the region that ''human rights abuses and crimes continue to be committed at an alarming rate, particularly against members of minority communities.'' It goes on to say that U.N. police and KFOR troops have been ''unable to prevent violent attacks, including human rights abuses, often motivated by a desire of retribution, against non-Albanians.'' Many refugees are forced to live in nearby enclaves under heavy NATO protection. The U.N.'s goals of maintaining a multi-ethnic Kosovo has failed. For example, an attempt to reintegrate Serb and Kosovar children in school in the village of Plementina recently failed. In response, the U.N. Kosovo Mission (UNMIK) decided to build a separate school several kilometers away for security reasons. These failures have forced the head of the U.N. Kosovo Mission, Bernard Kouchner, to concede that ''the most one can hope for is that they [Serbs and Albanians] can live side-by-side.'' So, it would seem that UNMIK's mission to Kosovo has drastically changed from maintaining a multi-ethnic society to one that must learn to co-exist side-by-side, but not together. Indeed, that is not even a representative picture. In fact, Kosovo's Serbian and other minority enclaves are being emptied of population. Kosovo will soon be ethnically cleansed during our peacekeeping operation, and NATO, KFOR and the U.S. will have to accept some responsibility for it.

One of the goals of the peackeeping mission was to disarm and disband the armed militia groups. However, many members of these groups remain as active as ever under KFOR occupation. For example in the villages of Presovo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB), which line the south Western border of Serbia where both ethnic Albanians and Serbs still live, an extremist group called the Liberation Army for Presovo is now active, though it did not exist before the peacekeeping mission began. Many members of this group are said to have been former militia members. The group has been blamed for a killing of a Serb police officer and attacks on UN staff.

Indeed, armed conflict could well get worse in the future under UN peacekeeping forces. Recently, American soldiers raided a radical group's command post seizing hundreds of stashed weapons. This region seems to be indicative of what seems to be a broader expansionist goal of creating a greater Albania. There are reports that violent clashes may spill into Macedonia and Montenegro. According to a Reuters news report last week, ''The Yugoslav army and Montenegro policy agreed on Saturday to set up a joint checkpoint between the coastal republic and Kosovo in a bid to stop smuggling and terrorism spilling over from the province.''

Moreover, I am concerned that continued peacekeeping operations may actually facilitate an escalation in violence in the region. It is my understanding that part of the mission of KFOR is not only to ''keep the peace'' in the region, but to also train local residents into a civilian police force. My concern is that UN troops are legitimizing and institutionalizing extremist or radical elements of society there by training them to be a police force. If that's true, then our forces and our funds are propping up extremist elements in Kosovo and consolidating their power.

If, indeed, UN troops are training rogue elements to become part of the civilian police force, Kosovo, then thus funding will not merely have been wasted, but will have contributed to instability in the region. I would like to put an American perspective on the proposed spending of $29 million for continued peace keeping operations in the region. You might be interested in knowing that we have a program in the United States called the Troops to COPS program, which provides law enforcement incentives to hire veterans who have served in our armed forces to serve as police officers. Funds are used to reimburse law enforcement agencies for training costs of qualified veterans. Since 1996, funding for this program has reached only $2.3 million-in 4 years. Why should we spend $29 million dollars in one year on peacekeeping operations that could put extremist elements in charge of Kosovo and that so far has provided inadequate? Maybe we should be using these funds to train law abiding US veterans to become community police officers here in America.

Now, I would like to touch upon the funding request for the Support Eastern European Democracy (SEED) program—a program which, among other things, supports democratic movements in the region. The funding request has increased from $77 million in 1999 to $175 million in Kosovo and from $6 million to over $41 million in Serbia, Yugoslavia. It indicates increased and intensified US involvement in the internal politics of the area. Here, too, our efforts have backfired. Democratic opposition groups in Serbia are weaker today than they were a year ago. Milosevic is stronger. It should concern Congress that funds for promoting democracy can result in weakening the popular appeal of democracy advocates. Congress needs to place limitations on this funding to restore its integrity. Specifically, Congress should place the following limitations:

No funds should be appropriated for use by any armed group or advocates of violence.

No funds should be appropriated for use by any group that advocates the violent overthrow of the Serbian government.

I conclude by saying that you should be skeptical of the budget request for peacekeeping operations and the SEED program in Kosovo and Serbia based on the past year's failure. I support the reduction of funding for peacekeeping forces in the Balkans.I support the advancement of peace and democracy in the Balkans. To achieve these goals, Congress will have to place limitations on spending in the Balkans. Otherwise, we will be adding to the problem of instability and a lack of democracy in the Balkans region.

