

"From my first day at NTEU, my goal has been to move us from helplessness and despair to dignity and respect; from being ignored to being recognized and included; and from acting alone to experiencing our collective power of collective action."

Mr. Speaker, Bob Tobias has achieved those goals and NTEU members and the American people are better off today because of his efforts. We wish him well, and we wish him all the best in the future, and we thank him for his service.

Mr. Speaker, I often observed to groups of employees to whom I spoke that there was no better labor leader in America than Bob Tobias. He cared about his people, he worked tirelessly on their behalf, he advocated in their best interest and, like most successful leaders, accomplished much for all of those he represented. But as I said earlier in my statement, not only did he accomplish great things for them, but he made the workforce of the American people, the Federal employees, a better, more effective, more efficient, more disciplined, more focused workforce. And for that, we in America owe him a great debt of gratitude. America and its government are a better place for the service of Robert Tobias.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the work Bob Tobias has done for federal employees. Bob has been the president of the National Treasury Employees Union since 1983 and has been with this organization for the last 31 years. No doubt about it—Bob Tobias has positively affected the character of the NTEU.

As chairman of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, I have had the honor and privilege of working closely with Bob on many issues. He has always been honest, compassionate, and unrelenting in fighting for what he believed to be the right course of action. I will always look back favorably on the times I have spent working with Mr. Tobias.

It is my understanding that Bob will be 56 years old in August, which is when his fourth term will expire. I wish him the best in his next endeavor. I'm told that he plans to write or teach, and even though he is an alumnus from the University of Michigan, and not from another more formidable "Big 10" school—Northwestern University from which I graduated—I am pleased to recognize Mr. Robert M. Tobias for his work with the NTEU.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Virginia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KOLBE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HILLIARD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF TURKEY'S INVASION OF CYPRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as I have done every year, I rise again to declare my deep concern and utter indignation regarding the 25-year occupation of the island of Cyprus by Turkish troops.

It was in July 1974, that Turkish forces, consisting of 6,000 troops and forty tanks, landed on Cyprus' northern coast and captured a good part of the island nation. This military operation was appropriately code-named "Attila."

A few days later, the three guarantor powers, namely, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom, were negotiating to determine the fate of the island. To maximize its illegal territorial gains, Turkey used this opportunity to

launch the second phase of its pre-planned assault, code-named "Attila II."

Since then, Turkey has occupied 37% of the island in defiance of any code of civilized behavior in the community of nations.

The consequences of that brutal action were devastating. More than 5,000 people were killed during the invasion. Even today, the fate of 1,614 Cypriots and 4 U.S. citizens, missing since the invasion, remains a mystery.

More than 200,000 Greek Cypriots—men, women and children—were forcibly expelled by the invading Turkish army in a mass exodus reminiscent of Bosnia and Kosovo. These "refugees" settled in the southern part of the island. Of course, they have never been compensated by Turkey for their confiscated lands and houses, or for their ruined businesses.

Ever since this atrocious act, Turkey has embarked on a methodical effort to first entrench and fortify its military presence on the island, and second, to alter the demographic characteristics and ethnic composition of its population.

To achieve the former goal, Turkey beefed up its occupation force to more than 40,000. In addition, a large amphibious assault force is permanently stationed at the Turkish mainland base closest to Cyprus.

To accomplish the latter goal, scores of Turkish people from Anatolia were transplanted into the occupied lands to take possession of the properties and businesses of the expelled refugees. These settlers, conservatively estimated at 80,000, and the Turkish occupation force currently outnumber the Turkish-Cypriot population who legitimately inhabited northern Cyprus before the invasion.

The illegal nature of this aggressive act, and the brutality with which it was conducted, aroused the indignation of the international community. In the ensuing years, the arbitrary declaration of the occupied northern Cyprus as an independent "republic" failed to expunge its illegal nature. A quarter of a century later, the occupied Northern Cyprus has remained a pariah "entity," not recognized by any nation in the world, except Turkey.

