The Turkish government and media have stirred up nationalistic passions against Mr. Ocalan. If the Turkish government stands with legally railroading Mr. Ocalan and the threat to hang him is carried out, the result would be disastrous for all the people of the region. Yet interestingly enough, the trial of Mr. Ocalan has created a potentially positive and long overdue opening towards reconciliation between the Turkish and Kurdish peoples.

Standing in the dock at his show trial, Mr. Ocalan made a brave plea for a negotiated, Democratic solution to the Kurdish question. Mr. Ocalan’s organization, the Kurdish workers’ party known as the PKK, has announced its support for Mr. Ocalan’s peace offer. With the media attention that the trial is attracting, putting the Kurdish issue in the spotlight to an almost unprecedented degree, Turkey could vastly improve its international standing by simply agreeing to begin negotiations, the decent and the smart thing to do from a number of issues, notes that the Turkish policy of relentless military and political attack on the Kurdish movement dooms Turkey to a conflict that sets it at odds with the human Democratic values of the western nations whose company it most values.

The Government of Turkey’s undeclared war against the Kurdish people is a cycle that must be broken. It is a cycle that must be broken on its ongoing war against the Kurds. It is a cycle that must be broken on its ongoing war against the Kurds. It is a cycle that must be broken on its ongoing war against the Kurds.

In the meantime, Turkey’s economic development, levels of education, infrastructure, development and standard of living, lag far behind European standards while scarce resources are squandered on its ongoing war against the Kurds. It is a cycle that must be broken.

As The Washington Post editorial concludes, “Friends of Turkey must hope it can muster the courage to broaden its perspective and to conduct an honest exploration of the Ocalan initiative.”

Mr. Speaker, two recent articles in the New York Times suggest unfortu-