

school coach just a few months before Kent passed away.

FOREIGN TRAVEL TO UNITED KINGDOM, FINLAND, RUSSIA, TURKEY, POLAND, AND FRANCE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, during the last 2 weeks of August, I had occasion to travel to Europe to discuss with a variety of foreign leaders subjects of mutual concern. The highlight of the trip was visiting the museum in Warsaw on the Jewish uprising, which occurred on August 1, 1944. That was a time when the Allies were making substantial progress, with the invasion of Normandy having occurred on June 6, 1944. The Soviets were coming in from the east, and the uprising was a valiant, heroic effort by the Jews in the Jewish ghetto to upset the Nazi tyranny. Regrettably, it failed.

But for anyone who has any doubt about the Holocaust or about the brutality of the Nazis in putting down the Jewish people, the 6 million Jews who died—and you have preposterous statements coming forth with some regularity, most recently from the President of Iran, doubting the existence of the Holocaust—a visit to the museum in Warsaw on the Jewish uprising will certainly quell any doubts.

The facts are established there, with the documentation, with people speaking, those who survived, to tell the grim tale of the Nazi brutality and the existence of the Holocaust.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full text of my report be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REPORT ON FOREIGN TRAVEL TO UNITED KINGDOM, FINLAND, RUSSIA, TURKEY, POLAND, AND FRANCE, AUGUST 18-29, 2007

Mr. President, I have sought recognition to report on foreign travel, as is my custom, I made to England, Finland, Russia, Turkey, Poland, and France from August 18 to August 29, 2007. I was joined by my wife Joan, my aide John Myers, Major Benjamin M. Venning, United States Marine Corps, and Commander John Clayton, United States Navy.

UNITED KINGDOM

On August 18, we departed Newark Liberty International Airport, Newark, New Jersey. Our first stop was in London, England, where we landed at Heathrow International Airport after a flight of just over 6 hours. Upon arriving in London, we were greeted by Richard Bell, First Secretary, U.S. Embassy, London.

Mr. Bell briefed me on a number of important issues ongoing in the United Kingdom and with new Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Terrorism is the large problem in the U.K. and is becoming more complex as terrorist threats are now increasingly coming from their own citizens. Further, many Britons have a negative perception of the United States due to the war in Iraq and the continued detainment of individuals in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

After a brief overnight stay, we traveled to Helsinki, Finland.

FINLAND

Upon arriving in Helsinki on August 19, we were greeted by Ambassador Marilyn Ware

and Greg Thome, Political Section, United States Embassy Finland.

We had lunch with Ambassador Ware, originally of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, at which I was briefed on a number of issues. First, we discussed the recent disagreement between Estonia and Russia, in which Estonia moved a statue honoring Russian soldiers who died in World War II from a park to a military cemetery. Russians were not pleased by this action and the Russian government reportedly ignored the harassment of Estonian officials in Russia. Finland played a leading role in gathering European Union support for Estonia regarding this matter. The Finnish effort resulted in a statement from the European Union in support of Estonia's action.

Secondly, we discussed Ambassador Ware's efforts to improve the energy diversity in Finland and surrounding areas. She is working to organize a symposium with regional energy officials to improve energy development in Finland.

We then discussed Finnish efforts to take a greater role in NATO and the United Nations. While Finland is not a member of NATO, it is a preferred partner. Currently, there are 240 troops serving in Lebanon, 105 in Afghanistan, 450 in Kosovo, and 80 in Bosnia. There is a great sense of pride in Finland that they are playing an important role in problem areas around the world.

Following the briefing, I headed with Ambassador Ware to the Parliament Building to meet with Speaker of Parliament Sauli Niinisto. We discussed the prospect of Finland becoming a member of NATO, to which the Prime Minister believed that more time would be needed if such a thing were to happen. As Finland shares a large border with Russia, there is great hesitation to taking an action which Russia opposes. However, there is a strong desire for Finland to continue as a preferred partner in NATO and to increase their role in NATO Rapid Forces.

