

TURKEY-ARMENIA
NORMALIZATION

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to hail the efforts underway to heal past wounds between the Republics of Turkey and Armenia.

For several years, the two countries have quietly been meeting, with the assistance of Switzerland, to come to an agreement to normalize diplomatic relations and open the borders between Armenia and Turkey. I am quite pleased that these negotiations have been fruitful. I also encourage the two countries to continue to work together to finish the process quickly since it will not only benefit the citizens of these two countries, but the region and the world as well.

I would like to put into the RECORD an article by Hugh Pope from the International Crisis Group who calls this recent action by Turkey and Armenia as taking, ". . . a brave and statesmanlike step.

Like the International Crisis Group, I too am optimistic that these efforts will lead to greater stabilization of the region and am proud to stand here today and congratulate the governments of Armenia and Turkey on their efforts to date and offer our friendship and help as they move on to the next steps in the process.

THE EU-TURKEY-CYPRUS TRIANGLE: "TURKEY AND ARMENIA VOW TO HEAL PAST WOUNDS", BY HUGH POPE

1 SEPTEMBER 2009

It's been a long time coming, but Turkey and Armenia's vow on 31 August to establish diplomatic relations, open their long-closed border and begin to talk seriously about the past is excellent news. As laid out in our 14 April report *Turkey and Armenia: Opening Minds, Opening Borders*, normalization between Turkey and Armenia will benefit not just the bilateral relationship. If successful, it could win back for Turkey and its AKP government much of their recently faded prestige as domestic reformers, as regional peace-makers and as a country seriously intending to push forward with its accession process to the European Union.

The brief joint announcement from Ankara, Yerevan and the Swiss mediators in Bern said that two protocols had been initialed on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the development of bilateral relations. The two sides committed to seeing the protocols through to parliamentary ratifications within six weeks—that is, two days before a 14 October World Cup qualifier match between Armenia and Turkey due to be played in the western Turkish provincial city of Bursa. Turkey hopes that Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian will accept its invitation to attend, just as Turkish President Abdullah Gill initiated the current process by attending the first round match in Yerevan in September 2008.

Texts of the two protocols circulating in Turkey and Armenia set out a fully rounded and reasonable plan. In a "Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations" the two sides promised to establish diplomatic relations on the first day of the first month after ratification; to exchange diplomatic missions; to reopen the border within two months of ratification; and to mutually recognize the existing border. In a "Protocol on Development of Relations"—to go into effect

simultaneously with the diplomatic opening—the two sides promised to promote cooperation in all areas from energy infrastructure to tourism; to set up a mechanism of regular foreign ministry consultations, including a main intergovernmental commission and seven sub-commissions; to act jointly to preserve the cultural heritage of both sides; and to establish consular cooperation. The protocols are accompanied by a detailed timetable, in which all steps and commissions would be fully implemented and in motion within four months.

On the vexed question of how to describe the Ottoman-era massacres of Armenians in the First World War—widely known as the Armenian genocide, a label rejected by Turkey—the "Protocol on Development of Relations" agreed to "implement a dialogue on the historical dimension with the aim to restore mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations." The timetable adds that this dialogue will be conducted under the aegis of the main intergovernmental commission in a "sub-commission on the historical dimension . . . in which Armenian, Turkish as well as Swiss and other international experts shall take part."

In short, Turkey and Armenia have taken a brave and statesmanlike step. Both will win if it succeeds. Armenia will overcome the sense that it is surrounded and under siege, will open a new commercial and psychological gateway westward to Europe, will be able to look better after the interests of the many tens of thousands of Armenians working in Turkey, will be able to market its electricity surplus and have easier access to the many Armenian cultural and religious sites in eastern Turkey. For Turkey, the gains are just as significant: the ability to show European and Western partners that it is working toward closure with Armenians on the contested matter of the First World War massacres; to add a new plank in its efforts to bring stability, prosperity and cooperation through relations with all three of its Caucasus neighbours; and, finally, to achieve the satisfaction of full and public Armenian recognition of its borders.

The 31 August step towards normalisation was originally expected in April, but Turkey backed away from the deal. All that could be announced on 22 April 2009 was a vague road map. This hesitation was apparently due to pressure from Azerbaijan—a major supplier of cheap gas to Turkey, and with which Turkey shares close linguistic ties—and continued nationalist opposition to compromise with Armenia inside the Turkish political system. This coincided with a period in Turkey in which reforms towards EU accession had virtually halted; in which Prime Minister Erdoğan appeared disengaged with EU ambitions and to be pursuing alternatives in Russia and the Middle East; and in which Turkey appeared to be taking sides in Middle Eastern issues, with notably harsh criticism of Israel. Turkey also appeared to side fully with Azerbaijan against Armenia, and it remains unclear what will happen to Erdoğan's 14 May promise to the Azerbaijani National Assembly that there would be no opening of the Armenia-Turkey border until there is an Armenian withdrawal from occupied Azerbaijani territory.

