TRIBUTE TO MRS. ELLA YON STEVENSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mrs. Ella Yon Stevenson of Norway, South Carolina. Today, I gladly join the community in celebration of her 100th birthday.

Mrs. Stevenson was born in Orangeburg County in the town of Norway, South Carolina on March 17, 1899. She is the daughter of the late Glen and Henrietta G. Yon. As a child, she attended Norway Public Schools. Mrs. Stevenson joined Bushy Pond Baptist Church of Norway, South Carolina at a very early age. She enjoyed singing in the choir until her health prevented her from participating. She is strongly committed to her church and community. To this day, Mrs. Stevenson continually offers support to her neighbors, friends, and family.

Mrs. Stevenson cherishes her family. She married the late George W. Stevenson. They had four sons: George Stevenson, Jr., James Stevenson, Authur Stevenson, and Levern Stevenson (all deceased), and two unique daughters, Clara Mae Stevenson Pough and Reather Bell Stevenson Pough. Mrs. Stevenson has 34 grandchildren, 50 great grandchildren, and 48 great-great grandchildren. She currently resides with her daughter Reather Bell in North, South Carolina.

Please join me in recognizing Mrs. Ella Yon Stevenson as she celebrates her 100th birthday today.

REMARKS OF SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT ON THE ACCESSION TO NATO OF POLAND, HUNGARY AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last Friday at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright president over the ceremony marking the final step in the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to membership in the North Atlantic Alliance. This was a historic occasion as these three former members of the Warsaw Pact, an alliance which was established to counter the North Altantic Treaty Organization, were now joining as full members of this western alliance.

Mr. Speaker, it was most appropriate that the ceremony marking full accession to NATO took place at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library. It was under the far-sighted and thoughtful leadership of President Truman that NATO was established fifty years ago this year. We mark not only the 50th anniversary of the establishment of NATO, but also the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Soviet dominance in Central and Eastern Europe.

If any one individual deserves credit for the end of communist domination in Europe and for the end of the Soviet empire, Mr. Speaker, it is President Harry Truman. He was the President to made the critical decisions in the early days of the cold war; he was the President under whose leadership the policy of containment was enunciated; and he was the President who established the critical institutions which were the basis of U.S. policy throughout the cold war. His successors—from Dwight Eisenhower to Ronald Reagan and George Bush—were simply implementing the fundamental policy that was enunciated, initiated, and put in place by Harry Truman.

Mr. Speaker, the accession to NATO of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic at the Truman Library was a quintessentially ''American'' event—the United States Senator who introduced our Secretary of State, my friend and colleague from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, is Polish-American; I had the honor of participating in that event and, as my colleagues know, I am a native of Budapest, Hungary; and, of course, our Secretary of State, Madeleine K. Albright who presided on this occasion, was born in Prague in the Czech Republic.

The remarks on this festive occasion by our Secretary of State, Mr. Speaker, provide an outstanding statement of the U.S. government policy that underlies this landmark addition of new members to NATO. Secretary Albright's speech also provides an excellent summary of the importance of the first half century of the NATO alliance as well as a discussion of its future. I ask that Secretary Albright's remarks be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to read and give them thoughtful attention.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you, Senator Mikulski, for that wonderful and personal introduction, and thank you for your great friendship. I want to thank you and your colleagues, Senators Roth and Smith and Representatives Skelton, Lantos, and McCarthy for your bipartisan leadership on behalf of NATO and NATO enlargement. You have helped to make history, because without your support we would not be here today.

Minister Kavan, Minister Martonyi, and Minister Geremek, excellencies from the diplomatic corps, Admiral Gough, General Anderson and other leaders of our armed forces, officials of the Truman Library—thank you for remembering my daughter—honored guests, colleagues, and friends, today is a day of celebration and re-dedication and remembrance and renewal.

Today we recognize in fact what has always been true in spirit. Today we confirm through our actions that the lands of King Stephen and Cardinal Mindszenty, Charles the Fourth and Vaclav Havel, Copernicus and Pope John Paul II reside fully and irrevocably within the Atlantic community for freedom. And to that I say, to quote an old Central European expression. ''Hallelujah.'' (Applause.)

History will record March 12, 1999, as the day the people of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland strode through NATO's open door and assumed their rightful place in NATO's councils.

To them I say that President Clinton's pledge is now fulfilled. Never again will your fates be tossed around like poker chips on a bargaining table. Whether you are helping to revise the Alliance's strategic concept or engaging in NATO's partnership with Russia, the promise of ''nothing about you without you,'' is now formalized. You are truly allies; you are truly home.

