

But the Camp is under siege.

PM Maliki wants to close the camp by December 31.

If the Camp is closed, many of the residents could be killed.

You see, Iraqi soldiers can't be trusted. In 2009 and 2011, they killed dozens of innocent civilians in the Camp.

Now Iran is promising all sorts of goodies if Iraq closes down the Camp.

Iran hates anyone who disagrees with its regime, so it wants nothing better than to have all these people in the Camp forcibly removed and eliminated.

But there is one tiny problem with Iran and Iraq's dirty little scheme: The world is watching.

Since the massacres, Camp residents have applied for UNHCR political refugee status.

It will take the U.N. 6 months to process their applications.

The U.N. Secretary General just wrote me yesterday to say that he has personally encouraged Maliki to not close the Camp down.

Sixty-five of my colleagues asked President Obama to raise this issue when he met with PM Maliki yesterday—we don't know if he did or not.

Maliki could be tried with war crimes if there is a New Year's massacre.

It should be the official policy of the United States to urge the government of Iraq to protect the residents, not return them to Iran, and not close the Camp until the U.N. can finish its political refugee process.

I am thankful to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs committee for their support of this policy.

We cannot allow Maliki to once again slaughter innocent civilians.

And that's just the way it is.

#### RECOGNIZING THE MORTGAGE-BURNING SERVICE AT LITTLE UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 14, 2011*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Little Union Baptist Church, in Dumfries, Virginia, on the occasion of its June 11, 2011, "Mortgage-Burning Service."

The Deed for the first site of Little Union Baptist Church was signed on September 9, 1901, a gift of the land from John Thomas and Mary Bates Thomas to church trustees. For Mary Bates Thomas in particular, this gift represented a great achievement in the life of a truly amazing woman. Mary Bates was born into slavery in Northern Virginia. As a slave, Ms. Bates learned to read and write and participated in the camp meetings praising God and maintaining her undying faith in the face of such great hardship.

Following emancipation, Mary Bates Thomas became a pillar of her community, running a small general store with her husband John Thomas, reading and writing letters for the illiterate, and acting as a healer and midwife. Recognizing the need of her community for a church of its own, Mary Bates Thomas and her husband donated the land on which the church, which would come to be known as Lit-

tle Union Baptist, was built. Its diminutive name may have reflected its intimate membership early on, but the church acted as a focal point of the community and a great source of comfort and pride in times of both joy and difficulty.

In over one hundred years of serving the community, the Little Union family has grown in size, yet its mission, handed down from Mrs. Bates Thomas to the church leadership and today through the guidance of Reverend James Green, has always remained: "to establish a fellowship in Jesus Christ that will promote the Gospel throughout the community and the world."

Mary Bates Thomas would surely be proud to see what her church has become. Due to the generosity of the congregation, the able leadership of the church, and God's grace, today we may celebrate Little Union Baptist's satisfaction of its mortgage. Now in complete ownership of its house of worship, the church will be able to use its resources in even greater support of other outreach ministries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the "Mortgage Burning Service" for Little Union Baptist Church. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Little Union church family for establishing and maintaining a healthy house of worship that spreads the spirit of charity and provides counsel to those in need of guidance.

#### URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

**HON. JAMES P. MORAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 13, 2011*

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, as a strong supporter of religious freedom, I share the desire of many of my colleagues that our international relationships and foreign policy should reflect our values. A legacy of intolerance and violent conflict is still palpable in Turkey, decades after the upheavals and population transfers that took place as the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Greeks, Armenians, Assyrians, and others still live with this legacy, and for many decades Turkey's government failed to account for it or to take any steps to recognize it.

Yet, Turkey is undergoing profound and very hopeful changes today. The current Turkish leadership demonstrates an understanding of these changes. They are challenging entrenched, conservative orthodoxies and facing the past in ways that I believe we should encourage. That is why I cannot support the resolution before us today. It is out of step with the reality of today's Turkey, the U.S.-Turkish alliance, and the political realities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

I am concerned that H. Res. 306 would not only send the wrong signal, it would cause the deterioration of a relationship with an important ally without advancing the laudable goal of religious freedom.

The fact is, the Turkish government is moving in the right direction on this issue, and of their own accord. Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey announced last August that his government would return hundreds of properties that were confiscated from religious minorities by

the state or other parties since 1936, and would pay compensation for properties that were seized and later sold.

I don't think such a gesture should be repaid by a sense of Congress that claims that "the Republic of Turkey has been responsible for the destruction and theft of much of the Christian heritage within its borders" and which accuses our strongest Muslim ally of "official and unofficial acts of discrimination, intolerance, and intimidation." This is a government that has fought beside our soldiers in Afghanistan, and has provided training, overflight and logistical support that have been critical to the United States in Iraq.

While we debate this resolution, we can't ignore the fact that Turkey has taken important steps forward regarding civil and political rights, and is even now developing a new constitution to reflect Turkey's diverse society and its aspirations to become a more active member of the global community. This orientation should be encouraged. The resolution before us, in my view, does nothing to encourage Turkey on that path, regardless of what its backers are claiming.

Only in the last few months, Turkey has taken some very difficult and controversial steps that support the foreign policy of the United States. Perhaps the best example, and least well-known, is in Libya. While U.S. and N.A.T.O. forces were protecting Libyan civilians from a depraved dictator, the Republic of Turkey agreed to serve as a "protecting power" on behalf of the United States. In that capacity they represented the United States in Libya, including acting as consular officers on behalf of U.S. citizens in Libya and looking after American diplomatic facilities in the country. They also fully supported our goal of protecting the Libyan opposition, and pledged financial and material support to NATO to bring about a free, democratic, secure, stable, and united Libya. Is this how we repay them?

Another example of Turkey's positive role in the Mediterranean region is their government's decision to host a U.S. radar warning system in the southeastern region of the country. This is a landmark agreement for the alliance. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen called the installation a "critical contribution" to the Alliance's efforts to address the growing threat of proliferation. This effort is not inconsistent with Turkey's leadership on issues of international security—only last month Turkey hosted an important international security conference on Afghanistan, and Turkey continues to participate in military and civilian efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And Turkey has also demonstrated a willingness to challenge undemocratic and despotic neighbors, despite the risk to its own economic interests. The Turkish government has imposed sanctions on the Assad regime in Syria, and erected trade barriers that will make it harder for the dictatorship to remain in place. And the Erdogan government has also distanced itself from Iran by pushing for secular, democratic governments in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria. These are not easy steps for the Turkish government to take—Iran and Syria account for much of Turkey's eastern border and a large part of its trade. But they are pushing ahead, because they share our concern for democratic values. Turkey's government is showing that there can be no real peace without moral principles.

The resolution before us seems utterly ignorant of these critical developments. I cannot