of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the consequence of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected peoples and enhanced regional stability.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations will hold a hearing entitled "The Container Security Initiative and the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism: Securing the Global Supply Chain or Trojan Horse?" In light of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, concern has increased that agents and smugglers might channel weapons of mass destruction in the approximately 9 million ocean going containers that arrive in the United States every year. As part of its overall response to the threat of terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security’s Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (Customs) implemented the Container Security Initiative, CSI, to screen high-risk containers at sea ports overseas, thus employing screening tools before potentially dangerous cargo reaches our shores. Customs also implemented the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, C-TPAT, to improve the security of the global supply chain in partnership with the private sector.

Both CSI and C-TPAT face a number of compelling challenges that impact their ability to safeguard our Nation from terrorism. The Subcommittee’s May 26 hearing will examine how Customs utilizes CSI and C-TPAT in connection with its other enforcement programs and review the requirements for and challenges involved in transitioning CSI and C-TPAT from promising risk management concepts to effective and sustained enforcement operations. These important Customs initiatives require sustained Congressional oversight. As such, this will be the first of several hearings the Subcommittee intends to hold on the response of the Federal Government to terrorist threats.

The Subcommittee hearing is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. For further information, please contact Raymond V. Shepherd, III, Staff Director and Chief Counsel. In addition, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, at 202-224-3721.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 9 a.m. to hold a briefing on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 10 a.m. to hold a hearing on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent for Franklin Thompson Reece to be granted floor privileges during debate on judicial nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Anne Milgram be granted floor privileges for the duration of the presentation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REFERRAL AND DISCHARGE—NOMINATION OF EDMUND S. HAWLEY

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination of Edmund S. Hawley, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security be referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and that, further, upon the reporting out or discharge of the nomination, the nomination be referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for a period not to exceed 30 days, after which time the nomination, if still in committee, will be discharged and placed on the Executive Calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXPRESSION OF THE SENSE OF CONGRESS RELATIVE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 35, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:


There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to the concurrent resolution.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and the preamble be agreed to on bloc; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the concurrent resolution be printed in the Record, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 35) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 35

Whereas the incorporation in 1940 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union was an act of aggression carried out against the will of sovereign people;

Whereas the United States was steadfast in its policy of not recognizing the illegal Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the Russian Federation is the successor state to the Soviet Union;

Whereas the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, including its secret protocols between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity to occupy and annex Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the occupation brought countless suffering to the Baltic peoples through terror, killings, and deportations to Siberian concentration camps;

Whereas the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania bravely resisted Soviet aggression and occupation;

Whereas the Government of Germany renounced its participation in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and publicly apologized for the destruction and terror that Nazi Germany unleashed on the world;

Whereas, in 1989, the Congress of People’s Deputies of the Soviet Union denounced the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and its secret protocols;

Whereas President Putin recently confirmed that the statement of the Congress of People’s Deputies remains the view of the Russian Federation;

Whereas the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union remains unacknowledged by the Russian Federation;

Whereas a declaration of acknowledgment of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Russian Federation would lead to improved relations between the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the people of Russia, would form the basis for improved relations between the governments of the countries, and strengthen stability in the region;

Whereas the Russian Federation is to be commended for beginning to acknowledge grievous and regrettable incidents in their history, such as admitting complicity in the massacre of Polish soldiers in the Katyń Forest in 1940;

Whereas the truth is a powerful weapon for healing, forgiving, and reconciliation, but its absence breeds distrust, fear, and hostility; and

Whereas countries that cannot clearly admit their historical mistakes and make peace with their pasts cannot successfully build their futures; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to
1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the consequence of which will be a significant increase in good will among the affected peoples and enhanced regional stability.

EXPRESSING CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 150, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 150) expressing continued support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I submitted a resolution with my colleague, Senator SMITH of Oregon, that I think is especially pertinent this week as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany. The end of World War II in Europe brought the end of Hitler’s regime and all of its horrors, but it did not, unfortunately, usher in an era that was free of tyranny as so many had hoped. Instead, the Soviet Union solidified its illegal occupation of its three Baltic neighbors, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and communism’s global expansion condemned millions to totalitarian rule or death.

The resolution we submitted expresses support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington, DC. Authorized by Congress in 1993, memorial will honor the more than 100 million victims of communism by supporting the United States to honor and remember the victims of communism, for example, by building and maintaining a Memorial near the United States Capitol.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

Whereas it is important for the people of the United States to honor and remember the victims of communism; Whereas construction of the Memorial is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2005; and Whereas the United States Capitol in the District of Columbia is fully representative of its citizens; Whereas Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by regularly holding free and fair elections, providing the free exchange of ideas, and vigorously exercising in its Parliament, the Knesset, a democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens; Whereas Israel has bravely defended itself from attacks repeatedly since independence; Whereas the Government of Israel has successfully worked with the neighboring Governments of Egypt and Jordan to establish peaceful, bilateral relations; Whereas, despite the deaths of over one thousand innocent Israelis at the hands of murderous, suicide bombers and other terrorists during the past 4 years, the people of Israel continue to seek peace with their Palestinian neighbors; Whereas the United States and Israel enjoy a strategic partnership based on shared mutual democratic values, friendship, and respect for the rule of law; and Whereas the people of the United States share affinity with the people of Israel and view Israel as a strong and trusted ally; and

Resolved, That the Senate expresses its continued support for the construction of the Victims of Communism Memorial.

RECOGNIZING THE 57TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 151, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 151) recognizing the 57th Anniversary of the Independence of the State of Israel.

Whereas the United States was one of the first nations to recognize Israel, only 11 minutes after its creation; Whereas Israel has provided the opportunity for Jews from all over the world to reestablish their ancient homeland; Whereas Israel is home to many religious sites which are sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; Whereas Israel provided a refuge to Jews who survived the horrors of the Holocaust and the evils committed by the people of the United States, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of the press, and government by the consent of the governed; and Whereas Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by regularly holding free and fair elections, promulgating the free exchange of ideas, and vigorously exercising in its Parliament, the Knesset, a democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens; Whereas the Government of Israel has successfully worked with the neighboring Governments of Egypt and Jordan to establish peaceful, bilateral relations; Whereas, despite the deaths of over one thousand innocent Israelis at the hands of murderous, suicide bombers and other terrorists during the past 4 years, the people of Israel continue to seek peace with their Palestinian neighbors; Whereas the United States and Israel enjoy a strategic partnership based on shared mutual democratic values, friendship, and respect for the rule of law; and Whereas the people of the United States share affinity with the people of Israel and view Israel as a strong and trusted ally; and