This is a cause for celebration not only in Prague, Budapest and Warsaw, but throughout the Alliance. For the tightening of transatlantic ties that we make today inspired the vision of translatlantic leaders half a century ago. That generation, which in Dean Acheson's famous phrase was ''present at the creation,'' emerged from the horror of World War II determined to make another such war impossible. They had seen—and paid in blood—the price of division; so their policies were inclusive. They wanted to help build a transatlantic community of prosperity and peace that would include all of Europe.

But between the 1947 offering of the Marshall Plan and the forgoing of NATO two years later, it became evident that the reality of their times did not match the boldness of their vision. The Iron Curtain descended, and across the body of Europe, a brutal and unnatural division was imposed. Now, due to bravery on both sides, that curtain has lifted, and links that should have been secured long ago are being soldered together.

Today is evidence of that. For this morning, NATO is joined by three proud democracies—countries that have proven their ability to meet Alliance responsibilities, uphold Alliance values and defend Alliance interests.

Since the decision to invite new members was first made, President Clinton has argued that a larger NATO would make America safer, our Alliance stronger and Europe more peaceful and united. Today, we see that this is already the case. For NATO's new members bring with them many strengths. Their citizens have a tradition of putting their lives on the line for liberty: Witness Hungary's courageous freedom fighters in 1956; the students who faced down tanks in the streets of Prague 12 years later; and the workers of Gdansk whose movement for Solidarity ushered in Europe's new dawn.

As young democracies, these countries have been steadfast in supporting the vision of an integrated Europe. Their troops are serving alongside NATO forces in Bosnia. And each is contributing to stability in its own neighborhood.

As a daughter of the region, and a former professor of Central and East European affairs, I know many Americans have not always had the understanding of this region that they now do. Earlier this century, when Jan Masaryk, son of the Czech President, came to the United States, an American Senator asked him, how is your father; and does he still play the violin?

Jan replied, sir, I fear that you are making a small mistake. You are perhaps thinking of Paderewski and not Masaryk. Paderwski plays the piano, not the violin, and was President not of Czechoslovakia, but of Poland. (Laughter.)

Of our Presidents, Benes was the only one who played; but he played neither the violin nor the piano, but football. In all other respects, your information is correct. (Laughter.)

Later, after his father had died and World War II had been fought, Jan Masaryk became Czechoslovak Foreign Minister—my father's boss. It soon became clear that the revival of Czechoslovak democracy and Czechoslovak aspirations to be part of the West would be short-lived.

Czechoslovakia was also invited to join the Marshall Plan. However, Foreign Minister Masaryk was summoned to Moscow and told that Czechoslovakia had to refuse the invitation. He returned to Prague to tell his colleagues, ''I now know I am not the Foreign Minister of a sovereign country.''

Masaryk's statement reminds us of another great gift the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary bring to our Alliance for freedom: the living memory of living without freedom.

NATO's success has enabled generations protected by the Alliance to grow up and grow old under democratic rule. For that, we are enormously grateful.

But we must also guard against a danger. For there is a risk that to people who have never known tyranny, an Alliance forged before they were born to counter an enemy that no longer exists, to defend freedoms some believe are no longer endangered, may appear no more relevant than the fate of Central Europe did to some of our predecessdors 60 years ago.

The Truman Library is a fit place for plain speaking. So let me speak plainly now. It is the job of each and every one of us, on both sides of the Atlantic, to bring home to the generations of today and tomorrow the compelling lessons of this century.

We must never fall back into complacency or presume that totalitarianism is forever dead or retreat in the face of aggression. We must learn from history, not repeat it. And we must never forget that the destinies of Europe and North America are inseparable; and that this is as true now as it was when NATO was founded 50 years ago.

Of course, there will always be differences between Europe and America. We have been aptly called cousins, but we will never be mistaken for clones. Today, there are splits on trade and other issues—some of which are quite controversial. But do not exaggerate, these are differences within the family.

However, I think I can speak for each of my Alliance colleagues when I say that on the central questions that affect the security and safety of our people, our Alliance is and will remain united, as it must. For the hopes of future generations are in our hands. We cannot allow any issue to undermine our fundamental unity. We must adapt our alliance and strengthen our partnerships. We must anticipate and respond to new dangers. And we must not count on second chances; we must get it right—now.

This requires understanding that the more certain we are in preparing our defense, the more certain we may be of defending our freedom without war. NATO is the great proof of that. For its success over five decades is measured not in battles won, but rather in lives saved, freedoms preserved and wars prevented. That is why President Truman said that the creation of NATO was the achievement in which he took the greatest pride.

