

22, 49, and 56; the LaPlata Volunteer Fire Department; the Sardom search and rescue dogs; the Cobb Island Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary.

Let me stop at the Cobb Island Ladies Auxiliary. I had the opportunity to talk to Gilda Farrell Wednesday night. Talked to her about the efforts of herself and the members of the auxiliary, and told her that Sally Shelton Colby expressed to me how persons who did not know her or her family were so warm in a time of crisis, were so uplifting at a time of tragedy, and how they had related to the entire Colby family at this time and given them comfort as well as aid.

In addition, the Charles County Communications Department; the Virginia State Marine Police; the Naval Surface Warfare Center EOD dive team and the rescue squad dive team from Dahlgren, VA; and numerous local citizens who volunteered in many, many different ways.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the efforts of the paid and volunteer members of this very special community. These individuals engage in hundreds of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance life-saving skills, just to be ready for emergency rescue calls and searches. Charles County and other communities across America benefit daily from the services of these dedicated professionals who are ready 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and they deserve our continued thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you share my pride at the efforts of the volunteer fire and rescue service personnel and other agencies involved in the intense search for Mr. Colby, which lasted more than 7 days.

ADMINISTRATION'S FAILURE TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. METCALF). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the matter of human rights. Perhaps the most basic of these rights is just to be able to exist or to live. And I am compelled to speak on America's role in protecting and promoting these basic rights.

Like it or not, we are the nation to which the world turns for leadership and direction, especially in the area of human rights. Quite frankly, our Government is just not doing a good job here. It isn't measuring up.

The administration has failed to exercise leadership all around the globe in the area of human rights. There has been a total collapse of will, of spine, of backbone in dealing with terrible things happening to people in every corner of the world. Events that we could alter—that we, in the past, have altered—by standing up to tough guy

dictators who treat their own with brutality and terrorism.

I wish it wasn't necessary to talk about this right now because this is the campaign season and honest criticism and frustration are sometimes discounted as just more candidate bashing. But I'm not bashing the administration. I want President Clinton to succeed in promoting human rights. In his State of the Union Speech on January 25, 1994, he stood right there and said "as we build a more constructive relationship with China, we must continue to insist on clear signs of improvement in that nation's human rights record." I alone arose from my seat over there to applaud his courageous intentions.

But he didn't follow through. And the men and women in China are worse off today for our failure to lead. Just as the men and women in southern Sudan are worse off, and the Nagorno-Karabach, Turkey, Tibet, Burundi, even Vietnam and elsewhere. But this afternoon, I want to focus on Chechnya, a fractious part of the Russian Federation of States, which I visited last year, and where unbelievably brutal events are unfolding. Chechnya could be the catalyst that results in a Russian Federation dominated by communism again.

It should have been enough to count the dead men, women, and children to see something must be done about Chechnya. But if it were not, it should then be enough to also see the villages and hamlets across the land that have been ravaged. But if that were still not enough add the once thriving capital city of Grozny which has been leveled, where few buildings remain standing; only hollow skeletons amid huge piles of rubble. That scene surely calls for remedy.

To give the administration some credit, perhaps they wanted to do something helpful there. But faulty and sporadic rhetoric have only made things worse. At one point the administration said Chechnya is an internal or civil problem. Russia then took this to mean that we would look the other way while they embarked on an effort to crush Chechnya. When the tragedy of war became too apparent to bear in silence, our Government began to urge President Yeltsin to bring this conflict to an end. Each time a high level delegation from the United States, either the President, Secretary of State or other high official, was scheduled to meet with the Yeltsin government, they would intensify their war effort to crush the Chechens hoping to claim the problem had been solved and peace is being restored even before our Government delegation arrived and could raise the issue.

