

However, as any police officer will tell you, sometimes someone is arrested who is not guilty of any crime. It could be a case of mistaken identity or of someone being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps someone falsely accused an innocent person or simply lied to the police. When the mistake or false accusation is discovered, the innocent person is free to go, but the record of the arrest can haunt him or her for the rest of his or her life.

Today, we are announcing the introduction of the Clear Your Good Name Act, which would require the expungement of voided arrest records in order to clear the names of innocent people.

The bill defines a "voided arrest" as any arrest followed by the release of the person without the filing of formal charges, by dismissal of proceedings against the person arrested, or by a determination that the arrest was without probable cause. The bill would require expungement of voided Federal arrest records and would provide a financial incentive to States to provide for expungement of voided State records. Some States have enacted laws requiring the expungement of voided arrest records, and we want to encourage other States to follow their lead. This bill would make States with expungement statutes eligible to receive a 10-percent increase in crime control funding. Specifically, it would increase the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance programs. For 2001, Congress appropriated \$569 million for these programs. If every State passed an expungement law, the cost would be \$56 million. These funds are used to reduce drug demand, improve effectiveness of law enforcement operations, and assist citizens in preventing crime.

When people are mistakenly arrested and then released after it is determined that they are innocent, they should not have to carry the burden of the mistaken arrest with them for the rest of their lives. We know that arrest records can prejudice opportunities for schooling, employment, professional licenses, and housing. But innocent individuals who have done nothing wrong should not be marked for life.

Lt. Manny Gomez is a perfect example of how an innocent person with a voided arrest record was unfairly denied access to a job. Before I tell his story I want to say a few words about Lt. Gomez. He came to my office two years ago to inform me of this problem, and has worked diligently with my staff and with other Members of the House and Senate to correct an injustice. He has been called "tenacious" by the NY Daily News, and has been profiled in the New York Times. He has worked with the NY City Council and with the NY State Assembly to pass expungement legislation. He is an example of a crusader who stays focused, works hard, and demands results. We are lucky to have him as a champion of this cause.

This is his story. In 1995, Lt. Gomez, two army duffel bags by his side, was approached by police officers in the train station because he happened to fit the description of someone they were looking for. He told them he was not the person, but he went voluntarily to the police station. Within five minutes another offi-

cer determined that indeed he was not the person they were looking for, and he was released after he gave the police his name and address. He was unaware that the encounter generated what is called a voided arrest record. Years later when he applied for a job at the police department, he told them—what he believed to be true—that he was never arrested. Unfortunately, the voided record had not been expunged, and the police found the record and accused him of not being truthful. The case of mistaken identity had come back to haunt him, and he was not allowed to become a police officer. He was never aware that he was arrested, so he then began searching for the reason for the record. After he investigated his case and discovered what had happened, he found that there was no law to provide for the expungement of voided arrest records, even if the person was completely innocent of all charges. After a lengthy battle over several years he was finally able to explain the situation to the police department. The police department has since realized that it was in error and will allow him to become a police officer. Unfortunately, not everyone is as capable as Lt. Gomez, and many people are unfairly harmed by voided arrest records that are never expunged. Thus the need for this bill.

I am hopeful that with a strong coalition working together we can pass this legislation and enable innocent people to clear their good names and go about their lives free from the harmful effects of a mistaken arrest.

ENERGY AND GLOBAL WARMING

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my deep concern about the direction President Bush is taking on energy and global warming.

The overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that the earth's atmosphere is warming, and human activities, especially combustion of fossil fuels, are contributing to the warming trend.

Robert Watson, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, has said, "We see changes in climate, we believe humans are involved, and we're projecting future climate changes much more significant over the next 100 years than over the last 100 years."

Coastal areas, such as my district of San Francisco, will face serious challenges from global warming. Sea levels are rising both because ice sheets are melting and because the ocean is expanding as it absorbs heat from the atmosphere. The projections for the rise in sea level between 1990 and 2100 range from a low of 3.54 inches to a high of 34.64 inches—close to three feet.

