

Stacy Fisher, American Medical Response, Cleburne
 Kim Higginbotham, Life Ambulance Service, Canutillo
 Joe Kammerling, Prime Care Ambulance, Houston
 Allen Snell, Rural/Metro, Waco
 Kenneth Stanley, LifeNet EMS, Texarkana

VIRGINIA—5

Ted Marshall, LifeCare Medical Transports, Fredericksburg
 Michael Martens, Sentara Medical Transport, Virginia Beach
 Dawn Novisky, LifeCare Medical Transports, Fredericksburg
 Ben Walker, American Medical Response, Richmond
 Danny Wildman, LifeCare Medical Transports, Fredericksburg

VERMONT—1

Kandis Holden, Regional Ambulance, Rutland

WASHINGTON—1

William Engler, American Medical Response, Seattle

WISCONSIN—1

Tina Nicolai, American Medical Response, Kenosha

SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE
 DISAPPEARANCE OF GENERAL
 YURY ZAKHARENKO OF
 BELARUS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the last dictatorship in Europe—the regime of Aleksandr Lukashenka in the former Soviet state of Belarus. The Lukashenka regime is one of the most notorious human rights abusers in the world, routinely suppressing the rights of the Belorussian citizens. May 7th marks the second anniversary of one of the most celebrated human rights abuses allegedly perpetrated by the regime—the not-so-mysterious disappearance of General Yury Zakharenko, former Belorussian Minister of Internal Affairs.

In 1995, General Zakharenko resigned his post in protest and attempted to form a union of officers to support democracy in Belarus. He also supported former Prime Minister Mikhail Chigir in an alternative presidential election held in May 1999 to replace Lukashenka at the legal end of his term on July 20, 1999. On May 7, 1999, Gen. Zakharenko disappeared while walking home and has not been heard from since. Sadly, Gen. Zakharenko is not unique. Others who dared to challenge the regime appear to have suffered the same fate. Victor Gonchar, Deputy Chairman of the legitimate parliament, the 13th Supreme Soviet; his associate Anatoly Krasovsky; and Dmitry Zavadsky, a cameraman for the Russian television station ORT, have all disappeared without explanation.

Since the day Gen. Zakharenko vanished, all evidence has pointed to the Lukashenka regime as being responsible for his disappearance. The regime has not made a serious effort to account for Gen. Zakharenko. Rather than investigate, the regime has targeted the missing general for personal attack, accusing him of fleeing the country or going into hiding

to embarrass Lukashenko. Gen. Zakharenko's family was forced to seek refuge in Western Europe to escape the regime's harassment. The regime has also tried to silence human rights activists, such as Oleg Volchek, who have attempted to find Gen. Zakharenko. Last November, when an anonymous letter reputed to be from officers of the Belorussian KGB (BKGB) accusing Lukashenka of blocking the investigation of disappearances in Belarus became public, Lukashenka sacked the head of the BKGB and the Prosecutor General. The Belorussian dictator also promised a serious investigation, but the regime has made no progress in the intervening six months and reports of increased pressure on investigators have surfaced.

Under the current dictatorship in Belarus, it would be impossible for such stonewalling and denial to take place without the approval of Lukashenka himself. Lukashenka even went as far as to state in November of last year, that he is personally responsible for accounting for Gen. Zakharenko and the other disappeared. This is a responsibility that the international community cannot let the Belorussian dictator escape from. The United States, the European Union, member states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the U.N. Working Group on Involuntary Disappearances, the Swedish Social Democratic Party, and international human rights NGOs have all called on the Lukashenka dictatorship to find the disappeared. I regret that the Russian Government is conspicuously absent from these ranks. This, in my view, sends a negative signal about the Russian Federation's view of its role in promoting democracy outside of its borders.

The Belorussian people also want an explanation, as the repeated statements by Belorussian democratic leaders and human rights advocates show. Even high officials in the regime have expressed privately their displeasure with Lukashenka's handling of the disappearances.

Until the Lukashenka regime accounts for Gen. Zakharenko, Deputy Chairman Gonchar, Mr. Krasovsky, and Mr. Zavadsky, one can neither expect a normalization in the international community's relations with Belarus nor an end to the climate of fear gripping the country. The Lukashenka regime needs to act immediately to find these brave democrats and Belorussian patriots. This issue of Gen. Zakharenko and the other disappeared will not go away, just as the issue of the disappeared in Chile did not go away, just as the issue of the Polish officers "disappeared" at Katyn did not go away, just as the issue of the disappearance of Swedish hero Raoul Wallenberg will not go away. Rather, with each new day the missing go unaccounted for, the call for the truth behind their disappearances will only grow louder, haunting those responsible for these crimes.

