

Lukashenka National Assembly given serious irregularities in Belarus' 2000 parliamentary elections. In light of the expiration of the mandate of the democratically elected 13th Supreme Soviet, no delegation from the Republic of Belarus was seated.

The inaugural ceremony included a welcoming addresses by the OSCE PA President Adrian Severin, Speaker of the National Assembly, Raymond Forni and the Speaker of the Senate, Christian Poncelet. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hubert Védrine also addressed delegates during the opening plenary. The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana, presented remarks and responded to questions from the floor.

Presentations were also made by several other senior OSCE officials, including the OSCE Secretary General, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

The 2001 OSCE PA Prize for Journalism and Democracy was presented to the widows of the murdered journalists José Luis López de Lacalle of Spain and Georgiy Gongadze of Ukraine. The Spanish and Ukrainian journalists were posthumously awarded the prize for their outstanding work in furthering OSCE values.

Members of the U.S. delegation played a leading role in debate in each of the Assembly's three General Committees—Political Affairs and Security; Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment; and Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions. U.S. sponsored resolutions served as the focal point for discussion on such timely topics as "Combating Corruption and International Crime in the OSCE Region," a resolution I sponsored; "Southeastern Europe," by Senator VOINOVICH; "Prevention of Torture, Abuse, Extortion or Other Unlawful Acts" and "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings," by Mr. Smith; "Freedom of the Media," by Mr. HOYER; and, "Developments in the North Caucasus," by Mr. CARDIN.

Senator HUTCHISON played a particularly active role in debate over the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, chaired by Mr. HASTINGS, which focused on the European Security and Defense Initiative.

An amendment I introduced in the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment on promoting social, educational and economic opportunity for indigenous peoples won overwhelming approval, making it the first ever such reference to be included in an OSCE PA declaration. Other U.S. amendments focused on property restitution laws, sponsored by Mr. CARDIN, and adoption

of comprehensive non-discrimination laws, sponsored by Mr. HOYER.

Amendments by members of the U.S. delegation on the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions focused on the plight of Roma, by Mr. SMITH; citizenship, by Mr. HOYER; and Nazi-era compensation and restitution, and religious liberty, by Ms. SLAUGHTER. Delegation members also took part in debate on the abolition of the death penalty, an issue raised repeatedly during the Assembly and in discussions on the margins of the meeting.

While in Paris, members of the delegation held an ambitious series of meetings, including bilateral sessions with representatives from the Russian Federation, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, and Kazakhstan. Members met with the President of the French National Assembly to discuss diverse issues in U.S.-French relations including military security, agricultural trade, human rights and the death penalty. A meeting with the Romanian Foreign Minister included a discussion of the missile defense initiative, policing in the former Yugoslavia, and international adoption policy.

Staff of the U.S. Embassy provided members with an overview of U.S.-French relations. Members also attended a briefing by legal experts on developments affecting the right of individuals to profess and practice their religion or belief. A session with representatives of U.S. businesses operating in France and elsewhere in Europe provided members with insight into the challenges of today's global economy.

Elections for officers of the Assembly were held during the final plenary. Mr. Adrian Severin of Romania was re-elected President. Senator Jeremiah Graftstein of Canada was elected Treasurer. Three of the Assembly's nine Vice-Presidents were elected to three-year terms: Alcee Hastings, U.S.A., Kimmo Kiljunen, Finland, and Ahmet Tan, Turkey. The Assembly's Standing Committee agreed that the Eleventh Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be held next July in Berlin, Germany.

WOMEN AND GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, just last year the Congress passed and President Clinton signed into law the Violence Against Women Act of 2000. The law instituted welcome changes in Federal criminal law relating to stalking, domestic abuse and sex offense cases. In addition, VAWA 2000 created programs to prevent sexual assaults on college campuses, establish transitional housing for victims of domestic abuse and enhance protections for elderly and disabled victims of domestic violence.

The importance of the Violence Against Women Act should not be un-

derestimated. However, if we are to comprehensively address this issue, we cannot ignore the impact of gun violence on women. According to studies cited by the Violence Policy Center, in 1998, in homicides where the weapon was known, 50 percent of female homicide victims were killed with a firearm. Of those murdered women, more than three quarters were killed with a handgun. And that same year, for every one time that a woman used a handgun to kill in self-defense, 101 women were murdered by a handgun.

While the firearms industry markets gun to women—asserting that owning a gun will make women safer—the statistics support the point made by Karen Brock, an analyst with the Violence Policy Center, "Handguns don't offer women protection; they guarantee peril."

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred February 21, 1997 in Atlanta, GA. A bomb exploded at a gay nightclub and another bomb was found outside the club during the investigation. Packed with nails, the bomb exploded in the rear patio section of the lounge shortly before 10 p.m. Two people were treated for injuries resulting from the flying shrapnel. An extremist group called "Army of God" claimed responsibility for the bomb.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE HMONG SPECIAL GUERRILLA UNITS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this weekend members of the Lao-Hmong American Coalition, Michigan Chapter, their friends and supporters will gather in my home State of Michigan to pay tribute to thousands of courageous Hmongs who selflessly fought alongside of and in support of the United States military during the Vietnam War. The efforts of the Hmong Special Guerrilla Units were unknown to the American public during the conflict in Vietnam, and the 6th Annual Commemoration of the U.S. Lao-Hmong Special Guerrilla Units Veterans Recognition Day is part

of the important effort to acknowledge the role played by the Hmong people in this war.

