

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REPORT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS VISIT TO CUBA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to submit to the record the following policy recommendations from the report by the delegation of the United States Association of Former Members of Congress Visit to Cuba. I commend the members of the delegation—Hon. Louis J. Frey, Jr., Hon. James W. Symington, Hon. Michael Barnes, Hon. Jon Christensen, Hon. Dennis DeConcini, Hon. Toby Roth, Mr. Walter Raymond, Jr., and Ambassador Timothy Towell—for their decision to take the trip and study this pressing issue in U.S. foreign policy.

As my colleagues will see, the delegation's policy recommendations amount to a serious reexamination of United States policy toward Cuba. This call for a reexamination of policy is not based on some nostalgic view of the dictator—Castro—who continues his grip on power in Cuba. In fact, by calling for the release of political prisoners and for free and fair elections, the members of the delegation demonstrate that they clearly understand the dictatorial nature of the Castro regime. These recommendations are made because they advance the United States national interest in a peaceful transition in Cuba away from dictatorship to democracy.

Unsurprisingly, the Cuban economy is in very bad condition, Cubans suffer shortages of basic necessities and electricity, and the Castro police state remains intact. Surprisingly, the majority of the dissidents the delegation met with in Cuba stated their opposition to the Helms-Burton law. According to the delegation's report, many dissidents favor an increased flow of people, information, and ideas into Cuba. It is this increased flow of people and information to Cuba, not the continued isolation of that nation's people, that poses the greatest threat to the Castro regime.

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Possible actions envisioned by the delegation to be taken in 1997 include:

(1) A comprehensive bilateral program to reduce drug trafficking. The effort which led to the recent 6-ton cocaine bust should be expanded. Consideration might be given to developing joint counter-narcotics interdiction strategies, including undertaking joint naval patrols in the Bahamas and in Cuban and U.S. waters.

(2) Visit by the International Human Rights Law Group to monitor the judicial process. This idea was raised with Minister of Justice Sotolongo who said he received many visits, but he was not closed to the idea. He said Cuban sovereignty and principles would have to be observed. The delegation urged the Minister to review all convictions, as a satisfactory resolution of cases concerning prisoners of conscience would evoke a positive U.S. response.

(3) Consultation with U.S. nuclear experts before completion and operation of Cuba's first nuclear plant. The delegation urged closer international supervision and were advised that IAEA had paid a visit. The plant is being built with Russian equipment and technology and, with the precedent of the Chernobyl plant disaster in Ukraine, is a cause of international concern. The Cuban officials took pains to remind the delegation that they are as interested as the United States in constructing a safe facility. An offer of a visit by a technical group from the southern United States (possibly Florida) whose citizens would be the most directly affected by any nuclear waste, emissions or malfunction should be considered.

(4) Support for human rights in Cuba. The delegation urges the U.S. Government, in conjunction with the EU, to press for the initiation of a process permitting free and open elections, maintained by a responsible international body. Further, the Cubans should be urged to invite the International Committee of the Red Cross to examine the conditions of Cuban prisons. Such a demarche to the Cubans would probably most effectively be pressed through the appropriate third party from the EU or Central Europe. The concurrent release of a number of political prisoners, estimated by the dissidents at 300-500, would be a dramatic gesture with little downside. In the judgment of the delegation, the political prisoners are considered as political chips and insurance rather than a security threat.

(5) An offer to open property settlement discussions. The Cubans acknowledge that this is still an outstanding issue in the bilateral relationship, but politics aside, they have neither the funds nor the will to make a new offer, unless it is part of a larger negotiation concerning bilateral relations. Nevertheless, an effort should be made to establish a process with a payment schedule even if actual funding is deferred to a future date.

(6) The elimination of barriers to two-way communication. This could range from the current—and significant—establishment of the CNN Bureau to the sale of Western books, magazines and papers and the removal of impediments to Internet connections. In this regard, the delegation was advised by the democratic opposition that TV Marti is never heard in Cuba except by party officials who have satellite dishes. Ordinary Cubans cannot own a satellite dish. Congress should explore how effective TV Marti actually is and if it proves to be as ineffective as the delegation was advised, funding should be stopped for TV Marti. These funds, however, should continue to be allocated for information programming to Cuba. The delegation believes the estimated \$12 million currently allocated for TV Marti could be effectively spent on more informational and academic exchanges and improvements to other communications channels including the provision of a broad Internet capability. In addition, serious program attention should be given to developing and broadcasting, via a variety of communication channels, basic educational materials concerning the development of a political and economic democracy. Paralleling U.S. programming to Central/East Europe and the NIS, the time is

right to provide materials to support a peaceful transition in Cuban.