Thank you.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE INDEPENDENT STATES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, functioning democracy in the newly emerging independent states of the former Soviet Union requires setting up new political institutions and developing the means of conducting the people's business. As we have seen in many of these countries, this is proving to be a challenge beyond the patience and political will of their leaders, particularly given the harsh economic conditions throughout the region. More often than not, responsible economic policies represent, in the short term, even greater hardships for the people whose support is essential if democracy and market economy are to be sustained in these countries.

In Ukraine this challenge was put to test earlier this year when the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine's parliament, was confronted with a serious political crisis over the selection of the Speaker and other leadership positions. The Leftist forces, though in the minority, have managed to control the parliament for the past 18 months, thwarting the majority's efforts to implement President Kuchma's legislative agenda.

A vivid description of how the leftist speaker, Oleksandr Tkachenko, thwarted the majority and the subsequent developments that lead to his ouster are provided in a report by the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation. In Update on Ukraine, February 24, 2000, Markian Bilynskj writes. ''Until January 21, the final day of the fourth parliamentary session, the Rada was presided over by a chairman whose political ambitions and sense of indispensability were matched only by his limitations. Oleksandr Tkachenko had been elected essentially by default 18 months earlier as elements within the Rada and beyond fought to prevent the chairmanship from falling into the hands of anyone harboring presidential ambitions. His eventual, somewhat surprise decision to run brought about a further politicization of the legislative process and was the principal reason behind the Rada's growing ineffectiveness. Tkanchenko's final unabashed identification with the communist candidate—a fitting conclusion to what can only be described as a parody of an election campaign—represented an abandonment of any pretense as impartiality and irreversibly undermined his credibility as Rada chairman. At the same time, President Leonid Kuchma's re-election altered the broader political context within which the Rada had to operate to such an extent that Tkachenko was transformed from a largely compromise figure into an anachronism''.

After the December election, President Kuchma's administration joined with the pro-reform majority to challenge Speaker Oleksandr Tkachenko and his Communist-Left forces and succeeded in electing a new Speaker and many of the leadership positions in the Rada. The result is a newly constituted parliament with a majority now occupying key positions that is capable of responding to President Kuchma and Prime Minister Yuschenko's reform agendas.

I would like to submit for the record and bring to the attention of my colleagues an interview with Grigority Surkis, a prominent, businessman and member of the Rada.

IT'S TIME FOR TRANSPARENCY

(By Grigoriy Surkis)

It would be desirable if our Parliament did not have deep divisions between the majority and minority factions; however this is not possible due to deep-rooted ideological divisions in the country.

Former Speaker Tkachenko, leader of the Communists in the Rada, demonstrated his inability to work out a compromise even when the majority announced a willingness to work cooperatively with Communist leaders on a legislative program.

By the way, leaders of the Ukraine Communists should learn a lesson from their Russian counterparts, who recently made a deal with the pro-government factions in organizing the Duma and distributing assignments among party leaders. They have a difficult time understanding that Communist authoritarianism does not exist in post-Soviet societies, nor is it as strong after eight years of democracy.

However, it remains to be seen how the pro-government bloc in Russia will get the Communist Speaker of the Duma to act on

progressive legislation and actually achieve results. I sincerely wish that this arrangement will work so that the people of Russia benefit from progressive changes that will improve living standards that make for a better society.

In my opinion, Ukraine has chosen the right path. In parliament, we formed a majority bloc by uniting the ''healthy'' forces who were committed to reform legislation. This is necessary to ensure speedy action on a range of progressive proposals to deal with the problems of our pension system, taxes, and the criminal and civil code. This will help us to clean house in the Rada and institute badly needed changes that, in the past, impeded our efforts to confront these needs.

Is compromise possible? Let's think about it. We want our people to live in a new environment but there are some who want to pull us back to the old Soviet system. To go back is to lose hope and confidence in our ability to improve our situation. The reformers want a government that will enable people to own property while the Communists want people to be the property of the state. We believe that the Constitution is the basic law, but they still believe the ''Party'' is the supreme authority.

Finally, in a democracy it is acceptable to have a compromise, which is how people work out their differences. But the old guard distrusts working with what they see as the ''bourgeois'' and reject efforts to resolve differences amicably. So we are not talking about compromise in terms of confronting the issues and resolving differences, but the Communists see any negotiations with reformers as selling out or imposing a kompromat on us. I am reminded of the words of the great Golda Meir, who was born in Kiev, who once said: ''We want to live. Our neighbors want to see us dead. I am afraid that this does not leave any space for compromise''.

The problem would not be so serious if we were talking only about Parliament. However, we are talking about society as a whole. The Leftists seem committed to destroying the Rada, the one institution that ensures representation of the people in government decision-making. Perhaps they do not know about Abraham Lincoln's statement that a house divided cannot succeed and that their intransigence will prevent democracy from taking root in Ukraine. Everyone knows what happens to the person if his right leg makes two steps forward and the left remains rooted in the same spot.

