

In 301 AD, Saint Gregory the Illuminator brought Christianity to the entire country, leading Armenia to declare Christianity the official religion, making it the first Christian state in the world.

The Armenian Church has made great contributions often during times of strife and oppression as my friend from California (Mr. LANTOS) has pointed out, over the last 17 centuries. Armenian Church leaders opened schools, cared for the sick and needy, and created an alphabet for Armenia and the Republic of Georgia in order to make scriptures more accessible to the people.

Armenians' devotion to God led them to create distinctive styles of manuscript illumination, architecture, sculpture, and textiles that are recognized as masterpieces of Christian art and as major contributions to world art. The Armenian Church continues to make significant contributions today through its ministry at home and its active participation in ecumenical bodies uniting Christians of all denominations throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, in the coming days, more than 100 communities around the United States will be celebrating this great anniversary with special worship and ecumenical services. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to author this resolution welcoming the Catholicos to the United States and honoring the 1700th anniversary of Christianity in Armenia.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and affirming our strong ties and relationship with Armenia and the Armenian Church.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to welcome the world leader of the Armenian Church, Catholicos Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, to celebrate the 1700th anniversary of Armenia's conversion to Christianity. His Holiness is a great moral and spiritual leader and it is an honor to have him as a guest in our country.

In 301 A.D., Armenia became the first Christian state in the world. At the time, Saint Gregory the Illuminator Christianized the entire country of Armenia, was consecrated the first Catholicos of Armenia, and baptized King Drtad of Armenia as a Christian. Consequently, King Drtad declared Christianity to be the official religion of Armenia.

Throughout our nation, Armenian communities will celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the coming of Christianity in Armenia with special worship and ecumenical services. On this day, we join the Armenian community, and His Holiness in celebrating the ideals and values shared by the people of the United States, the people of Armenia, and the Armenian Church in America.

It is truly a rare opportunity to have an important world religious leader such as His Holiness here with us to share his wisdom. His Holiness is accompanied by a large delegation consisting of the Supreme Council's members

and high-ranking clergy. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you join me in wishing His Holiness Karekin II, and the delegation, the best on his first official pontifical tour of the United States.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 139

Whereas the Armenian people have lived in their homeland for more than 3,000 years and created a unique civilization;

Whereas two of Jesus Christ's own disciples, Saint Thaddeus and Saint Bartholomew, introduced Christianity in Armenia and were the original founders of the Armenian Church;

Whereas in 301 A.D., Saint Gregory the Illuminator Christianized the entire country of Armenia, was consecrated the first Catholicos of Armenia, and baptized King Drtad of Armenia as a Christian;

Whereas in 301 A.D., King Drtad declared Christianity to be the official religion of Armenia, making it the first Christian state in the world;

Whereas Armenian Church leaders opened schools, cared for the sick and needy, and created alphabets for Armenia and Georgia to make the Scriptures more accessible to the people;

Whereas Armenians' devotion to God led them to create distinctive styles of manuscript illumination, architecture, sculpture, and textiles, that are recognized as masterpieces of Christian art and as major contributions to world art;

Whereas the Armenian Church has persevered in its faith throughout the past 17 centuries in cultures that were hospitable to it and others that were hostile;

Whereas the Armenian Church actively participates in ecumenical bodies and movements, uniting Christians of all denominations world-wide;

Whereas more than 100 communities throughout the United States will celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the acceptance of Christianity in Armenia with special worship and ecumenical services;

Whereas in celebration of the 1700th anniversary, His Holiness Karekin II will visit the United States;

Whereas the 1700th anniversary is an appropriate occasion to celebrate the ideals and values shared by the people of the United States, the people of Armenia, and the Armenian Church in America;

Whereas representatives of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths, including representatives of the Armenian Church, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., will celebrate an ecumenical prayer service on May 30, 2001, at the Catholic Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on the occasion of the 1700th anniversary;

Whereas the Armenian Church, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. have chosen the theme "Walking Together in the Light of Our Lord" as the message to embrace the ecumenical spirit of brotherhood on the occasion of the 1700th anniversary; and

Whereas the Armenian Church has established parishes throughout the United States

and has contributed to the quality of religious life in this Nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) congratulates the Republic of Armenia on the occasion of the 1700th anniversary of the acceptance of Christianity in Armenia;

(2) welcomes His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, on his visit to the United States; and

(3) joins with the people of Armenia, the Armenian Church in America, and His Holiness Karekin II in celebrating the ideals and values they share with the people of the United States.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 139.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES WITH RESPECT TO PROHIBITING THE IMPORTATION OF ROUGH DIAMONDS FROM SIERRA LEONE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-75)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to expand the scope of an existing national emergency in response to the unusual and extraordinary threat posed to the foreign policy of the United States by the Government of Liberia's complicity in the illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone by the insurgent Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and by the Government of Liberia's other forms of support for the RUF. I also have exercised my statutory authority to issue an Executive Order that prohibits the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Liberia, whether or not such diamonds originated in Liberia. These actions are mandated in part by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1343 of March 7, 2001.