This cat and mouse brand of diplomacy had the effect of ratcheting up the killing and bombing and shelling. And more Chechens died. But more Russian soldiers continued to die as well. The Chechens are fierce fighters and good soldiers comfortable in their

homeland which they know like the back of their hand. They, too, can be ruthless and are not pushovers. They have taken a grueling toll on the Russian troops. This, coupled with the hemorrhage of rubles to wage this war, the humiliating realization by the Russian people that their army may be only a paper tiger that cannot over-run even tiny Chechnya, and the stinging negative world opinion showering down on the Yeltsin government, has made this a key issue in the upcoming June elections.

What is at stake in these elections is the soul of Russia. And the major candidates to control its soul are President Boris Yeltsin on one hand and the Communist leaders on the other. President Yeltsin himself has said he may not win re-election if the Chechnya war continues. Let me say that again. The Russian people, tired of and embarrassed by the war in Chechnya, could turn away from President Yeltsin and re-embrace communism as, perhaps, the lesser among evils.

Russia could return to communism as we stand idly, too timid or too confused to force the Chechen issue. Now I absolutely do not suggest this is something which should involve U.S. forces. That would clearly be irresponsible. What we have is two belligerents engaged in a struggle which neither side knows how to end. Like two feuding family members unable and unwilling to stop fighting even when both recognize continuing conflict is worse than any resolution available. Sometimes it takes an outsider to demand a truce. I don't want to trivialize this conflict but it is not unlike two small boys whaling away at one another and both are secretly delighted when someone steps between them.

I have, again and again, written the President and others in his administration—and Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert in the RECORD copies of these letters—urging that our Government offer and encourage both sides, Russian and Chechen, to accept the offer of an American statesman of high stature and achievement to help search for peace. A broker or negotiator or arbitrator—choose a title—but someone with wisdom, experience and diplomacy to help find an accord where neither side is a loser, killing and destruction end and people can begin rebuilding lives. The administration barely even acknowledges my letters, which would be OK if they were pursuing another workable outcome. They are not. They again arrange a high level meeting with the Yeltsin government which spurs the Russians toward a renewed offensive to stamp out the Chechens. More killing and destruction result; time passes; frustration and bitterness grow and the cycle begins anew.

This is not diplomacy. This is not international leadership. This is folly. It seems that our Government is abdicating its role as a world leader. A role no other power can assume. And the

void is being filled around the world with brush fires and geographically contained arenas of terror and terrorism.

But the stakes in Chechnya may be higher. Communism might be the winner in this round. And if it is, it will not only be the Russians who are the losers. It will be every free nation and those who thirst for freedom. And surely, America will be among the losers if this happens. And that will be the biggest shame of all because we had, in our grasp, the ability to try to lead the world into a tomorrow of relative peace and tranquility.

Even if a resurgence of communism did not hinge on the resolution of the conflict in Chechnya, and Mr. Speaker, the political picture in Russia is such a tangled web no one could predict with any certainty the outcome at the Russian ballot box on June 16, the administration should still prod the Russian Government into finding peace. Isn't peace and the end of killing and the destruction of a society a worthy goal in itself? Of course it is and it is one our Government ought to resolutely pursue with dispatch. I implore the administration to not let this slip through their fingers.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letters I referred to above.

The information referred to follows:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 26, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The brutal conflict in Chechnya is now in its second month. Gruesome images of the fighting emerge day after day. Thousands of Chechnyans have died in the fighting, including many innocent women and children.

While the U.S. position has been that this is an "internal Russian affair," the American people certainly have an interest in bringing an end to the fighting. Besides the obvious human tragedy occurring as men, women and children continue to die, Russia is a major recipient of U.S. foreign aid. This war is causing many in the Congress to consider whether Russia is deserving of such aid and whether the entire U.S.-Russian relationship should be re-examined, particularly our close ties to President Yeltsin. Continuation of this conflict will have major implications for the future of the Yeltsin government, the Russian economy and Russia's already fragile relationship with its neighbors. I believe our government should use its diplomatic leverage now to help bring peace to the region.

I am writing to propose that you appoint former President George Bush, or possibly former Secretary of State James Baker, as special emissary for this purpose; to go to Moscow, meet with President Yeltsin and other Russian leaders, and present your viewpoint on the importance of quickly ending the Chechnyan conflict. I believe President Bush could be very helpful in ending the fighting and stopping the killing.