The news that normalisation with Armenia is back on track, therefore, is a signal that Turkey may be changing direction again. In

the past few months, Turkey and the AKP leadership have also begun to push hard for progress on two other difficult dossiers, coming to terms with the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq and firmly setting out a framework of reconciliation with its own substantial Kurdish community. Progress towards Turkey-Armenia normalisation has also been helped by the unusual way that the US and Russia appear to have been working separately toward a similar compromise outcome, and pushing more actively for progress toward a settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno Karabakh.

The fact that Turkey is now leaning back towards a reconciliation with Armenia will do much to clear doubts about the country's posture and the priorities of Prime Minister Erdoğan. It will also do proper credit to the polls that showed 70 per cent of the Turkish population supported President Gü's gesture of visiting Armenia for last September's first round football match, and the great strides Turkey's intellectual and political elites have taken in the past decade to dismiss the old-fashioned narrative of nationalist denial towards the catastrophic Armenian massacres of 1915. Normalisation with Armenia will also give real substance to new Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's stated goals of "zero problems" and "peace in the neighbourhood".

However, while reconciliation with Armenia will rightly attract great positive attention in Europe, the next test will not be long in coming. Turkey has to find a way to expedite a solution to the long-running Cyprus solution in the next several months, or see its EU accession process effectively grind to a halt.

HONORING REVEREND ANNABELLE
MCKUNE

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, Reverend Annabelle McKune was born in Brooklyn, New York on November 16th, 1924. The youngest of Francinia and Joseph Stanley's six children, she and her siblings Elizabeth, Louise, Eleanora, Vivian and Joseph, Jr. were raised with strong Christian values at Evening Star Baptist church. Reverend McKune was educated in Brooklyn Public Schools attending P.S. 25, P.S. 3 and graduating from Sarah J. Hale High School.

Her appreciation of music and dance led to her meeting her first husband, the late Micah Diego Chandler at the Savoy Ballroom. They were married in 1941 and the union produced two sons, the late Micah Diego Jr., and Paul Fitzgerald Chandler. Known for her strong work ethic, commitment and tender touch, Reverend McKune worked at several city hospitals, including Baptist Medical Center.

She met her second husband, Reverend Earl McKune at West Baptist Church where they both served as deacons. They were married in 1952 and together, they went on to found Christ Memorial, St. Marks Baptist Church and Fellowship Baptist Church. Following her calling, she became an Evangelist, and later, became the first woman ordained at Fellowship Baptist Church.

After 48 years of marriage, Reverend Earl McKune passed and although she remained a faithful member of Brooklyn's Fellowship Baptist church, she relocated to Florida in August

2008 and served as an Elder in New Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

Annabelle returned to New York in June 2009 and passed on the morning of August 1st, 2009. She will be remembered as a visionary who believed deeply in her work in the ministry. Her family and friends will remember her great culinary skills, her sense of style, her willingness to listen and her quick wit. Her legacy will live on through her children Donna, Sylvia, Eartha Lee, William, Bobby, Cynthia, Valerie, Yvonne, Jeffery and his wife Patricia and Paul and his wife Gloria. She is also survived by 14 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, a host of loving god-children and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL
RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. PAUL C. BROUN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes:

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3221, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009. I oppose this bill because, as the nonpartisan CBO has reported, it will cost taxpayers more than \$15 billion over 10 years. And it could also eliminate as many as 30,000 private-sector jobs.

In fact, H.R. 3221 will eliminate choice, competition, and innovation, while growing government and increasing the deficit. This bill will eliminate choice and competition by ending the Federal Family Education Loan Program and giving the Federal Government a monopoly over student aid financing.

This bill will also reduce innovation and grow the government by expanding mandatory and entitlement spending by billions of dollars.

When will the massive spending and Federal takeover end?

Congress should not be growing government and increasing the debt burden on taxpayers. It has no business putting taxpayers on the hook for defaulted student loans when the private sector would gladly bear this risk.

As Herbert Hoover once said, "blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt." That is a sad truth. We should be working to lessen that burden, not take away their choices and reduce their chances to succeed.

