

under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

NONPROLIFERATION AMENDMENT

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, in January 2001, a well-respected and bipartisan task force looked at the threats facing the United States and recommended increasing nonproliferation funding under the Department of Energy to \$3 billion per year for the next 10 years. As they stated in their report, the most urgent unmet national security threat to the United States today is the danger that weapons of mass destruction or weapons-usable material in Russia could be stolen and sold to terrorists or hostile nation-states and used against American troops abroad or citizens at home.

This year, now, 3 years after that report, the Department of Energy and Department of Defense nonproliferation budgets only contained \$1.8 billion combined for nuclear nonproliferation. This is simply not enough.

I offered an amendment that would increase the amount of funding for nonproliferation by a combined \$200 million, bringing the total for nonproliferation to \$2 billion this year. Regrettably, this amendment was not made in order.

On the Defense Department side, our amendment would have added \$50 million for the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, or Nunn-Lugar. The goal of Nunn-Lugar is to lessen the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, to deactivate and destroy these weapons and to help scientists, formerly engaged in the production of such weapons, start working for peace. To date, Nunn-Lugar has reportedly helped destroy over 6,000 warheads.

The Defense Department authorization bill contained a \$41.6 million decrease in funds for Nunn-Lugar from last year's level. In fact, it is a \$34 million decrease below the pre-September 11 level.

Last year, Congress expanded the scope of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program to countries outside of the former Soviet Union. They authorized \$50 million for this purpose. The amendment would have provided this \$50 million. The elimination of Libya and Iraq as states of concern have presented us with new opportunities for progress on nonproliferation, as has our improved relationship with the former Soviet Union states whose need for assistance in securing nuclear materials has never been greater.

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In the Department of Energy, there are countless programs sorely in need of additional funding. Our amendment would have provided \$40 million more for global cleanout, a program to se-

cure and dispose of highly enriched uranium at research reactors around the globe. There are over 345 operating or shut-down research reactors in 58 countries fueled with highly enriched uranium.

The State Department has identified 24 other facilities for highly enriched uranium cleanout operations because they have enough uranium to make a nuclear weapon. Many of these facilities are guarded by little more than a night watchman and a chain link fence.

The Department of Defense authorization bill we just passed only contains \$9.8 million for this program, which is only enough to clean out one site.

A recent report by the Project of Managing the Atom at Harvard University suggests Congress appropriate \$40 million annually to fund global cleanout efforts. Our amendment would have met or exceeded this goal. And I have also introduced stand-alone legislation to establish a structure to prioritize the effort to clean out highly enriched uranium around the world. It would have provided funding to downblend highly enriched uranium to low enriched uranium so that it could not be used directly to make nuclear weapons, but would be suitable for nuclear power plant fuel.

Russia currently has over a thousand tons of highly enriched uranium, enough for 20,000 simple nuclear weapons. Under a 1993 U.S.-Russian agreement, Russia will convert 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium to low enriched uranium by 2013, but this program was zeroed out in the Department of Energy's budget. We would have changed that.

According to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute, only a quarter of Russia's nuclear sites are properly secured. We would have added funding for global nuclear security. We would have added funding for security upgrades at nine Russian weapons complexes.

The irony of removing this funding, of not sensing this urgency, after going to war in Iraq over weapons of mass destruction stockpiles we have not found, when we know there are massive stockpiles in the former Soviet Union for which we have cooperative arrangements to secure and destroy, could not be more apparent. The urgency could not be greater.

We would have paid for these programs, we would have provided for the national defense, and this must be an urgency.

Osama bin Laden has declared that the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction is a religious duty. After the Taliban was defeated, blueprints of a crude nuclear weapon were found in a deserted al Qaeda headquarters in Afghanistan.

My amendment would not have gotten us all the way to the \$3 billion recommended by the Baker-Cutler Commission, but it was an important first step. We must continue that process now in the conference committee, and I

would urge the conferees to take up the cause of nonproliferation with the urgency it deserves.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, as Senator Nunn put it so well, the most effective, least expensive way to prevent nuclear terrorism is to lock down and secure weapons and fissile materials in every country, in every facility that has them.

THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE HEROIC BATTLE OF CRETE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise proudly today to celebrate the 63rd anniversary of the Battle of Crete, a World War II event of epic proportions that profoundly impacted on the determination of many countries to resist the aggression of Nazi Germany.

It is a story of a battered, but brave, group of individuals thrown together in a combined effort to halt the domination of a smaller and weaker nation by a larger more powerful aggressor. One of those individuals, a true hero of the battle, is with us tonight in the gallery, Mr. George Tzitzikas, who now lives in California.

Today, more than half a century later, the heroic event that took place in the Battle of Crete remains etched in the memory of people around the world. In commemoration of this anniversary, and for the benefit of future generations, I will share a brief account of these events as they unfolded.

Early on the morning of May 20, 1941, Crete became the theater of the first and largest German airborne operation of the war. The skies above Crete were filled with more than 8,000 Nazi paratroopers landing in a massive invasion of the island, which was subjected to heavy bombing and attacks in what became known as Operation Mercury.

Old men, women, and children participated, and used whatever makeshift weapons they could find. They used sticks, sickles, and even their bare hands to fight those soldiers already on the ground. Most of them were illiterate villagers; but their intuition, honed by the mortal risk they were facing, led them to fight with courage and bravery. "Aim for the legs, and you will get them in the heart," was the popular motto that summarized their hastily acquired battle experience.

Although the Germans captured the island in 10 days, they paid a heavy price. Of the 8,100 paratroopers involved in this operation, close to 4,000 were killed and 1,600 were wounded. So injured were the German units that they never again attempted an airborne assault of the magnitude launched at Crete. In fact, it is a lesson taught in almost every major military academy in the world on what not to do.