

engineering design to the narrow portion of Route 63 in Phelps and Maries Counties. This project will improve the overall safety of the roadway. The State of Missouri will provide 20% to match the federal contribution. All federal funds received will be spent on right of way improvements and engineering design. None of these funds will be transferred to another project.

Requesting Member: Rep. JO ANN EMERSON
Bill Number: Fiscal Year 2010 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill

Account: Transportation & Community & System Preservation Requesting Entity: Missouri Department of Transportation

Address of Requesting Entity: 105 West Capitol P.O. Box 270 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0270

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$500,000 to improve shoulders, as well as widen and straighten curves along Route 34 in Cape Girardeau and Bollinger Counties. This segment of Route 34 is heavily traveled by commuters and there are serious safety concerns with the roadway. The State of Missouri will provide 20% to match the federal contribution. All federal funds received will be spent on improving Route 34. None of these funds will be transferred to another project.

NORTH KOREA'S HARD-LABOR CAMPS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, Monday's Washington Post featured a comprehensive piece by veteran reporter Blaine Harden headlined, "N. Korea's Hard-Labor Camps: On the Diplomatic Back Burner," documenting the horrific nature of North Korea's gulag system, and the failure of this administration to raise this issue with the North Korean regime. I submit the article for the record.

We have known for some time about the true nature of the cruel and inhuman system of labor camps maintained by the totalitarian regime in North Korea. And yet somehow, almost inexplicably, these horrific camps have failed to inspire collective outrage on the part of the West, and have been sidelined to the point of irrelevance in successive U.S. administrations' dealings with North Korea.

The U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea published a report in 2003—six years ago—about these camps. It was written by David Hawk, quoted in Monday's article, and called *The Hidden Gulag: Exposing North Korea's Prison Camps*. It contains a full description of the camps, the worst of which are called kwan-li-so, which is translated as "political penal-labor colonies," and where, according to the Committee's report, scores of thousands of political prisoners—along with up to three generations of their family members—are banished without any judicial process and imprisoned, typically for life-time sentences of slave labor.

The report also contains prisoners' testimonies and satellite photographs of the camps, whose very existence continues to be denied by the North Korean government, which is why the committee described the gulags as "hidden."

Defector testimony, satellite images and in depth reporting have left no doubt about the camps' existence and the horrors of life there. The real question is what do we do about this abomination? What do we do about the regime that sustains and perpetuates this evil?

Because North Korea possesses nuclear weapons and threatens not only to use them against neighboring countries but also to share nuclear weapons technology with such rogue states as Burma and Syria, the international community, the U.S. included, has tended to ignore the horrendous human rights abuses in North Korea in the interest of trying to negotiate through the so-called six-party talks an end to its nuclear program.

But nothing has been achieved by these negotiations and North Korea has formally withdrawn from the six-party process.

And so while efforts continue, the diplomatic process on the nuclear front appears to have reached an impasse.

Frankly, I don't expect much to come from these efforts. The possession of nuclear weapons is simply too important to the North Korean regime, if only to deflect attention from its cruel and oppressive system of camps and the famine that it has brought upon its people at an estimated cost of anywhere from one to three million lives.

Human rights activist and 2008 Seoul Peace Prize Laureate Suzanne Scholte recently wrote in the *Korea Times* that both the Clinton and Bush administrations "intentionally sidelined human rights concerns, making them secondary to addressing North Korea's nuclear ambitions."

The young Obama administration appears to be in status quo mode, adopting the same failed approach.

This approach hasn't succeeded in curbing North Korea's nuclear ambitions. And it hasn't brought relief to the thousands that languish in unimaginable conditions. A new North Korea framework is long overdue. Ignoring or downplaying the human rights situation for one more day is unconscionable.

Ronald Reagan negotiated with the Soviet Union to reduce nuclear weapons throughout the 1980s, but that did not stop him from speaking about human rights, calling upon the Soviets to tear down the Berlin Wall, and predicting that communism would end up on the ash heap of history. His outspoken support for human rights had an effect, accelerating the demise of communism and, in the process, making it easier to resolve nuclear and security issues, since the main cause of Soviet aggressiveness was the communist system it was intended to defend and extend. Further it reminded those living behind the Iron Curtain that America was a friend, not an enemy, despite Soviet propaganda to the contrary.

We should be doing the same thing with North Korea today.