Parents, college presidents, and financial aid professionals are against this takeover. They are the experts on this issue because they are the ones that have to foot the bill. I urge my colleagues to hear them and vote no on this legislation.

HONORING GAIL-BURNS SMITH

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and achievements of

Gail Burns-Smith, a tireless advocate for victims of sexual assault and abuse. When Gail passed away unexpectedly on September 5th, our country lost an unspoken hero for women everywhere.

As the Executive Director of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services for twenty-two years, Gail drew critical attention to the prevalence of sexual abuse and the need to end assault and support its victims. She successfully secured federal funding for organizations working to end sexual abuse and assist victims and was instrumental in passing numerous laws in Connecticut that work to protect our residents against assault. A leader in her field, Gail recognized early on the need for collaboration between victim advocates and sex offender treatment providers.

On the national level, Gail worked with the Center for Treatment of Problem Sexual Behavior to develop the first Victim Advocate Program for sex offender treatment, which became recognized as the national model for such programs. She cofounded the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, an organization that helped to secure passage of the National Violence Against Women Act. Gail also helped to establish the national Women of Color Leadership Project which evolved into the nonprofit Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA).

While we have made great strides thanks to champions like Gail, the work to protect and support sexual assault victims is not over. Today, nearly one in five Connecticut residents has experienced a sexual assault. Twenty-six percent of Connecticut women and 10 percent of Connecticut men are sexual assault survivors. Further, many sexual assault treatment centers are experiencing dramatic cuts to their funding and have become limited in their outreach efforts. Just as Gail did, we must continue to champion efforts to end sexual assault and provide help and compassion to victims. She was a true role model and will be dearly missed.

CONGRATULATING THE MINORITY
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
ON ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

SPEECH OF

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 215, a resolution congratulating the Minority Business Development Agency on its 40th anniversary and commending its achievements in fostering the establishment and growth of minority businesses in the United States. I know in my own district MBDA is an integral part of the economic development of Orlando. In fiscal year 2008, the MBDA Florida Minority Business Opportunity Center (MBOC) in Orlando helped minority businesses get \$13.6 million in contracts and \$29 million in financial transactions.

This year in 2009, one of their local success stories includes APC Workforce Solutions, a contract labor, acquisition and management company. With the assistance of the MBDA Florida Minority Business Opportunity Center, APC recently received a three-year renewable

\$45 million per year contract from Sunoco, Inc. to provide staffing services. The contract is that resulted in the creation of 30 new jobs.

MBDA and its network of centers across the country are helping businesses like APC every day. That's why last year MBDA helped minority businesses get over \$1 billion worth of contracts, \$1 billion worth of financial transactions that helped create more than 5,300 jobs across the country. In this tough economy, agencies like MBDA are helping minority-owned firms succeed and Congress needs to do a better job of recognizing the important job MBDA has been doing over the past 40 years. I am ashamed to say that MBDA was overlooked in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and there was no specific language in ARRA for minority businesses.

In 2050, the minority community will represent 54 percent of the total U.S. population. It is imperative to the continued strength of the U.S. economy to provide for the growth and expansion of minority businesses. The nation is failing to reap the benefits of economic parity through the creation of 16 million jobs, generating \$2.5 trillion in gross receipts and an unrealized tax base of more than \$100 billion per year. Congress must do more to help the minority business community.

I like to say when America has a cold, the African-American community has pneumonia. Right now, Congress is ignoring the long-term health of our economy by ignoring the needs of minority businesses.

Minority-owned firms are in the position to generate long-term employment and economic sustainability in their communities. Minority firms provide nearly 5 million people with steady jobs and create wealth in minority communities. They create jobs, impact local and state economies and pursue global market-places

MBDA's long term strategic direction is achieving economic parity for minority firms. Economic parity is a benchmark measured by the proportion of U.S. business owned by minorities being roughly equal to the percent of their population. MBDA is focused on creating a new generation of \$100 million dollar minority businesses creating the foundation that helps to close the gap in annual revenues between minority-owned firms and non-minority owned firms. At economic parity, the diverse business community will be larger than the economies of Russia, Italy or Spain. At economic parity, we reduce the unemployment rate from the current level of about 9.4 percent to 7.5 percent. At economic parity, the tax-base that is generated could fund 100 percent of Head Start, 100 percent of State Children's Health Insurance Program or a full 10 percent of the cost estimate to reform healthcare.

In closing, I'd like to again congratulate the Minority Business Development Agency on their 40th Anniversary and reiterate the importance of minority businesses to the economy.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL
RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under