

to undermine the intent of the Act, but to increase the overall cost of litigation to the extent that the Act encourages the filing of parallel claims.⁴

Prior to the passage of the Reform Act, there was essentially no significant securities class action litigation brought in State court.⁵ In its Report to the President and the Congress on the First Year of Practice Under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, the SEC called the shift of securities fraud cases from Federal to State court "potentially the most significant development in securities litigation" since passage of the Reform Act.⁶

The managers also determined that, since passage of the Reform Act, plaintiffs' lawyers have sought to circumvent the Act's provisions by exploiting differences between Federal and State laws by filing frivolous and speculative lawsuits in State court, where essentially none of the Reform Act's procedural or substantive protections against abusive suits are available.⁷ In California, State securities class action filings in the first six months of 1996 went up roughly five-fold compared to the first six months of 1995, prior to passage of the Reform Act.⁸ Furthermore, as a state securities commissioner has observed:

It is important to note that companies can not control where their securities are traded after an initial public offering. * * * As a result, companies with publicly-traded securities can not choose to avoid jurisdictions which present unreasonable litigation costs. Thus, a single state can impose the risks and costs of its peculiar litigation system on all national issuers.⁹

The solution to this problem is to make Federal court the exclusive venue for most securities fraud class action litigation involving nationally traded securities.

SCIENTER

It is the clear understanding of the managers that Congress did not, in adopting the Reform Act, intend to alter the standards of liability under the Exchange Act.

TOM BLILEY,
M.G. OXLEY,
BILLY TAUZIN,
CHRIS COX,
RICK WHITE,
ANNA G. ESHOO,

Managers on the Part of the House.

ALFONSE D'AMATO,
PHIL GRAMM,
CHRIS DODD,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

⁴Grundfest, Joseph A. & Perino, Michael A., *Securities Litigation Reform: The First Year's Experience: A Statistical and Legal Analysis of Class Action Securities Fraud Litigation under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995*, Stanford Law School (February 27, 1997).

⁵*Id.* n. 18.

⁶Report to the President and the Congress on the First Year of Practice Under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of the General Counsel, April 1997 at 61.

⁷Testimony of Mr. Jack G. Levin before the Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials of the Committee on Commerce, House of Representatives, Serial No. 105-85, at 41-45 (May 19, 1998).

⁸*Id.* at 4.

⁹Written statement of Hon. Keith Paul Bishop, Commissioner, California Department of Corporations, submitted to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs' Subcommittee on Securities' "Oversight Hearing on the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995," Serial No. 105-182, at 3 (July 27, 1998).

SUPPORTING THE BALTIC PEOPLE OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA, AND CONDEMNING THE NAZI-SOVIET PACT OF NON-AGGRESSION

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 320) supporting the Baltic people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and condemning the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of August 23, 1939, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 320

Whereas on February 16, 1918, February 24, 1918, and November 18, 1918, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, declared, respectively, their independence and became democratic, peace-loving states with membership in the League of Nations and diplomatic representation in the United States;

Whereas on August 23, 1939, emissaries of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, Nazi German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, signed an agreement known as the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression which contained secret protocols that illegally divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence with Estonia, Latvia, and part of Poland going to the Soviet Union and Lithuania and Poland going to Nazi Germany;

Whereas the Soviet Army fulfilled the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression by illegally invading Lithuania on June 15, 1940, and invading both Latvia and Estonia on June 17, 1940;

Whereas this illegal and forcible occupation was never recognized by the United States and successive United States Administrations maintained continuous diplomatic relations with these countries throughout the Soviet period, never once considering them to be "Soviet Republics";

Whereas the Baltic peoples valiantly re-established their independence through peaceful means and the United States recognized their independent governments in 1991; and

Whereas Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have achieved commendable success in the eight years since they re-established independence, including full democracy, significant economic reforms, and civilian control of a new military based on Western standards: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That, in observance of the 59th anniversary of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression, the Congress—

