Of the 780,000 people currently living in Cyprus, there are about 65,000 to 80,000 Turkish Cypriots and about 100,000 Turks who have moved illegally to the island from Anatolia. A solution to the Cyprus problem has been elusive for more than a quarter-of-century with President Clinton raising the Cyprus issue in his State of the Union Address this year, the highest priority. It was the first time in 20 years that a president had mentioned the Cyprus question in that annual speech. Clinton, who has actively immersed himself in other international issues including Ireland and the Middle East, still has seven months remaining in office to push for a Cyprus settlement.

There are hopeful signs that the situation is improving. Devastating earthquakes that hit both Greece and Turkey last year resulted in both countries coming to the aid of victims. In Cyprus itself, Turkish and Greek Cypriots worked together to solve common issues, such as in the divided city of Nicosia when officials resolved sewage problems and other municipal issues. And hundreds of Turkish Cypriots are trying to have their blood tested to see if they could provide a bone marrow transplant for a six-year-old Greek Cypriot boy fighting leukemia. Another round of U.N.-sponsored talks aimed at reunifying the island will get underway July 5 in Geneva.

The European Union and the United States are pushing for a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, a framework to follow since it is a carefully worked out compromise which recognizes the current situation. Turkey, however, has remained intransigent in seeking an island with two separate and equal states, which is a wholly unaccept-able solution.

While Clerides is recognized internationally as the head of Cyprus, only Turkey has recognized the proclaimed "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" in the occupied area of the island headed by Rauf Denktash, who to date has refused to budge from his hard line. Compromise is needed. The U.N. plan is the framework to follow since it is a carefully constructed outline that both communities previously rejected, but the Turkish side keeps changing its position.

An eventual solution needs to include a complete demilitarization of the island, with the Turkish troops leaving and the illegal settlers returning to where they came from. Reunification also will allow both commun-ities to enjoy the benefits of EU membership since Cyprus is expected to join the organization within a few years.

Lellos Demetriades, the Greek Cypriot mayor of the town of Famagusta, recently said, "You can’t live next to each other and not talk." This is what is needed most at this time—constructive and substantive talks that will lead to a settlement of the Cyprus issue. As Defense Secretary Cohen points out, a resolution is needed sooner rather than later. Active leadership from the United States is needed now more than ever to solve this issue.

[From the Washington Times, June 6, 2000]

**KOSOVO'S ONGOING AGONIES (HARRY MOSKOS)**

Nato Secretary-General Lord Robertson took a walking tour this week to see for himself what it is like in Pristina after the allied war in Kosovo. Where he didn’t walk illustrates that nearly one year after NATO’s 78-day bombing of the Serb province that all is not well—or safe for the people living there.

Lord Robertson’s stroll took him down a central shopping street where he was met with cheers from civilians. He also toured parts of Kosovska but bypassed the northern, predominantly Serbian, part of the city.

Delays in the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Kosovo and Serbia. The United States and Europe have turned away the people and allowed the Serbs to ride on a high horse, the U.S.-led forces to act like faceless killing machines.

The conflict begins with the war on Serbia, which is improving.

It was the first time in 20 years that a president had mentioned the Cyprus question in that annual speech. Clinton, who has actively immersed himself in other international issues including Ireland and the Middle East, still has seven months remaining in office to push for a Cyprus settlement.

The European Union and the United States are pushing for a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, a framework to follow since it is a carefully worked out compromise which recognizes the current situation. Turkey, however, has remained intransigent in seeking an island with two separate and equal states, which is a wholly unaccept-able solution.

While Clerides is recognized internationally as the head of Cyprus, only Turkey has recognized the proclaimed "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" in the occupied area of the island headed by Rauf Denktash, who to date has refused to budge from his hard line. Compromise is needed. The U.N. plan is the framework to follow since it is a carefully constructed outline that both communities previously rejected, but the Turkish side keeps changing its position.

An eventual solution needs to include a complete demilitarization of the island, with the Turkish troops leaving and the illegal settlers returning to where they came from. Reunification also will allow both commun-ities to enjoy the benefits of EU membership since Cyprus is expected to join the organization within a few years.

Lellos Demetriades, the Greek Cypriot mayor of the town of Famagusta, recently said, "You can’t live next to each other and not talk." This is what is needed most at this time—constructive and substantive talks that will lead to a settlement of the Cyprus issue. As Defense Secretary Cohen points out, a resolution is needed sooner rather than later. Active leadership from the United States is needed now more than ever to solve this issue.

[From the Washington Times, June 6, 2000]
DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES — APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

SPEECH OF HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK OF CALIFORNIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Thursday, June 8, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4579) making ap-

propriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Service, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Chairman, reducing fraud and abuse in Medicare has been identified by the Majority Leader as a major initiative. The Budget Committee has a Medicare Fraud Task Force to look into ways to reduce Medicare fraud. The Ways and Means and Commerce Committee has held hearings on reducing Medicare fraud.

