

and understanding yourself and others. She then used these skills to design and implement a series of Lenten workshops for the young children in her parish church. Kathleen Lomedico earned badges in artistic crafts and career exploration among others. After learning leadership skills through Girl Scouting, she served as the editor of her high school yearbook. As her Girl Scout Gold Award project she spent the past year organizing and leading a youth group for teens which meets every other week and a youth band which plays every Sunday night for her parish church. Ms. Lomedico wanted the young people in her parish to "feel a sense of home in the church." Both girls used skills they learned in Girl Scouting to help the church of their faith.

These two Senior Girl Scouts have earned my respect and admiration. I believe both girls should receive the public recognition due them for such significant services to their communities and their country.

TRIBUTE TO IYLENE WEISS

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, a friend, former neighbor, and unique natural force died last month.

Iylene Weiss probably did more than any other individual to restore the largest wetland in Los Angeles County and its neighboring lagoon, known as Ballona.

At her funeral, Los Angeles City Councilwoman Ruth Galanter read a poem that she composed in two parts as Iylene's health failed. Ruth's poem is a special and deserved tribute and I ask unanimous consent to insert it in the RECORD at this point.

TRIBUTE TO IYLENE WEISS—BY COUNCILWOMAN RUTH GALANTER

We cannot let more time go by without acknowledging that Iylene Weiss has pulled a clever trick.

She made a plan and made it stick that no marina'd grace this shore; no docks, no paving, and, what's more, that birds and worms and clams and such and wetlands plants that you can touch, would fill this water and these banks.

For this, Iylene, we give you thanks; we toast the docents and the kids, we toast the herons and the squids, we raise our cups not once, but twice, to cheer the work of Iylene Weiss.

FAREWELL

Peace be with you now, Iylene; the plants are coming nice and green, and all the folks who cheered you on, in realizing you'd be gone, and also moved by love for you, are doing work you used to do.

At last they've grasped that central theme, that people working as a team, have more successes and more fun, than leaving all the work to one.

And so, Iylene, it's safe to go; it's safe to trust that those you know, will carry on from where you've been; so peace be with you now, Iylene.

CONGRATULATIONS TO VASILIOS PYROVOLIKOS

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Vasilios Pyrovolikos for his service during World War II in helping to contribute to the success of the Allied forces.

Mr. Pyrovolikos, like many other civilians, supported members of the Allied forces in the Mediterranean Theatre during World War II. His support and service has been noted in a certificate awarded to him by H.R. Alexander, Field Marshal and Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean Theatre—1930–45—for help given to the sailors, soldiers, and airmen of the British Commonwealth of Nations, enabling them to escape from or evade capture by the enemy.

Mr. Pyrovolikos has also been honored by Col. Harry S. Aldrich, U.S. Army, commanding, for his service with the United States Army Forces in the Middle East under the supervision of maritime units of the Ministry of the Merchant Marine, Athens, Greece, for the period of June 1, 1944, to October 15, 1944, in appreciation for his contributions to the success of the Allied forces.

It is because of the dedication of people like Mr. Pyrovolikos that this country and our Allies, both then and now, enjoy the freedoms to which we are so accustomed. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to salute Mr. Pyrovolikos for his courageous and devoted actions in the name of freedom.

SLOVAKIA DESERVES NATO MEMBERSHIP

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, I believe in all fairness we should consider Slovakia with the other countries this body has determined to be eligible for NATO participation, both last year and this year.

The Slovak Republic has a democratically elected parliamentary government which has made marked political and economic progress. This country is a valuable participant in the Partnership for Peace and has contributed to peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and eastern Slavonia. The Slovak Republic is a peaceful, law-abiding country that has instituted judicial and free market reforms. When one takes the time to compare Slovakia's record of democratic and humanitarian achievements with those of other former Eastern Bloc countries, it is clear that Slovakia is equally deserving and meritorious of NATO membership.

My colleagues, I took the time to review Amnesty International's 1996 and 1997 reports and the U.S. State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1996 relating to human rights abuses. I examined Slovakia's record and also the record of some of the other nations which have been recommended for NATO membership, including the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania.

Slovakia had no recorded human rights abuses in these reports. The other countries had the following abuses documented.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Freedom of speech and press—so long as you don't talk bad about the Republic or the President.

Police abuses continue to be a problem.

In March 1995, a reporter was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment for calling the president "a traitor and a false prophet" in a newspaper article. (Amnesty)

In April 1995, prison officials beat to death a prisoner at Horni Slavkov prison. (Amnesty)

In June 1994, a Rom citizen was shot to death by police while being interrogated in detention at Horsovsyky Tyn. (State Department)

Both the International Helsinki Federation and Human Rights Watch criticized the Government in 1996 and in 1997 for not curbing discrimination and skinhead violence against Romani citizens.

ROMANIA

The Ministry of Internal Affairs supervises the police—sporadic reports of human rights abuse by the police have continued.

At least 4 prisoners of conscience in 1995 and 1 in 1996. (Amnesty)

Many reports of torture and ill-treatment by police, resulting in 1 death in 1995 and 3 in 1996. (Amnesty)

In January 1996, Ion Axente was beaten by a police officer outside a bar in Piscu. After he fell to the ground, his face was sprayed with a paralyzing gas and he was kicked severely in the head. That night he went into a coma and he later died in June. (Amnesty)

In July 1995, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the Romanian Government to respect human rights and to end abuses by police and security forces.

