

## TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, next week the European Union will begin conducting membership negotiations with Turkey. As this process begins, it is important that the EU not allow Turkey to take any shortcuts. I am confident the European Union will insist Turkey follow all the proper steps and make the substantial changes necessary in many areas before the nation could ever be accepted.

To date, I do not believe Turkey has made substantial and meaningful progress in many of the areas that are of concern to members of the European Union. Despite making commitments for its membership negotiations, Turkey's lack of progress in adhering to essential democratic principles is of great concern. It continues to be in breach of the pace and standards set forth under initial agreements with the EU. In fact, the EU has prepared a report criticizing Turkey's reform process.

During next week's meetings, the European Union must demand answers from the Turkish government as to why the nation is not meeting benchmarks it agreed to in order to receive EU consideration. The EU must also begin to seriously explore Turkey's continued disregard for improving fundamental freedoms within its boundaries, freedoms that are commonplace throughout the European Union.

There is no question Turkey is going to be forced and should be forced to make dramatic improvements in these areas before it can ever be considered for EU membership. The EU must also consider Turkey's relations with its neighbors. I remain a vocal critic of Turkey's treatment of both Armenia and Cyprus, and believe that these issues must also be addressed during next week's discussions.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about Turkey's lack of progress in the diplomatic recognition of Armenia, the removal of its blockade against Armenia, and ending its official policy of denial of the Armenian genocide by coming to terms with it, an irrefutable historical fact affirmed by an increasing number of EU member states and European institutions.

Turkey's refusal to acknowledge the systematic killing of 1.5 million Armenians has no limits. Just last month, Turkey pulled out of a NATO exercise because the Canadian Prime Minister used the term "genocide" in reference to the massacre. Prior to that, the Turkish Ambassador to France was temporarily removed from the country as an act of protest against a French law making it illegal to deny the Armenian genocide.

This type of behavior goes on and on. Five journalists who criticized a court's decision to cancel a conference on the genocide were arrested. A lead-

ing Turkish novelist, Orhan Pamuk, was also arrested and charged with insulting Turkey's identity for referring to the Armenian genocide. Clearly, Turkey's protection of the fundamental freedoms of a democracy is simply inadequate.

Now, meanwhile, Turkey continues to illegally occupy the northern third of Cyprus. In 2001, the European Court of Human Rights rebuked the Turkish government when the court overwhelmingly found Turkey guilty of massive human rights violations in a scathing 146-page decision. The court concluded Turkey has not done enough to investigate the whereabouts of Greek-Cypriot missing persons who disappeared during life-threatening situations after the occupation.

The findings of the European Court of Human Rights should be taken very seriously by the EU, and the Turkish government should be forced to respond to these devastating charges before even being considered for membership. Turkey must also agree to once again come to the table and negotiate in good faith with Cyprus. Turkey simply cannot be admitted to the European Union if Cyprus remains divided and Turkish troops are still there.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in adding their support to a letter I am circulating with my colleague, CAROLYN MALONEY of New York. We will soon send a letter to Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, to express many of these same concerns. I also strongly urge President Bush to personally raise these concerns with President Barroso.

It is imperative Turkey's progress is measured on the basis of its complete accomplishment of all necessary criteria set forth by the European Union.

## IRAQ RESOLUTION

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, it was September 26, 2002, I was sitting in the cabinet room of the White House with Condoleezza Rice, Andy Card, and President Bush, and the President explained to us that day, and I took notes and still have them, that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction; that Saddam Hussein was training terrorists on weapons of mass destruction; and that if military force was used, in President Bush's words, it would be swift. September 26, 2002.

It is now June 15, 2006, some 2,500 soldiers have died and more than 18,000 injured, many like Kevin Pannel, from Glenwood, Arkansas, who have been injured in ways that will forever change his life and so many others.

One thing we know for sure, Mr. Speaker, is that our intelligence failed us. There is not a more difficult decision that Members of Congress are asked to make than whether or not to

send our men and women in uniform into harm's way. And when we are faced with making that decision, we must know our intelligence is right.

This has been a war that has touched most families, and mine is no different. My brother-in-law spent Christmas in the Middle East supporting a mission to refuel Air Force aircraft over Afghanistan. My first cousin was in Iraq serving our country when his wife gave birth to their first child.

We all have a story like that. We all know someone who has been there. I escorted a young woman and her two children to the White House this morning for a tour of the White House. They are in Washington, D.C. with her mom and dad on vacation. Her husband was in Iraq when she gave birth to their second child, and he is in Iraq today on his third mission in 4½ years.

I want you to know that our men and women in uniform and their service to our country is much greater, much greater than that of any Member of Congress or any President could ever be, and tonight I honor them.

There has been a lot of talk about this resolution that we will be voting on tomorrow. I have read it three times. It says that we support our troops, and I do. It says that we are against terrorists, and I am. It says that we are against a date certain for withdrawal from Iraq, and I agree with that, and so I plan to vote for this resolution tomorrow. But here is where I disagree with this President.

This President is spending \$279 million of your tax money in Iraq every 24 hours. And yet if you ask him to be accountable for it, if you ask him how he is spending that \$279 million of your tax money in Iraq every day, he will tell you that you are unpatriotic. I disagree with that. I believe in accountability. I believe that this President, this administration and this Republican Congress, must be held accountable for the \$279 million of your tax money that they are spending in Iraq every 24 hours.

I also believe that this President lacks a plan. This resolution is full of saying things like, we support our troops, and I certainly do. It is full of things like saying, we are against terrorists, and I would hope we all are. But there is nothing in the resolution about how we are going to win, how we are going to win, and it is time for this President to give us a plan on how we can win in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Iraq. We had some 3,000 Arkansas National Guard troops there August 11, 2004, and I went to let them know we support them and to make sure some of this money was being spent on them and the equipment they need to get the job done. I visited with young soldiers from my hometown, soldiers I had taught in Sunday school, soldiers I had duck hunted with.

And so I said to them, what do we need to be doing differently? They said we need to be hiring Iraqis to rebuild