

TURKEY'S ASSAULT ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, over the years the Helsinki Commission has closely monitored human rights developments to Turkey. I have supported Commission efforts and have joined my colleagues in speaking out about suppression of free speech, torture, and fundamental human rights questions concerning Turkey's Kurdish citizens. As the new Chairman of the Commission, I will continue to speak out on these and other such developments.

I rise today to protest the arrest of seven leaders of the Human Rights Association of Turkey's Diyarbakir branch. Prosecutors want to jail these individuals for no less than 10 years on charges that a publication they produced which documented human rights cases constitutes "separatist propaganda." One of those detained, Neymetullah Gunduz, an attorney and association leader, had met with members of a Helsinki Commission delegation last October. Just weeks ago, several other human rights leaders were acquitted of similar charges. Mr. Speaker, international scrutiny has and should continue to focus on these draconian speech restrictions and other human rights problems which continue to tarnish Turkey's democratic credentials.

For years now, Human Rights Association members throughout Turkey, but especially in the southeast, have been harassed, gunned down, and have had their offices forcibly closed. The Diyarbakir branch was the last allowed by authorities to function in the region, and now, it too has been silenced. Mr. Speaker, the deteriorating human rights situation facing residents of southeast Turkey can only be described in terms of fear and violence. The freedoms and liberties of all citizens have been stripped in an effort to fight terrorism, and residents are victimized by both terrorist and security forces.

Mr. Speaker, Turkish leaders have expressed dismay at efforts to slow Turkey's integration into the European Union, and yet that Government has continued to pursue policies contrary to accepted international human rights norms. Their protests about congressional conditioning of U.S. aid on human rights performance ring equally hollow given the flagrant disregard for Turkey's stated human rights commitments, including those undertaken with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon the Government of Turkey to immediately drop its case against the seven activists and to release all those political prisoners who presently languish in Turkish prisons simply for expressing their opinions.

TUCSON'S WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Sarah

R. "Sally" Simmons was recently chosen Tucson's Woman of the Year for 1994. This award, given by the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, recognizes outstanding individuals who have selflessly helped others.

Through her career and dedication to the community, Sally Simmons is both a role model and an inspiration to those around her. In 1993, she became the first Tucson woman and second woman ever to become president of the Arizona Bar Association. She is also a partner in the firm of Brown & Bain, where she specializes in real estate law.

In addition to her thriving career, Ms. Simmons contributes her personal time to various boards and community organizations. She serves on the Board of Directors for Southern Arizona Legal Aid, D-M 50, Lawyers Against Hunger, and is on the advisory board of Tucsonians for a Drug Free Workplace. Ms. Simmons is a charter member of the Arizona Women Lawyer's Association and has served on the board of the Alcoholism Council of Tucson.

Again, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Simmons and especially to thank her for all she is doing to improve the lives of the people of Tucson and throughout Arizona.

PROCLAMATION CONGRATULATING THE STEUBENVILLE MASONIC LODGE NO. 45

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the following article to my colleagues:

Whereas, the Steubenville Masonic Lodge #45 F. & A.M. has contributed untold volunteer hours in building character, citizenship, and leadership in this community; and,

Whereas, the Steubenville Masonic Lodge #45 F. & A.M. is celebrating 175 years of service to the area's Masons and community; and,

Whereas, members have made in kind contributions of service, financial contributions to the Steubenville area, contributions to the Special Olympics, and to other important needs of the community; and,

Whereas, the local Masonic Lodge has extended the interest of the Masonic Order within this community; and,

Whereas, the members of schools, churches, service clubs, union organizations, and others have been members of the Masonic Order; and,

Whereas, the city of Steubenville and all the surrounding areas of Ohio are better places to live because of Steubenville's Masonic Lodge #45, we join in the celebration of their 175 year anniversary on the twentieth day of January in 1995.

HOLDING OUR FEET TO THE FIRE—THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, several months ago I joined my Republican colleagues

to sign a contract with the American people to give them less government, less taxes, and less spending. As part of our new covenant we also promised the American people a more open and accountable Government.

We have invited radio talk show hosts to the Capitol to communicate to their listeners exactly what it is we are doing to keep our promises. I am excited to report that they are taking us up on our invitation.