I want to stress again that after the 1999 presidential election, it became obvious that a divided parliament with a Communist as Speaker would prove unacceptable and only serve to obstruct the reform agenda of the government. Had the Communists prevailed, they would have taken the country down the back road of political fatalism. Yet there are some who worry that the unfairness of winners hides the guilt of losers. I can only say that if the Leftists had won the election, we would not be asking these questions.

I am afraid that if the majority had allowed a Communist to remain as Speaker, it would have proved to be a temporary solution, similar to what will happen with the Duma. In the United States, it is possible for the Republicans to control the Congress and the other party to have the Presidency. This is possible because America has 200 years of experience working within a democratic system.

Our country does not have time to wait. For us, every day without enacting and implementing laws is a huge setback for a country that must accomplish so much in a critically short time. The majority knows that it is impossible to form a parliament without the opposition, and it is our intention to treat proposals from the opposition seriously. We have assumed political responsibility that gives us an opportunity to cooperate with the newly re-elected president who bears the main responsibility for society as a whole.

We recognize that it is the president who must provide the leadership and direct the institutions of government. Throughout the years of Ukraine's independence, there is not a single case when the three branches of power simultaneously worked together on behalf of Ukrainian citizens. Today we must take responsibility and are ready to be accountable for our actions.

Once again, we do not have time. The majority of Ukrainian citizens spoke very clearly in the recent election by giving President Kuchma a new four-year term. By this vote, they rejected the Communist Party and the idea of turning back to the old system where freedom and human rights did not exist.

The Communists, of course, feel threatened by the new democratic forces and their reform agenda. They do not want to relinquish power and recognize that a new generation of intelligent and resourceful leaders is taking charge. That is the promise of democracy and, if given a chance to succeed, the future of Ukraine in the new millennium.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to necessary medical treatment, I was not present for the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

April 3, 2000:

Rollcall vote 96, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1089, the Mutual Fund Tax Awareness Act, I would have voted ''yea.''

Rollcall vote 97, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3591, providing the gold medal to former President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy Reagan, I would have voted ''yea.''

April 4, 2000:

Rollcall vote 98, on agreeing to the LaHood amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted ''nay.''

Rollcall vote 99, on agreeing to the DeGette amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted ''yea.''

Rollcall vote 100, on agreeing to the Luther amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted ''nay.''

Rollcall vote 101, on passage of H.R. 2418, the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Amendments, I would have voted ''yea.''

THE TWO-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF EASTON, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the beginning of a New Millennium, we are reminded of the history and accomplishments of our forebears in past centuries who ''brought forth'' as President Lincoln said, ''on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.'' This year, 2000, also marks the Two-hundred and Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of Easton, Massachusetts, which shares a unique role in the Colonial and Civil War history of this great country. I acknowledge the monumental spirit of the citizens of Easton, and to recognize their many contributions to the growth and development of the United States, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

THE CONFEDERATE FLAG

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, there are a million reasons why the Confederate Flag should not be flying over any state capitol, comprise a part of any state flag, or be displayed in any place of honor or distinction. From its racist past to its polemic present, the one thing that can be stated unequivocally, is that today, the flag has become shrouded in an over-simplified, revisionist version of American history.''

''Claims that the flag represents a benign segment of Southern history, ruled by some sort of gentile charm and virtuous code of conduct, are patently offensive to every American whose ancestors were brutalized by the stinging pains of slavery or ostracized by its illegitimate progency, Jim Crow.''

''This legislation is intended to set the record straight. The Leaders of the Confederate States of America were traitors. Had they been allowed to succeed in their ultimate act of betrayal, they would have destroyed all of the principles and freedoms we hold dear as Americans. It is impossible to celebrate the Confederate Flag and simultaneously profess one's love of democracy. It is self-delusional to attribute equality, freedom and opportunity to the Confederacy when its treasonous acts would have destroyed all of these values—these American values.''

''As our nation tries to deal with rise in conspicuous acts of racial violence and hate, the one glaring fact with which we are frequently confronted is that we have not adequately and honestly dealt with our past. Once again, this resolution will be a constructive first step in starting that dialogue. I challenge one person who presently supports the flying of the Confederate flag to read the words contained in this legislation and say that the beliefs of the Confederacy, articulated in this bill, do not stand direct conflict with the principles we enjoy as one nation united and indivisible under God.''

''At the end of the day, this bill is about the true history of the flag flying over the Capitol building in South Carolina. It clarifies the symbolism connected with the battle flag contained in the Mississippi and Georgia state flags. At the end of the day, this legislation begs the question, 'Will we, as Americans, united and God-fearing, allow ourselves to posthumously give the Confederacy the divided nation they so desperately fought to create, or will we embrace the fundamental principles which presently govern the moral conscience of our nation and work toward a day