

TRAGEDIES IN CHECHNYA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 1995

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, while this House was in recess, the world learned of a tragic loss. Fred Cuny, disaster relief expert, pioneer in modern humanitarian assistance, and American citizen, is now presumed by his family to have been murdered in Chechnya. He had vanished there some 5 months ago, along with a Russian translator, Galena Oleinik, and two Red Cross doctors, Andrei Sereda and Sergei Makarov, who had come with him. Their deaths are all the more tragic because they were in Chechnya not to help one side or another, but to assess the needs of innocent refugees, Chechen and Russian, driven from their homes by the conflict.

The facts of this tragedy are not entirely clear. According to information received by the Cuny family, it appears that Fred Cuny and his associates were killed by a group of Chechens, but there is evidence that Russian authorities in Chechnya may have had a hand in the killings. During the course of an investigation into his death, the Cuny family took written and spoken testimony that Russian intelligence operatives had spread disinformation about the group, alleging that Cuny's team was anti-Chechen and associated with the Russian secret service. Whether this effort was intended to discredit the team, or had more sinister motives, is immaterial. If true, it is an example of the callous disregard Russia has shown toward the fate of non-combatants in Chechnya, including those who are trying to alleviate human suffering.

Mr. Speaker, Fred Cuny cared passionately about human rights. After his first visit to Chechnya, he wrote an article entitled "Killing Chechnya" for the New York Review of Books, in which he documented the indiscriminate bombing and shelling of residential areas by the Russian Army, a barrage that left both Chechen and Russian civilians dead by the thousands and homeless by the tens of thousands. Just before he departed for his fateful second trip, he met with the staff of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, of which I have the honor to serve as chairman, recounting the willful disregard for human life that he had found in Chechnya. His words from that meeting about the innocent civilians caught up in the fighting—"they're dying like flies"—were marked by both frustration and compassion. I would add also that Fred Cuny also testified before the Commission earlier with regard to his humanitarian efforts in the former Yugoslavia and the human suffering in that corner of Europe.

Fred Cuny's concern for human rights abuses carried him all over the world, often at the behest of his country's political and military leaders, who many times—most recently, during and after the gulf war, and in the former Yugoslavia—employed him as a consultant. The company he founded, Intertect Relief and Reconstruction Agency, was devoted to finding solutions to humanitarian disaster—solutions that set a new precedent for excellence and long-range planning in the field of disaster relief. He saved tens of thousands of lives, traveling to some of the most dangerous cor-

ners of the world, often at enormous personal risk.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken out strongly against the brutality of the war in Chechnya, and its corrosive and potentially destructive effect upon the prospect of Russian democracy. I have joined with the international community in calling for a cease-fire in Chechnya. One month ago, that call was answered. The efforts of the Russians and Chechens in establishing and holding to a cease-fire agreement should not be overlooked. But neither should the murders of Fred Cuny and his team, and neither should Russian and Chechen responsibility for the killings, if any exists.

In his compassion, courage, and ingenuity, Fred Cuny embodied so much that we hold valuable in the American spirit. But the deaths of that relief team remind us that the horrors against which he had spent his life fighting—the slaughter of innocent civilians, the deprivation of even the most basic human rights, such as food and shelter, from an entire town, the persecution of humanitarian workers—are the tools of those who would rule by repression, force, and fear.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my condolences to the Cuny family, and to the families of those who died with him. I hope that Fred Cuny will be remembered for his good work, immense courage, and for his honorable death. And, I call on both sides, Chechen and Russian, to use the current cease-fire to expose and bring to justice those responsible for this reprehensible act.

TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN
AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION
SCHOOL SAFETY PATROLS

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 1995

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the American Automobile Association's School Safety Patrols. The 1995–96 school year marks the 75th anniversary of the AAA/School Safety Patrol partnership. Over the years, the safety patrol—which annually safeguards the lives of millions of young boys and girls—has become almost as recognizable to motorists as the stop sign. The presence of a safety patrol member wearing the familiar orange Sam Browne belt, which circles the waist and crosses over the shoulder, is a nationally accepted traffic indicator alerting motorists to drive carefully, for school children are in the area.

Motorists will find safety patrol members in 76 percent of the communities across the country. AAA clubs across the United States and Canada sponsor the 500,000 member safety patrol program in 50,000 schools.

AAA clubs supply the training materials, belts, badges and everything needed to organize and operate a school safety patrol program, as well as recognition activities.

Serving as patrols helps children develop a sense of responsibility at an early age. They're on duty early every morning of the school year and after the school day is over, sacrificing their play time. Throughout the day they remind their fellow students of safety rules and see that they cross the street only when it is safe to do so.

Over the years, the program has spurred worldwide interest, and youngsters in many foreign lands have joined in the effort to improve traffic safety for school children.

The national pedestrian death rate per 100,000 children under 10 years of age is dropping steadily—from 10.4 in 1935 to 3.0 in 1986, a 71-percent decline—and continues to decline. By 1993, the death rate for pedestrians under 10 was 1.4 per 100,000, down 65 percent from 1975. Not only are fewer young pedestrians being killed, but the percentage of those deaths in relation to total pedestrian fatalities also is declining. Some factors in the drop in child pedestrian deaths include increased public and media attention on traffic and child-safety issues, more students being bused to and from school, and improved emergency-medical services.

During its long and distinguished history, the School Safety Patrol has saved many lives. Last year, for instance, seven safety patrol members were honored for their heroics.

Drivers can and need to help protect our most precious resource by recognizing school zones—and the familiar orange Sam Browne belt worn by the School Safety Patrol—as a warning to slow down and look for children crossing the road.

I ask my colleagues to join me today and salute the contributions of the thousands of safety patrols kids everywhere.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me the distinct pleasure of recognizing the 75th anniversary of the AAA School Safety Patrol partnership.

CODIFICATION OF RECENT LAWS
TO BE INCLUDED IN TITLE 49,
UNITED STATES CODE, TRANS-
PORTATION

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 1995

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to codify without substantive change recent laws related to transportation not included in title 49 and to make technical and conforming amendments to the United States Code. This bill was prepared by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel of the House of Representatives under its statutory duty—2 U.S.C. 285b—to prepare and submit periodically revisions of positive law titles of the Code to keep those titles current.

This bill makes no change in the substance of existing law. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the bill should contact the Judiciary Committee document clerk in room B-29 of the Cannon House Office Building. The telephone number is 225-0408. In addition, a section-by-section summary—containing reviser's notes—of the bill may be obtained through Edward F. Willett, Jr., Law Revision Counsel, U.S. House of Representatives, H2-304 Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC, 20515-6711.

Persons wishing to comment on the bill should submit those comments to the law revision counsel no later than October 12, 1995.