

Roma in the OSCE region. Unfortunately, in the intervening months, relatively little progress has been made by government authorities in addressing the problems he described.

The Helsinki Commission, which I co-chair, receives so many reports on an almost daily basis which demonstrate the magnitude of the problems Roma face. We receive reports of Roma who are denied access to public places, like the three Roma who were turned away from a Warsaw restaurant last September 29, just before the OSCE convened its annual human rights meeting in that city. We receive reports of discrimination in housing, like the January 27 Hungarian television report that local authorities in Rabakoez, Hungary, have called for prohibiting the sale of real estate to Roma. We receive reports of police abuse, such as the repeated cases of unlawful police raids in Hermanovce, Slovakia. We receive reports of violent attacks, such as the assault on a Romani church in Leskovac, Serbia, at the beginning of this year.

Too often, courts are part of the problem, not the solution. Rather than providing a remedy for victims, they compound the abuse. Take a recent case from the Czech Republic. The Czech Supreme Court issued a ruling that a violent attack on a Romani man in 1999 was premeditated and organized, and then remanded the case back to the district court in Jesenik for sentencing in accordance with that finding. But the district court simply ignored the Supreme Court's finding and ordered four of the defendants released. I am hopeful that Slovak courts, which are currently weighing the fate of three of the defendants charged in last year's brutal murder of Anastazia Balazova, will do a better job of bringing her murderers to justice.

In a few places, there are some glimmers of hope. In Viden, Bulgaria, for example, the Romani organization Drom has led a successful effort to bring 400 Romani children, who previously attended segregated schools, into the mainstream school system. In that instance, the cooperation of local and national authorities, governmental and non-governmental bodies, is paying off.

Unfortunately, too few government leaders demonstrate the courage necessary to address these issues. Some pass the buck, looking to the European Union or the Council of Europe to fix problems that must be tackled, first and foremost, through political leadership at home. Moreover, a number of EU countries have little to teach the applicant countries about tolerance towards Roma. Many OSCE countries—not just the former Communist states—are in need of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws, a priority recognized in the 1999 OSCE summit agreement and by the European Commission in the adoption of its "race directive" in June of last year. Regrettably, nearly two years after Bulgaria received praise from many quarters for agreeing to adopt such legislation, the government is not one step closer to fulfilling its commitment. The Slovak Government's human rights office, in contrast, has undertaken a serious study of legislative options and may soon have a draft ready for a vote.

In addition, it is imperative that political and civic leaders condemn anti-Roma manifestations in clear and unequivocal terms.

Mr. Speaker, when the Mayor of Csor, Hungary—a publicly elected official—said "the

Roma of Zamoly have no place among human beings; just as in the animal world, parasites must be expelled," I believe it is the responsibility of Hungary's political leadership to condemn these outrageous slurs. If more leadership was demonstrated, perhaps confidence would have been strengthened and maybe 5,772 Hungarian Roma would not have applied for asylum in Canada over the past three years.

When the Mayor of Usti nad Labem built a wall to segregate Roma from non-Roma, all members of the Czech parliament—not just a paper slim majority of 101 out of 200 MPs—should have voted to condemn it. And when Mayor Sechelariu of Bacau, Romania, announced plans to build a statue of Marshall Antonescu—the World War II dictator who deported 25,000 Roma to Transnistria, where some 19,000 of them perished—Romanian officials, who have pledged to the OSCE community to fight intolerance, should begin at home by ridding their country of every Antonescu statue built on public land.

IN SUPPORT OF LONG BEACH
NAVY CREW MEMBER DETAINED
IN CHINA

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I know my fellow Members of Congress join me in calling for the safe return home of the 24 American servicemen and women currently being detained in China after their surveillance plane made an emergency landing in Chinese territory when they collided with a Chinese fighter jet. Our hearts and our prayers go out to these young men and women and their families.

One of those crew members is a young man from the district I represent. His name is Josef Edmunds and he is from Long Beach. Perhaps China does not realize how profoundly concerned all Americans are about the well-being of their service men and women. On behalf of Josef Edmunds and his family, I submit this article that appeared in today's edition of the Long Beach Press-Telegram expressing the personal concern and uncertainty that this family—like all the others—is experiencing as a result of this incident.

Mr. Speaker, my fellow Members of Congress and I urge the Chinese government to immediately release our service men and women so that they may return home safely.

L.B. FAMILY OF CREW MEMBER FULL OF HOPE
(By Wendy Thomas Russell)

Long Beach.—Josef Edmunds, one of 24 Navy crew members being held in China since their surveillance plane made an emergency landing Sunday, was described by his Long Beach mother as "a very courageous young man" captivated by "the idea of putting on a uniform and standing up for his country."

"I think," Amanda De Jesus said Tuesday, "he's always had a little streak of heroism." De Jesus and her husband, Alfredo, said they were waiting anxiously but patiently for contact from Edmunds, a 30-year-old cryptographer and Chinese interpreter.

"It's just a waiting game," said Alfredo De Jesus, a teacher at La Estrella Argentine Tango and Dance School in Long Beach. "We

have high hopes that it's going to be over soon without any duress to him at least that's what we hope."

Edmunds and his crewmates have been kept at a military base on China's Hainan Island since Sunday, when their surveillance plane was forced to land after colliding mid-air with a Chinese jet fighter. The crew is safe, but U.S. officials have expressed concern that the Chinese may have gained insight into classified surveillance systems by tampering with the plane's equipment.

"I really don't worry that much" about the safety of crew members, Alfredo De Jesus said, "because I know that they're not going to be abused, and it's just a political game. It's just politics."

Amanda De Jesus said she moved to Long Beach about five years ago, after both her sons had grown, but Edmunds still visits her here when he's on leave.

She said she was caught off guard when she got the phone call from the Navy on Sunday; she didn't have a clue that Edmunds would be on a plane over China in the first place. The Navy immediately told her that Edmunds was safe, however, so there was no time for panic.

Edmunds, who is stationed in Japan, joined the Navy about eight years ago, shortly after the birth of his first daughter, Sierra. He had been living with his wife in Davis, near Sacramento, and holding down three jobs at the time, his mother said.

The first job was at a car dealership, the second at a pizza place, and "I don't even remember what the third job was," she said.

One day, Edmunds dropped everything and walked into a recruiter's office.

His colorblind eyes ruled out any chance of being a Navy pilot, so he chose an area well-known in his family: foreign-language interpretation.

His mother once taught French and Spanish, and his aunt is a Russian interpreter for the Air Force who also speaks fluent French and German.

Edmunds' hereditary language skills paid off. He learned Chinese and Cambodian and was transferred to several bases before landing in Japan.

Edmunds is now divorced with four children three of whom, ages 8, 7 and 5, still live in Northern California. The fourth, a son, is only about 6 months old and lives with Edmunds' girlfriend in Texas, Amanda De Jesus said.

"He's a great guy," Edmunds' stepfather said. "He's really a good-spirited person. He's the kind of guy that you make friends with just in the moment. He really is."

Despite the stressful situation in China, Amanda De Jesus said she knows her son is acting courageously.

"He's always been gutsy," she said.

Once, while stationed in Texas, Edmunds was among a group of military men who volunteered hours and hours of their time to help people rebuild their tornado-torn houses after their military shifts had ended. He was given an award for his work, his mother said.

Edmunds told his friends that his mother would be "upset to know that he was working for no money."

"But no," she said softly. "I was proud of him."

ON H. RES. 91 AND H. RES. 56

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was unable to speak on the floor yesterday when