allow paramilitary violence to continue. Already this year paramilitaries have killed 529 people. It will continue a civil war that all military experts agree is hopelessly stalemated. And to the degree that it has any impact on eliminating coca production in Southern Colombia, it will simply shift that production to other parts of Colombia or neighboring countries. Crop substitution and alternative development projects, already underfunded in Plan Colombia, have not even begun. Because of U.S. funding, fumigation of coca fields has begun, leaving these farmers without any source of income. Imagine you were a poor farmer in Colombia, what would you do to provide income for your family?

Aerial fumigation may successfully kill coca plants, but it also contaminates other food sources. And it certainly creates fear and suspicion among the people in eradication areas. Mr. Chairman, I believe we can reduce coca production in Colombia and in other parts of the region. However, military helicopters and aerial fumigation are never going to solve the problem. These tactics merely escalate the conflict and undermine the peace process in Colombia. Until we can move beyond the military strategy of Plan Colombia, we will never solve the drug problem, nor will we bring peace to Colombia.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude these remarks by listing the students honored by the city. I congratulate them and the sponsoring organizations for such a worthwhile and beneficial program.

HERO OF WEEK HONOREES


A TRIBUTE TO SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA’S ‘HERO OF THE WEEK’ PROGRAM

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a wonderful program in the city of Santa Clarita called “Hero of the Week” as well as those individuals who have been honored in the program.

The program is sponsored jointly by the City of Santa Clarita Anti-Gang Task Force and Mad About Rising Crime Santa Clarita Chapter under the direction of Mr. Gary Popejoy. Started by Maria Fulkerson and Lorraine Grimaldo of the Santa Clarita Anti-Gang Task Force, the “Hero of the Week” program focuses on the positive actions of our youth rather than the negative. The program honors students for the constructive choices they have demonstrated. The students from the Santa Clarita Valley Junior and Senior High School have recommended by teachers and principals based on their observations of the student exhibiting positive behavior.

The students that are selected exhibit the qualities that we are looking for in future leaders of our nation. These students, many of whom have experienced difficult times in their own lives, have made remarkable improvements through this program. I am pleased to honor these students today here on the House floor.

On May 24th, 2001, the “Hero of the Week” program honored 44 members of my community for their outstanding activities that truly made them heroes in our neighborhood. These students have faced serious obstacles and, in many cases, faltered in the face of adversity. However, none of these students gave up. Their hard work and determination have truly earned them the title “Hero” in our community.

Congress must end labor rights violations on American soil.

HON. GEORGE MILLER
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, years have passed since the Department of Labor-Interior-Justice and INS first documented widespread sweatshop conditions under the American Flag in the U.S. territory of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (US/CNMI). Years have passed since national media such as ABC’s 20/20 first reported the thousands of young, Asian women working in the US/CNMI toil as many as 12 hours a day at sub-minimum wages under dangerous and unhealthy conditions. And years have passed since U.S. Congress first had the chance to protect those who work on American soil by finally ending the exemption that has allowed this U.S. territory from following U.S. labor and immigration laws. Yet the Congress has turned a blind eye and allowed this exploitation to continue.

Too many US/CNMI clothing manufacturers continue to show complete disregard for U.S. labor laws. During the three-year period that ended on June 1, 2001, nearly 60% of the factories inspected by the Wage and Hour division of the Department of Labor had wage violations, and in one case, a single US/CNMI corporation owed more than $1 million in back-wages to its employees.

The Congress is partly responsible for the conditions that led to these labor violations. As you may be aware, federal immigration and minimum wage laws were not immediately extended to the territory when the Congress first established the US/CNMI. The temporary exemption was intended to help the territory develop its economy with local workers while responding to local concerns that U.S. immigration laws were too lax. However, the opposite has turned out to be the case. The local government has used its local control over its own tax immigration procedures to create a caste system that exploits disenchanted foreign workers to the most abusive labor conditions and lowest wages. According to 1999 statistics, foreign workers held more than 85% of all private sector jobs, where they worked for sub-minimum wages, while nearly 50% of local residents held government jobs, where starting salaries are more than seven times that of the private sector.

For many years, the US/CNMI has aggressively developed an economy based on the importation of tens of thousands of desperately poor foreign workers from Asia who pay between $3,000–$7,000 for what they are told are good jobs in “America.” Instead these workers are surrounded by barbed wire as the toll under the same dangerous unhealthy working conditions that are far too common in many of the countries they left behind. This practice of shipping indebted women from their native countries to sweatshops on American soil continues today, and it could easily lead to many more cases of human trafficking.