Mr. President, I hope you will give careful consideration to this proposal and move quickly in sending an emissary to Russia. Thank you.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 21, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As you know, I traveled to Chechnya in May of last year to view the ravages of war in that part of the world. I have enclosed a copy of my trip report.

It has been frustrating to see this conflict drag on for over a year and the fighting and hostage-taking flare up again in recent weeks. The Russians seem to be getting more militaristic, but I understand that President Yeltsin recently acknowledged the importance of dealing with the conflict before the elections. The U.S. should strongly support President Yeltsin in any of his efforts to bring peaceful resolution to the conflict and, if necessary, serve as the catalyst for peace in the region. Perhaps the U.S. could help bring the sides together or serve as a mediator.

The U.S. should use every opportunity to strongly encourage the Russian government to end this conflict peacefully. It's in the best interest of Russia, and ultimately, the best interest of the United States.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 4, 1996.

Hon. WARREN CHRISTOPHER,
Secretary of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am writing to again raise the tragic situation in Chechnya. Some 40,000 civilians are dead, hundreds of thousands are homeless and, yet, this was not even a topic of discussion during your recent visit to Moscow. Why should the United States step in? Each time a high-level U.S. delegation has visited Moscow, President Yeltsin, seemingly in an attempt to put this issue aside, steps up the intensity of the military action and more Chechen civilians get pummeled.

President Yeltsin now seems to be making efforts to establish peace. He has called a cease-fire and the fighting has died down somewhat. We all hope his efforts are sincere, lasting and fruitful. But like a family trying to work out solutions to irreconcilable problems, sometimes the issues are too difficult to resolve alone. Feelings run too high and past wrongs have seared too vivid a memory to bring about resolution. Families often need to bring in outside help to provide counsel and objectivity, defuse tensions, arbitrate unresolvable differences and provide a fresh outlook. This is a mediation role only the United States can play in resolving this brutal conflict. I ask that you consider offering to both sides the use of a high-level negotiator of unquestionable stature: someone, perhaps, who has held at least a cabinet position in our government.

When I visited Grozny last May, there seemed little of the town left to destroy. Yet reports of death and destruction continue. What can we lose by offering to negotiate between the parties? Things could grow even worse after the June elections if the winner of the presidential race senses a mandate to end the conflict in Chechnya by any means.

I hope the U.S. will lend its weight to seek a speedy resolution. Please consider appointing a high-level negotiator to shuttle between the sides and push for peace. Our neutrality should cease to be indifference and we should use our voice, our experience and our economic power to stridently work for peace in Russia.

It's not too late. But too many have died. I urge you to take decisive action.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 25, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your response to my last letter expressing concern over Chechnya. I have been in Chechnya, seen the results of the war, met with the people there and have a sense of their resolve, their bitterness and their anger. They are a hearty, robust and proud people. Chechens are good fighters and will not yield in this situation, not as long as even a few have the means to resist.

I believe more must be done and time is running out. Time has already run out for too many Chechen men, women and children as well as for too many Russian soldiers and their families. Though not intended, each time you meet with President Yeltsin or visit Russia... with the purpose of propping him up or lending stature to his presidency... the opposite and undesired outcome results. Before your meetings, he tries, once again, to clean up events in Chechnya with a renewed and vigorous military onslaught causing more Chechens and more Russian soldiers to die, and the two sides become even more deeply mired in the conflict. President Yeltsin's attempt to make Chechnya disappear from the radar screen before you meet has the opposite and unwanted result of more killing, more conflict and a diminished way out of this mess. He has apparently even found it necessary to lie to you. According to the enclosed Reuters report, the Russian military attacks which resulted in Dzhokhar Dudayev's death were occurring even as President Yeltsin assured you that he was pursuing a peaceful resolution in Chechnya.

