

the fact that the President of the United States would waive that provision of the law and we would hear about it not by his notifying Congress, but through the Turkish foreign minister.

Recently, Turkey occupied islands that have long been conceded as belonging to Greece, upping the tension between our allies, Greece and Turkey, for reasons beyond comprehension, and most egregiously.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Kurdish minority in Turkey continues to be repressed by the government of that country. There were 713 applications for treatment of torture by the Human Rights Foundation in Turkey just last year. Torture continues to be a process used by the Turkish Government throughout the country, particularly in respect to the Kurdish minority. As many as 2 million people have left their homes in the southeast—these are Kurdish peoples—over the past 7 years and have been made refugees in their own country; 2,200 villages in the southeast have been destroyed by Turkish military troops. During the last year, 1,443 publications were confiscated on court order, most pro-Kurdish publications.

Mr. Speaker, Turkey most recently tried and convicted its leading author, and what was he convicted of? He was convicted of speaking out against the policy of the Turkish Government to use violence only against its huge Kurdish minority of 15 to 20 million people, instead of sitting down at the table and negotiating with them to resolve differences and to guarantee their rights.

Mr. Speaker, government agents have harassed human rights monitors as well as lawyers and doctors involved in documenting human rights violations. Some of them reported death threats. A number of monitors have been aggressively prosecuted by the Government of Turkey. The government gave an 8-year sentence to their leading author, Yasif Kamal, and they then said that they would not impose the sentence if he would cease criticizing the government for its policy against the Kurdish people, an obvious act of censorship by the government on a person speaking out against human rights abuses that are among the most egregious in the world.

There is genocide against the Kurds going on in Turkey, Mr. Speaker, there is continuing intransigence and militarism on Cyprus, aggression toward Greece, and disruption of United States aid intended for the people of Armenia. For all these reasons, the subcommittee cut half of the economic assistance provided to Turkey in this bill. As I said, it is one of the world's major human rights abusers, and yet the only one that receives assistance from the United States. We provided a cut in the bill to send a message that all of these abuses must cease.

We want Turkey to be our ally. We wish to have a close relationship with Turkey and with its people. But, Mr.

Speaker, it is made very, very difficult to do so when a major ally of ours claiming to be a democracy observes very few of the tenets of democracy whatsoever, is listed among the major human rights abusers in the world and commits genocide against its own people without any willingness to sit down at the table and talk our differences.

I believe this cut is justified. I would go further if I could, but this Congress must send a message to Turkey, to its government, to its people, that we need to see Turkey move toward real democracy, observe human rights, the basic rights that all people on this planet deserve, and stop the occupation of Cyprus, the prevention of humanitarian aid to the people of Armenia, stop its actions against Greek interests and the repression of its Kurdish minority.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to point out before I yield back my time that the efforts of the distinguished gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HALL] with regard to dealing with the problems of the world, the most egregious problems with those who are the least able to deal with themselves, the sick, the poor, the children, and particularly in the areas of starvation, the accomplishments of the gentleman and commitment to that cause are well-known and I congratulate him for that.

Obviously there are a great many global problems out there. You cannot pick up a newspaper, you cannot look at a map, you cannot turn on the television without being reminded that if it is not East Timor, it is Korea or one of the former Russian states or it is Russia itself or the Turks or the Greeks or maybe it is the Cypriots, as we have just heard the problem there, or perhaps it is the Baltics or the Balkans, perhaps it is the Visegrads. Maybe it comes to our own hemisphere, to South America or Central America or perhaps the Caribbean where we have Cuba and Haiti and some other things that catch our attention. Sometimes we look at the other side of the issues where we have apparently enemies to American interests, and Iraq and Iran and Libya jump into focus, and I have not even mentioned perhaps three of the biggest problem areas that we have, the immediate threat always to peace from the Mideast, that continuing nagging question; the problems going on in India today, the teeming masses there and how they are going to be fed and what provisions there are going to be for them. I know we have not talked about the continent of Africa where every day, if we can keep up with the map and the changes that are going on, the problems seem to be simply overwhelming.

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The point of this is that we could have endless debate and we could com-

mit endless resources to try and solve all the problems of the world, but obviously we do not have endless time, we do not have endless ability and we do not have endless resources. It is the people we work for, the American people, in the end, who are going to tell us how much resource we should commit to our domestic problems and then what percentage should we commit to the folks overseas who are in true need.

That is what this debate is about, and that is why I think it is important that this debate come forward under an open rule.

I have no doubt that there will be many Members coming forward and spending a great deal of time acquainting us and the people who are interested in this debate with aspects of our foreign assistance, our foreign interests, our foreign activities and our foreign operations that are vital not only to our national interests, our national well-being and to American interests overseas, whether it be individual, corporate, or just tourists on a summer vacation, but also to the well-being and the survival, as my friend from Ohio has so eloquently spoken, of so many countries where they have so little compared to what we enjoy in this much-blessed United States.

That debate, I think, is a debate that is critical every year. I think it helps set the tone and helps set the measure and the standard of what we are about in our world leadership role. I look forward to that debate, and I am extremely pleased that we are able to come forward from the Rules Committee, both sides, in agreement that this should be an open rule so that we can have such discussion in the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3540, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 445 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3540.