While the Congress took the important step of passing legislation that allows for more aggressive criminal prosecution of human traffickers after they have committed that deplorable crime, we must also place immigration into the American territories under the control of the Federal government so that we can better prevent human trafficking before it ever happens.

Many of our constituents would be surprised to learn that the garments manufactured in the US/CNMI—in foreign owned factories with foreign labor and foreign fabric—are awarded the “Made in USA” label and enter the states both quota and duty free. In 2000, over $1 billion worth of garments came to the states, depriving the U.S. taxpayers of more than $200 million in duty fees. We are allowing US/CNMI garment manufacturers to deceive American consumers with the use of this label while we are providing and enor- mous subsidy as they do it. This cannot continue. We must only offer the benefits of the “Made in the USA” label and duty free import- ing to those U.S. territories that agree to follow U.S. laws.

While the House Republicans have refused to even hold a hearing on the exploitation of workers in the US/CNMI, I am glad to report that we are beginning to win support from other places. On May 15, 2001, the Bush Administration endorsed the idea of federalizing immigration in the US/CNMI in the form of a letter from John Ashcroft’s Assistant Attorney General. The Bush Administration endorsement argued that extending Federal rules to the territory: . . . would improve immigration policy by guarding against the exploitation and abuse of individuals, by helping ensure that the United States adheres to its international treaty obligation to protect refugees, and by further hindering the entry into United States territory of aliens engaged in international organized crime, terrorism, or other illicit activities.

Congress cannot continue to stand by and allow these labor abuses to continue on American soil. Today, I am joined by more than 40 co-sponsors as we introduce the “CNMI
Human Dignity Act,” which would require that the Americans living in the US/CNMI live under the same laws as all of our constituents in our home districts. This legislation also extends U.S. immigration and minimum wage laws to the US/CNMI. The law also includes a provision to preserve the integrity of the “Made in USA” label by requiring that this benefit only be allowed for garments made in compliance with U.S. immigration and labor practices. It also conditions duty-free and quota-free imports from the US/CNMI upon compliance with U.S. laws. In addition, the legislation creates a one-time grandfather provision that allows non-resident individuals who have been long-term employees in the US/CNMI on the date of enactment to apply for permanent residence. Lastly, this legislation would assure that U.S. Customs agents have the authority to board and inspect ships in US/CNMI waters to address the numerous allegations of illegal transshipment of fully completed garments from a CNMI.

No member of the House of Representatives would tolerate sub-minimum wages and other severe forms of labor exploitation in his or her home district, and we should not tolerate those conditions in the American territories either. I urge you to join me in supporting the CNMI Human Dignity Act.

U.S. FUNDING FOR UKRAINE

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the provision in the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for 2002 that reduces U.S. foreign assistance to the country of Ukraine to $125 million, which is $45 million below last year’s funding level and what the President requested.

With its geo-strategic location between Russia and our NATO allies, Ukraine has an inherent importance to our national security. It houses a major naval fleet with access to the Mediterranean and can be a major communication and oil conduit between Europe and Asia. As the 6th most populous nation in Europe, Ukraine is filled with resources and promise, and we can’t afford to turn our backs on it.

Over the past 16 months, the Ukrainian economy has grown immensely. In fact since January of this year, Ukraine’s GDP has risen by over 9%. The privatization of land and businesses has proceeded at an unprecedented rate and the National Bank of Ukraine has undertaken a series of reforms to promote transparency and stability. These are tremendous accomplishments for a country that was part of the Soviet Union until 1991.

This year also marks the 15th Anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and the impact of this tragedy continues to haunt the Ukrainian people. Children still suffer from illnesses caused by exposure to radiation. Much of the farmland, which is vital to the survival of the people, remains contaminated. The recent closing of the remaining Chernobyl reactors has added to the already severe power shortage in Ukraine. The disastrous effects of this tragedy demand that this body reach out to the hand of humanitarian aid.

Despite these numerous accomplishments, Ukraine still requires U.S. assistance. The $125 million provided in this bill will not effectively fund the programs needed to assist Ukraine down the road toward democracy and prosperity. It is a shame that this bill severely cuts aid to this country, at a time when it is needed most. I believe that we should at least provide last year’s level of funding, which was $170 million. Ukraine has made great strides since its independence and it deserves our continued support.