Speaker Niinisto also noted concern among some Finnish people about the war in Iraq. He suggested that it would have been wiser to have the United Nations more involved after Saddam Hussein was removed from power. I noted that I do not believe that the United States would have received that support from the United Nations. Though if there had been better intelligence on weapons of mass destruction, we might not have gone into Iraq.

That evening, I had dinner with Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen at his home on the Baltic Sea. We were joined by Ambassador Ware, State Secretary Risto Volanen and European Union Affairs Advisor Riina Nevamäki. We discussed a number of important topics. The Prime Minister offered hope that the United States could remove troops from Iraq, though he would not suggest a timetable for doing so. He also offered support for Turkey entering the European Union, stating that doing so would bind the Turkish people to Democratic values. However, Turkey faces obstacles to becoming part of the European Union; specifically they must address concerns regarding human rights and freedom of the press. I was interested to learn that Prime Minister Vanhanen also serves on his city council in his home city of Nurmiyärvi.

We also discussed John Morton, a great Pennsylvanian of Finnish descent. A member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and Delegate to the Continental Congress, John Morton cast the deciding vote in favor of the United States Declaration of Independence. This important figure in American history provides an excellent example of the importance of Finns in America.

On Monday, August 20, we attended a breakfast hosted by U.S. Ambassador Ware

at her residence. The breakfast was attended by a distinguished group of individuals including Minister of Justice Tuija Brax, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Pauline Koskelo, Kimmo Sasi, Chairman of the Parliament's Constitutional Law Committee, and Pertti Salolainen, Chairman of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee. I was interested to learn that the judicial system in Finland is a non-political system and there are far less ideological conflicts than in the United States. We also discussed the need for the United States to be more engaged in the Middle East and conduct bilateral discussions with Iran.

RUSSIA

From Helsinki, we traveled to St. Petersburg Russia, where Consul General Mary Kruger and Consular Officer Doug O'Neill met us.

That afternoon, I met with a group of U.S. business executives including American Chamber of Commerce—Russia President Andrew Somers, American Chamber of Commerce—St. Petersburg Chapter Executive Director Maria Chernobrovkina, American Chamber of Commerce—Russia Vice President Tatiana Ragnzina, American Chamber of Commerce—Russia Communications Director Guy Archer, U.S. Department of Commerce Principal Communications Officer Keith Silver, General Director International Paper—St. Petersburg Larry Booker, Citibank—St. Petersburg Commercial Director Ruslan Belyaev, EMC Software Director Igor Agamirzian, and Boyden Managing Partner Julia Nikitina. U.S. companies play an important role in the economy of Russia employing 200,000 Russians. I questioned the group about the level of government corruption and how it affects their companies. They responded that corruption has been drastically reduced; Russia is encouraging foreign investment; and companies that are investing are experiencing considerable growth.

Following that meeting, I met with the representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Those in attendance were Boris Pustyntsev, Citizens Watch, Vladimir Shnitke, Memorial, and Ella Polyakova, Soldiers' mothers. Ms. Polyakova explained the abuse that new members of the military are facing, specifically the injuries to Roman Rudakov, who as the result of beatings had to have most of his intestines removed and has been systematically mistreated by military and government.

They also noted their concern with a new Russian law that allows the government to place requirements for reporting and registration of NGOs. The requirements being placed on these organizations are extensive and burdensome. Mr. Pustyntsev explained that he was required to provide correspondence from the last 14 years. There is great concern that this will reduce the number of NGOs and harm human rights progress that Russia has made.

On Tuesday, August 21, we were fortunate to examine the country's rich cultural heritage. We toured the Petershof Palace, the summer home of Peter the Great. We then visited the Hermitage Museum, one of the best museums for Russian and European art in the world. The museum is located in the former winter home of the Czars.

On August 22, we departed St. Petersburg for Moscow, where we were greeted by James Melville, Charge d'Affaires Ad Interim, Kathleen Doherty, Deputy Minister Counselor, and U.S. Department of Justice Resident Legal Advisor Thomas Firestone. I was briefed on issues of concern by them. Habeas corpus is gaining more prevalence in Russia with more cases being appealed and more defendants being released on those appeals.