Today we, too, have grounds for pride. For NATO enlargement is a sign that we have not grown complacent about protecting the security of our citizens. The nations entering our alliance today are the first new members since the Cold War's end, but they will not be the last. For NATO enlargement is not an event; it is a process.

It is our common purpose, over time, to do for Europe's east what NATO has already helped to do for Europe's west. Steadily and systematically, we will continue erasing without replacing the line drawn in Europe by Stalin's bloody boot.

When President Clinton welcomes his counterparts to Washington next month to mark NATO's 50th anniversary, they will affirm that the door of the Alliance does remain open; and they will announce a plan to help prepare aspiring members to meet NATO's high standards.

But enlargement is only one element in our effort to prepare NATO for its second 50 years. The Washington Summit will be the largest gathering of international leaders in the history of Washington, D.C. It will include representatives from NATO and its partner countries—44 in all—and it will produce a blueprint for NATO in the 21st Century.

Our leaders will, I am confident, agree on the design of an Alliance that is not only bigger, but also more flexible; an Alliance committed to collective defense, and capable of meeting a wide range of threats to its common interests; an Alliance working in partnership with other nations and organizations to advance security, prosperity and democracy in and for the entire Euro-Atlantic region.

The centerpiece of the Summit will be the unveiling of a revised strategic concept that will take into account the variety of future dangers the Alliance may face.

Since 1949, under Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty, the core mission of our alliance has been collective defense. That must not change, and will not change. NATO is a defensive alliance, not a global policeman.

But NATO's founders understood that what our alliance commits us to do under Article V is not all we may be called upon to do, or should reserve the right to do. Consider, for example, that when French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman signed the North Atlantic Treaty, he characterized it as ''insurance against all risks—a system of common defense against any attack, whatever its nature.''

During the Cold War, we had no trouble identifying the risks to our security and territory. But the threats we face today and may face tomorrow are less predictable. They could come from an aggressive regime, a rampaging faction, or a terrorist group. And we know that, if past is prologue, we face a future in which weapons will be more destructive at longer distances than ever before.

Our alliance is and must remain a Euro-Atlantic institution that acts by consensus. We must prevent and, if necessary, respond to the full spectrum of threats to Alliance interests and values. And when we respond, it only makes sense to use the unified military structure and cooperative habits we have developed over the past 50 years. This approach shouldn't be controversial. We've been practicing it successfully in Bosnia since 1995.

We are also taking steps, as we plan for the summit, to ensure that NATO's military forces are designed, equipped and prepared for 21st Century missions. And we expect the Summit to produce an initiative that responds to the grave threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Clearly, NATO's job is different now than when we faced a single monolithic adversary across a single, heavily-armed frontier. But NATO's purpose is enduring. It has not changed. It remains to prevent war and safeguard freedom. NATO does this not only by deterring, but also by unifying. And let no one underestimate its value here, as well. For if NATO can assure peace in Europe, it will contribute much to stability around the globe.

The history of this century and many before it has been marked by shifting patterns within Europe as empires rose and fell, borders were drawn and redrawn, and ethnic divisions were exploited by aggressors and demagogues. Twice this century, conflicts arose which required American troops to cross the Atlantic and plunge into the cauldron of war.

NATO and NATO's partners have closed that book and are authoring a new one. In collaboration with regional institutions, we are encouraging the resolution of old antagonisms, promoting tolerance, ensuring the protection of minority rights and helping to realize, for the first time in history, the dream of a Europe whole and free.

So let us not hesitate to rebut those who would diminish the role of our alliance, dispute its value, or downplay the importance of its unity and preparedness. For if NATO does not respond to the 21st Century security challenges facing our region, who will? If NATO cannot prevent aggressors from engulfing whole chunks of Europe in conflict, who can? And if NATO is not prepared to respond to the threat posed to our citizens by weapons of mass destruction, who will have that capability?

The 20th Century has been the bloodiest and most destructive in human history, and despite the Cold War's end, many threats remain. But we have learned some hard lessons from this history of conflict, and those lessons underlie all our planning for the Washington Summit.

We know that when the democracies of Europe and America are divided, crevices are created through which forces of evil and aggression may emerge; and that when we stand together, no force on Earth is more powerful than our solidarity on behalf of freedom.