Just last week my good friend Carl Gershman, the president of the National Endowment for Democracy, spoke at the Korean Embassy's KORUS House in Washington about North Korea. His talk was titled, "Contending with the North Korean Dictatorship: A Perspective from the National Endowment for Democracy." Mr. Gershman acknowledged the diplomatic impasse with North Korea, but he didn't stop there. He said that in his view the North Korean totalitarian system was undergoing an inexorable process of erosion, marked by a sharply reduced ability to impose

a complete information blockade on its population, increased traffic across the border with China, the growth of an exile population of defectors that has now reached 16,000 from almost zero less than a decade ago, and even local uprisings as the regime has tried to suppress informal markets that have emerged as a way to cope with the famine and economic hardship.

He pointed out that what makes the North Korean system especially vulnerable is the existence just across the southern border of a free, successful and affluent South Korean society. For decades now the regime in Pyongyang has told its population that the people of South Korea live in hell while they live in a communist paradise. As the population learns that the truth is exactly the opposite, they will become increasingly restive, resentful, and rebellious, he noted.

In his talk Mr. Gershman quoted from a report by a senior researcher for the Korea Institute for National Unification which spoke of the dormant reality of "cracking the myth of permanent stability in North Korea" and pointed to the "danger of minor clashes to play a role of a primer for mass protest against excess of governmental indiscretion."

Mr. Gershman said that the NED, with the support of the U.S. Congress, would continue to support organizations in South Korea set up by North Korean defectors to reach back into North Korea by providing information to the people. He urged the U.S., in the absence of a six-party process, to convene the other members of those talks (South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia) to discuss with them not just the security situation, but to prepare for a possible collapse in North Korea by considering now what would need to be done to aid the reconstruction of the country.

I agree that this would be a good starting point for the administration as would appointing a special envoy on North Korea human rights as is mandated by Congress.

Further, any future talks with the North Koreans, be it the six-party process or some other forum, must include human rights on the agenda.

Additionally, the administration ought to be pursuing a policy which places a high priority on working with other countries in the region to champion the rights of North Korean refugees. China is among the biggest obstacles. Its current policy of repatriating North Korean refugees violates China's international treaty obligations. A grim fate awaits those who are returned to North Korea.

Similarly, if North Korea continues to refuse U.S. food aid, the administration should urge those countries that do provide aid, which again includes China, to press for International Red Cross access to the camps and monitors from the World Food Programme to ensure that the aid goes to its intended recipients.

Ultimately, we need to look forward. The North Korean regime will not be there forever to oppress its people. Just like the gulags and the regimes in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, that preceded it, this evil empire, too, will fall.

In the meantime we must champion the rights of the people who wither under this regime. I'll close with the words of Anne Applebaum in the hope that they inspire the administration's approach to North Korea moving forward. She writes in the introduction of *The Hidden Gulag*, "This is not to say that

words can make a dictatorship collapse overnight. But words can certainly make a dictatorship collapse over time, as experience during the last two decades has shown. Totalitarian regimes are built on lies and can be damaged, even destroyed, when those lies are exposed."

[From the Washington Post, July 20, 2009]

N. KOREA'S HARD-LABOR CAMPS: ON THE
DIPLOMATIC BACK BURNER

(By Blaine Harden)

SEOUL.—Images and accounts of the North Korean gulag become sharper, more harrowing and more accessible with each passing year.

A distillation of testimony from survivors and former guards, newly published by the Korean Bar Association, details the daily lives of 200,000 political prisoners estimated to be in the camps: Eating a diet of mostly corn and salt, they lose their teeth, their gums turn black, their bones weaken and, as they age, they hunch over at the waist. Most work 12- to 15-hour days until they die of malnutrition-related illnesses, usually around the age of 50. Allowed just one set of clothes, they live and die in rags, without soap, socks, underclothes or sanitary napkins.

The camps have never been visited by outsiders, so these accounts cannot be independently verified. But high-resolution satellite photographs, now accessible to anyone with an Internet connection, reveal vast labor camps in the mountains of North Korea. The photographs corroborate survivors' stories, showing entrances to mines where former prisoners said they worked as slaves, in-camp detention centers where former guards said uncooperative prisoners were tortured to death and parade grounds where former prisoners said they were forced to watch executions. Guard towers and electrified fences surround the camps, photographs show.

"We have this system of slavery right under our nose," said An Myeong Chul, a camp guard who defected to South Korea. "Human rights groups can't stop it. South Korea can't stop it. The United States will have to take up this issue at the negotiating table."