“A NEW DEFENSE POSTURE”

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises to commend to his colleagues an edi-

torial in the May 3, 2001, edition of the Omaha World-Herald. Of particular note is the editorial's assessment of international reaction to President George W. Bush's May 1, 2001, speech on a national missile defense (NMD) system.

In the weeks approaching the speech, many newspaper and magazines ran articles and editorials which criticized President Bush for his strong and vocal support for the development of NMD and for reassessment of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Domestic opponents claimed that such views strain relations with key U.S. allies in Europe and Asia. And yet, after a major speech outlining the Administration's proposed approach to national security, U.S. allies appear to have reacted fairly positively by agreeing to talk about the approach, if not entirely support it.

The cold war is over, and therefore it is entirely appropriate for the U.S. to re-evaluate the institutions and treaties from that era. It is this Member's hope that our allies will strongly agree and will find upon review that President Bush's initiative to begin the development of a NMD system and to revamp arsenal cuts reflects careful reflection upon the long-term interests of the United States.

[From the Omaha World Herald, May 3, 2001]

A NEW DEFENSE POSTURE

Call it Missile Defense III. It's not the largely discredited Reagan-era Strategic Defense Initiative. It's not the Clinton-nurtured limited shield. In fact, it's not clear at this juncture what it is. But President Bush wants it and is determined to get it if possible. And that may not be bad.

The most salient aspect of Bush's freshly stated commitment to a missile defense system is what didn't happen. The international community didn't, for the most part, start screaming to the heavens that the United States has become frighteningly arrogant and is going to get everybody fried. And that was largely because Bush had the good sense to get in front of his Tuesday announcement with pre-emptive and assuring phone calls to the world leaders who might be most concerned. He and Secretary of State Colin Powell repeatedly made two points:

Although Bush finds the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty outmoded and only marginally effective, the United States is not going to simply abrogate it without something to take its place.

There will be no change in Washington's international nuclear-weapons understandings until such time as a missile defense can reasonably be called workable.

The biggest surprise of all may be that Moscow pronounced itself, though not exactly happy, entirely willing to sit down and discuss the matter rationally. That gets past what could have been a substantial hurdle, because Russia has long seen any sort of missile defense as a direct threat aimed at neutralizing its nuclear strike capability. It has been adamant on the point. But on Wednesday, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said his nation "is ready for consultations, and we have something to say."

The biggest question about a missile defense is whether such a bogglingly complex system can, in fact, ever work. Results to date have not been encouraging. Efforts from the Reagan era forward have cost more than \$60 billion. Tests in the '80s were spotty, and the few seeming successes were later shown to have been either unrealistically simplistic or just plain fudged. Three tests of a scaled-down system in the '90s yielded two failures.

The concept, nonetheless, remains appealing, particularly to those old enough to remember the duck-and-cover classroom drills

of the 1950s. The less-stable post-Cold War world, with the addition of such nations as Northern Korea, Iraq and Iran to the list of potential nuclear threats, adds to that. (In fairness, though,

The ABM treaty is a sticking point, of sorts, but that doesn't mean a new document can't be crafted to take its place. Contrary, perhaps, to common perception, there is a provision for withdrawing from it. Either Russia or the United States can get out on six months' notice by explaining that its "supreme interests" have been jeopardized by events relating to the treaty.

Bush, in his remarks on Tuesday, seemed to have been laying the groundwork for such an assertion. In any case, this much is certain: A functioning missile defense is incompatible with the treaty, which forbids it. At least the president chose not to figuratively rip the document up, which some of his campaign rhetoric last fall seemed to suggest. He wants to—at some undetermined point—take the legitimate exit route.

The president also wants to give back with one hand at least part of what he proposes to take away with the other. He's convinced (and he's probably right) that the United States doesn't need nearly the nuclear arsenal it now maintains. America has about 7,200 warheads; Russia, about 6,100. Under various START agreements and negotiations, both nations have agreed to a target of 2,000 to 2,500. Bush has said lately that he envisions still lower numbers, and Moscow seems ready to go along. (Not the least of its reasons is the cost savings.)

Cost still casts a long shadow on the missile defense idea as well, though. Defense Department sources say even a rudimentary plan could start at \$35 billion. One of the proposal's harshest critics, Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware, has fielded a figure almost 30 times higher; \$1 trillion. At such prices (in addition to what already has been spent), the nation certainly deserves a system that works. Bush's commitment to it should include a commitment to eliminating the engineering hanky-panky that marked previous tests.

In coming months, Bush and other top officials will be fanning out over Asia and Europe, talking to America's allies and seeking input—views to be taken into account. This has all the earmarks of a rational, reasoned approach far superior to the gunslinger rhetoric of last year's campaign. It just might work. The administration is to be congratulated for being both assertive and constructive.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Small Business Committee, I am pleased to join with the President in launching Small Business Week. Small businesses represent the most important sector of our economy. They comprise 99.7 percent of all the employers in the United States. They provide two-thirds of the initial job opportunities for Americans. And, they provided over \$63 billion worth of goods and services to the federal government.