However, the detention rate continues to be very high even with the presumption of innocence.

Russia is currently dealing with the highly publicized trial of Mikhail Khodorovsky, CEO, Yukos Oil Company. He was arrested and sentenced to jail for 8 years for tax evasion, fraud, and money laundering. Some believe this was an effort to silence a political opponent of President Vladimir Putin. While he was found guilty of these crimes it is likely that there are many others that could be brought forward on similar charges and his political opposition to President Putin increased the scrutiny of him.

Russia is undergoing an economic boom and that has led to high approval ratings for government officials. With this economic upturn and prosperity, human rights concerns are not at the forefront of societal concerns. If the economic increase continues it may lead to a greater political interest in human rights and general support for charitable interests.

That afternoon I met with Deputy Minister of Justice Nikolay Savchenko and representatives of the Ministry. First, I asked the Deputy Minister if Russian authorities could implement a wire tap without judicial authorization. He replied that the system for wire tapping is similar to the United States. To receive approval for a wire tap you must meet certain standards and receive a court order. While there are no statistics for usage, it is an important and necessary measure.

I then questioned the Deputy Minister about the advisability of the U.S. entering Pakistan to apprehend Osama Bin Laden if we have information on his location. The Deputy Minister asked that I offer my opinion first, which I did, explaining that the U.S. should first approach President Musharraf to seek approval for such action, but if not given, then a preemptive action is warranted under international law if there is cause to conclude that an attack by Iran is imminent. The Deputy Minister noted that the problem is both political and legal, but if there is proof of an imminent attack then he would agree with me.

We then discussed the case of Mikhail Khodorovsky who is currently appealing his conviction to the European Court of Human Rights and the impact that will have on his case in Russia. As a ratifier of the European convention on human rights, he may have his case heard there, but a decision in his favor by the European Court of Human Rights will not vacate the Russian judgment. However, the European Court of Human Rights may order the Russian government to pay monetary damages.

That meeting was followed by a meeting with representatives of U.S. based NGOs. Those in attendance were Second Secretary Political Section U.S. Embassy Russia Daniel Wartko, USAID Russia Deputy Director Erin Krasik, Elena Panifilova of Transparency International, National Democratic Institute Program Officer Ian Woodward, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Director Rose Gottemoller, Ford Foundation Moscow Office Representative Steven Solnick, International Republican Institute Russian Country Director Joe Johnson III, USAID Russia Senior Advisor for Legal Affairs Jonathan Kamin, and USAID Russia Legal Advisor Zoya Kaitova. The representatives, similarly to those in St. Petersburg, were very concerned with the new Russian law that regulates NGOs. The NGOs have provided the required information including future plans for their respective organizations and they continue to inform the government of their actions, but not asking permission. While the organizations have not had any problems, there is great angst that the information that they are providing now

will be used against them in the future to shut them down.

The American Chamber of Commerce hosted a breakfast on the morning of Thursday, August 23. A number of representatives of U.S. companies attended including American Chamber of Commerce—Russia President Andrew Somers, American Chamber of Commerce—Russia Vice President Tatiana Ragnzina, American Chamber of Commerce—Russia Communications Director Guy Archer, Merrill Lynch Head of Russia Global Markets Bernie Sucher, Air Products General Manager Eastern Europe Vaclav Harant, Sun Microsystems Managing Director Chris Morris, Microsoft General Manager in Russia Birger Steen, Archer Daniels Midland Company Director Vladimir Myrikov, and Alcoa Russia President William J. O'Rourke, Rohm and Haas Country Manager Michael Shukov, Backer & MacKenzie Partner Eugene Arieovich, Boeing Director of International Trade Policy Business Strategy and Marketing Commercial Airplanes, Keystone Foundation for Children and Families General Director Maria Dolbunova, Keystone Foundation for Children and Families President Dennis Felty, and GE Money Bank Russia President and CEO Richard Gaskin. We discussed patent protection in Russia, which had previously not been observed but is now beginning to be upheld. Russia is starting to prosecute intellectual property violators, bringing those individuals to trial and a guilty verdict is resulting in a jail sentence or compensation to the intellectual property holder.