But the camps have not been discussed in meetings between U.S. diplomats and North Korean officials. By exploding nuclear bombs, launching missiles and cultivating a reputation for hair-trigger belligerence, the government of Kim Jong Il has created a permanent security flash point on the Korean Peninsula—and effectively shoved the issue of human rights off the negotiating table.

"Talking to them about the camps is something that has not been possible," said David Straub, a senior official in the State Department's office of Korean affairs during the Bush and Clinton years. There have been no such meetings since President Obama took office.

"They go nuts when you talk about it," said Straub, who is now associate director of Korean studies at Stanford University.

Nor have the camps become much of an issue for the American public, even though annotated images of them can be quickly called up on Google Earth and even though they have existed for half a century, 12 times as long as the Nazi concentration camps and twice as long as the Soviet Gulag. Although precise numbers are impossible to obtain, Western governments and human groups estimate that hundreds of thousands of people have died in the North Korean camps.

North Korea officially says the camps do not exist. It restricts movements of the few foreigners it allows into the country and severely punishes those who sneak in. U.S. re-

porters Laura Ling and Euna Lee were sentenced last month to 12 years of hard labor, after being convicted in a closed trial on charges of entering the country illegally.

North Korea's gulag also lacks the bright light of celebrity attention. No high-profile, internationally recognized figure has emerged to coax Americans into understanding or investing emotionally in the issue, said Suzanne Scholte, a Washington-based activist who brings camp survivors to the United States for speeches and marches.

"Tibetans have the Dalai Lama and Richard Gere, Burmese have Aung San Suu Kyi, Darfurians have Mia Farrow and George Clooney," she said. "North Koreans have no one like that."

EXECUTIONS AS LESSONS

Before guards shoot prisoners who have tried to escape, they turn each execution into a teachable moment, according to interviews with five North Koreans who said they have witnessed such killings.

Prisoners older than 16 are required to attend, and they are forced to stand as close as 15 feet to the condemned, according to the interviews. A prison official usually gives a lecture, explaining how the Dear Leader, as Kim Jong Il is known, had offered a "chance at redemption" through hard labor.

The condemned are hooded, and their mouths are stuffed with pebbles. Three guards fire three times each, as onlookers see blood spray and bodies crumple, those interviewed said.

"We almost experience the executions ourselves," said Jung Gwang Il, 47, adding that he witnessed two executions as an inmate at Camp 15. After three years there, Jung said, he was allowed to leave in 2003. He fled to China and now lives in Seoul.

Like several former prisoners, Jung said the most arduous part of his imprisonment was his pre-camp interrogation at the hands of the Bowibu, the National Security Agency. After eight years in a government office that handled trade with China, a fellow worker accused him of being a South Korean agent.

"They wanted me to admit to being a spy," Jung said. "They knocked out my front teeth with a baseball bat. They fractured my skull a couple of times. I was not a spy, but I admitted to being a spy after nine months of torture."

When he was arrested, Jung said, he weighed 167 pounds. When his interrogation was finished, he said, he weighed 80 pounds. "When I finally got to the camp, I actually gained weight," said Jung, who worked summers in cornfields and spent winters in the mountains felling trees.

"Most people die of malnutrition, accidents at work, and during interrogation," said Jung, who has become a human rights advocate in Seoul. "It is people with perseverance who survive. The ones who think about food all the time go crazy. I worked hard, so guards selected me to be a leader in my barracks. Then I didn't have to expend so much energy, and I could get by on corn."

DEFECTORS' ACCOUNTS

Human rights groups, lawyers committees and South Korean-funded think tanks have detailed what goes on in the camps based on in-depth interviews with survivors and former guards who trickle out of North Korea into China and find their way to South Korea.

The motives and credibility of North Korean defectors in the South are not without question. They are desperate to make a living. Many refuse to talk unless they are paid. South Korean psychologists who debrief defectors describe them as angry, distrustful and confused. But in hundreds of separate interviews conducted over two dec-

ades, defectors have told similar stories that paint a consistent portrait of life, work, torment and death in the camps.

The number of camps has been consolidated from 14 to about five large sites, according to former officials who worked in the camps. Camp 22, near the Chinese border, is 31 miles long and 25 miles wide, an area larger than the city of Los Angeles. As many as 50,000 prisoners are held there, a former guard said.