That is why NATO is focused not only on welcoming new members, but also on strengthening its valuable partnerships with Russia, Ukraine and Europe's other democracies. Their inclusion and full participation in the transatlantic community is essential to the future we seek. For NATO's purpose is not to build new walls, but rather to tear old walls down.

Five years ago, while serving as US Permanent Representative to the UN, I traveled with General Shalikashvili to Central and Eastern Europe, to outline President Clinton's plan for a Partnership for Peace. That concept continues to deepen and pay dividends for countries whether or not they aspire to NATO membership. Today, former adversaries are talking to each other, training with each other, carrying out missions together, and planning together for the future. By fostering that process, we prevent potentially dangerous misunderstandings, address present problems and lay a solid foundation for future cooperation.

We also remind ourselves, that although NATO stands tall, it does not stand alone. The EU, OSCE and NATO and its partners form the core of a broader system for protecting vital interests and promoting shared values.

We learned in Bosnia earlier this decade how vital such a system is. We face a test of that system now in Kosovo, and we welcome Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov's efforts in Belgrade today to help achieve our common goal.

There, together, we have backed diplomacy with tools ranging from humanitarian relief to OSCE verifiers to the threatened use of NATO force. Together, we have hammered out an interim political settlement which meets the needs and respects the rights of all concerned.

When talks resume next week, we must be firm in securing this agreement. We must be clear in explaining that a settlement without NATO-led enforcement is not acceptable because only NATO has the credibility and capability to make it work. And we must be resolute in spelling out the consequences of intransigence.

To those abroad and in my own country who have raised doubts, I reply that the plan we and our partners have developed is not risk-free. But we prefer that risk to the certainty that inaction would lead to a renewed cycle of repression and retaliation, bloodletting and ethnic cleansing. The path we have chosen for our alliance in Kosovo is not easy; but it is right. It serves NATO interests, and it upholds the values of our alliance for which it was created and which we will defend.

Today, as NATO embarks upon a new era, our energy and vision are directed to the future. But we are mindful, as well, of the past. For as we welcome three new members, we have a debt we cannot fail to acknowledge.

In this room today are ambassadors and foreign ministers and generals and members of Congress. In this room, there is great pride and good reason for it. But let us never forget upon whose shoulders we stand. We pay homage to our predecessors and to the millions of soldiers and sailors and aviators and diplomats who, throughout the past half-century, have kept NATO vigilant and strong.

We pay homage, as well, to those who fought for freedom on the far side of freedom's curtain. For the Berlin Wall would be standing today; the Fulda Gap would divide Europe today; the Warsaw Pact would remain our adversary today, if those who were denied liberty for so long, had not struggled so bravely for their rights.

Let us never forget that freedom has its price. And let us never fail to remember how our alliance came together, what it stands for, and why it has prevailed.

Upon the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, President Harry Truman referred to the creation of NATO as a ''neighborly act.'' ''We are like a group of householders,'' he said, ''who express their community of interests by entering into an association for their mutual protection.''

At the same time, Canadian Secretary of State Lester Pearson said, ''The North Atlantic community is part of the world community, and as we grow stronger to preserve the peace, all free men and women grow stronger with us.''

Prime Minister Spaak of Belgium added, ''The new NATO pact is purely defensive; it threatens no one. It should therefore disturb no one, except those who might foster the criminal idea of having recourse to war.''

Though all the world has changed since these statements were made, the verities they express have not. Our alliance still is bound together by a community of interests. Our strength still is a source of strength to those everywhere who labor for freedom and peace. Our power still shields those who love the law and still threatens none, except those who would threaten others with aggression and harm. Our alliance endures because the principles it defends are timeless and because they reflect the deepest aspirations of the human spirit.

It is our mission now, working across the Atlantic, to carry on the traditions of our alliance and prepare NATO for the 21st Century. To that end, we take a giant step today. And we look forward with confidence and determination to the historic summit in Washington and further progress tomorrow.

Thank you all very much.

(Applause)

GROWING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in the coming days the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) will conduct in Vienna, Austria, a Supplementary Meeting on Freedom of Religion with the intent to discuss some of the key human rights concerns raised at the 1998 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The United States has a sincere interest in the deserved attention the OSCE is bringing to violations of religious liberty.

As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission(which has the mandate to monitor compliance with the Helsinki Accords), I continue to be concerned with the growing evidence that religious intolerance is on the rise and violations of this precious freedom are cropping up among the stalwart participating States of the OSCE. This trend is especially noteworthy in Western Europe, in countries such as France and Belgium, where the parliaments, respectively, reports listing a variety of religious groups and institutions as ''dangerous sects.'' The French, Belgian, and Austrian Governments have also established governmental centers to advise citizens which religious groups meet government criteria as a bona fide religion. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment and share with my colleagues these alarming initiatives so that we may consider what these actions portend for all peoples of faith.