One of my constituents, Ms. Rebecca Hillburst of Rockford, Illinois, will be honored

this week as the Regional Subcontractor of the Year. She is the first in our region to receive this award.

Ms. Hillburst's father started the Commercial Printing Company in Rockford in 1948. She assumed the helm of the company in 1989. The business performs customized and commercial printing jobs. Rebecca Hillburst and her four employees, George, Lars and Eleanor Hillburst and Darcie Powelson are symbolic of the small entrepreneurial enterprise that makes America great. I applaud their hard work and dedication.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND COWORKERS OF VERONICA "RONI" BOWERS AND CHARITY BOWERS

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, as we all are well aware, on the morning of April 20th a Peruvian Air Force fighter jet erroneously shot down a single engine Cessna owned and operated by the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism based in York County, Pennsylvania and located in my District. In so doing, one American missionary was severely injured and two were tragically killed.

I want to express my profound sympathy to James Bowers and his son Cory upon the tragic and untimely loss of their wife and mother, Veronica "Roni" Bowers and seven-month-old daughter Charity. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to the pilot of the plane Kevin Donaldson, who despite severely injuring both legs was able to land safely in the Amazon River.

In addition, I want to urge the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE) to continue to pursue their critical outreach efforts in the Amazon region and around the world. As a matter of background, the ABWE supports 1,300 missionaries in 65 countries worldwide. The missionary group has worked in Peru since 1939 establishing Baptist churches, schools, camps, and centers for pregnant women, as well as providing medical care throughout the Peruvian Amazon. More than 8,000 churches in the U.S. and Canada contribute money to support the mission of the ABWE. But what makes ABWE's mission so successful are the countless American men, women, and families from all walks of life who willingly sacrifice their precious time and effort, and unfortunately sometimes their lives, to do God's work.

The untimely death of Roni and Charity Bowers has brought to the forefront a significant, but little known operation that takes place as part of our overall anti-drug policy. Since the mid 1980's, the Department of Defense has led an inter-agency air interdiction effort to close the "air bridge" between coca fields in the Andean region of Peru and Bolivia and the production facilities in Colombia. The idea was that the United States would provide intelligence and other assets to the host nations for the detection and elimination of drug

smuggling operations, while staying out of the host nation's respective internal affairs and chain of command. Although an innovative approach to drug policy, this helping-hand policy is in obvious need of review, especially with respect to Peru.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, Section 1012 of the 1995 Defense Authorization Act requires that U.S. intelligence and related assets can only be used if the President determines whether drug smuggling comprise an "extraordinary threat to the national security of" the foreign country and that "that country has the appropriate procedures in place to protect against the innocent loss of life . . . which shall at a minimum include effective means to identify and warn an aircraft before the use of force" is authorized. After temporarily suspending air interdiction flights in early 1994, former President Clinton made the determination that Peru fulfilled Section 1012

These straight-forward procedures include checking the flight plan of the observed aircraft, establishing radio communications, making visual contact to check the aircraft's registry and to give it visual instructions to land, getting permission to fire warning shots, then disabling shots and finally, when all else fails and the aircraft refuses to comply, then and only then can permission be granted to shoot down a civilian aircraft.

All reports indicate that on that fateful Friday morning, over the strenuous objection of U.S. personnel, Peruvian officials either moved too quickly through these procedures, or did not implement them fully. The result was that a bullet fired from a Peruvian Sukhoi—25 jet fighter passed through the fuselage of the tiny missionary plane, through the heart of Roni Bowers and into the head of baby Charity, killing both instantly. The air interdiction effort in Peru and the overall policy itself is mired in questions.

President Bush has requested \$882 million for his Andean Regional Initiative in next year's budget. This program will substantially increase the investment in drug interdiction and eradication efforts in Peru and surrounding countries. Before Congress appropriates another dollar toward counter drug efforts in Peru, I believe it is imperative for us to review and rethink our interdiction policy. I urge Congress to look into tightening intercept procedures in drug trafficking areas, as well as strengthening the important role they have in the oversight of our drug policy.

The United States should not expend taxpayer dollars to provide intelligence to a country that apparently violates straight-forward, internationally recognized interception procedures. Every effort must be made in our interdiction policies and procedures to ensure against the innocent loss of life. We cannot undo the horrific personal tragedy that James and Cory Bowers have endured with the loss of their wife and daughter, mother and sister. We can, however, do our utmost as a nation to ensure that through procedural reforms of the interdiction program, this private tragedy is transformed into a public good, so that no other family will suffer a similar heartache and loss in the future.