There is a broad consensus among researchers about how the camps are run: Most North Koreans are sent there without any judicial process. Many inmates die in the camps unaware of the charges against them. Guilt by association is legal under North Korean law, and up to three generations of a wrongdoer's family are sometimes imprisoned, following a rule from North Korea's founding dictator, Kim Il Sung: "Enemies of class, whoever they are, their seed must be eliminated through three generations."

Crimes that warrant punishment in political prison camps include real or suspected opposition to the government. "The camp system in its entirety can be perceived as a massive and elaborate system of persecution on political grounds," writes human rights investigator David Hawk, who has studied the camps extensively. Common criminals serve time elsewhere.

Prisoners are denied any contact with the outside world, according to the Korean Bar Association's 2008 white paper on human rights in North Korea. The report also found that suicide is punished with longer prison terms for surviving relatives; guards can beat, rape and kill prisoners with impunity; when female prisoners become pregnant without permission, their babies are killed.

Most of the political camps are "complete control districts," which means that inmates work there until death.

There is, however, a "revolutionizing district" at Camp 15, where prisoners can receive remedial indoctrination in socialism. After several years, if they memorize the writings of Kim Jong Il, they are released but remain monitored by security officials.

SOUTH'S CHANGING RESPONSE

Since it offers a safe haven to defectors, South Korea is home to scores of camp survivors. All of them have been debriefed by the South Korean intelligence service, which presumably knows more about the camps than any agency outside of Pyongyang.

But for nearly a decade, despite revelations in scholarly reports, TV documentaries and memoirs, South Korea avoided public criticism of the North's gulag. It abstained from voting on U.N. resolutions that criticized North Korea's record on human rights and did not mention the camps during leadership summits in 2000 or 2007. Meanwhile, under a "sunshine policy" of peaceful engagement, South Korea made major economic investments in the North and gave huge, unconditional annual gifts of food and fertilizer.

The public, too, has been largely silent. "South Koreans, who publicly cherish the virtue of brotherly love, have been inexplicably stuck in a deep quagmire of indifference," according to the Korean Bar Association, which says it publishes reports on human rights in North Korea to "break the stalemate."

Government policy changed last year under President Lee Myung-bak, who has halted unconditional aid, backed U.N. resolutions that criticize the North and tried to put human rights on the table in dealing with Pyongyang. In response, North Korea has called Lee a "traitor," squeezed inter-Korean trade and threatened war.

AN ENFORCER'S VIEW

An Myeong Chul was allowed to work as a guard and driver in political prison camps

because, he said, he came from a trustworthy family. His father was a North Korean intelligence agent, as were the parents of many of his fellow guards.

In his training to work in the camps, An said, he was ordered, under penalty of becoming a prisoner himself, never to show pity. It was permissible, he said, for bored guards to beat or kill prisoners.

"We were taught to look at inmates as pigs," said An, 41, adding that he worked in the camps for seven years before escaping to China in 1994. He now works in a bank in Seoul.

The rules he enforced were simple. "If you do not meet your work quota, you do not eat much," he said. "You are not allowed to sleep until you finish your work. If you still do not finish your work, you are sent to a little prison inside the camp. After three months, you leave that prison dead."

An said the camps play a crucial role in the maintenance of totalitarian rule. "All high-ranking officials underneath Kim Jong Il know that one misstep means you go to the camps, along with your family," he said.

Partly to assuage his guilt, An has become an activist and has been talking about the camps for more than a decade. He was among the first to help investigators identify camp buildings using satellite images. Still, he said, nothing will change in camp operations without sustained diplomatic pressure, especially from the United States.

INCONSISTENT U.S. APPROACH

The U.S. government has been a fickle advocate.

In the Clinton years, high-level diplomatic contacts between Washington and Pyongyang focused almost exclusively on preventing the North from developing nuclear weapons and expanding its ballistic missile capability.

President George W. Bush's administration took a radically different approach. It famously labeled North Korea as part of an "axis of evil," along with Iran and Iraq. Bush met with camp survivors. For five years, U.S. diplomats refused to have direct negotiations with North Korea.

After North Korea detonated a nuclear device in 2006, the Bush administration decided to talk. The negotiations, however, focused exclusively on dismantling Pyongyang's expanded nuclear program.

In recent months, North Korea has reneged on its promise to abandon nuclear weapons, kicked out U.N. weapons inspectors, exploded a second nuclear device and created a major security crisis in Northeast Asia.