(7) Lifting of restrictions on air travel from the United States to Cuba. This could be done on a step-by-step basis, such as for holidays, to monitor the new arrangements. However, it should be noted that Americans do get to the island now through a very complicated routing. The FMC delegation, for example, traveled via Costa Rica and Mexico. Others go via Nassau and, in comparatively large numbers, travel onward to Cuba by charter. In other words, travel restrictions are finessed and the difficulties imposed are counterproductive. These restrictions do not appear to have any redeeming value. Lifting them would facilitate and energize a range of contacts between Cubans in Cuba, their relatives in the United States and with the wider American community. Such contacts would provide a source of physical and moral support to the Cuban citizens and could temper the conduct and course of the regime itself.

(8) The removal of barriers to humanitarian assistance. Discussions with Caritas, the international arm of the U.S.-based Catholic Relief Services, were very positive and members of the delegation will be in further communication with it. Other channels may also be explored. The Cuban-American community in the United States has been very helpful in assisting their families, but the current restrictions have reduced this assistance. The delegation sees no reason to create obstacles to such assistance.

(9) The removal of remaining impediments to exchange programs. Significant increases in exchanges should be authorized and, as needed, financed. On the basis of our discussions with faculty and students, stringent visa restrictions—which they said appeared to be getting tighter—have directly hampered two-way student and professor exchanges involving the University of Havana. On the basis of the knowledge of the important role such exchanges have played in the past and continue to play in Central/East Europe and the NIS, the free flow of information can directly benefit the democratization process.

(10) A U.S. Government call for the formal adoption of the "Sullivan-Arcos Principles" by the foreign investment community (EU, U.S. and others) as an integral component of their business arrangements in Cuba. International and domestic trade unions should be urged to enlist their support and intercession with Western governments and the business community.

(11) Enhanced foundation support for academic and scholastic programs. The MacArthur and Kellogg Foundations currently support the Center for American Studies at the University of Havana. Others with equivalent interests should be encouraged to determine if such programs (see Paragraph 5 above) meet their criteria for support.

(12) Development of a Speakers Program. Encourage the extension of speaking invitations from non-governmental Cuban groups to U.S. leaders. The delegation asked if Billy Graham were to visit Cuba could he speak to the Cuban people. The answer was that if invited by a Cuban institution, Billy Graham and other religious leaders could visit and speak in Cuba. By this measure, the openings for speaking engagements for scientific, cultural, farm and business leaders would be considerable.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

(13) Consideration by Members of Congress of fact-finding trips to Cuba. Hill staffers from the House and Senate foreign affairs committees have been invited to visit Cuba and should be encouraged to do so.

The FMC delegation believes that the contacts developed and candid discussions which took place in mid-December in Havana were an important start. The bipartisan quality of the group, its liberal to conservative construction, and its ability to be one step removed from the direct domestic political pressure that a formal Congressional delegation would have suggest that this opening should be pursued. The delegation was asked by the Cubans to plan a sequel trip at an appropriate time in the future and the FMC will consider such a possibility if and when it appears such a mission could serve a constructive purpose.

Representative Louis Frey, Jr., Republican-Florida (1969-1979), Chairman of Delegation; Representative Toby Roth, Republican-Wisconsin (1981-1997); Representative Jon Christensen, Republican-Nebraska (1995-); Representative James Symington, Democrat-Missouri (1969-1979), Vice Chairman of Delegation; Senator Dennis DeConcini, Democrat-Arizona (1977-1995); Representative Michael D. Barnes, Democrat-Maryland (1979-1985).

FOREIGN SUBSIDIARY TAX EQUITY ACT

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 1997

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced the Foreign Subsidiary Tax Equity Act, a bill to discourage domestic corporations from establishing foreign manufacturing subsidiaries in order to avoid Federal taxes. I urge all Members to cosponsor this important legislation.

The bill is long overdue. American manufacturers have abused the good faith of the American workers by developing manufacturing processes in this country then moving production facilities overseas while handing out pink slips to workers here in America. Despite the fact that the American worker is the most productive and talented laborer in the world, many U.S. manufacturers, lured by cheap labor costs and tax holidays, have closed down plants and moved operations to countries like Mexico, Taiwan, and South Korea. Using the complex Tax Code to their advantage, some U.S. corporations pay next to nothing in Federal taxes. How can we as a Congress justify these policies?

Under my bill, foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies located in countries that provide tax holidays and other tax breaks and ship a significant portion of their products into the United States, would be taxed as if that subsidiary were located in the United States. My bill is designed to discourage tax-motivated foreign investment while protecting the jobs of your constituents.

