First and foremost, there is simply no need to proceed with this sale. Turkey is already the most militarized state in that region, and it has the second largest army in NATO after the United States. Despite these facts, Turkey plans to spend $150 billion over the next 25 to 30 years on military weapons; and it plans to implement the first $31 billion phase in the next 10 years. This money could be better used to build schools, hospitals, or housing for the victims of last year's destructive earthquake. Mr. Speaker, the list is endless.

Previous experience leaves no room for any optimism regarding legitimate use of such weaponry by Turkey. Quite the contrary, the record shows that the Turkish military has consistently failed to distinguish between civilian and military targets. For the last 16 years, the Turkish military has been using American weaponry, most notably attack helicopters, to kill more than 30,000 civilians, destroy over 2,000 ethnic Kurdish villages and displace more than 2½ million ethnic Kurds.

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The Turkish military has misused its equipment even though its government has signed numerous international agreements guaranteeing freedom of religion and human rights. Recently, Turkey used an American COBRA attack helicopter in its campaign against the Kurds in southeast Turkey, in direct violation of the Arms Export Control Act and the Foreign Military Sales Agreement which Turkey signed with the United States.

Despite its repeated pledges and promises to make improvements, Turkey's record of human rights violations remains dismal. In a December 1997 meeting with U.S. officials, Turkish diplomats pledged to meet certain benchmarks for improving human rights in Turkey. In subsequent meetings, U.S. officials pledged to oppose the sale of U.S. attack helicopters or other military equipment to Turkey unless the Turkish government met these standards.

And to what degree did Turkey honor its promises? According to the State Department's 1999 Country Report on Human Rights, Turkey has failed to meet any of the benchmarks set forth by the administration. How can we allow this sale to proceed when Turkey has repeatedly failed to live up to its promises? Our Nation risks a loss of credibility in permitting this sale while repeatedly proclaiming our commitment to respect and promote human rights and our opposition to Turkey's violations.

Other countries have refused to sell Turkey weapons because of its human rights records. According to a report by Reuters on September 8, 2000, Germany's ruling Social Democrats said their government would veto a $7.1 billion order to supply Turkey with 1,000 tanks because of Turkey's human rights violations. If Germany is willing to forego a lucrative arms deal based on these concerns, why should we feel any differently? Is our Nation any less committed to protecting human rights? Are our principles more ''flexible'' when a significant dollar amount is involved? I would hope not.

Mr. Speaker, some values transcend geopolitical barriers, and respect for human rights is one of them. People around the world look to the United States for leadership and guidance precisely because of our strict adherence to such principles. The proposed arms sale to Turkey, viewed in the light of its past record on human rights, is contrary to the values we espouse, harmful to our imagine abroad, and threatens the security of a strategically important region.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to join me in opposing this arms deal and in calling for its immediate cancellation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I have long been concerned about the level of U.S. military aid and arms sales to Turkey. On average, the U.S. provides Turkey with more than $1 billion each year in direct military assistance and training and commercial arms exports. There are more particular reasons, however, for why I am opposed to the recently announced agreement for Turkey to purchase 145 attack helicopters worth $4.5 billion from U.S. arms manufacturers. Nothing could be more destructive to the efforts by the U.S. and the international community to bring peace and stability to the eastern Mediterranean region that this major arms purchase by Turkey.

Human rights organizations inside and outside of Turkey have documented that Turkey has used American Cobra attack helicopters in its campaign against the Kurdish people in southeast Turkey. The Turkish military consistently fail to distinguish between civilian and military targets. For the past 16 years, the Turkish military has used American weaponry and especially attack helicopters to kill over 30,000 civilian non-combatants, destroy over 2,000 ethnic Kurdish villages, and displace over 2.5 million ethnic Kurds. In its ''Report 2000,'' Amnesty International states that the practice of torture has actually increased in the past year.

At a time when the world hopes for a breakthrough in negotiations on Cyprus, the U.S. approves a massive military sale to Turkey. At a time when the world is attempting to lessen the attacks and repressive actions taken against the Kurdish minority by the Turkish government, the U.S. approves a massive military sale to Turkey.

Why is the Administration allowing this commercial sale to go forward? Turkey is already the most militarized state in the Mediterranean. It possesses vast military superiority over all its neighbors. There is no need to increase its military arsenal.

Rather than spending $4.5 billion on the purchase of attack helicopters, the Government of Turkey might better target those funds toward rebuilding the communities ravaged by earthquakes, building more schools and health clinics, and addressing other basic economic needs of its people.

I urge the Administration to revoke this export license and move away from the longstanding policy of militarizing Turkey—a policy supported by Republican and Democratic Administrations alike. What might have once made sense during the Cold War is now counter-productive to efforts to demilitarize the region.

The pursuit of regional peace and stability and respect for basic human rights are not helped by arms sales.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RECOGNIZING WHITNEY M. YOUNG AS OUTSTANDING PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as the debate continues around the issues of vouchers, charter schools, and what some call alternatives to traditional public education, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Whitney M. Young Public High School in Chicago, Illinois, which has the distinction of being hailed number one in the Nation in college preparatory education.

For 15 years, the Whitney M. Young magnet school has been number one in the State of Illinois. This year, the year 2000, it leads the United States in the numbers of its students who qualified as semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Competition for outstanding black students. Twenty seniors put Whitney M. Young on the top of the list as a result of their ranking in the top 2 percent of youngsters in competition.

Graduates of Young go on to college at the astronomical rate of 96 percent, with the University of Illinois enrolling more than any other college or university. Princeton, Harvard, Stanford, Yale and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology lead other schools in enrollment of Whitney Young alumni.