(1) reaffirms the United States policy of the non-recognition of the occupation by the Soviet Union of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia subsequent to the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression, which for the 50 years after the signing of such Pact was a commendable bipartisan policy that refused to legally recognize the Soviet occupation of these countries;

(2) urges Russia, in the spirit of democracy, to renounce the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression and its secret supplemental protocols, as illegal;

(3) welcomes and supports the signing of the United States-Baltic Charter by the United States, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia that reiterates the strong historical kinship between the peoples of these countries; and

(4) calls on the President and Secretary of State to work to ensure that Russia understands that the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression should be considered illegal and null and void.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 320, the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this resolution reiterates an important aspect of our policy towards the three Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, namely, that our Nation has never recognized their invasion by the military forces of the former Soviet Union and the former Nazi Germany or their occupation and absorption by the former Soviet regime as legal acts. This is an extremely important measure to remember as we consider the actions of the Russian Federation in regards to the newly independent Baltic States.

As much as we should call for fair treatment of all citizens of the Baltic States, we should remember that the acts of Russia's predecessor State, the Soviet Union, towards Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were illegal. We should also bear in mind that, due to the purposeful policies of the former Soviet regime, specifically its attempts to Russify the Baltic States through policies of deportation of Baltic residents of those states and settlement of ethnic Russians in those states, the Baltic countries are today faced with the presence of large numbers of ethnic Russian residents, many of whom appear to resent the renewed independence of those states.

The actions of the Russian government with regard to the small Baltic states has not been reassuring. Despite the fact that, at the urging of the United States and the European Union, the Baltic governments have adopted policies meant to fairly integrate ethnic Russians into their politics and society, the Russian government in Moscow seems determined to take advantage of any complaint voiced by ethnic Russians in the Baltic states to renew their harsh criticism of those countries and to claim violations of the human rights of ethnic Russians.

Recent actions threatened against the government of Latvia by the Russian government do not give us any assurance that Russia intends to undertake a fair and balanced approach towards the small Baltic countries and their renewed independence. I would suggest that if the Russian government wishes our Nation and the international community to take more seriously its allegations of violations of

human rights of ethnic Russians in the Baltics, it ought to first do as the resolution states:

Officially acknowledge that the actions of its predecessor state towards the Baltic countries, as embodied in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and exemplified by Soviet occupation and Russification of the Baltic states, were illegal.

In concluding, I want to note that the resolution also states congressional support for the U.S.-Baltic Charter, signed by our President and the Presidents of the three Baltic states in January of this year. Although there is some concern in the Congress over the increasing use of charters that do not require ratification, the U.S.-Baltic Charter outlines the importance of U.S. interaction with the Baltic states and assistance to them as they seek to integrate into the pan-European and trans-Atlantic nations. I certainly support that approach in our bilateral policy towards those three States.

I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) for being a staunch advocate of this measure and for taking an active role in bringing this measure to the floor at this time. Accordingly, I support the approval of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the chairman of our Committee on International Relations, for his leadership and for bringing this piece of legislation to the floor. My commendation also to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) for his participation and his support of this legislation; and certainly my good friend, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for their support.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution gives a sense of observation and recognition of this 59th anniversary of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression. The resolution reaffirms the U.S. Policy of the nonrecognition of the occupation by the Soviet Union of the free Baltic states, mainly Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, subsequent to this infamous non-aggression pact which was done in 1939.

The resolution also urges Russia to renounce as illegal the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact and its secret protocols.

□ 1345

The resolution welcomes the signing of the U.S.-Baltic Charter in January 1998, and it calls also on the President and the Secretary of State to ensure that Russia understands that the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact should be considered illegal, null and void.

The resolution will have no impact on U.S. foreign policy, Mr. Speaker. Rather, it is intended as an implicit warning to the Russians to keep their hands off the Baltic states and to emphasize that these states are no longer in the Russian sphere of influence. This resolution may cause minor problems with our Russian friends, but so it does call on the administration to push our Russian friends to formally renounce the nonaggression pact as illegal, null and void.