I want to welcome southern California radio talk show host Roger Hedgecock and almost 200 of his listeners who traveled at their own expense, more than 3,000 miles to hold our feet to the fire and make sure that we work to pass the Barton balanced budget amendment.

I am heartened to see such a devoted group of citizens travel so far to enjoy a more open and accountable Congress committed to keeping its word.

They understand a balanced budget amendment will fundamentally change the way Government works. They know that this amendment is the only way to ensure that their children and grandchildren will not be saddled with a Federal debt which is currently tipping the scales at more than \$4.5 trillion.

The American people know that it is time for the Federal spending beast to change its eating habits. As with any healthy diet, discipline is key. The balanced budget amendment imposes just that kind of control.

Anyone who has ever been on a diet knows that the key to success is resisting the temptation to cheat. The three-fifths rule in the Barton amendment will help Congress resist the temptation to cheat by making it more difficult to raise taxes on hard working Americans. It will make it tougher for Congress to continue its unhealthy spending habits.

I urge my colleagues to support the Barton amendment and Roger Hedgecock's listeners to continue holding our feet to the fire.

TRIBUTE TO EDDY JASON

HON. TOBY ROTH

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, last weekend one of our communities lost a vibrant personality and talented broadcaster. Eddy Jason, whose radio program was an important part of daily life in Green Bay, WI, passed away at the age of 92.

For 47 years, Eddy entertained, comforted, and informed listeners on WGEE radio with his daily show, "Partyline." He was a lifeline to people in the community, who counted on him for news, information, and just plain old advice. He possessed an amazing amount of common knowledge and common sense. There wasn't any question he couldn't answer.

He played a special role for many seniors in the area, who turned to him every weekday at 9 a.m. for the latest word on current events and happenings around town.

His off-the-air personality was also geared toward helping his community. He was a regular participant in my annual senior seminar, kicking off the proceedings with the Pledge of Allegiance or a brief presentation.

He was a household name in the Green Bay area and enjoyed the recognition. On the street, he was probably more recognizable by

his voice than his face, but people felt like they knew him. Eddy was an exercise walker, and his routine consisted of walking one way and busing back. He said he took the bus because he enjoyed getting to know people.

A native of New York, he loved Green Bay and always spoke highly of its friendly, hard-working people. In 1941, Eddy spent 6 years as a military instructor in the Army. He returned to Green Bay in 1947 as a young actor, whose profession had already led him to Chicago and Hollywood, where he starred in a number of silent films.

Eddy made his mark in Wisconsin in the Town Hall Players, an acting group based in LaCrosse that made more than 300 appearances across the State. Eddy fondly remembered the job's best fringe benefit—the free meal offered at many of the engagements.

Eddy broke into Green Bay radio with a noon-time program called "The Farm Hands" that broadcast from the top of the Bellin Building. Every day the show was kicked off by a live, barking dog. It was less than glamorous but he reveled in radio.

"Partyline" debuted in November 1948 on WBAY Radio. With partner Roger Mueller, Eddy began a Green Bay tradition of on-the-air storytelling, joking, and reporting.

Eddy Jason had no plans to retire. He loved his job and his coworkers. He didn't even consider his radio show work. He called it a hobby.

He was on the air 5 days a week and never missed a wedding anniversary or birthday announcement.

Eddy Jason will be remembered by many as not just a broadcasting pioneer, but as an outstanding human being who cared deeply about the community where he lived and worked.

Our thoughts and prayers today are with his son, Wallace McDonald, his six grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren.

After 47 years, the airwaves will seem a little empty without Eddy Jason's kind voice. For years to come, the people of Green Bay will not be able to turn on their radios without thinking of him. He will be fondly remembered and sincerely missed.

VFW CHARTER AMENDMENT

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to amend the Congressional Charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States [VFW]. My good friends SONNY MONTGOMERY, and JERRY SOLOMON, former chairman and former ranking Republican member of the House Committee of Veterans' Affairs respectively, join me in introducing this bill. It provides that veterans who have served in the Republic of Korea for not less than 30 consecutive days, or a total of 60 days after June 30, 1949, would become eligible for VFW membership.

Now, only veterans of Korea who served during the war itself are eligible to belong to the VFW. The VFW's congressional charter requires its members to have received a campaign medal or badge to be eligible for membership. However, many veterans have served

in Korea but did not receive the requisite campaign medal or badge because of narrow DOD eligibility criteria. Consequently, those service men and women are not eligible to join the VFW.