Over the years, repeated attempts have been made by individual governments and by the United Nations to find a solution to the problem of Cyprus. All of them failed because of the intransigence of Turkey. As a result, the relations between Greece and Turkey have been adversely affected to the point that direct military confrontations between them have been narrowly averted on at least two occasions. Given their geographic location and the fact that both countries are member states of NATO, such a conflict would seriously impact the stability of the eastern Mediterranean region.

Demilitarization would alleviate the security concerns of all parties and substantially enhance the prospects for a peaceful resolution of the problem. Unfortunately, Cyprus' efforts to resolve the situation have been rebuffed by Turkey and the self-proclaimed leader of the illegitimate Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mr. Denktash.

The intransigence of the Turkish side is clearly reflected in the two pre-conditions set by Mr. Denktash for a solution of the Cyprus problem. Specifically, he demanded that this illegal "government" in the occupied part of northern Cyprus be formally recognized. He also said Cyprus must withdraw its application to join the European Union, threatening that

"there will be war if Cyprus joined the European Union".

Both demands are obviously unacceptable to the Congress, the United States Government, the Government of Greece, the legitimate Government of Cyprus, and to any neutral member of the international community.

Denktash's threats have been echoed by the Government of Turkey which has threatened to annex the occupied part of the island if Cyprus joins the European Union. In fact, Turkey has already signed a number of "agreements" with the illegal Turkish regime that lay the groundwork for the eventual annexation of the occupied area.

What Mr. Denktash and Turkey fail to understand is that acceptance to membership in the European Union must be earned on the basis of performance and achievement.

Over the years, it has become obvious that the intransigence of Turkey on a just settlement of the Cyprus problem represents a strategy aimed at forcing Turkey's acceptance to membership in the European Union. Such membership has so far been denied for several reasons. First, is the fact that Turkey has not yet achieved the level of economic prowess deemed necessary for membership in the European Union. Second, the political system and the philosophy and practices of its governments over the past several decades do not conform with the democratic principles of the western world. Third, Turkey's record on respect of human rights and political freedom leaves a lot to be desired.

Lastly, Turkey continues to reject proposals for a just and permanent solution of the problem of Cyprus, despite the European Parliament's position that membership is contingent upon resolution of the Cyprus problem.

The recent dispute over Cyprus' plan to purchase defensive anti-aircraft missiles to protect itself also demonstrates the bellicose posture of Turkey as opposed to the conciliatory stance of the Government of Cyprus. This incident clearly illustrates the need for a concerted effort to solve the problem of the divided Cyprus.

Turkey objected to the planned deployment of the defensive missiles, falsely claiming that they represent a threat to its security. It also made clear its intention to use force to block this deployment.

In response to these threats, the Government of Cyprus offered to cancel deployment if Turkey would resume serious and constructive reconciliation talks. Yet, the Turkish side remained intransigent in its refusal to renew negotiations and continued to threaten Cyprus with military action.

In a remarkable gesture of good will, the Government of Cyprus eventually and unilaterally canceled the deployment of the missiles, forgoing its legitimate right to self-defense against Turkish aggression. It is regrettable that this conciliatory decision failed to bring the Turkish side to the negotiations table.

Prolonging this explosive state of affairs in eastern Mediterranean is fraught with risks for all parties involved, including the United States. An armed conflict between Greece and Turkey over the Cyprus dispute remains a dire possibility. Such a conflict would have devastating consequences for peace and stability in that sensitive and highly volatile region.

It is the interests of the United States, the countries involved in the dispute, as well as other neighboring countries to have this matter settled in a spirit of mutual respect.

I, along with Representatives MALONEY and KELLY, today introduced a bill that urges Turkey's compliance with all relevant United Nations resolutions relating to Cyprus. This bill also requests our administration to use its influence to persuade Turkey to accept the United Nation's Secretary General's invitation for negotiations without preconditions in the fall of 1999.

To this end, I call upon the administration to focus its attention on the problem at hand and to apply the necessary diplomatic pressure on Turkey and Mr. Dektash in order to promote a peaceful and negotiated resolution of the dispute. If nothing else, history has taught us that neglecting a smoldering problem that has the potential of a major crisis, only makes its consequences more devastating. In the threshold of the third millennium, the United States can hardly afford to turn a blind eye to the Cyprus problem.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mrs. MALONEY, who are the co-chairs of our congressional caucus on Hellenic issues, by organizing this special order on Cyprus and for their leadership on this issue.