The administration does not oppose this resolution, Mr. Speaker. Privately it questions its need and utility, but we think it is important.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we continue to condemn the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 which led directly to the illegal incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union, an act which the United States for some 50 years refused to recognize.

Mr. Speaker, in 1918 under the League of Nations then, the countries of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia were fully recognized as sovereign and independent nations and these nations were duly recognized even by our own country. But then in 1939 the nations of Germany under Adolf Hitler and Russia under Joseph Stalin signed an agreement known as the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression which basically divided these Baltic states. Estonia and Latvia went to Poland, Poland became part of the Soviet Union, and, of course, Lithuania became part of Germany. But in 1940 the Soviet Union invaded these three countries and occupied them ever since then.

Mr. Speaker, ironically our country never officially recognized the occupation of these three countries. In 1991 with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the Cold War was over, these Baltic states are again duly recognized as sovereign and independent nations.

As the process of NATO enlargement unfolds next year, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we underscore our strong commitment to the continued independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of these three Baltic states.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of an African proverb that states that when two elephants fight, the grass gets trodden. It seems that these countries, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, always get caught when larger and more powerful nations fight.

Mr. Speaker, I submit, let us not allow this to happen again to these three states. A couple of years ago it was my privilege to visit the newly recognized states of Estonia and Latvia. They are good people, no different from us here in America.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that we have got to recognize the importance of this resolution. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gen-

tleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time, and I rise in the strongest possible support for the resolution. I really do want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for his initiative here and certainly the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and my good friend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for their very strong support of this legislation.

The forcible incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union in 1940 was one of the greatest tragedies of this 20th century. Invaded by Soviet troops pursuant to a secret pact between Hitler and Stalin, the three Baltic nations had their freedom and their sovereignty totally obliterated for a half century, 50 years. But Soviet jackboots could not stamp out the pride, the religious and cultural strength, and the national identities of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian peoples. Ten American Presidents, five Democrats and five Republicans, refused to recognize the Baltic nations as part of the Soviet Union. Indeed our government, and I was so proud of both political parties, helped keep open the embassies these nations had right here in Washington, D.C. as a symbol of hope for those people. All Americans rejoiced in 1990 when Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia regained their independence as the Iron Curtain came tumbling down thanks to Ronald Reagan and this Congress and others.

But we must never allow ourselves to slip into a false sense of security. The forces of a vicious nationalism are on the rise again in Russia today, Mr. Speaker. Senior Russian officials, including Boris Yeltsin, insist on using ominous terms such as "former Soviet republics" when they mention Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. And so this resolution is very timely here today. By passing this resolution, we will reaffirm the historic U.S. policy that condemned the forcible enslavement of the Baltic nations and refuse to give it any color of diplomatic recognition or legality. Mr. Speaker, moreover we will be calling upon the administration to reinforce that very policy with Russia so as to urge Moscow to renounce once and for all any claim on the Baltics.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would just make a personal note. It is my fervent hope that the next round of NATO expansion will include Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. I am sure many Members here join me in that hope. I look forward to the day when the historic political orientation toward the West that these nations have always had is recognized by bringing them into NATO.

I want to commend—and this is not like JERRY SOLOMON—I want to commend President Clinton for his support of the Baltics at the meeting of NATO in Madrid that approved the acceptance of Poland, Hungary and the Czech

Republic. At that meeting President Clinton accepted my language that made it clear that regardless of size, regardless of geographic location, regardless of political consideration, the Baltics would be included in the open door policy of offering NATO membership to new democracies who otherwise meet the criteria that the NATO allies have set.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank all these Members, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and certainly the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Again I want to compliment the statement and remarks of the gentleman from New York. This is not meant to be trite or repetitious, but again we are going to miss you, JERRY. I hope all the best for you in your future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL).

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 320, a measure which signals our support for the Baltic people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and condemning the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of August 23, 1939.