Containing that crisis has monopolized the Obama administration's dealings with North Korea. The camps, for the time being, are a non-issue. "Unfortunately, until we get a handle on the security threat, we can't afford to deal with human rights," said Peter Beck, a former executive director of the U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea.

A FAMILY'S TRIBULATIONS

Kim Young Soon, once a dancer in Pyongyang, said she spent eight years in Camp 15 during the 1970s. Under the guilt-by-association rule, she said, her four children and her parents were also sentenced to hard labor there.

At the camp, she said, her parents starved to death and her eldest son drowned. Around the time of her arrest, her husband was shot for trying to flee the country, as was her youngest son after his release from the camp.

It was not until 1989, more than a decade after her release, that she found out why she had been imprisoned. A security official told her then that she was punished because she had been a friend of Kim Jong Il's first wife

and that she would "never be forgiven again" if the state suspected that she had gossiped about the Dear Leader.

She escaped to China in 2000 and now lives in Seoul. At 73, she said she is furious that the outside world doesn't take more interest in the camps. "I had a friend who loved Kim Jong Il and for that the government killed my family," she said. "How can it be justified?"

HONORING JACK NYIRI

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the selfless service Jack Nyiri has performed throughout his lifetime for the Boy Scouts of America, specifically the Cub Scout organization.

The aims of Scouting—citizenship training, character development, and personal fitness—are so very important to developing the next generation of American citizens. But these aims cannot be accomplished without the dedication of individuals like Jack Nyiri, who are willing to part with their own time and effort for the good of our children.

After participating in both Cub and Boy Scouting in Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Nyiri dove into leading Cub Scout packs and participating in the administration of scouting across at least three different states. His steadfastness and excellence has been recognized through many of scouting's highest awards, as he has more than lived up to the Cub Scout motto—"Do your best."

Nowhere is Mr. Nyiri's dedication more tangible than in the success of Bus Scout Pack 96, based in Nashville, Tennessee. His leadership has built this pack into a strong and vibrant organization, and the scouts and parents of Pack 96 have expressed to me their extreme gratefulness for Mr. Nyiri's tenure as the Pack Leader.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Jack and ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating his accomplishments.

JEREMIAH MEYER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremiah Meyer of Liberty, Missouri. Jeremiah is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 215, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremiah has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeremiah has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. He was also the recipient of the Eagles Soaring High award.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremiah Meyer for his ac-

complishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I submit the following:

Project Name: Elevated Water Tank Construction

Requesting Member: Congressman JO BONNER

Bill: Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010

Account: Housing & Urban Development, Economic Development Initiatives

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The City of Atmore, AL

Address of Requesting Entity: 201 East Louisville Avenue, Atmore, AL 36502

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$350,000 for engineering and construction of a 500,000 gallon elevated water tank to provide a potable water supply and fire protection for the City of Atmore's industrial development park and will also augment existing water service to the Holman Correctional Institute by providing backup water supply. The total project cost is estimated to be \$1,000,000. Approximately, \$75,000 [or 21%] of the earmark is expected to be used for engineering; \$25,000 [or 7%] for environmental assessment; \$50,000 [or 14%] for in ground lines and infrastructure connected to the tower; and \$200,000 [or 58%] for construction of the tower itself. The City of Atmore will provide a minimum of a 45/55 cost share and this funding will come directly from the City.

Project Name: Atmore Airport Access Road, Runway Lights, and Safety Improvements, AL
Requesting Member: Congressman JO BONNER

Bill: Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010

Account: Airport Improvement Program
Legal Name of Requesting Entity: The City of Atmore, AL

Address of Requesting Entity: 201 East Louisville Avenue, Atmore, AL 36502

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$475,000 for engineering and improvements to Atmore's airport, including construction of an access road to the airport terminal, rehabilitation of the airport runway lights, and improved safety zones at and surrounding the airport. The total project cost is estimated to be approximately \$2,300,000, of which \$1,140,000 was appropriated in FY2009. This appropriation should complete the project. Approximately, \$75,000 [or 16%] of this year's earmark will be used for engineering; \$100,000 [or 21%] for replacement lights and electrical equipment; and the remaining \$300,000 [or 63%] will be used for construction. The City of Atmore will provide the required federal match. Improvements to runway lights and correction of grading in the safety zone area will enhance safety to the flying public while complying with FAA regulations.

Project Name: Mobile Downtown Airport Taxiway A Improvements, AL