President Yeltsin's history here is one of reacting badly in Chechnya each time you and he are to meet. The outcome inevitably is an even more difficult problem for him and may result in his downfall in the June elections. He may not win reelection without resolving this Chechnya situation.

I agree that our interests and Russia's as well are better served with Mr. Yeltsin as president when compared to other likely candidates. If he loses, Russia and their federation of states will take a giant stride backward. So I believe America must do all it can to bring resolution to the Chechen conflict, for them, certainly, but for us as well.

No one, least of all me, wants US involvement on the ground in that region. But America, as no other, is a respected and trusted force standing for freedom and justice. Our leadership alone can drive a peace solution. As I have asked before, and copies of all my earlier letters on this issue are enclosed to refresh your memory, please offer to President Yeltsin... and urge him to accept... the appointment of an American of considerable stature to negotiate and to search for a peaceful end to this tragedy in Chechnya. I know there are many good candidates, perhaps a retired flag or general officer or a statesman on the order of former Secretary Holbrooke.

Mr. President, when I first wrote on this issue, our interest was one of bringing a humanitarian end to a needless war in Chechnya. With the passing of time and evolving political fortunes in Russia, our own national interests could be also affected

by fall-out from this matter, especially if it results in the return of communism to Russia. This would be bad for America and for the world.

I believe we must quickly do something here. I respectfully submit these recommendations and will do anything I can to help. If I can persuade you on this matter, I will come over on a moments notice.

Please act, Mr. President. Thank you and best regards.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF
Member of Congress.

REPORT: RUSSIAN 'COPTERS ATTACK CHECHEN TOWN

MOSCOW.—Russian helicopter gunships attacked rebel positions in the Chechen town of Shali on Thursday, a day after slain separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev was buried.

General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, commander of Russian forces in Chechnya, told Interfax news agency that the gunships had made two "pinpoint strikes" on guerrilla positions in Shali, about 25 miles southeast of the regional capital Grozny.

The attacks were in response to rebel fighters firing on Wednesday at Russian helicopters which flew over Shali on a reconnaissance mission, he said.

Interfax said civilians had been killed and wounded in the attacks, though it gave no casualty figure.

It said seven people were killed when Russian ground forces opened fire on a civilian convoy trying to flee the town which had been sealed off by Russian troops in six days.

A Shali police official, quoted by Interfax, said the Russian attacks had caused considerable destruction. "People have been killed and wounded," he said.

The renewed Russian air raids followed the death of Dudayev last Sunday in a rocket attack from the air at Gekhi-Chu, about 20 miles south-west of Grozny, as he stood in an open field speaking by satellite telephone.

Dudayev, '52, unchallenged leader of the rebellion against Russian rule, was buried on Wednesday at a secret location in the south of the territory.

Russian military involvement in killing Dudayev, to whom President Boris Yeltsin had offered indirect talks to end the 16-month conflict, was mired in controversy.

Tikhomirov was quoted by Interfax as saying his troops had not conducted any special operation to assassinate Dudayev.

But an Interior Ministry source said on Wednesday he had been killed in retribution for an ambush last week in which Chechen fighters killed up to 90 Russian soldiers.

In a more detailed report, Interfax quoted another source as saying Dudayev had been deliberately targeted by a rocket fired from the air which homed in on him by following the signal of his satellite telephone.

This source said it was the fifth attempt in the past two or three months to destroy Dudayev by this means.

The first four had failed, the source said, because the Chechen leader ended his telephone conversation before the rockets could target him.

Tikhomirov called the report of retribution "madness and an attempt to pass on to the federal troops the blame for a possible disruption of a peace settlement in Chechnya."

He said his forces had stuck to Yeltsin's order to halt military operations and only responded to rebel attacks.

Yeltsin ordered troops into Chechnya in December 1994 to crush its independence drive.

Over 30,000 people, mostly civilians, are believed to have died and Yeltsin is trying to

end the conflict to boost his chances of winning a second term as president in a June poll.

