 miles from their mainland. If, as Mr. Chirac has stated, these tests pose no threat to the ecosystem, why are they being carried out 10,000 miles away from France? Why detonate atomic weapons in somebody else's backyard? Why not in central France?

The United States, numerous countries and respected individuals in the region pleaded with the French not to carry out these ''experiments.'' But Mr. Chirac insisted that they are necessary. Why are these tests necessary? Whom are the French preparing to fight? Are they planning to drop a bomb on Algeria? What specter so haunts them that they need to test their nuclear weapons before they sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty? And what will this mean for the future of the treaty? Will other countries rush to detonate bombs before they finally renounce nuclear testing? Will rogue nations and terrorist organizations experiment with nuclear weaponry, claiming that they must protect themselves from French aggression?

Mr. Speaker, I cannot adequately express my disappointment with the Chirac Government. Economic boycotts, political protests, editorial outrage and public opinion seem all to have failed in convincing Mr. Chirac that his policy is wrong. It is dangerous for the ecosystem, dangerous for the fragile marine environment, dangerous for the people living around the mururoa atoll, and dangerous for those who seek a nuclear-weapon-free world. As Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans stated: ''This is not the action of a good international citizen.''

INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC PENSION PARITY ACT

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, our Nation's public servants have had a long and difficult year. Public employees have been asked to increase their pension contributions in exchange for smaller annuities and to make other financial sacrifices in the name of deficit reduction. Last spring, some Federal employees working in the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City made the ultimate sacrifice while performing their jobs. The time has come to show some support for our public servants, the men and women who work hard to provide needed services for the American people.

Today, I am reintroducing the Public Pension Parity Act, legislation I first introduced in the 98th Congress to rectify a serious tax inequity that our retired public employees continue to face. America's public retirees deserve positive action on this bill.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most of our public-sector retirees receive a pension in lieu of the Social Security benefits received by private-sector retirees. Social Security benefits are fully tax exempt for individual private-sector retirees earning as much as $25,000 per year, and couples earning up to $32,000. There is no corresponding tax exemption for public-sector retirees, who are effectively being penalized by the Internal Revenue Code for their years of public service.

My legislation, the Public Pension Parity Act of 1995, would amend the Internal Revenue Code so that a public retiree could deduct that portion of his or her governmental pension equivalent to the maximum level for Social Security retirement benefits so long as the individual or couple stays under the same gross income limitations I stated earlier. The bill also includes an offsetting provision to prevent overly generous tax exemptions for those with incomes above these thresholds or who collect both public and private annuities.

The principle of fairness underlies this bill; public-sector retirees should be treated in the same manner as private-sector retirees for purposes of taxation. It is fundamentally unfair to continue to tax the retirement benefits of public employees differently than the Social Security retirement benefits of private-sector employees. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to join me this year in supporting the Public Pension Parity Act to correct the significant inequity in the tax treatment of public-retiree benefits. It is time to reaffirm our support for those who dedicate their careers to public service.

Mr. Speaker, I would also submit a copy of the Public Pension Parity Act for the RECORD.

GREG WYATT—BILL OF RIGHTS EAGLE SCULPTURE

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Wyatt, the sculptor in residence at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and director of the art academy at the Newington Cropsey Foundation. I urge my fellow colleagues to attend an exhibition of Mr. Wyatt's Bill of Rights Eagle in the Russell Senate Office Building rotunda from today until Saturday, September 9, 1995.

Mr. Wyatt's early training in the arts came from instruction with his father, a painting professor at the City College of New York. At an early age Mr. Wyatt's father instilled in him an appreciation for the cultural and artistic traditions of the Hudson River Valley of New York. Greg followed this tradition, earning a bachelor of arts degree in art history from Columbia College and a master of arts degree in ceramic arts from Columbia University. He continued his studies at the National Academy of Design focusing on classical sculpture, and later traveled to Italy as an instructor in Renaissance figurative sculpture.

In addition, I am honored to represent the district that is home to the Newington Cropsey Foundation located in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY, an organization dedicated to preserving the work of the 19th century Hudson Valley artist Jasper Francis Cropsey and the culture of the Hudson River Valley. The exhibit of Mr. Wyatt's Bill of Rights Eagle was made possible by funding from the Newington Cropsey Foundation. The foundation has previously donated important Cropsey works to significant collections including the White House, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the U.S. Department of State and Princeton University.