Ms. STABENOW. My colleague from Michigan is correct in stating that Hmong Special Guerrilla Units played an important role in assisting US efforts in the Vietnam conflict, often times at great sacrifice to themselves. From 1961 to 1975 it is estimated that about 25,000 young Hmong men and boys were fighting the Communist Lao and North Vietnamese. The Hmong Special Guerrilla Units were known as the United States' Secret Army, and their valiant efforts ensured the safety and survival of countless U.S. soldiers.

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator is correct. Hmong Special Guerrilla Units actively supported the United States, and risked great loss of life to save downed United States pilots and protect our troops. While the Special Guerrilla Units may have operated in secret, their efforts, courage and sacrifices have been kept secret for far too long. The word Hmong means "free people," and celebrations such as this commemoration will raise awareness of the loyalty, bravery and independence exhibited by the Hmong people.

Ms. STABENOW. It is important that the sacrifices made by the Hmong people are honored by all Americans. These rugged people, from the hills of Laos, paid a great cost because of their love of freedom and their support of the United States. It is estimated that over 40,000 Hmong died during the Vietnam War. Thousands more were forced to flee to refugee camps, and approximately 60,000 Hmongs immigrated to United States.

Mr. LEVIN. As the Senator from Michigan knows, thousands of Hmongs immigrated to the United States after the Vietnam War. The transition to life in the United States has not always been easy, but the Hmong community has grown and is prospering. There are nearly 200,000 Hmong in the United States, and many of them live in our home State of Michigan. It is important that those who fought in the Special Guerrilla Units are honored for their actions. These units, like all those who served the cause of freedom, must know that we appreciate the great sacrifices made by the Special Guerrilla Units.

Ms. STABENOW. I would concur with my good friend that events such as the 6th Annual Commemoration of U.S. Lao-Hmong Special Guerrilla Units Veterans Recognition Day play an important role in honoring these courageous veterans. This celebration will also educate future generations of Americans about the sacrifices made by this independent and freedom loving people. I know that my Senate colleagues will join me, and my colleague from the State of Michigan, in commending the Hmong Special Guerrilla Units for their bravery, sacrifice, and commitment to freedom.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, July 18, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,712,502,926,348.50, five trillion, seven hundred twelve billion, five hundred two million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand, three hundred forty-eight dollars and fifty cents.

One year ago, July 18, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,680,376,000,000, five trillion, six hundred eighty billion, three hundred seventy-six million.

Five years ago, July 18, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,168,794,000,000, five trillion, one hundred sixty-eight billion, seven hundred ninety-four million.

Ten years ago, July 18, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,546,904,000,000, three trillion, five hundred forty-six billion, nine hundred four million.

Fifteen years ago, July 18, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,070,143,000,000, two trillion, seventy billion, one hundred forty-three million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$3.5 trillion, \$3,642,359,926,348.50, three trillion, six hundred forty-two billion, three hundred fifty-nine million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand, three hundred forty-eight dollars and fifty cents during the past 15 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DONNA CENTRELLA

• Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Donna Centrella, a very special woman whom I met 2 years ago during my campaign in New York. Donna died on Monday after a long, brave battle with ovarian cancer.

I first met Donna in September 1999, when I visited Massena Memorial Hospital in Massena, NY. Donna had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer in August, but did not have health insurance to cover her treatment. Miraculously, she found a doctor who would treat her without insurance and she was able to afford care through a variety of State programs.

Perhaps even more astounding was her doctor's statement that she was actually better off without managed care coverage because he could better treat her that way. Without HMO constraints, they were free to make the decisions about the best procedures to follow for her treatment and care—her doctor could keep her in the hospital as long as needed and he would not have to get preapproval for surgery.

I have retold Donna's unbelievable story many times since meeting this extraordinary woman. Hers is a story that underscores the profound need in this country for immediate reform of the way we provide health coverage to our citizens. We owe it to patients like Donna to sign patients protections into

law as soon as possible to ensure that we can provide the best medical treatment possible to everyone who needs it.

We have lost an ally, but I have faith that we will not lose the fight for greater patient protections. It saddens me greatly that Donna will not be here to see it happen. She was an amazing soul whose determination and strength we'll never forget.●

TRIBUTE TO LANCE CPL. SEAN M. HUGHES

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Lance Cpl. Sean Hughes of Milton, NH, who gave his life for our country on July 10, 2001, when a Marine Corps helicopter participating in a training exercise went down in Sneads Ferry, NC.

Sean was a graduate of Nute High School in Milton, NH. He joined the Marine Corps on July 14, 1999, following the military tradition of his father and grandfather who both served as members of the United States Air Force. An extremely talented and highly intelligent Crew Chief with Marine Helicopter Squadron 365, Sean will always be remembered as the little boy who enjoyed watching planes take off and land at the flight line with his father.

An artist, athlete, and committed Marine, friends each remember him as an exceptional person with a gentle heart. Those who knew him best described him as "irreplaceable," "a dear friend," and one that has "enriched their lives simply by having known him." His constant smile will be missed, as will his unwavering devotion to this country.

As a fellow veteran, I commend Sean for his service in the U.S. Marine Corps. Hundreds of Marines, friends, and family lost a devoted scholar, friend, brother, and son. The people of New Hampshire and the country lost an honorable soldier with a deeply held sense of patriotism. The determination and devotion he possessed as a Marine, and an individual, will not soon be forgotten.

I send my sincere sympathy and prayers to Sean's family and wish them Godspeed during this difficult time in their lives. It is truly an honor to have represented Lance Cpl. Hughes in the U.S. Senate.●

STRAND FAMILY FARM 100TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to a North Dakota family that exemplifies the spirit of rural life and all that it contributes to our Nation. The Strand family, of Regan, ND, will this week celebrate 100 years on the family farm.

Andrew and Anna Strand arrived in North Dakota in 1901, brought by emigrant train to Wilton, ND. Then, with