The VFW believes, and I agree, that those veterans who would be covered by this legislation should be eligible to enjoy membership in the VFW. Only Congress can make this change, because the VFW's congressional charter must be amended.

Mr. Speaker, the realities of the United States military presence in Korea, and the current dangers there provide compelling reasons to support the VFW's desire to amend its charter, I strongly urge all Members to co-sponsor and support this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REFORM OF THE FEDERAL BLACK LUNG PROGRAM

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today, I am re-introducing legislation that I have sponsored for several Congresses now to form the Federal Black Lung Program.

This legislation reflects the frustration of thousands of miners and their families with the extremely adversarial nature of the current program as administered by the Labor Department.

As it now stands, disabled miners who suffer from the crippling effects of black lung disease are faced with a Federal bureaucracy so totally lacking in compassion to their plight, that it appears intent upon harassing their efforts to obtain just compensation at every single step of the claim adjudication process.

In fact, today, we are witnessing less than a 10-percent approval rate on claims for black lung benefits.

This figure does not attest to any reasonable and unbiased comportment of the facts.

Rather, it represents nothing less than a cruel hoax being perpetrated against hard working citizens who have dedicated their lives to the energy security and economic well-being of this Nation.

The original intent of Congress in enacting legislation to compensate victims of black lung disease was for this to be a fairly straightforward program. This intent has been defeated by years of administrative maneuverings aggravated by some extremely harmful judicial interpretations. Under this bill, we will return to a program that reflects the statutory commitment Congress, and indeed, the Nation, made to compensate these coal miners and their families.

Make no mistake about it. Victims of black lung disease are not people who are looking for a handout.

They are people who worked their lives in one of the most dangerous occupations in this country.

They are people who were promised compensation by their Government. And they are people who now see their Government break that promise.

It is time, indeed, long past the time that Congress move legislation on behalf of the thousands of miners, their widows and families

who are being victimized by this program, the very program that was intended to bring them relief.

In general, this measure contains the following proposals:

First, new eligibility standards. A miner would be presumed to be totally disabled by black lung if the miner presents a single piece of qualifying medical evidence such as a positive x ray, ventilatory or blood gas studies, or a medical opinion. The Secretary of Labor could rebut the presumption of eligibility only if he can show that the miner is doing coal mine work or could actually do coal mine work.

Second, application of new eligibility standards. The new standards would apply to all claims filed after enactment of the Black Lung Benefits Act of 1991. All pending claims, and claims denied prior to enactment of the Black Lung Benefits Act of 1991 would be reviewed under the new standards.

Third, elimination of responsible operators. All claims would be paid out of the coal industry financed black lung disability trust fund. The purpose of this provision is to eliminate coal operators as defendants in black lung cases and the advantage they have over claimants by being able to afford to pay legal counsel.

Fourth, widows/dependents. A widow or dependent of a miner would be awarded benefits if the miner worked 25 years or more in the mines; the miner died in whole or in part from black lung; the miner was receiving black lung benefits when he died; or medical evidence offered by the miner before he died satisfies new eligibility standards. Widows who are receiving benefits and who remarry would not be disqualified from continuing to receive the benefits; and, a widow would be entitled to receive benefits without regard to the length of time she was married to the miner.

Fifth, offsets. The practice of offsetting a miner's Social Security benefits by the amount of black lung benefits would be discontinued.

TURKEY: HERE WE GO AGAIN

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 20, 1995

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, last October, the Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, Dennis DeConcini, lead a delegation to Turkey to examine human rights issues in that country. While in Diyarbakir, the largest city in the predominantly Kurdish southeast, delegation members visited the offices of the local Human Rights Association [HRA] branch. The delegation had met with HRA leaders in Ankara and the Helsinki Commission has often worked with the HRA and has found its publications extremely useful and reliable.

While meeting with the Commission delegation, HRA leaders explained how the organization's members operated at great risk to their personal safety. HRA members around the country, but especially in the southeast, face constant danger and persecution. Dozens of activists had been threatened, kidnapped, murdered and disappeared with the collusion of security forces. The Diyarbakir HRA branch was the only office in 10 state of emergency provinces allowed to remain open. HRA leaders believed authorities wanted to use the