And yet, this bill would actually reduce already appropriated funds for lighting fraud and abuse in Medicare by $50 million. These funds were appropriated in advance when the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was enacted in 1996 and intended to fight Medicare fraud. This program has returned $17 for every dollar invested. Because of our fraud-fighting efforts, we have experienced the lowest growth in Medicare spending ever.

Obviously, the Appropriations Committee disagrees with the Majority Leader and other Committee Chairmen who want to reduce Medicare fraud. Instead, the Committee would reduce our anti-fraud efforts. Evidently, the Committee feels that there is not enough fraud in Medicare, so they grow.

Second, Mr. Chairman, the General Accounting Office and others have issued numerous reports recently about the alarming abuses and poor quality of care of senior citizens in nursing homes—the care of our mothers and fathers and our constituents. GAO said that one in four nursing homes actually harm our senior citizens or place them in danger of being harmed. The GAO recommended stronger enforcement of quality standards.

In Northern California, only 6 percent of nursing homes were found by State inspectors to be in full or substantial compliance with requirements. The President proposed additional funding to support a Nursing Home Initiative for enforcing nursing home standards more strictly.

Yet this bill would eliminate the funding for this Nursing Home Initiative. Obviously, the Appropriations Committee simply does not care what happens to our senior citizens in nursing homes. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

Mr. Chairman, I submit into the RECORD a letter sent to me by the National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform.

For FY 2001, the Administration proposed a major funding increase that would invest $701 million in improving oversight of nursing homes. It would include (1) training surveyors in effective inspection of nursing homes; (2) surveying nursing homes during evenings and weekends; and (3) surveying substantial facilities more frequently than now required. The Appropriations Committee proposed the lowest level of funding in history, virtually eliminating the initiative.

By passing an appropriations bill without funding for the Nursing Home Initiative, the House would be ignoring overwhelming evidence of harm to residents that is occurring because of lack of adequate enforcement. The 1998 GAO report on California nursing homes showed that one in three facilities has violations that cause either actual harm to residents or place them at risk for serious injury or death. This report launched the Nursing Home Initiative to address the poor care in nursing homes. We cannot abandon these efforts, which are now beginning to have an effect. Otherwise, we are abandoning the most vulnerable and frail population in this country who need protection from a strengthened enforcement system.

Sincerely,

SARAH GREENE BURGER, Executive Director.

STATEMENT ON A BILL TO AMEND TITLE II OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION'S PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR REPRESENTATION OF CLAIMANTS

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI OF CALIFORNIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to join Congressman CLAY SHAW, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, to introduce legislation regarding fees owed to attorneys who represent Social Security disability claimants. This bill would require the Social Security Administration to pay the attorney fees it owes in a timely fashion or else grant those attorneys an exemption from the administrative assessment that SSA charges in exchange for handling such fees.

Under current law, when an attorney successfully represents a Social Security disability claimant and that claimant is entitled to past-due benefits, SSA retains a portion of those past-due benefits in order to pay the attorney for the services he or she provided. Specifically, SSA withholds and certifies for direct payment to the claimant an amount equal to the lesser of 25 percent of the past-due benefits or the fee that SSA has previously authorized the attorney to charge his or her client. (Fees authorized by SSA may not exceed 25 percent of past-due benefits or $4,000, whichever is lower).

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS OF GEORGIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to honor Wesley Rhodes of Pineview, GA, Wesley, a student at Fullington Academy, was named a National Award Winner in Science. This special award recognizes fewer than ten percent of all American high school students. Wesley was recommended for the award by his teachers for his outstanding academic performance in science, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS OF GEORGIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to honor Wesley Rhodes of Pineview, GA, Wesley, a student at Fullington Academy, was named a National Award Winner in Science. This special award recognizes fewer than ten percent of all American high school students. Wesley was recommended for the award by his teachers for his outstanding academic performance in science, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS OF GEORGIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to honor Wesley Rhodes of Pineview, GA, Wesley, a student at Fullington Academy, was named a National Award Winner in Science. This special award recognizes fewer than ten percent of all American high school students. Wesley was recommended for the award by his teachers for his outstanding academic performance in science, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS OF GEORGIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to honor Wesley Rhodes of Pineview, GA, Wesley, a student at Fullington Academy, was named a National Award Winner in Science. This special award recognizes fewer than ten percent of all American high school students. Wesley was recommended for the award by his teachers for his outstanding academic performance in science, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS OF GEORGIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to honor Wesley Rhodes of Pineview, GA, Wesley, a student at Fullington Academy, was named a National Award Winner in Science. This special award recognizes fewer than ten percent of all American high school students. Wesley was recommended for the award by his teachers for his outstanding academic performance in science, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to restore funds for lighting Medicare fraud and for the Nursing Home Initiative.

As a result of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170), SSA is now required to impose an administrative assessment of 6.3 percent on all such fee payments to attorneys. Some maintain that this 6.3 percent assessment is necessary to cover the costs that SSA incurs in withholding and processing the fee payments. If this is indeed the case and the 6.3 percent assessment is simply compensation for services rendered, then it is not unreasonable to expect