President Bush says, "My Administration takes the issue of global climate change very seriously." During his campaign, he pledged to reduce emissions from electric utilities, including carbon dioxide. Last week, responding to a concerted campaign from the electric utility and fossil fuel industries, he broke that prom-

ise. The environment, and the human communities around the world that will be harmed by climate change, will suffer the consequences.

Instead of encouraging the U.S. to reduce our dependence on the fossil fuels that cause global warming, by using energy more efficiently

The Administration has made drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge the centerpiece of their energy policy. They say we need oil from the Refuge to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. They even point to the electricity shortages in California as a reason to drill for oil in the Refuge. But oil is used to generate less than one percent of California's electricity, truly a negligible amount.

Not only would oil from the Refuge do nothing to help California, but it would also do very little to increase America's energy supply. Over the next half century, the coastal plain of the Refuge would contribute less than 1 percent of the oil consumed in the U.S.

The Administration is using the energy crisis to score victories against the environment, both on climate change and drilling in the Arctic Refuge. If they can roll over environmental protection in these areas, none of our environmental laws and regulations will be safe from attack.

I call on President Bush to stand up for the American people and the environment. We must move quickly to counter global warming—our future depends upon it.

CELEBRATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the celebration of Greek independence, and I thank our colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILL RAKIS) and the gentlelady from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), for reminding us of the important role Greece has played in the past and plays now.

It is important that we join together to celebrate the 180th anniversary of Greek independence and to pay tribute to a nation which is considered the birthplace of democracy. Lest we forget, the world owes a great deal to the nation that first developed the concept of majority rule, a concept that is at the very heart of our own institutions.

In 1821, Greek patriots rose up against the Ottomans, who for nearly 400 years had curtailed their basic civil rights. The struggle of the Greek patriots won the support of many in Western Europe and in the United States. The French, the British, and the Russian governments, strongly identifying with the descendants of a nation that had so strongly influenced Western civilization, intervened on behalf of the Greeks, forcing the Ottoman Empire to recognize Greece as an independent state in 1829.

Our nation has greatly benefited from the contributions of Greek immigrants who have substantially contributed their toil, their knowledge and their skills to our American society.

We have been blessed with a strong, vibrant Greek-American community who have significantly contributed to our culture, our prosperity, and who have deeply embraced the ideals of Democracy.

Greece has been an island of peace and security in a sea of troubles which have embraced the Balkans, and today plays an important role in assisting in our efforts to bring peace and security to the entire region. With regard to Cyprus, Greece is still in the process of trying to reconcile the 27-year occupation of that Island by the Turkish army.

Thousands of Greeks fought and died for their independence in the same fashion that America's founders fought and died. As Greece prepares to welcome the world to the Athens Olympics in 2003, let us join in celebrating this very special Greek Independence Day, and let us hope and pray that we can soon celebrate peace and reunification on Cyprus.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, during Women's History Month, I would like to highlight one of the cruelest and most widespread forms of violence: violence against women. In 1999, there were over 59,000 domestic violence calls for assistance in Los Angeles County—755 in my district alone. And those are just the women who call.

I am taking this opportunity to mention two shelters located in my district. Rainbow Services, a shelter in San Pedro, California, was the first shelter to establish an emergency response program in Los Angeles County for battered women and children. Rainbow Services provides resources and guidance that help battered women end abuse. Women at the shelter are given help obtaining a restraining order and there is a large network of almost 20 weekly peer support groups. As important, all services are offered in Spanish, allowing access for more women to seek help.

A second shelter, the 1736 Family Crisis Center in Hermosa Beach, also offers unique and important help. The Center aids women and children who need to use emergency services by allowing them to stay one month with confidential shelter. Second Step Shelters also provide transitional abuse counseling and offer independent living skills training, which allows women to become self-sufficient after their time at the shelter.