The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to issue regulations in exercise of my authorities under the IEEPA and the United Nations Participation Act, 22 U.S.C. 287c, to implement this prohibition. All Federal agencies are also directed to take actions within their authority to carry out the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued. The Order was effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on May 23, 2001.

I have authorized these measures in furtherance of Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001, and in response to the Government of Liberia's continuing facilitation of and participation in the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone and its other forms of support for the RUF. The Government of Liberia's actions in this regard constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States because they directly challenge United States foreign policy objectives in the region and the rule-based international order that is crucial to the peace and prosperity of the United States.

In Executive Order 13194, President Clinton responded to the RUF's illicit arms-for-diamonds trade that fuels the brutal, decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone by declaring a national emergency and, consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1306, by prohibiting the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone except for those importations controlled through the certificate of origin regime of the Government of Sierra Leone. In a report issued on December 14, 2000, the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1306 found that diamonds represent a major and primary source of income for the RUF to sustain and advance its military activities; that the bulk of the RUF diamonds leaves Sierra Leone through Liberia; and that such illicit trade cannot be conducted without the permission and involvement of Liberian government officials at the highest levels. The Panel recommended, among other things, a complete embargo on all diamonds from Liberia until Liberia demonstrates convincingly that it is no longer involved in the trafficking of arms to, or diamonds from, Sierra Leone.

On March 7, 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1343 to impose sanctions against the Government of Liberia. The resolution determined that the Government of Liberia's active support for the RUF in Sierra Leone and other armed rebel groups in neighboring countries constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region and decided that all states shall impose an imme-

diately arms embargo on Liberia and also shall impose travel and diamond bans on Liberia on May 7, 2001, unless the Council determined before that date that the Government of Liberia had ceased its support for the RUF and for other armed rebel groups and, in particular, had taken a number of concrete steps identified in the resolution. In furtherance of this resolution, the Secretaries of State, Commerce, and Defense have taken steps, under their respective authorities, to implement the arms embargo.

With regard to the travel ban and diamond embargo, the Government of Liberia has failed, notwithstanding the two-month implementation period granted by resolution 1343, to honor its commitments to cease its support for the RUF and other armed rebel groups. As a result, the Security Council did not determine that Liberia has complied with the demands of the Council.

In Proclamation 7359 of October 10, 2000, President Clinton suspended the entry as immigrants and non-immigrants of persons who plan, engage in, or benefit from activities that support the RUF or that otherwise impede the peace process in Sierra Leone. The application of that Proclamation implements the travel ban imposed by resolution 1343.

Finally, for the reasons discussed above and in the enclosed Executive Order, I also have found that the Government of Liberia's continuing facilitation of and participation in the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone and its other forms of support for the RUF contribute to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States described in Executive Order 13194 with respect to which the President declared a national emergency. In order to deal with that threat, and consistent with resolution 1343 and this finding, I have taken action to prohibit the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Liberia, whether or not such diamonds originated there, in order to contribute to the international effort to bring a prompt end to the illicit arms-for-diamonds trade by which the RUF perpetuates the tragic conflict in Sierra Leone. This action, as well as those discussed above, also expresses our outrage at the Government of Liberia's ongoing contribution to human suffering in Sierra Leone and other neighboring countries, as well as its continuing failure to abide by international norms and the rule of law.

GEORGE W. BUSH,
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 23, 2001.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

A LOOK BACK AT THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, everybody knows about Iwo Jima and the horrible battle that took place there back in 1945.

This weekend an organization called Freedom Alliance is going to have a number of specials on this on the Fox News Channel, and I hope all of my colleagues have a chance to see this.

The Freedom Alliance founder and Honorary Chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, will be hosting a 60-minute documentary this weekend on the Fox News channel outlining the bloody battle, Iwo Jima during World War II.

He will interview survivors from Iwo Jima and Marines who played crucial roles in the pivotal battle in the Pacific for the special which is entitled War Stories with Oliver North.

This will air three times on the Fox News channel over Memorial Day weekend. I urge all of my colleagues to watch. The times and dates are as follows: on Saturday, May 26 at 10 p.m. Eastern; 7 p.m. Pacific it will be on; Sunday, May 27, 8 p.m. Eastern; 5 p.m. Pacific; and Monday, May 28, noon Eastern, 9 a.m. Pacific.

The battle for Iwo Jima which was fought during February and March of 1945 was one of the bloodiest battles of World War II, nearly 7,000 U.S. military personnel lost their lives and 16,000 were wounded. Most of them were Marines.

Mr. Speaker, when the island was secured on February 23, 1945, five Marines and one Navy Corpsman raised the Stars and Stripes on Mt. Suribachi, the highest point on the island. Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal captured the historic moment on film and the Marines Corps War Memorial, which now stands at the north end of Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, was sculpted from that famous photograph.

This fascinating and informative television special this weekend is worth all of our time. I hope my colleagues will watch it.

On this Memorial Day, Oliver North and the Freedom Alliance salute all the men and women of our Armed Forces whose lives were taken in the defense of America's liberty. We continue to pray also for the safety of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who serve today.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will take the time this weekend to watch this very important.