In 1939, emissaries of Hitler and Stalin signed an agreement known as the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression. This pact illegally divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. One year later, the Soviet army invaded Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in fulfillment of the Nazi-Soviet agreement. This occupation ruthlessly suppressed the ethnic identities of the three Baltic countries.

The illegal incorporation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the Soviet Union was a unilateral act of force with no legal basis in international law. Under Soviet occupation, there was seizing of property, rigging of elections and mass deportations.

Mr. Speaker, during this grim time, the United States never recognized the Baltics as part of the Soviet Union.

In 1990, the Baltics reestablished their independence and shed the yoke of Communist domination. Since that time, each country has been working diligently towards democratic reforms, including religious freedom, which we have talked about so many times on this floor, and movement toward effective free market economies, which we have talked about so many times on this floor.

That is why this measure is necessary. We need to demonstrate our support for the Baltic countries. They are embracing democratic values. Not surprisingly, Lithuania this year elected a Lithuanian-born American citizen, Valdas Adamkus, as their new Presi-

dent. In fact, Lithuania will most likely be the first Baltic country to be ready for NATO membership.

And why not? The Baltics would like to gain membership into NATO. Russian leaders have stated recently that any territory formerly part of the Soviet Union should still be considered under the Russian sphere of influence, unavailable for membership in NATO.

We cannot allow Russia to dictate what NATO is about. We cannot allow Russia to dictate what this country, the United States, is all about. We must continue to build bridges to freedom, international freedom throughout the world. These emerging democracies need full United States support.

That is exactly what this measure does, Mr. Speaker. It reaffirms the United States policy of not recognizing the illegal occupation of the Baltics, and it reiterates our support of the United States-Baltic Charter which was signed earlier this year.

We need to fan the fire of democracy and freedom in these countries. Let us help the Baltic people realize their dreams and secure a prosperous and democratic future. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important measure. And let us continue to build bridges. Let us continue to build bridges and not be afraid to risk the building of those bridges.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), a former resident of my congressional district while he attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The gentleman from Illinois was the original author of this measure, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), my cosponsor, cochairman of the Baltic Caucus, and also those Members who signed as cosponsors of this resolution.

The Baltic countries, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, over the centuries have been occupied, terrorized and vilified. At the hands of the former Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, these countries were illegally annexed under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of World War II. With this concurrent resolution, I hope that we may be able to provide some security to the region by once again denouncing the illegal annexation of the Baltics and to pledge the United States' continued support.

Most people do not realize what happened in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia during World War II. During their occupation, there was the rigging of elections, seizing of bank accounts, censoring of the press, and suppression of religious worship. Additionally, many law-abiding citizens, including teachers and police officials, were imprisoned, sent to labor camps or executed. This was all part of a systematic campaign to transform the Baltic way of life into Russian.

However, this illegal annexation had no basis in international law. In fact,

during the Soviet occupation of eastern and central Europe, the U.S. Congress continued to pass resolutions asking Americans across the country to join in recognizing the fundamental freedom and independence of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Even after all the hardships, the Baltic people valiantly reestablished their independence through peaceful means. In 1991, the United States recognized their independent governments. But the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact continues to haunt these free countries. Recently, Russian leaders have stated on the record that all territory formerly designated part of the Soviet Union should be considered part of an exclusive Russian sphere of influence, untouchable by NATO or anyone else. The United States, and more specifically this body, must demonstrate that we support the Baltics and do not condone Russia's actions. We can do this by approving this concurrent resolution.

House Concurrent Resolution 320 simply supports the Baltics. Specifically, it reaffirms the United States policy of not recognizing the occupation of the Baltics; urges Russia to renounce the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in the spirit of democracy; welcomes the signing of the U.S.-Baltic Charter last winter; and calls on the President and the Secretary of State to work to ensure that Russia understands that the pact should be considered illegal, null and void.