Mr. Speaker, this week I will introduce a House resolution to accept on behalf of the American people the Bill of Rights Eagle for display on the grounds of Congress. The distinguished Senate majority leader, TRENT LOTT, will introduce companion legislation in the Senate. This gift by Mr. Wyatt and the Newington Cropsey Foundation, at no cost the United States, is an appropriate tribute to a document that insures the core of our democracy. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues to support this measure to place this beautiful sculpture on permanent display in the U.S. Capitol.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE AND UNITED STATES-ORIGIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN TURKEY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, on June 1, 1995, the State Department released a report on allegations of human rights abuses by the Turkish military. This report stated that United States-origin military equipment has been used in operations in Turkey during which human rights abuses have occurred. This report is the most definitive administration statement linking United States military assistance to human rights violations in Turkey.

I wrote a letter to Secretary Christopher on June 29 asking several questions about that report, and on August 15 I received a reply. I ask that my letter, and the Department's response, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,

Washington, DC, June 29, 1995.

Hon. WARREN CHRISTOPHER,

Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I write regarding the State Department's Report on Allegations of Human Rights Abuses by the Turkish Military, released on June 1, 1995. I commend you for the precision and detail of that report, which provides important information to the Congress.

What impresses me about that report is your open acknowledgment of the role of U.S.-origin military equipment in human rights abuse in southeastern Turkey. As your report states: ''U.S.-origin equipment, which accounts for most major items of the Turkish military inventory, has been used in operations against the PKK during which human rights abuses have occurred.''

I would like to ask you several questions about the June 1 report.

1. I do not recall prior Administration statements or testimony coming to the conclusion that U.S. military equipment provided to Turkey was used in operations during which human rights abuses occurred.

Can you point me to prior statements by this Administration, or previous Administrations, that make a link between U.S.-origin equipment provided to the Turkish military and human rights abuses?

2. For how long has the Turkish military used U.S.-supplied equipment in operations against the PKK?

For how long do you believe human rights abuses in connection with Turkish military operations against the PKK have been occurring?

3. Are Turkey's human rights abuses with U.S.-origin military equipment, as detailed in your June 1 report, consistent with Section 4 of the ''Purposes for Which Military Sales by the United States Are Authorized,'' under Section 4 of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA)?

Do you intend to report under Section 3(c)(2) of the AECA concerning a violation of that Act, through the use of U.S.-origin defense equipment for a purpose not authorized under Section 4 of the AECA?

At what point do human rights abuses with U.S.-origin defense equipment constitute a ''consistent pattern of gross violations'' and thus, under Section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act, prohibit AECA sales of defense articles or services?

4. What are the implications for U.S. policy of your determination that Turkey has used U.S.-origin military equipment in operations in which human rights abuses have occurred?

What steps are you taking to address human rights abuses mentioned in your June 1 report?

5. Is it U.S. policy to promote a political solution in southeastern Turkey?

Does Turkey support a political solution?

What is the next step in trying to promote a political solution?

I appreciate the strategic importance of Turkey, and I agree with you that Turkey is a long-standing and valuable U.S. ally. I also appreciate the serious security dilemmas facing that country. Yet I believe that your June 1 report compels the United States to revisit relations with Turkey, to insure that U.S.-origin weapons are not used to commit future human rights abuses, and to insure that every effort is made to work for a political solution in southeastern Turkey.

I look forward to your answers to the questions above.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

LEE H. HAMILTON,
Ranking Democratic Member.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, August 15, 1995.

Hon. LEE HAMILTON,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. HAMILTON: On behalf of Secretary Christopher, I am responding to your June 29 letter, which raised a number of questions regarding human rights abuses and the Turkish military's use of U.S.-supplied equipment.

I want to thank you for your comments regarding the State Department's Report on Allegations of Human Rights Abuses by the Turkish Military. The Embassy in Ankara and concerned offices at the Departments of State and Defense made every effort to convey the situation as accurately as possible.

Turning to your questions, we are not aware of statements by this or previous administrations which specifically linked U.S.-origin equipment provided to the Turkish military and human rights abuses. That said, the Administration has frequently expressed concern about human rights abuses in Turkey's conflict with the PKK. We have also noted, in response to Congressional inquiries, the high probability that the GOT has used U.S.-supplied equipment in the southeast. Ambassador Grossman addressed this issue during his confirmation hearings in response to a question from Senator Pell. I have enclosed Ambassador Grossman's response.