I have always argued that many of America's social problems—crime, welfare abuse, health care costs, unemployment, and a breakdown in family values—lie in our trade and taxation policies. If we forced rogue multinationals to pay their fair share to the U.S. Treasury, we would be able to better tackle these problems.

I urge all Members to cosponsor this bill.

A LABOR OF LOVE

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 1997

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, please permit me to share with my colleagues the text of a very touching letter U.S. Air Force Maj. William F. Smith wrote to a truly extraordinary man, Mr. Zachary Fisher.

Mr. Fisher is well-known to the men and women of our Nation's Armed Forces. With his wife, he established the Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Armed Services Foundation to provide scholarships for service men and women and their families. To date, more than 700 scholarships have been awarded. The Fishers also provide direct financial assistance to families of military personnel killed in the line of duty.

In 1990, Zachary and Elizabeth undertook an important and unique project called Fisher House, to provide shelter near hospitals at major American military bases. The houses provide a home away from home for the families of military personnel recovering from illness at the adjacent hospitals. To date, 25 Fisher Houses have been constructed, with plans for several more.

Mr. Fisher is also the founder of the Intrepid Sea Air Space Museum, the world's largest maritime museum, located on New York's Hudson River.

The Fishers latest philanthropic effort is directed toward finding a cure for Alzheimer's disease, which affects more than 4 million Americans. The Fishers have established the Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research, which is the largest and best equipped laboratory devoted wholly to Alzheimer's research. Working in union with David Rockefeller and Rockefeller University, the Fishers have an ambitious goal, to create a model center for patient care and research.

Major Smith, who is stationed at Andrews Air Force Base, MD, penned this letter to Zachary following the dedication of a Fisher House on base. I commend it to my colleagues:

DEAR MR. FISHER: I am writing to thank you for the special gift you gave us here at Andrews Air Force Base on September 26, 1994. No, I'm not talking about the Fisher House although I do appreciate you building it and am thankful for all the good it will do for our community. I'm talking about the gift of love, and more specifically the gift you gave us of how to love. As I stood in the back and listened to the speeches honoring you I became mesmerized with the way you doted over your wife. Prior to your arrival I wondered what you would look like and how you would act. I guess I wondered about your character since a lot of men with wealth and power have fairly predictable characters. So as I stood in the midst of affluence and opulence I began to assess your character and I was impressed and inspired. The way you smiled at her and held her hand and took the time to explain things to her touched me very deeply. It occurred to me that I may be standing in a holy place, a place where true, unconditional love is alive in a special man. At the end of the ceremony the officer standing next to me said "that was pretty impressive wasn't it?" I said "I don't know what impressed you, but I think we just witnessed

the finest example of how we should love our wives." He looked at me a moment contemplating my comment and said, "Yes, I think you're right."

When I got home I told my wife about what I saw. When I began to describe how you started your speech saying, "Honey I think I should give you a kiss to remind us of how much we love each other," I began to cry. Then I kissed my wife and told her I found someone who loves his wife as much as I love mine. And that night as she lay asleep in bed I put my arms around her and held her and told her I love her and I kept holding her and she didn't know it. I think that is a sacred act, to love someone when they may not know it.

You are the luckiest man in the world, you have love in your heart. And so, even though I don't have the wealth you have, I am just as lucky as you, and I thank you for reminding me how lucky I am. Thank you.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM D. SMITH,
Major, USAF.

WILMINGTON CELEBRATES ITS 175TH BIRTHDAY

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, on March 22, the Essex County Town of Wilmington will celebrate its 175th Birthday.

As far as I'm concerned, Mr. Speaker, the nicest thing to happen to me in the 1990's is the addition of most of Essex County to the district I have the pleasure of representing. The town of Wilmington is typical of the region, one of hardy winters and friendly people. It is in such towns that the values and virtues that made America great have been developed to their fullest.

These values and virtues include self-reliance and a spirit of volunteerism, which is nothing more than an instinctive response to a neighbor in need.

America is not really defined by her soaring skyscrapers and sprawling shopping malls. She is defined by her small towns, where everyone knows each other like a large, extended family. It is actually possible to walk the streets at night in such towns.

Everything is on a smaller scale in such towns, everything that is, except the generosity and love of one's fellow man. Church steeples invariably pierce the horizons of such towns, reflecting the deep and abiding religious faith without which these values and virtues could not survive.

I invite Members to visit the area some day, perhaps on your way to enjoy the local seasonal sports. You will enjoy as well as open friendliness and picturesque scenery, and finally discover why I make it a point to go home every weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all Members to join me in wishing the town of Wilmington a happy 175th birthday, and in congratulating Supervisor Roy C. Holzer, other town officials, and the entire populace for bringing the town into the 21st century without changing what is great about small-town American life.