Mr. Speaker, Principal Joyce Kenner, her staff, local school council, parents, the Chicago Board of Education, and the students themselves are to be commended for proving, and for proving conclusively, that a student does not have to have a voucher or go to a private or charter school to achieve, and indeed to excel academically.

So, Mr. Speaker, a school located in the inner city of Chicago, with a diverse student population, 50 percent of whom are black, leads the Nation in the number of its students who qualified as semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Competition for outstanding students. So just as Whitney Young practiced excellence in his life and work, the Whitney M. Young High

School has built and continues to develop a legacy of excellence in preparation of its students for college, for life, and for service to humanity.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I commend all of those who have been a part of the development of this outstanding institution: the parents of the community where the school is located, the parents who serve on the local school advisory council, the principal, members of the faculty, and the Chicago Board of Education itself, who continue to prove that public education can in fact thrive; that it can flourish; that it has worked and continues to work when we put the resources where the need exists.

REPUBLICAN CONGRESS HAS MADE HIGHER EDUCATION MORE AFFORDABLE FOR AVERAGE FAMILY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for the tremendous progress we have made in funding students who want a higher education.

As a former university president, I understand the importance of the grants, loans and work study programs which are funded by the Federal Government. I also understand the financial difficulties that are faced by most families in America. That is why I am so pleased that the Republican Congress has taken significant steps in removing the financial barriers to higher education.

One accomplishment that this Congress can be particularly proud of is the increased funding for the Pell Grant program to provide access to college for students from low-income homes. Since the Republicans took control of Congress, we have increased the maximum award by an average annual rate of over 7 percent. During the 40 years our friends across the aisle were in the majority, the maximum Pell Grant award was only increased by the average of 1.4 percent. Think of it. Think how many students were denied access.

This academic year, students can gain up to a $3,300 Pell Grant for higher education expenses. This award can make the difference in whether a student stays in school or has to drop out because he or she cannot afford it. More than 84 percent of the students receiving this award come from families who make less than $30,000 a year. Without this program, college would be just a dream for most of them. I am delighted that my colleagues have been able to increase funding for Pell Grants and make college available to many more low-income students who are in need.

We also have taken steps to have more students able to afford college. When I was president at California State University in Long Beach, during those 1970s and 1980s, there were 35,000 students; but 5,000 who were eligible for Pell Grants were not able to have the Federal funds. Even with financial aid, many students were forced to take out student loans to meet the rising tuition costs of higher education.

In fact, the demand for loans has increased by 35 percent over the past 5 years. Until recently, many of these loans came with high interest rates. When one has to borrow thousands of dollars, the interest can be fairly substantial. It is bad enough that graduating students start out in life thousands of dollars in debt; they should not be saddled with high interest in addition.

The Higher Education Act amendments, which we passed in 1998, changed the formula for determining the interest rates on variable rate student loans. Once this bill was enacted, interest rates dropped 1.3 percent to under 7 percent. This is only the third time that this has ever happened in the history of the student loan program. Lower interest rates mean less expensive loans that more students and families can take out. It also means that students can pay off their loans in less time and put the money toward other expenses.

Mr. Speaker, a college education is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. In today's high-tech, highly competitive economy, a college-educated workforce is crucial to our Nation's success. But there is more than that at stake here. For many people, a college education is part of the American Dream. Republicans are working hard to make this dream a reality. These accomplishments bring us closer to the goal of ensuring that every qualified American who wants a college education will be able to afford one.

I want to congratulate my colleagues who have worked so hard on these issues, and I am very proud that the Republican Congress has made it such a priority to open the doors of higher education even further.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, for the past six months, I have been reading letters on the floor of the House of Representatives from senior citizens from all over the state of Michigan. These seniors have shared their stories with me about the high cost of prescription drugs. They all have one thing in common: these seniors rely solely on Medicare for their health insurance, so they do not have any prescription drug benefit. They must pay for their prescription drugs themselves, and with the high prices, they often are forced to make decision between buying the prescription drugs they need or buying food or heating their homes. We must enact a voluntary, Medicare prescription drug benefit that will provide real help for these seniors.

This week, I will read a letter from Mary Hudson from Fenton, Michigan.

I understand that Mary currently does not fill most of her prescriptions because she cannot afford them.

Sometimes, her son buys her medication for her and sometimes she goes without.

If Mary did purchase all of the prescription medication she needs, her bills would be approximately $1715.40 per year.

I will now read Mary's letter. ''Dear Debbie, Last summer, I went to a doctor with bladder problems and high cholesterol and was given prescriptions cost $44—which I got filled—but the other was $90—which I would not. Who can afford those prices and pay other bills too?

Thanks for your interest in seniors, Debbie, and for anything you can do to help us. Love, Mary.''

Mary deserves a genuine Medicare prescription drug benefit. Time is running out to do something in this Congress. We must enact real prescription drug reform before we adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WAMP addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCGOVERN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESS IGNORES ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING MONETARY POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, at a frantic pace we anxiously rush to close down this Congress with excessive legislation while totally ignoring the all-important issue of monetary policy.

Congress has certainly reneged on its responsibility in this area. We continue to grant authority to a central bank that designs monetary policy in complete secrecy, inflating the currency at will, thus stealing value from the already existing currency through a dilution effect.

The Federal Reserve clings to the silly notion that economic growth causes inflation, thus trying to avoid the blame it deserves. The Federal Reserve then concludes that an economic slowdown is the solution to the problem it created. Those who argue to continue the inflationary process are equally in error. As if the economy were an airplane, the monetary authorities talk about a soft landing with the false hope of painlessly paying for the excesses enjoyed for a decade.

It should surprise no one that our financial markets are getting more volatile every day. Inflating a currency and causing artificially low interest rates