I would encourage all my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution so that we may continue to support the emerging democracies of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

□ 1400

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), who has a considerable number of his constituency from Latvia.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, as the cochair of the Baltic Caucus, a position which I proudly serve with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), I am here today to speak about Resolution 320. I had the privilege of being present with Mr. SHIMKUS and others at the signing of the U.S.-Baltic agreement which took place last winter at the White House, to meet with the Presidents of those countries and to share with them our concern that this fledgling freedom which all were feeling would have a chance to be able to grow and to prosper.

This resolution is an important part of it. The resolution's purpose is to express the sense of Congress that we support the Baltic people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and that we condemn the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of August 23, 1939. This pact of non-aggression, otherwise known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, was a pivotal time in Baltic history. Part of this treaty that was not published at this time stated, and I quote from it, Mr. Speaker:

In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States: Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the USSR.

This pact, in effect, resulted in the annexation of the Baltic States by the USSR.

In 1940 the Soviet Army illegally invaded Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. It is no wonder then that the Baltic Republics played a vital role in dismantling the Soviet Union. Opposition groups in all three Baltic States became popular movements calling for national independence. These popular movements culminated with the Baltic Way demonstration on August 23, 1989, exactly 50 years after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed. Nearly 2 million people formed a human chain stretching from Tallinn through Riga to Vilnius to protest the illegal pact and to question the legitimacy of the Soviet role.

In August 1991, all three of the Baltic States declared their full independence following the official recognition of the independence of all three Baltic States by many Western countries. Moscow decided to acknowledge their sovereignty on September 4, 1991. Within 3 months the Soviet Union would no longer exist.

Recently, Russian leaders have stated that any territory formerly part of the Soviet sphere should still be considered under the Russian sphere of influence. This resolution, if passed by the United States Congress, would send a clear signal to Russian leaders that they should renounce the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and relinquish its grip on nations that never agreed to be part of the Soviet Union and certainly do not consider themselves to be part of the Russian sphere of influence.

I ask my colleagues to vote for this important Baltic resolution to support the people of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and to support their quest for the growth of freedom and to support the continuation of democracy all around the world.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of this resolution, the resolution supporting the Baltic people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in condemning the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of August 23, 1939. This resolution was, of course, introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) and the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) on August 5 of this year, referred to the Committee on International Relations.

The people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have a new active leader and friend in the U.S. Congress in the gen-

tleman from Illinois and the gentleman from Ohio, and I commend the gentleman from Illinois, for example, in his efforts to craft a strong bipartisan statement of support for these nations. I am pleased to join as a cosponsor.

Mr. Speaker, in 1991, after more than 50 years of Soviet occupation, the nations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, acting peacefully, but with great courage, regained their freedom. In doing so they at last put an end to the illegal and forcible subjugation they had suffered as a result of the infamous Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression of 1939.

It is highly appropriate that this body remember that shameful occasion of the 59th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact by reaffirming our principle bipartisan rejection of that evil agreement and by calling on others to join in condemning it and all it represents.

During the bitter years of occupation, as the gentleman from New York mentioned, the United States' administrations and congressional leaders of both parties consistently rejected the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union and maintained diplomatic relations with their legitimate representatives. When at long last their freedom was restored, the United States joyfully welcomed those three countries back into the community of independent nations and sought to assist them in overcoming the legacy of Soviet domination.

Playing a key role in this effort were the many citizens who traced their origins back to the Baltic countries. While enriching our Nation with their cultural heritage, they never lost hope that their mother countries would regain the freedom that is their birthright.

Finally, I join in expressing strong support for the landmark U.S.-Baltic Charter signed in January of this year. The charter both defines and describes our bonds of kinship and friendship with all three nations.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that through their efforts, both individually and together, these three nations will continue to make progress in overcoming the lost years of occupation and returning to their rightful place among the free peoples of the world.