WORKPLACE REFORMERS ARE STIRRING IN CHINA

HON. ANNA G. ESHTOO
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 26, 2001

Ms. ESHTOO. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an op-ed piece written by Mr. William B. Gould IV that appeared in the San Jose Mercury News on Monday, July 23, 2001. Mr. Gould wrote the article upon his return from a trip to China where he conducted a series of lectures at local universities. I share it with my colleagues in the hope that they will find it as instructive as I did.

(From the San Jose Mercury News, July 23, 2001)

WORKPLACE REFORMERS ARE STIRRING IN CHINA

(By William B. Gould IV)

On an uncomfortably hot June afternoon in Shanghai, university students giggle as they complete their mandatory military exercises before departing for the summer. The coexistence of these out-of-uniform drills with the martial laughter of students mirrors much of the paradox of Chinese free market policies alongside Communist Party controls.

The free market has meant a labor market that has witnessed more than an incremental expansion of freedom to hire and fire—millions of dismissed Chinese public enterprise workers who have not found re-employment in the newly expanding private sector can testify to the latter. The same environment affects rural migrant workers who have streamed to the job-filled urban centers with a resolve that sometimes borders on the desperate. Their unemployment and second class status mean worker protest and government scrutiny. Like South Africa and Poland in the ‘90s, China has the potential for a mobilized worker discontent that could cut across most of the sectors of political and economic life.

Last year, for instance, 20,000 miners in the northeast went on a violent rampage of burning and window smashing as they faced dismissal.

Workers in a state-owned silk factory confronted with the same prospect, called for a new and independent union.

Standing in the way of such spontaneity are not only the security apparatus but also the Communist Party government unions, which perform none of the representative function normally present where there is freedom of association. The Chinese government, though it signed last month a Decent Work agreement with the Geneva-based International Labor Organization, defiantly proclaims its continued hostility to the right of workers to choose their bargaining agents. Yet advocates of reform are stirring and American policy makers on Capitol Hill considering China’s preferential trade status need to be aware of them.

As the military drills fade into the languid Shanghai air, labor law reform expert Dong Bao Hua tells me, “The essence of reform is to try to persuade policy makers that we want to have a government with open and societized features.” The approach is to protect both rural migrants and those dislocated public enterprise workers through a number of avenues.

One is to provide a “hotline” with legal advice for workers with labor complaints, pregnant female employees who are unfairly dismissed, and those who have suffered workplace accidents.

Dong and his students have organized events in public squares to advertise their services. They use the courts and China’s expanding government arbitration process. The cases move quickly by Western standards, most of them brought to conclusion within 60 to 90 days of a complaint’s filing.

The arbitration mechanism, admittedly government controlled, resolves a variety of workplace disputes. (The so-called neutral third party is a Labor Ministry employee.) Workers can retain lawyers and in half of the cases in Shangai they do so.

The bad news is that workers have difficulty getting their frequently fearful fellow employees to testify on their behalf. The Communist Party official government unions are of no or little help to them. As a Shenzen employment lawyer said to me: “No representatives of workers are in the arbitration process.”

No one can completely anticipate the stress that the transition will place on China’s workforce. The government’s response to Tianannen Square illustrates the likely reaction to any new challenge or to an outcry against its unapologetic use of forced labor.

Yet the workplace democratic impulse is an international one. In South Africa and Poland, it had its origin in institutions far more modest than those that ultimately brought sweeping change. And Chinese officials may ultimately find comfort in the examples of Hungary and the Czech Republic, where reform did not include new Solidarity-type mass movements.

One of China’s many puzzles lies in the prospects of and the government’s answer to the new workplace reformers who have come on the scene.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM A. NACK ON BEING HONORED BY THE SAN MATEO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

HON. ANNA G. ESHTOO
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 26, 2001

Ms. ESHTOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bill Nack, a citizen of San Mateo County, CA who is being honored by the San Mateo Central Labor Council at its 22nd Annual COPE Benefit Dinner on July 27, 2001.

Bill Nack is a dedicated labor leader who has been instrumental in the growth and development of the labor movement in this area. He has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of workers and to ensure that their rights are protected.

Bill Nack’s contributions to the labor movement are numerous and significant. He has been a strong advocate for workers’ rights and has played a key role in improving working conditions and wages for workers in the area.

Bill Nack’s dedication to the labor movement is unmatched. He has been a tireless worker for the betterment of working people, and his contributions to the labor movement have been invaluable.

Bill Nack is a true labor leader, and I am proud to honor him today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.