I rise today to acknowledge the 25th anniversary of Turkey's invasion and occupation of Cyprus. As a result, an estimated 35,000 heavily armed Turkish troops continue to occupy 37% of the island.

Nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, who fell victim to a policy of ethnic cleansing, were forcibly evicted from their homes and became refugees in their own country. Tragically, a quarter of a century later they are still refugees as they continue to be prevented by the Turkish occupation army from returning to their ancestral homes.

To this day, over 1,600 Greek Cypriots—civilians, soldiers, women and children—including four Americans of Cypriot descent, have been missing since the Turkish invasion of 1974, and their fate is still unaccounted for. The Turkish Government refuses to provide any information of their status.

In June, the leaders of the seven most industrialized countries and Russia, the G-8, urged the U.N. Secretary General to invite the leaders of the two sides to comprehensive negotiations without preconditions in the autumn of 1999. As the G-8 leaders stated recently in Cologne, "The Cyprus problem has gone unresolved for too long. Resolution of this problem would not only benefit all the people of Cyprus, but would also have a positive impact on peace and stability in the region."

Several rounds of negotiations have taken place which have failed, principally because of a lack of political will on the Turkish side and its refusal to abide by international law and to comply with Security Council resolutions which provide the framework for a solution. Moreover, Turkey has upgraded its military presence on the island, it has made repeated threats against the Republic of Cyprus for further military action and has spared no effort to block any progress toward a just and viable solution.

If a solution is ever to be achieved, it is essential that the Turkish side respond positively to the call of the international community for a resumption of the negotiations without preconditions and within the agreed parameters.

Sadly, Turkey continues to reject numerous gestures of goodwill by the Cyprus Government to facilitate the achievement of a solu-

tion. The Cyprus Government has canceled an order for the importation and deployment of a Russian defense air-to-missile system on Cyprus, and has put forward a comprehensive proposal for the complete demilitarization of the island, which has also been rejected by the Turkish side.

The current status quo is unacceptable. It is imperative to take all necessary steps to actively support all efforts to end the forcible division of the island and its people and reunify Cyprus through a just and lasting solution. I urge Turkey to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations and to work constructively for a solution to the Cyprus problem. Twenty-five years of occupation are enough.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mark the 25th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus.

As Greek-Cypriots around the world mark a tragic day in their nation's history, hundreds of people joined hands in a circle of hope around the U.S. Capitol to ask for Congress' help in making Cyprus whole again.

All the commemorations held today marking the 25th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus highlight one of the great and continuing tragedies of the 20th century. With 37% of Cyprus currently occupied by Turkish forces, with 1,618 Greek-Cypriots still unaccounted for from the conflict, and with over 200,000 Cypriots displaced from their homes since 1974, it is long past time for the United States to lead the international community in addressing this great injustice.

We, in this body, have passed resolution after resolution urging Turkey to withdraw its forces from Cyprus, urging Turkish-Cypriot leaders to renounce "declarations of independence" that they have issued in defiance of international law. And in the United Nations, the Security Council has consistently and forcefully urged Turkey to end its military occupation of over a third of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Cyprus. These efforts, coupled with vigorous diplomatic initiatives sponsored by the United States and the European Community, remain central to securing a final settlement that will end the artificial division of Cyprus.