Lastly, I would like to note the very direct link between Latvia and Lincoln, Nebraska. Karlis Ulmanis, Father of Latvian independence and the long-serving Latvian President between World War I and World War II, was a graduate of the University of Nebraska School of Dairy Science. He returned to his homeland after World War I, led his country to independence, and was eventually brutally seized in prison by the occupying Soviets and disappeared in Siberian captivity. Next year his grandnephew, Guntis Ulmanis, the current and very popular President of Latvia, will receive an honorary degree from the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Thus, Mr. Speaker, we complete the circle.

The Latvian-American community in Lincoln are proud of the role of their adopted son, the first President of Latvia and his grandnephew, the current President of Latvia, who will be welcomed to Lincoln soon. The Lithuania-American and Estonian-American citizens of our State are also, of course, very supportive of this resolution supporting the Baltic people and recognizing their long-term suffering under the Soviets.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of H. Con. Res. 320.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), a member of our committee.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I join with my friends today from Illinois and Ohio in supporting the freedom of the Baltic peoples and in memorializing the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact is an historic reminder that the forces of evil and tyranny are inevitably attracted to one another. In a world of nazism and communism six decades ago, some unfortunate people in the West, unfortunate because of their wishful thinking, thought that they could play one evil off against another and thus did not just simply state to the world and join in solidarity with the other free people against evil itself. It did not work, and this compromise with evil, trying to play the Nazis off against the Communists and the Communists against the Nazis, led to a world conflagration that destroyed much of the planet and took up to 100 million lives, and, of course, what we saw ending that wishful thinking was an alliance between the Communists and the Nazis. Today we remember the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and declare there is no compromise with evil and tyranny. Consistent with that we focus on the Baltic nations.

I recently traveled through Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The people there for the most part are successful in their transition out of Communist tyranny. They are showing their Russian neighbors that democracy, free enterprise and the aspects of our Western society work, and the people of the Baltic States now enjoy prosperity, peace and freedom.

The passage of this resolution restates to the world America's commitment to peace, prosperity and democracy for all of the people of the world, especially those brave souls in the Baltics who have suffered so much during the 20th century from the twin evils of communism and nazism.

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

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

My apologies to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for not recognizing his tremendous contributions as the prime sponsor of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that according to an African proverb, when two elephants fight, the grass gets trodden. A little twist to this African proverb by a remark made years ago by the former Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa, the Honorable Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese, who also said that when two elephants make love, the grass still gets trodden.

Mr. Speaker, what is obviously meant by this is that let us not forget the economic and social needs of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania when the United States intends to conduct major trade and business transactions with Europe and Asia.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 320. I would like to thank the esteemed Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. GILMAN, and the Ranking Member, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. HAMILTON, for their leadership on this issue. I would also like to salute the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. SHIMKUS, for all of the hard work he has put in in drafting this important resolution. His leadership along with his foresight and keen awareness of foreign policy has been instrumental in making this resolution become reality. As the co-chair of the Congressional Baltic Caucus, along with the other co-chair, the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. KUCINICH, his ability to work in a bipartisan fashion for important measures such as this are certainly appreciated by this Member.

Around sixty years ago, the three nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia had their freedom stripped away by the Soviet army. Under a secret, illegal and immoral agreement between Hitler and Stalin, the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression tore Eastern Europe apart. After the Soviet Union invaded Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in 1940, the cultural identities of those nations were ruthlessly suppressed. These invasions and occupations were not only illegal under international law, they were immoral and atrocious crimes against humanity.

Thanks to the heroic efforts of Ronald Reagan, the fall of communism during his watch eventually freed the Baltic States from communist tyranny. Since their independence in 1990, each nation has been working diligently towards democratic reforms including religious freedom and movement towards free market economies. The brave efforts of the Baltic States must be supported by the U.S.

H. Con. Res. 320 will do just that. It sends a message to the world that we support the Baltic States. Since their independence, Russia continues to refer to the Baltic States as former Soviet Republics despite the fact that they were illegally invaded by the former Soviet Union, and it appears that Russia continues to view the Baltic States as part of the Russian "sphere of influence." We must demonstrate our support for the Baltics. These are fledgling democracies who peacefully overturned the tyrannical rule of communist aggression.