We also discussed the strong growth of the Russian economy and the freedoms that Russians are experiencing as a result. The U.S. company representative expressed concerns about a recent U.S. law increasing the taxes of Americans living abroad. This discourages companies from hiring well qualified Americans who will have to be paid more to compensate for that tax.

I then went to the Supreme Court Building of the Russian Federation, to meet with Justice Stanislav Razumov of the Supreme Court. The Russian Supreme Court has 125 Justices, with three justices at one time presiding over primarily appellate cases. I asked Justice Razumov what occurred if a group of three Justices differed on a ruling from another three judges on a case before them. He said that a dissenting judge has the right to issue a separate dissenting opinion. He also explained the mechanism by which the Supreme Court provides guidance to lower courts, in the absence of a system of case precedent. The Justices sit in plenary session where they summarize cases, offer direction on cases they have ruled on and vote on issues of disagreement. I then asked him if they have votes that are so many one way to so many for another. He said there is usually not a problem reaching majority consensus in the plenary sessions and that the dissenting vote is rarely more than 5 to 7 percent.

We then discussed the role of the Russian Supreme court in ruling on cultural issues that are the subject of legal disputes such as abortion, assisted suicide, and race. I learned that the jurisdiction of the Russian Supreme Court is different from that of the United States. Those decisions are made by lower courts. If an individual believes that a law is unconstitutional or does not comply with federal regulation, then that case is taken to the Constitutional Court.

I then asked Justice Razumov if President Putin or other government officials can order a wire tap in cases of terrorism. He replied that he cannot without a court order and citizens must be protected.

We then visited the Novodevichy Convent, a beautiful site that housed a number of Russia's royal families, and Red Square.

TURKEY

On Friday, August 24, we traveled to Ankara, Turkey, where we were met by Charge d'Affaires Nancy McEldowney. This was an important day in Turkey as the parliament had its second vote for President. The Parliament votes three times for President unless a candidate receives a majority of votes before that. Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Gul won the election on August 28, though he did not obtain the majority necessary to win on this day. I was scheduled to meet with Foreign Affairs Minister Gul, but because we were delayed departing Moscow by the airport authorities, we were not able to meet.

We immediately traveled to the United States Embassy for a brief discussion of issues of importance in Turkey. Iraq is on the top of the list of concerns. Turkey does not want the United States to leave in the near future to prevent the destabilization of Iraq. Further, Turkey supports the current boundaries in Iraq and opposes creation of three states. The Turkish people are also greatly concerned about S. Res. 106 and H.R. 106, which would recognize the actions by Turkey against Armenia in 1915 as genocide.

We then went to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building where I had lunch with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Undersecretary Ertugrul Apakan. The Undersecretary voiced his support for the United States to remain in Iraq as he would like to see the United States achieve success there, for if the United States fails, then Turkey has failed. I was intrigued by the possibility of United Nations military assistance in Iraq. The Undersecretary believes that the U.N. can bridge the views between the Shitte, Sunni and Kurds in a peaceful manner. The possibility also remains that the U.N. could provide an umbrella for troops to assist in the stabilizing of Iraq. The entrance of U.N. troops may also cut down on the insurgent anger directed at the United States.

On August 10, 2007, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1770 to extend the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq for one year and to provide assistance regarding political dialogue and national reconciliation. The Mission will also work to facilitate dialogue between Iraq and other countries in the region. It is important for neighboring countries to support Iraq in efforts to reduce conflict and to build a functioning government. Turkey is currently working to hold a convention with other countries in the region to discuss problems facing Iraq. The countries involved would include Syria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Yemen, Iraq and Turkey. Also invited would be the United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, United States, Germany, Canada, and Japan.

The Undersecretary then explained the Turkish opposition to S. Res. 106 and H.R. 106. He did offer support for a joint history commission regarding the issue and Turkey would accept the use of the term genocide if that is what the evidence states.

