

of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the consequence of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected peoples and enhanced regional stability.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations will hold a hearing entitled "The Container Security Initiative and the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism: Securing the Global Supply Chain or Trojan Horse?" In light of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, concern has increased that terrorists could smuggle weapons of mass destruction in the approximately 9 million ocean going containers that arrive in the United States every year. As part of its overall response to the threat of terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (Customs) implemented the Container Security Initiative, CSI, to screen high-risk containers at sea ports overseas, thus employing screening tools before potentially dangerous cargoes reach our shores. Customs also implemented the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, C-TPAT, to improve the security of the global supply chain in partnership with the private sector.

Both CSI and C-TPAT face a number of compelling challenges that impact their ability to safeguard our Nation from terrorism. The Subcommittee's May 26 hearing will examine how Customs utilizes CSI and C-TPAT in connection with its other enforcement programs and review the requirements for and challenges involved in transitioning CSI and C-TPAT from promising risk management concepts to effective and sustained enforcement operations. These important Customs initiatives require sustained Congressional oversight. As such, this will be the first of several hearings the Subcommittee intends to hold on the response of the Federal Government to terrorist threats.

The Subcommittee hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. For further information, please contact Raymond V. Shepherd, III, Staff Director and Chief Counsel to the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, at 202-224-3721.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 9 a.m. to hold a briefing on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 10 a.m. to hold a hearing on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent for Franklin Thompson Reece be granted floor privileges during debate on judicial nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Anne Milgram be granted floor privileges for the duration of the presentation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REFERRAL AND DISCHARGE—NOMINATION OF EDMUND S. HAWLEY

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination of Edmund S. Hawley, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security be referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and that, further, upon the reporting out or discharge of the nomination, the nomination be referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for a period not to exceed 30 days, after which time the nomination, if still in committee, will be discharged and placed on the Executive Calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS RELATIVE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 35, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 35) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation of the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution

and the preamble be agreed to en bloc; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 35) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 35

Whereas the incorporation in 1940 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union was an act of aggression carried out against the will of sovereign people;

Whereas the United States was steadfast in its policy of not recognizing the illegal Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the Russian Federation is the successor state to the Soviet Union;

Whereas the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, including its secret protocols, between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity to occupy and annex Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the occupation brought countless suffering to the Baltic peoples through terror, killings, and deportations to Siberian concentration camps;

Whereas the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania bravely resisted Soviet aggression and occupation;

Whereas the Government of Germany renounced its participation in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and publicly apologized for the destruction and terror that Nazi Germany unleashed on the world;

Whereas, in 1989, the Congress of Peoples' Deputies of the Soviet Union denounced the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and its secret protocols;

Whereas President Putin recently confirmed that the statement of the Congress of Peoples' Deputies remains the view of the Russian Federation;

Whereas the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union remains unacknowledged by the Russian Federation;

Whereas a declaration of acknowledgment of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Russian Federation would lead to improved relations between the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the people of Russia, would form the basis for improved relations between the governments of the countries, and strengthen stability in the region;

Whereas the Russian Federation is to be commended for beginning to acknowledge grievous and regrettable incidents in their history, such as admitting complicity in the massacre of Polish soldiers in the Katyn Forest in 1940;

Whereas the truth is a powerful weapon for healing, forgiving, and reconciliation, but its absence breeds distrust, fear, and hostility; and

Whereas countries that cannot clearly admit their historical mistakes and make peace with their pasts cannot successfully build their futures: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to

1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the consequence of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected peoples and enhanced regional stability.

EXPRESSING CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 150, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 150) expressing continued support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I submitted a resolution with my colleague, Senator SMITH of Oregon, that I think is especially pertinent this week as we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. The end of World War II in Europe brought the end of Hitler's regime and all of its horrors, but it did not, unfortunately, usher in an era that was free of tyranny as so many had hoped. Instead, the Soviet Union solidified its illegal occupation of its three Baltic neighbors, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and communism's global expansion condemned millions to totalitarian rule or death.