This important resolution will reaffirm the U.S. policy of not recognizing the illegal occupation of the Baltics, urge Russia to renounce the illegal Nazi-Soviet Pact, reiterate our support for the U.S.-Baltic Charter signed earlier

this year, and call on the President of the United States and the Secretary of State to work to ensure that Russia understands the Pact should be considered illegal.

I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution. Let us support freedom, let us support peace, let us support democracy, and let us support the pursuit of justice.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 320, legislation supporting the Baltic People and condemning the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact.

Prior to the cold war Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia proudly declared their independence and became democratic states with membership in the League of Nations. But, during the cold war Germany and Russia decided to split the Baltic States into two parts by forcing Estonia, Latvia, and a portion of Poland to become part of the Soviet Union and by forcing Lithuania and the rest of Poland to become part of Nazi Germany. I have never recognized the legitimacy of such a decision and I am proud to say that the United States has taken the same point of view. Additionally, I must add that the illegal incorporation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the Soviet Union does not have and will never have a legal basis in international law.

In 1990, when the Baltic States re-established their independence, the United States along with many other countries boldly recognized their independence. Many of the Baltic States have successfully made the transition from an authoritarian political system to that of a democratic system. It is interesting to note that in light of all these political changes Russia continues to recognize the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression. This pact illegally divides the Baltic States into "spheres of influence", therefore, precluding the Baltic States from asserting their autonomy and joining NATO or entering into other such alliances.

As faith would have it, Russia itself has undergone tremendous democratic and free market reforms but has yet to recognize the independence of the Baltic States. It is only fitting and just that Russia denounce the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression and recognize the autonomy of the Baltic States and demonstrate to the world that it truly believes in the principles of democracy and individual freedom.

I strongly urge President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright to work with the Russian government to ensure that Russia understands the importance of denouncing the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression and endorsing the right to self determination by the Baltic States.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill to support the Baltic people and to condemn the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. SHIMKUS] for his leadership on this issue and in organizing the Congressional Caucus on the Baltics.

In 1918, the nations of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia declared their independence and became democratic states with membership in the League of Nations and diplomatic representation in the United States.

In 1939, emissaries of Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin signed an agreement, known as the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression, which contained secret protocols to divide Eastern Europe into spheres of influence. Estonia, Latvia and part of Poland were made subject to the Soviet Union, with Lithuania and most of Poland going to Nazi Germany.

In 1940, the Soviet Army invaded Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. This occupation has never been recognized by the United States, and all successive U.S. administrations, whether Democratic or Republican, maintained continuous diplomatic relations with these countries as sovereign nations throughout the Soviet period, never considering them to be Soviet Republics.

The Baltic peoples re-established their independence through peaceful means following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, and the United States recognized their independent governments in 1991. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have achieved significant success in the eight years since they gained their independence, including instituting democratic institutions, economic reforms, and civilian control over the military.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 320, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Illinois [Mr. SHIMKUS], and to which I am a proud cosponsor, reaffirms the U.S. policy of not recognizing the occupation by the Soviet Union of these proud nations following the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression. Further, it urges the now independent nation of Russia, in the spirit of democracy, to renounce the Nazi-Soviet Pact and its secret protocols as illegal. Finally, the measure welcomes and supports the signing of the United States-Baltic Charter by the U.S., Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia—a charter that reiterates the strong historical kinship and support between the Baltic peoples and Americans.

Mr. Speaker, for all the progress, both democratic and economic, these three Baltic nations have made since regaining their independence in 1991, they continue to face many challenges and uncertain relationships with their powerful neighbors. Russia continues to be a threatening and intimidating force, which still views the Baltic nations as subject to its "sphere of influence."

H. Con. Res. 320 clearly signals U.S. support for these nations, for their independence, and for their democratic futures. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this measure.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 320, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2431. An act to establish an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, to provide for the imposition of sanctions against countries engaged in a pattern of religious persecution, and for other purposes.