I then met with Special Envoy for Iraq, Ambassador Oguz Celikkol. With the Ambassador we had a brief discussion regarding the war in Iraq. I stated to the Ambassador that I had voted for \$100 billion in funding in support of the war, but I must see a light at the end of the tunnel to continue supporting funding. I informed him of my town hall meetings across Pennsylvania during the first two weeks of August where I met 4,000 people many of whom we are adamant about leaving Iraq. The Ambassador repeated the importance of the United States remaining in Iraq.

We then departed on a 45-minute flight to Istanbul where we were greeted by Peter Barte, our State Department control officer.

In Istanbul, we visited the Hagia Sophia, Topkapı Palace, and the Grand Bazaar with Filiz Ozer, Professor of Art History and Architecture at Istanbul Technical University and Sevil Sezen, Cultural Affairs Specialist, U.S. Consulate General.

POLAND

The morning of Sunday, August 26, we traveled to Warsaw, Poland and were met by David Van Cleve, First Secretary, United States Embassy of Poland.

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to tour Warsaw, specifically the areas related to Warsaw's WWII and Jewish history. We toured old town Warsaw, which was rebuilt after World War II to its original beauty, the monument to the Warsaw Uprising and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, commemorating the Jews who fought against the Nazis. We then visited the Jewish cemetery, with more than 200,000 graves including many who perished in World War II.

That evening we had dinner with Ambassador Victor Ashe, Senator Shelby, and Embassy and Senate staff at the Ambassador's residence.

On August 27, we visited the Warsaw Rising Museum, a unique museum that examines Poland in WWII, specifically the Polish uprising and the Home Army. The facility is extremely interactive with a recreated sewer system, which the Polish Home Army used to travel through Warsaw and evade the Nazis. The facility also had a number of documents from that time including a pamphlet that was air dropped in Warsaw encouraging the Home Army to wear markings that would indicate that they are part of an army, so that the Nazis could be prosecuted for war crimes by the United States.

I was particularly impressed with the story of Tadeusz Ruman, a member of a flight crew that dropped supplies in Warsaw to aid the Home Army. During the flight, their plane suffered heavy damages from attacks and lost two engines. After the drop of the supplies they had to pass over mountains, which they only cleared by a few feet. After taking attacks and injuries, the crew made it to Brindisi, Italy, however, upon landing they realized that their brakes had been damaged and were unable to stop. Taking quick action they were able to steer the B-24 Bomber into vines and rocks to bring the plane to a stop, a harrowing tale that displayed the effort that the Allies made to assist the Polish Home Army.

I was then briefed by Ambassador Victor Ashe, Deputy Chief of Mission Kenneth Hillas, Political Counselor Mary Curtin, Economic Counselor Richard Rorving, Counsel General Philip Min, Public Affairs Counselor Ed Kulakowski, Defense Attache Col. Richard Runner, and FBI Attache Jay Bienkowski. The Polish economy is doing very well with annual increases of 6 percent. While this is below the increases of Russia and other Baltic countries it is very encouraging given the stable market environment in Poland for businesses, which is not as strong in those other countries.

The relationship between the United States and Poland is strong with left and right wing political groups, despite the opposition to the Iraq war. The proposed missile defense system in Poland is a point of ongoing discussions, with Polish representatives desiring to speed up discussions. Poland is putting forward a number of troops to assist the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, with 900 in Iraq and 1,200 in Afghanistan. While Poland is looking to reduce the number of troops in Iraq, they may consider increasing the number in Afghanistan.

I was scheduled to meet with Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga, but could not do so because we left Wednesday early to return to the U.S. to attend the funeral of a close friend. I spoke to her by phone. I informed her of the United States' appreciation for Poland sending troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. I asked for her assessment of having the United Nations involved in Iraq and if Poland would consider sending additional troops to Iraq if it was under the United Nations banner. She replied that she would have to defer to the President, Prime Minister, and Minister of Defense on that issue.

I met with Andrzej Duda, Deputy Minister of Justice, a impressive 35-year-old gentleman. We discussed the prosecutorial system in Poland which is similar to the United States as Prosecutors are responsible for cases in a geographical area. Prosecutors are required to graduate from law school, serve a 3-year internship with a senior Prosecutor, and then pass an exam.