The resolution we submitted expresses support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial here in Washington, DC. Authorized by Congress in 1993, memorial will honor the more than 100 million victims of communist atrocities around the globe. The overwhelming carnage and suffering that occurred at the hand of international communism must never be forgotten. The Victims of Communism Memorial will pay tribute, in our Nation's capital, to those who lost their lives to communist tyranny. Construction of the Memorial is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2005, and when it is completed it will serve as an enduring reminder of communist atrocities and of the value of our Nation's commitment to freedom.

I will also join my colleague from Oregon in submitting a resolution that calls on the Russian Government to acknowledge the Soviet Union's illegal annexation of the three Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania during the Second World War and to condemn this aggression by the USSR. In 1939, Joseph Stalin allied himself with Adolf Hitler with the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, an agreement that led to the Soviet Union's occupation of the Baltic countries in 1940. For five decades, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were forced to live under the

authoritarian rule of the Soviet empire.

When I speak about the Baltic countries, I speak with a particularly personal interest. Lithuania has a special meaning to me because it is my mother's birthplace, and I have visited there a number of times. When I visited Lithuania for the first time in 1979, it was under Soviet domination. Freedom was at a premium, and the poor people of that country struggled day after day wondering if they would ever have another chance at self-governance. I have journeyed to the region on several occasions since then, and I have witnessed the miracle of independence and democracy coming to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The amazing transformation for these nations was something that many of us with strong ties to this part of the world had prayed for but never believed would happen in our lifetime.

The legacy of Soviet occupation remains strong even today. Unfortunately, Russia's leaders refuse to acknowledge the wrongs committed by the Soviet Union against the Baltic nations. Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected a suggestion from U.S. officials that he renounce the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and he has publicly clung to the fiction that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania asked to become part of the Soviet Union. In order for relations between the Baltic nations and Russia to move forward, the Russian Government and its people must honestly and publicly confront the USSR's brutal legacy of repression. This resolution will call on Russian leaders to take that important step.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 150) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 150

Whereas section 905 of the FRIENDSHIP Act (40 U.S.C. 1003 note) authorizes the construction of a memorial to honor the victims of communism;

Whereas the construction of a Victims of Communism Memorial near the United States Capitol in the District of Columbia is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2005;

Whereas construction of the Memorial is supported by many Americans whose country of origin is, or was, a "Captive Nation", from Baltic-Americans to Vietnamese-Americans;

Whereas communism has claimed the lives of more than 100,000,000 people in less than 100 years; and

Whereas it is important for the people of the United States to honor and remember the victims of communism by supporting the construction of this memorial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate expresses its continued support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial.

RECOGNIZING THE 57TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 151, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 151) recognizing the 57th Anniversary of the Independence of the State of Israel.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. ALLEN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 151) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 151

Whereas in May 1948, the State of Israel was established as a sovereign and independent nation;

Whereas the United States was one of the first nations to recognize Israel, only 11 minutes after its creation;

Whereas Israel has provided the opportunity for Jews from all over the world to reestablish their ancient homeland;

Whereas Israel is home to many religious sites which are sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;

Whereas Israel provided a refuge to Jews who survived the horrors of the Holocaust and the evils committed by the Nazis which were unprecedented in human history;

Whereas the people of Israel have established a unique, pluralistic democracy which includes the freedoms cherished by the people of the United States, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of the press, and government by the consent of the governed;

Whereas Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by regularly holding free and fair elections, promoting the free exchange of ideas, and vigorously exercising in its Parliament, the Knesset, a democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens;

Whereas Israel has bravely defended itself from attacks repeatedly since independence;

Whereas the Government of Israel has successfully worked with the neighboring Governments of Egypt and Jordan to establish peaceful, bilateral relations;

Whereas, despite the deaths of over one thousand innocent Israelis at the hands of murderous, suicide bombers and other terrorists during the past 4 years, the people of Israel continue to seek peace with their Palestinian neighbors;

Whereas the United States and Israel enjoy a strategic partnership based on shared mutual democratic values, friendship, and respect;

Whereas the people of the United States share affinity with the people of Israel and view Israel as a strong and trusted ally; and