

expressing its support for a unified Cyprus. Over the past several months, it has been particularly forceful in expressing its support and desire for successful proximity talks leading to a comprehensive negotiated settlement. These include strong statements from the European Union, leaders of the G-8 nations, the United Nations Security Council, the Clinton Administration and the U.S. Congress.

The people of Cyprus have suffered too long. A lasting and comprehensive solution, one based on international law and democratic principles, can and must be negotiated.

Twenty-six years ago, on July 20th, Turkey invaded Cyprus. As a result, an estimated 35,000 heavily armed Turkish troops continue to occupy 37 percent of Cyprus' territory.

I hope that this year, the beginning of the new millennium, a new anniversary will be created. It will be the year when the breakthrough happens and the people of Cyprus are blessed with peace, security, reconciliation and a single democratic sovereignty.

COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today we are observing a tragic occasion, the invasion of Cyprus by Turkish troops. I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) who has, over the years, made certain that the House does not fail to observe the events of July 1974, the tragic consequences of which still persist today, more than a quarter of a century later.

The occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish troops which began some 26 years ago has turned into one of the most vexing problems of the international community, confounding the efforts of five presidents, four U.N. Secretaries General, and many of the world's top diplomats, including our own.

Late last year, we finally saw the first faint signs of hope when Rauf Denktash, a Turkish Cypriot leader, decided after more than 2 years of stonewalling, to agree to participate in U.N.-sponsored proximity talks with President Clerides, the Greek Cypriot leader. A few days ago, the third round of those talks resumed in Geneva. Although they have recessed until later this month, the good news is that they are going to continue, and further rounds for the fall of this year are also scheduled.

But mere talks alone do not achieve any resolution of this issue. We need to see substantive discussions with real progress being made.

It is gratifying that this summer, we have had two young people from Cyprus serving as interns with our Committee on International Relations. They have given their personal view-

point, providing some convincing evidence to us that a resolution of the Cyprus problem is very possible, if sufficient political will is brought about by both sides. Greek Cypriot President Clerides has over the years demonstrated that kind of will. We must, therefore, look to Mr. Denktash and to Ankara. There is, thankfully, a new dynamic at play, which is the European Union's accession talks with Cyprus and the prospective candidacy for EU membership that was extended to Turkey by the EU just late last year.

Membership in the European Community is now at hand for Cyprus; and with all of that, it entails cementing a peaceful and prosperous future for the Cypriot people. Likewise, Turkey, in order to demonstrate its own commitment to the peaceful democratic values that lie at the core of the European Union, must decide whether it wants to play a positive role in resolving the Cyprus dispute, or a divisive one.

Mr. Speaker, when I first came to the Congress some 28 years ago, Cyprus was one of the first international crises in which I became involved as a member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs, as it was then labeled. It is one of the most frustrating facts that I have faced as I look back on that now, after a quarter of a century during which we have seen the collapse of communism in Europe, greater peace in the Middle East, a possible settlement in Northern Ireland, and conflicts resolved in the Balkan tinderbox, but no movement on Cyprus.

Accordingly, we call upon our State Department and our President to continue to place the highest priority on working with the Turkish Government and all parties in Cyprus to produce results in this ongoing U.N. negotiation.

I have conferred with our special envoy to Cyprus, Al Moses; and I know that he is committed to achieving success, but he needs to have the continued backing of high officials, including our President. With such support, I am confident we can produce the outcome that we have all been seeking for so long, a reunified Cyprus and a peaceful and prosperous future for all of the Cypriot people.

TURKEY AND CYPRUS: THE TIME FOR PEACE IS NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 1 minute.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on International Relations for his statement and for his long-standing support and leadership in educating us all on this issue.

I rise today to join him and other colleagues, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who will follow,

in acknowledging this tragic invasion of Cyprus by the government of Turkey.

We are here, as we heard the Chairman say, for the 26th anniversary of the hostile assault on Cyprus which unlawfully led to the declaration of independence by the Turkish Cypriots.

Mr. Speaker, time and time again, Turkey has violated international law, imposing a systematic campaign of harassment and intimidation in the occupied areas. This has led to severe problems such as internally displaced refugees, violations of human rights, and the disappearance of over 1,400 Greek Cypriots.

Mr. Speaker, Turkey is our ally. We give them military aid and other forms of assistance. It is about time that we demanded that this ally comply with the United Nations and end this deplorable crisis.

The time for peace is now.

THE BEST OF TIMES AND THE WORST OF TIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized during morning hour debates for 2 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is the best of times and the worst of times.

In 1993, it was somewhat the worst situation in this country in terms of overspending and debt. We had a \$250 billion deficit every year, as far as the budgeters could project. Earlier this year in January, CBO and OMB predicted there was going to be a \$26 billion on-budget surplus next year—a \$28 billion surplus this year. Yesterday, they predicted a tremendous increase in tax revenues, almost three times the amount in terms of on-budget surplus this year for an estimated \$84 billion. Next year, they are projecting \$102 billion surplus. Our economy has been growing now for 18 years—steadily for the last 10 years.

But remember, back in 1993 the Clinton administration and the Democrats made a decision that we should increase taxes in order to have deficit reduction. They passed the largest tax increase in history, \$250 billion. As it turned out, half of that money was used to expand domestic social program spending. The other half used to reduce borrowing.

If the goal of that huge tax increase was to have a smaller deficit and now we are looking at a projection of \$4.6 trillion to \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years with the unified budget, it is time to give back some of that tax increase. Let us reduce that 4.3 cent gas tax increase passed. Let us rescind and reduce the extra Social Security tax that was also part of that 1993 tax increase.