I asked the Deputy Minister about crime in Poland. He informed me that there are several hundred murders a year in Poland, but less than one thousand. He also informed me of the decreasing juvenile crime problem in Poland. While juvenile crime is still a problem the improving economy of Poland is increasing wages and employment, providing youth with quality jobs. Poland as a member of the European Union does not have the death penalty and has not used it since 1987.

I then questioned him about the use of terrorism and wiretapping in Poland. The Deputy Minister noted that he has not been involved in any terrorism cases, though the Ministry is working with the United States on this important issue. He believes wiretapping is a critical tool against crime. When I asked him about the ability of government official's ability to use wire tapping without a judge's approval he stated that it was not possible.

FRANCE

We departed for Paris, France that evening, where we were met by our Control Officer Kim Khouneq and Logistics Control Officer Chanh Nguyen.

On Wednesday, August 29, we were briefed by Ambassador Craig R. Stapleton at the United States Embassy on a number of issues. We were also joined by Deputy Chief of Mission Mark Pekala, Political Minister Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, Economic Minister Counselor Stuart Dwyer, Consul General Catherine Barry, Public Affairs Minister Counselor James Bullock, Defense Attache Col. Raymond Hodgkins, Foreign Commercial Service Minister Counselor Raymond Connan, and Head of Office Regional Affairs Michael Altoff.

We discussed new French President Nicolas Sarkozy and what his views will mean to the United States. President Sarkozy wants a culture of success in France. He is seeking to reform the country and make it the leading country in Europe.

President Sarkozy views himself as pro-American, and has stated that he wants to help the United States in Iraq. This is likely to be through economic development and not through placing troops in Iraq. On the possibility of France providing troops for a United Nations military force, there is little optimism. However, there may be an opportunity for France to increase its assistance through NATO by training Iraqi soldiers and policemen.

Regarding Iran, the French support diplomatic efforts to prevent Iran from securing nuclear weapons capability. In fact, France may be willing to take actions on this issue outside of the United Nations Security Council.

From the Embassy we departed for Charles De Gaulle International Airport and returned to the United States.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, in the absence of any Senator seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. President, I withdraw that suggestion. I had not noticed the presence of the Senator from Tennessee.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

IRAQ

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today during morning business to talk about a trip I made to Iraq. I think the Acting President pro tempore made a similar trip during the August recess. I want to make a few points regarding that trip.

I know a lot of people talk about these trips, and they talk about the fact that they are choreographed and short term. I do want to say my comments are in the context of many hours of committee hearings the Acting President pro tempore and I have both sat through in Foreign Relations and Armed Services and many other ways developing the background prior to being in Iraq.

I know, again, much is said of these trips. I will say I do not think there is anything—and the Chair probably would attest to the same—like being there on the ground yourself and seeing firsthand our troops, seeing our military leaders, seeing leaders of the Iraqi Government, and also seeing many of the tribal leaders, the sheiks who actually lead in these various areas throughout the country.

I wish to make three points, and then I wish to urge something in conclusion.

No. 1, I think the Chair would agree with me the professionalism and commitment of our men and women in uniform is absolutely overwhelming. The way they conduct themselves on our behalf would almost lead you to emotion just in seeing the way they do what they do on our behalf. I have noticed that both in State, as I have traveled the State as our men and women prepare, but certainly even more so on the ground there in Iraq. I am indebted to them. I know the Acting President pro tempore and all Americans are indebted to the way they conduct themselves, regardless of how we may feel about the conflict that is underway.

Secondly, I do not think there is any question that we have had military gains on the ground. I realize that is uneven. But I think there is no question what General Petraeus, General Odierno, and others have done on the ground, in beginning the work in a bottoms-up approach, where we work with tribal leaders there on the ground to secure their own areas, is the right approach. I do not think there is any question we are seeing the results of that approach.

It seems as if a light has gone on where, No. 1, the tribal leaders, the sheiks, and others there on the ground are realizing that we are there not as occupiers but we are there as enablers.