The United States has had a military supply relationship with Turkey for over 40 years. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that Ankara has used U.S.-origin equipment against the PKK since the conflict started nearly 11 years ago. The Turkish military became extensively involved in operations against the PKK in 1992, when the conflict worsened dramatically. Until that time, the military's involvement, as opposed to that of the Jandarma (national guard), was minimal.

With respect to your questions regarding the Arms Export Control Act (''AECA''), section 4 of that Act provides in relevant part that the U.S. Government may provide U.S.-origin defense articles to friendly countries for a number of purposes, including for internal security. Although human rights violations have occurred in the course of operations, those operations appear in fact to have been undertaken for a purpose authorized under the AECA and therefore a report is not required under section 3(c)(2). In any case, the information in our report on alleged human rights abuses is more extensive than what would be provided in a report under section 3(c)(2) of the AECA.

Turkey's human rights record raises serious concerns, but we do not believe that it has engaged in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights within the meaning of Section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act. We must not forget that Turkey is a functioning, albeit troubled, democracy. Although freedom of expression is restricted, Turkey's press is able to criticize the government, and frequently does so.

On July 23, Turkey's Grand National Assembly approved, by the overwhelming majority of 360 to 32, 16 constitutional amendments which will enhance Turkish democracy and broaden political participation. These amendments, among other things, eliminate restrictions on participation in politics by associations, unions, groups and cooperatives; grant civil servants the right to form unions and engage in collective talks; lower the voting age from 20 to 18, and increase the number of parliamentarians from 450 to 550. Both Prime Minister Ciller and Deputy Prime Minister Cetin are committed to going beyond this important step to achieve further reforms, such as modification of Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law, which has constrained freedom of expression. Additionally, as noted in our report, the Turkish General Staff (TGS) has instituted a program to train soldiers in human rights requirements.

For the past three years, human rights has been a major part of our dialogue with the Turkish government. Every high-level official, both from the State Department and DoD, who has visited Ankara has raised the issue of human rights and its importance to U.S.-Turkish relations. We have started to engage the TGS on this subject as well, and have encouraged visitors from other western countries to support these efforts.

The Turkish government interprets references to the need for a ''political solution'' in the southeast as encouragement to negotiate with the PKK, which we have not asked Ankara to do. We support Turkey's territorial integrity and legitimate right to fight terrorism. We have emphasized repeatedly that there is no solely military solution to this conflict. We have argued that, in addition to carefully calibrated military operations, resolution will require the expansion of democracy and human rights, including increased civil and cultural rights for Turkey's Kurdish citizens.

While engaged in a difficult struggle with a brutal terrorist organization, the Government of Turkey is making a determined effort to improve its human rights performance. We believe that to promote a settlement in the southeast, our best course is to continue energetically to promote democratization, while supporting Turkey's legitimate struggle against terrorism. In both of these efforts, Turkey needs, and continues to deserve, our help and support.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

WENDY R. SHERMAN,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

Enclosure: As stated.

QUESTION FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO MARC GROSSMAN BY SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

Question. 2. Is U.S.-origin equipment being used in the Turkish military campaign against Kurdish civilians?

Answer. A large portion of Turkey's inventory of defense items is U.S.-supplied or produced under co-production arrangements. I therefore assume that U.S.-origin equipment is being used in the Turkish military's campaign against the PKK.

I understand that internal security, along with self-defense, is recognized as an acceptable use of U.S.-supplied defense articles. The agreements under which we provide Turkey and other foreign countries with defense articles permit such uses.

There are reports that in the counter-insurgency a large number of civilians have been killed. These reports are troubling, and the Administration has brought them to the attention of the Turkish authorities, and will be looking into them further. Assistant Secretary Shattuck visited Turkey in July and will be going again in October, partly for this purpose.

TRIBUTE TO PAGE AND ELOISE SMITH

HON. NORMAN Y. MINETA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. MINETA. Mr. Speaker, a week and a half ago, Page Smith, noted historian and educator, and his wife Eloise, noted artist and educator, passed away in Santa Cruz, CA. They leave behind monuments few will ever equal—monuments in their creative works, in generations of students they inspired, institutions they shaped and reformed, and in the lives they touched and the affections with which they are remembered.

Page as a young man was tempted by various professions: novelist, actor, miner, journalist, and historian among them. He graduated from Darmouth College—selected for its proximity to good trout fishing—in history in 1940. Like many men of his generation, his choice of career was interrupted by military service. He served for 5 years in the Army, including ski combat duty, following graduation from Darmouth. In 1945, as commander of a rifle company of the Tenth Mountain Division