Robert Radu was reportedly tortured during interrogation in Constanta in January 1995. Allegedly beaten with a club on the arms, legs, and head by a police officer and suffered a fractured shin. The officer reportedly threatened to kill him unless he said that he had injured himself falling down the stairs. (Amnesty)

In April 1995, Viorel Constantin was punched and kicked by police officers and civil guards outside a bar in Tandarei. Constanti suffered multiple bruising and scratches on the chest and the back, a cracked collar-bone and a ruptured ear drum. (Amnesty)

According to Human Rights Watch, Mircea-Muresul Mosor, a Rom from Comani, was shot and killed in May 1996 while in police custody in Valcele.

In July 1996, 3 Romani minors were held for 5 days on suspicion of theft of a watch and were all beaten, leaving severe bruises on the youths' arms and legs. (Both State Department and Amnesty)

Many other cases of deaths in custody or deaths reportedly due to police brutality have never been resolved.

Free speech is limited by prohibiting "defamation of the country."

In 1996, journalists Tana Ardeleanu and Sorin Rosca-Stanescu—convicted of "seditious libel" and sentenced to serve prison terms—printed an article that claimed former President Ion Iliescu had been recruited for KGB service while a student in Moscow. (State Department)

In 1996, Radu Mazare and Constantin Cumpăna—published an article about an illegal contract in the city council—sentenced to 7 month prison terms (although President Iliescu pardoned them). (State Department)

HUNGARY

There continues to be credible reports of police abuses and use of excessive force against suspects.

In May 1996, Hamodi Ahmed was assaulted by police officers outside a Budapest restaurant. The officers pushed him against the wall, handcuffed his arms behind his back and beat him. Later at the 5th District Police Station, Ahmed was repeatedly kicked by 5 or 6 other officers. He later required hospital treatment.

Also in May 1996 and in Budapest, Istvan Nagy was taken to the 8th District Police Station, where he was hit in the face, beaten and kicked. He later required 3 days hospital treatment for a ruptured ear-drum and injuries to the chest and spleen. His crime: he criticized a police officer who had shouted at an old man for crossing a road too slowly. (Amnesty)

In Kunszentmiklos in April 1995, Farkas Geza was punched, kicked and beaten with a rubber truncheon in a police car and in the police station, and a doctor was called in to stop heavy bleeding from his injuries. (Amnesty)

In June 1995, Stefan Vasile Chis was arrested in Budapest and was made to stand against the wall with legs spread apart and was kicked from behind in the genitals 3 times. After falling to the ground he was then repeatedly kicked and beaten. Released the next morning, Chis was admitted to a hospital where he underwent a urological operation and was hospitalized for 10 days. (Amnesty)

In July 1995 Almasi Laszlo died as a result of a severe beating by police officers who were searching his home in Paszto. (Amnesty)

The Hungarian Helsinki Committee reported in 1995 that police misconduct " * * * takes place every day, although the public is only informed by chance, only in conspicuous cases. Guilty police officers are very rarely condemned, and the majority of the officers suspected of such crimes remain on duty." (State Department)

LITHUANIA

"The State Security Department is responsible for internal security and reports to Parliament and the President. The police committed a number of human rights abuses."

Local press reported that police brutality is becoming more common. In many instances, victims reportedly are reluctant to bring charges against police officers for fear of reprisals. (State Department)

Most years the Ministry of Interior refuses to publicize statistics on reported cases of police brutality and in fact has yet to establish an internal affairs group to address this problem.

"Human rights violations continue in the military." The chief resident of one of Vilnius's major hospitals stated that soldiers in the army are constantly being treated for injuries resulting from abuse. In the 1st 6 months of 1996, the same hospital treated 4 soldiers for broken jawbones. (State Department)

Journalists alleges that government officials apply pressure on them not to criticize governmental policies or acts.

POLAND

Restrictions on freedom of speech and press.

Polish Penal Code states that acts that "publicly insult, ridicule, and deride the Polish nation, the Polish Republic, its political system, or its principal organs are punishable by between 6 months and 8 years of imprisonment." (State Department)

The Code imposes a prison term of up to 10 years for a person who commits any of the prohibited acts through print or mass media.

Let me also include excerpts from the State Department's report on Slovakia's human rights record:

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

1996 STATE DEPARTMENT COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

On human rights abuses:

"There were no confirmed reports of political or other extrajudicial killings by government officials."

"There were no reports of politically motivated disappearances."

The Slovak Constitution specifically prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Constitution specifically prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, and the Government observes their prohibition.

On freedom of speech and press:

"The Constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press, and the Government generally respects this right in practice."

The Constitution provides for freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and the Government respects them in practice.

On freedom of religion:

"The constitution provides for freedom of religious belief and faith, and the Government respects this provision in practice."

On democracy:

"Citizens have the constitutional right to change their government through the periodic free election of their national representatives."

"The law prohibits discrimination and provides for the equality of all citizens. Health care, education, retirement benefits, and other social services are provided regardless of race, sex, religion, disability, language, or social status."

"The Constitution provides minorities with the right to develop their own culture, receive information and education in their mother tongue, and participate in decision-making in matters affecting them."

On children's and labor rights:

"The Government demonstrates its commitment to children's rights and welfare through its system of public education and medical care."

"The Constitution provides for the right to form and join unions * * *. The law provides for collective bargaining, which is freely practiced throughout the country * * *. Both the Constitution and the Employment Act prohibit forced or compulsory labor."

While some have been critical of Slovakia's record in this area, a fair comparison with these other countries shows the Slovak Republic has a much better record than any of these candidates.

Finally, my colleagues, I strongly believe it would be in the United States' international interests to grant the Slovak Republic NATO membership. Slovakia is strategically and geographically located in Eastern Europe and occupies an area which may be vital to ensuring security for our fellow NATO allies against future aggression.

It is my hope that we will move in the near future to make the Slovak Republic eligible for NATO participation and permit this country to join the league of nations which stand together in mutual defense and international security.