

IN OPPOSITION TO FRENCH
NUCLEAR TESTING

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over the detonation by the Chirac government of a nuclear device in the South Pacific.

The French have blatantly and egregiously ignored the environmental sovereignty of the region. I strongly object to the fact that France carried out these tests more than 10,000 miles from their mainland. If, as Mr. Chirac has stated, these tests pose no threat to the ecosystem, why are they being carried out 10,000 miles away from France? Why detonate atomic weapons in somebody else's backyard? Why not in central France?

The United States, numerous countries and respected individuals in the region pleaded with the French not to carry out these "experiments." But Mr. Chirac insisted that they are necessary. Why are these tests necessary? Whom are the French preparing to fight? Are they planning to drop a bomb on Algeria? What specter so haunts them that they need to test their nuclear weapons before they sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty? And what will this mean for the future of the treaty? Will other countries rush to detonate bombs before they finally renounce nuclear testing? Will rogue nations and terrorist organizations experiment with nuclear weaponry, claiming that they must protect themselves from French aggression?

Mr. Speaker, I cannot adequately express my disappointment with the Chirac Government. Economic boycotts, political protests, editorial outrage and public opinion seem all to have failed in convincing Mr. Chirac that his policy is wrong. It is dangerous for the ecosystem, dangerous for the fragile marine environment, dangerous for the people living around the mururoa atoll, and dangerous for those who seek a nuclear-weapon-free world. As Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans stated: "This is not the action of a good international citizen."

INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC
PENSION PARITY ACT

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, our Nation's public servants have had a long and difficult year. Public employees have been asked to increase their pension contributions in exchange for smaller annuities and to make other financial sacrifices in the name of deficit reduction. Last spring, some Federal employees working in the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City made the ultimate sacrifice while performing their jobs. The time has come to show some support for our public servants, the men and women who work hard to provide needed services for the American people.

Today, I am reintroducing the Public Pension Parity Act, legislation I first introduced in the 98th Congress to rectify a serious tax in-

equity that our retired public employees continue to face. America's public retirees deserve positive action on this bill.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most of our public-sector retirees receive a pension in lieu of the Social Security benefits received by private-sector retirees. Social Security benefits are fully tax exempt for individual private-sector retirees earning as much as \$25,000 per year, and couples earning up to \$32,000. There is no corresponding tax exemption for public-sector retirees, who are effectively being penalized by the Internal Revenue Code for their years of public service.

My legislation, the Public Pension Parity Act of 1995, would amend the Internal Revenue Code so that a public retiree could deduct that portion of his or her governmental pension equivalent to the maximum level for Social Security retirement benefits so long as the individual or couple stays under the same gross income limitations I stated earlier. The bill also includes an offsetting provision to prevent overly generous tax exemptions for those with incomes above these thresholds or who collect both public and private annuities.

The principle of fairness underlies this bill; public-sector retirees should be treated in the same manner as private-sector retirees for purposes of taxation. It is fundamentally unfair to continue to tax the retirement benefits of public employees differently than the Social Security retirement benefits of private-sector employees. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to join me this year in supporting the Public Pension Parity Act to correct the significant inequity in the tax treatment of public-retiree benefits. It is time to reaffirm our support for those who dedicate their careers to public service.

Mr. Speaker, I would also submit a copy of the Public Pension Parity Act for the RECORD.

GREG WYATT—BILL OF RIGHTS
EAGLE SCULPTURE

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Wyatt, the sculptor in residence at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and director of the art academy at the Newington Cropsey Foundation. I urge my fellow colleagues to attend an exhibition of Mr. Wyatt's Bill of Rights Eagle in the Russell Senate Office Building rotunda from today until Saturday, September 9, 1995.

Mr. Wyatt's early training in the arts came from instruction with his father, a painting professor at the City College of New York. At an early age Mr. Wyatt's father instilled in him an appreciation for the cultural and artistic traditions of the Hudson River Valley of New York. Greg followed this tradition, earning a bachelor of arts degree in art history from Columbia College and a master of arts degree in ceramic arts from Columbia University. He continued his studies at the National Academy of Design focusing on classical sculpture, and later traveled to Italy as an instructor in Renaissance figurative sculpture.

In addition, I am honored to represent the district that is home to the Newington Cropsey Foundation located in Hastings-on-Hudson,

NY, an organization dedicated to preserving the work of the 19th century Hudson Valley artist Jasper Francis Cropsey and the culture of the Hudson River Valley. The exhibit of Mr. Wyatt's Bill of Rights Eagle was made possible by funding from the Newington Cropsey Foundation. The foundation has previously donated important Cropsey works to significant collections including the White House, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the U.S. Department of State and Princeton University.

Mr. Speaker, this week I will introduce a House resolution to accept on behalf of the American people the Bill of Rights Eagle for display on the grounds of Congress. The distinguished Senate majority leader, TRENT LOTT, will introduce companion legislation in the Senate. This gift by Mr. Wyatt and the Newington Cropsey Foundation, at no cost to the United States, is an appropriate tribute to a document that insures the core of our democracy. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues to support this measure to place this beautiful sculpture on permanent display in the U.S. Capitol.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE AND UNITED STATES-ORIGIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN TURKEY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, on June 1, 1995, the State Department released a report on allegations of human rights abuses by the Turkish military. This report stated that United States-origin military equipment has been used in operations in Turkey during which human rights abuses have occurred. This report is the most definitive administration statement linking United States military assistance to human rights violations in Turkey.

I wrote a letter to Secretary Christopher on June 29 asking several questions about that report, and on August 15 I received a reply. I ask that my letter, and the Department's response, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,

Washington, DC, June 29, 1995.

Hon. WARREN CHRISTOPHER,
Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I write regarding the State Department's Report on Allegations of Human Rights Abuses by the Turkish Military, released on June 1, 1995. I commend you for the precision and detail of that report, which provides important information to the Congress.

What impresses me about that report is your open acknowledgment of the role of U.S.-origin military equipment in human rights abuse in southeastern Turkey. As your report states: "U.S.-origin equipment, which accounts for most major items of the Turkish military inventory, has been used in operations against the PKK during which human rights abuses have occurred."

I would like to ask you several questions about the June 1 report.

1. I do not recall prior Administration statements or testimony coming to the conclusion that U.S. military equipment provided to Turkey was used in operations during which human rights abuses occurred.