

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 50

Concerning the protection and continued livelihood of the Eastern Orthodox
Ecumenical Patriarchate.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 28, 1995

Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. GEKAS, Mr. ZIMMER, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. KLINK) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Concerning the protection and continued livelihood of the
Eastern Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Whereas in recent years there have been successive terrorist attempts to desecrate and destroy the premises of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Fanar area of Istanbul (Constantinople), Turkey;

Whereas attempts against the Ecumenical Patriarchate have intensified, including:

(1) In July and August 1993, the Christian Orthodox cemetery in Yenikoy, near Istanbul, was attacked by vandals and desecrated.

(2) There has been a concerted effort throughout Turkey to convert the Church of Hagia (Saint) Sophia,

one of the most sacred monuments of Greek Orthodox Christianity and currently used as a museum, into a mosque.

(3) On the night of March 30, 1994, 3 bombs were discovered in the building where the Patriarch lives.

(4) The Turkish press and some politicians have been launching a well-orchestrated campaign against the Ecumenical Patriarchate accusing it of trying to become an independent State or that it wishes to revive the Byzantine Empire. These accusations resulted in provoking dangerous reactions among the Moslem population in Turkey against the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

(5) Negative statements have been directed toward the Patriarchate by the Mayor of the Fatih District of Istanbul.

Whereas His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew and those associated with the Ecumenical Patriarchate are Turkish citizens and thus must be protected under Turkish law against blatant and unprovoked attacks toward ethnic minorities;

Whereas the Turkish Government arbitrarily closed the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology in 1971;

Whereas the closing of the Halki School of Theology is a serious concern for the Ecumenical Patriarchate;

Whereas Turkish law requires that the Patriarch, as well as all the clergy, faculty, and students be citizens of Turkey, and the Halki School of Theology is the only educational institution for Orthodox Christian leadership;

Whereas the unimpeded continued provocations against the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the closing of the Halki School of Theology are in violation of International Treaties to which Turkey has been a signatory, including the Treaty of Lausanne, the 1968 Protocol, the Helsinki Final Act-1975, and the Charter of Paris;

Whereas these consequences have severely compromised and threatened the safety and security of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the future existence of this Orthodox Institution in Turkey;

Whereas the Ecumenical Patriarchate is the spiritual center for more than 250,000,000 Orthodox Christians worldwide, including approximately 5,000,000 in the United States; and

Whereas it is in the best interest of the United States to prevent further incidents regarding the Ecumenical Patriarchate and in the overall goals of the United States to establish peaceful relations with and among the many important nations of the world that have substantial Orthodox Christian populations: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*

2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) the United States should use its influence
4 with the Turkish Government and as a permanent
5 member of the United Nations Security Council to
6 suggest that the Turkish Government—

7 (A) ensure the proper protection for the
8 Patriarchate and all Orthodox faithful residing
9 in Turkey;

1 (B) assure that positive steps are taken to
2 reopen the Halki Patriarchal School of Theol-
3 ogy;

4 (C) provide for the proper protection and
5 safety of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pa-
6 triarchate personnel;

7 (D) establish conditions that would prevent
8 the reoccurrence of past terrorist activities and
9 vandalism and other personal threats against
10 the Patriarch;

11 (E) establish conditions to ensure that the
12 Patriarchate is free to carry out its religious
13 mission; and

14 (F) do everything possible to find and pun-
15 ish the perpetrators of any provocative and ter-
16 rorist acts against the Patriarchate.

17 (2) The Administration should report to the
18 Congress the status and progress of the concerns in
19 paragraph (1) on an annual basis.

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