Mr. Speaker, violence against women is still an epidemic in this country. It is my hope this important issue continues to receive government attention. Shelters, like those in my district, must receive the necessary resources so all women in need have access to a safe and confidential home. We cannot ignore this issue, or sweep it under the rug. Only constant vigilance and providing women with tools and knowledge will be successful in ending the cycle of domestic violence.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CELEBRATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, 180 years ago the Greek people rose against the Ottoman Empire to free themselves from oppression and to reestablish not only a free and independent state, but a country that would eventually regain her ancient status as a democracy. In congratulating the people of Greece on the anniversary of their revolution, I join in recognizing the distinction earned by Greece as the birthplace of democracy and her special relationship with the United States in our fight together against Nazism, communism and other aggression in the last century alone. Yes, democrats around the world should recognize and celebrate this day together with Greece to reaffirm our common democratic heritage.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, while the ancient Greeks forged the notion of democracy, and many Greeks of the last century fought to regain democracy, careful analyses of the political and basic human freedoms climate in today's Greece paint a sobering picture of how fundamental and precious freedoms are treated.

Taking a look at the issues which have been raised in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Human Dimension Review Meetings and will be considered over the next week at the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), a few of the most critical human dimension concerns about contemporary Greece affect the freedom of expression, the freedom of religious belief and practice, and protection from discrimination.

Legal restrictions on free speech remain on the books, and those convicted have typically been allowed to pay a fine instead of going to jail. In recent years, though, Greek journalists and others have been imprisoned based on statements made in the press. This was noted in the most recent Country Report on Human Rights Practices prepared by the Department of State. The International Press Institute has also criticized the frequent criminal charges against journalists in cases of libel and defamation.

Religious freedom for everyone living in Greece is not guaranteed by the Greek Constitution and is violated by other laws which are often used against adherents of minority or non-traditional faiths. Especially onerous are the provisions of Greek law which prohibit the freedom of religious

These statutes have a chilling impact on religious liberty in the Hellenic Republic and are inconsistent with numerous OSCE commitments which, among other things, commit Greece to take effective measures to prevent and eliminate religious discrimination against individuals or communities; allow religious organizations to prepare and distribute religious materials; ensure the right to freedom of expression and the right to change one's religion or belief and freedom to manifest one's reli-

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gion or belief. Over the last ten years, the European Court of Human Rights has issued more than a dozen judgments against Greece for violating Article 9 (pertaining to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

One positive development was the decision made last summer to remove from the state-issued national identity cards the notation of one's religious affiliation. In May 2000, Minister of Justice Professor Mihalis Stathopoulos publicly recognized that this practice violated Greece's own Law on the Protection of Personal Data passed in 1997. The decision followed a binding ruling made by the relevant Independent Authority which asked the state to remove religion as well as other personal data (fingerprints, citizenship, spouse's name, and profession) from the identity cards. This has long been a pending human rights concern and an issue raised in a hearing on religious freedom held by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (which I Co-Chair) in September 1996.

I am pleased to note that Greece has acknowledged in its most recent report to the UN CERD that the problems faced by the Roma community (which has been a part of Greek society for more than 400 years), migrant workers and refugees are "at the core of the concern of the authorities." The recognition that issues which need attention is always the first step necessary to addressing the problem. The Commission has received many reports regarding the Roma community in Greece, including disturbing accounts of pervasive discrimination in employment, housing, education, and access to social services, including health care. With a very high illiteracy rate, this segment of Greek society is particularly vulnerable to abuse by local officials, including reports of Roma being denied registration for voting or identity cards that in turn prevents them from gaining access to government-provided services. Particularly alarming are incidents such as the forced eviction of an estimated 100 families by order of the mayor of Ano Liossia and the bulldozing of their makeshift housing in July of 2000. Similar incidents have occurred in recent years in Agia Paraskevi, Kriti, Trikala, Nea Koi, and Evosmos.

Our Founding Fathers relied heavily on the political and philosophical experience of the ancient Greeks, and Thomas Jefferson even called ancient Greece "the light which led ourselves out of Gothic darkness." As an ally and a fellow participating State of the OSCE, we have the right and obligation to encourage implementation of the commitments our respective governments have made with full consensus. I have appreciated very much and applaud the willingness of the Government of Greece to maintain a dialogue on human dimension matters within the OSCE. We must continue our striving together to ensure that all citizens enjoy their fundamental human rights and freedoms without distinction.