He unveiled a peace plan on March 31 which included a halt to Russia's military offensive, partial withdrawal of troops and indirect talks with Dudayev. But the plan allowed "special operations against terrorists."

It was not clear how the killing of Dudayev and his replacement by Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, a hardline pro-independence ideologist, could affect peace efforts.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 7, 1996.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am, once again, writing to point out that conditions for the men, women and children in Chechnya continue to deteriorate as hopelessness and hatred battle one another. Did you see the enclosed Washington Times piece reporting the views of Duma Member, Mr. Aoushev, who is also the deputy chairman of their parliament's national security committee? He makes several thoughtful points which should give us pause about a "see nothing—do nothing" policy.

He notes: military action could spread from Chechnya to next door neighbor Ingushetia. Not only would this bring senseless killing, destruction, and misery to a new region that is, today, relatively tranquil, it would deny an existing haven to many Chechens who have fled from the daily terrors of their homeland. When I recently visited that region, I went to an Ingushetian refugee camp for Chechens, mostly women, children and the aged. They do not need another turn in a war zone.

The conflict in Chechnya will not continue at its present level. It cannot get better so it will only become worse. Not only will pain and suffering intensify with continued fighting but the opportunity for reconciliation or consensual peace will recede further into the realm of the improbable.

The Clinton Administration (Mr. Aoushev's term) is ignoring human rights violations by Russian military and has not done enough to use its influence to end the conflict.

I hope you will consider what Mr. Aoushev has to say and I reiterate my earlier and often made suggestion that you should offer to both sides an American negotiator of principle and stature whose task is to urge and prod the parties to this senseless conflict to stop it. How could it hurt? It might help. Continuing to do nothing is to accept or even to encourage more inhumane acts on helpless people.

Please work to stop this senselessness. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

HONORING MOTHERS AND WOULD-BE MOTHERS ON MOTHER'S DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, we will celebrate Mother's Day.

As a grandmother and mother, each year I look forward to this special day, this honored celebration.

But, Mother's Day is not just about fancy flowers, fruit baskets and pretty greeting cards.

Mother's Day is not about colorful scarves, chocolate candy or an evening out.

Mother's Day is about family and the role of women in the family.

Mother's Day is about respect, dignity and self-esteem—the same qualities that come from having a job, working at a decent and fair wage and making a contribution.

Mother's Day is not only about reverence, but it is also not about ridicule and contempt.

Mothers are ridiculed and held in contempt when women workers are not paid a decent and fair wage and when Congress tries to cut programs for women.

Yet, mothers and would-be-mothers are being ridiculed and held in contempt by a Congress that does not seem to care.

It would appear that our colleagues did not listen or perhaps did not hear during consideration of the fiscal year 1996 budget.

On Medicare, Medicaid, education funding, the earned income tax credit and other areas, they are proposing the same kind of cuts this time that were rejected last time.

Yet, while proposing these cuts—many of which were vetoed by the President—our colleagues on the right want to give tax breaks amounting to \$176 billion, including a capital gains tax cut for the wealthiest Americans.

And, while proposing a tax cut for the wealthy, they are opposing a wage increase for the lowest income workers.

There are 117,000 workers in the State of North Carolina working at or below the Federal minimum wage.

Who are they?

They are primarily adults.

More than 7 out of 10 of all minimum wage workers are adults over the age of 20.

Also, they are primarily women.

More than 6 out of 10 of all minimum-wage workers are female.

And, of great significance to my State, they are primarily from rural communities.

It is twice as likely that a minimum wage worker will be from a rural community than from an urban community.

But, even more disturbingly, as we are poised to pause and celebrate Mother's Day, almost 4 out of 10 of all minimum wage workers are the sole wage earner in a family.

Single, female heads of households make up a large part of the minimum wage work force.

As a result, 58 percent of all poor children come from families whose parent or parents who work full time.

Twelve million minimum wage workers in America; most of them are women, many with children.

Mother's Day is about food on the table, a roof over one's head, money to pay the doctor and money to get to the doctor's office.