The clearest and most comprehensive commitments on religious liberty found in any international instrument are enunciated in the OSCE documents. Non-interference in the affairs of religious communities is central to the OSCE understanding of religious liberty. The tendency of a number of European governments to establish themselves as the determiner of the rightness or wrongness of a particular belief is in direct contravention to this principle. In addition, OSCE States have committed to eliminating and preventing discrimination based on religious grounds in all field of civil, political, economic, social and cultural life. Other commitments include the freedom to profess and practice one's religion alone or in community, the freedom to meet with and exchange information with co-religionists regardless of frontiers, the freedom to freely present to others and discuss one's religious views, and the freedom to change one's religion.

Over the past three years, the parliaments of France, Belgium, and Germany each established commissions to study ''dangerous sects and cults' that have contributed to the discrimination and harassment of targeted groups. For example, an investigative report undertaken by the French Parliament in 1996 contained a list of ''dangerous'' groups in order to warn the public against them. Suspect activities, according to the report, include ''recruitment'' through evangelistic outreach and distribution of tracts, activities clearly within the internationally recognized right to free expression. Similarly, the Belgian Parliament's 1997 report had a widely circulated informal appendix that listed 189 groups and included various allegations against many Protestant and Catholic groups, Quakers, Hasidic Jews, Buddhists, and the YWCA. In Belgium, the unofficial appendix appears to have gained significance in the eyes of some public officials who reportedly have denied access to publicly rented buildings for Seventh Day Adventists and Baha'i because they were listed in the appendix.

Equally alarming, the French, Belgian, and Austrian Governments, as well as a number of state governments in Germany, have set up hotlines for the public and, through government-sponsored ''information centers'', distribute information on groups deemed by the government to be ''dangerous.'' Characterizations of religious beliefs by these government information centers and publication of unproven and potentially libelous materials have already caused problems for a number of minority religious groups. Such government action presumes that religious beliefs and spiritual convictions can be objectively analyzed by government bureaucrats in their consumer protection role. These information centers contradict the OSCE commitments to ''foster a climate of mutual tolerance and respect,'' and excessively entangle the government in the public discussion on the viability of particular religious beliefs.

A few months ago, in October 1998, the French Prime Minister's office created the ''Interministerial Mission to Battle Against Sects'', which by its very name, suggests confrontation with religious minorities rather than tolerance. The Interministerial Mission's mandate includes the responsibility to ''predict and fight against actions of sects that violate human dignity or threaten public order.''

This is the latest example of how the French Government has taken steps which have negative effects on religious liberty. In 1996, the French Parliament placed the Institut Theologique de Nimes, a mainstream Baptist seminary closely connected to the Luther Rice Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, on its list of so-called ''sects.'' Since then, libelous articles about the Institut have been published in newspapers. The articles were based on hearsay of dubious origin. In addition, the church connected with the Institut recently reported that a loan application was rejected for the reason that the church is on the Parliament's ''sect'' list. Members of the Institut have also apparently suffered discrimination from people in the region; according to report, at least one church member has lost her job due to her attendance.

Since the 1997 Belgian Parliament's report with the unofficial appendix listing 189 groups, the Belgian Government has moved ahead with plans to establish an ''Advice and Information Center on Dangerous Sects.'' It is my understanding that this center should be fully operational by the latter part of this year. According to Belgian officials at the Ministry of Justice, the new center will distribute official government views on the groups identified by the Parliament and may expand its inquiries to other groups not previously listed. A coalition of Belgian religious groups registered their concern at a press conference held in May 1998 in Brussels and continues to oppose the Belgian Government policies toward religious groups.

In Austria, a law restricting religious freedom became effective in January 1998. The law requires that a religious group prove a 20-year existence in Austria, have a creed distinct from previously registered groups, and have a membership of at least 0.02% of the population or 16,000 members before they are granted full rights under law. The Austrian Government's opinion that the government must ''approve'' religious belief before it is available for the public reveals a shocking retreat from democratic principles which encourage the free exchange of ideas and quality before the law for all religions or beliefs.

The tendency to increase control over religion or belief groups extends to Europe as a whole. Pan-European institutions such as the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament have in the last year debated the role of government in controlling ''sects.'' The tone of these discussions has been ominous and proposals include instituting even more government controls over minority religions.