It is my firm belief that today and every day, Congress has solemn obligation to support a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem. A solution which must follow the precepts laid down in United Nations Security Council 1250, which was adopted on June 29, 1999 and which in part reads, "... a Cyprus settlement must be based on a State of Cyprus with a single sovereignty." In short, the House of Representatives should serve as a guiding force in the pursuit of a reunified Cyprus, an island nation where all citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying that I am of the belief that the solution to the Cyprus problem resides in the will of the United States and the international community to renounce the violence that divided Cyprus a quarter century ago and to affirm that the reunification of Cyprus is a priority. The resolutions concerning Cyprus that we in this body consider and pass, those passed by the EU and other distinguished international organizations, are all important. They are important because they uniformly call on Turkey to abide by international law by withdrawing its troops from Cyprus and in so doing, serving to advance a swift and certain resolution to the Cyprus problem. I support the speedy resolution

of the Cyprus problem and look forward to a day when the unification, not the division, of Cyprus is celebrated in this body and around the world.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, twenty-five years is too long. It is too long to be kept from your home. It is too long to be separated from family. It is too long to have children have to make the decision to go to school and never see their family again. Twenty-five years is too long.

It is too long for Cyprus' rich 9,000 year-old cultural and religious heritage in the occupied part to be destroyed or plundered. It is too long to watch helplessly the continual stream of atrocities and human-rights abuses. It is too long for the world to watch in silence and do nothing. Twenty-five years is too long.

It is time to correct the injustice that has been occurring on Cyprus. It is time to return displaced Cypriots to their homes. It is time to reunite families. It is time to allow children to go to school. It is time to restore the rich cultural and religious heritage of Cyprus.

After 25 years, it is time for the United States to take a vocal role in speaking out against the division of Cyprus and the horrible atrocities that have happened there. That is why the Gentleman from Florida and I introduced a resolution today that urges compliance by Turkey with United Nations Resolutions on Cyprus.

In the last year, the U.N. Security Council has passed four resolutions regarding the invasion of Cyprus. It is time that a Cyprus settlement is reached: Based on a single sovereignty and a single citizenship with its independence and territorial integrity safeguarded and compromised of two politically equal communities—a bicomunal and bizonal federation.

The Republic of Cyprus has agreed to these conditions. It is time that Turkey come to the bargaining table without unacceptable preconditions and the idea of a confederation of two sovereign states. We have challenging work to do. But, with the help of everyone here, hopefully soon we will be celebrating the reunification of Cyprus instead of commemorating the invasion.

Already there are 34 cosponsors of the bill. The momentum in Congress is growing. Take, for instance, the Hellenic Caucus. There are 75 members of the Hellenic Caucus this year which is up from 69 last Congress.

The momentum is here in Congress and we must continue that momentum and use our influence with Turkey to push them to bring real goals to the table instead of unviable preconditions.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 25th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, and I rise with my colleagues to sadly commemorate this tragic event. I have always supported efforts, including legislation, calling for the end of the tragic separation of the island of Cyprus. I am proud to be a cosponsor of important legislation calling for a just and peaceful resolution to the current situation on Cyprus (H. Con. Res. 81), and have also called for an immediate end to the militarization of Cyprus. I have also written to President Clinton numerous times to point out instances of Turkish aggression on the island. Lastly, I have also supported the Republic of Cyprus's application for entry into the European Union.

It goes without saying that the situation on Cyprus is of great importance to the United

States and to me. The appointment of Ambassador Richard Beady as special emissary for Cyprus demonstrates this importance to the Clinton Administration. I believe that after 25 years of stagnation, the situation on Cyprus demands a fair and comprehensive solution. The UN Security Council has condemned the declaration of independence by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and has called for the withdrawal of all Turkish troops. The Security Council also called on all states not to recognize the purported state of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus."

In fact, no country in the world recognizes the so-called "TRNC" except for Turkey. UN resolutions since 1974 have called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Cyprus, the return of all refugees to their homes in safety, and respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. Several rounds of negotiation have taken place, all of which have failed because of a lack of political will on the Turkish side and its refusal to abide by international law and to comply with Security Council resolutions.

Turkey has also continued to upgrade its military presence on Cyprus despite the fact that the Republic of Cyprus decided recently not to deploy Russian S-300 missiles on Cyprus. The TRNC has further blocked progress by setting two preconditions for the resumption of peace talks by requiring the recognition of the "TRNC", and the withdrawal of Cyprus' application for membership in the European Union. Neither of these are acceptable to the Republic of Cyprus, and only serve to continue to block any kind of possible resolution.

I therefore call on this Administration, in this 25th year, to take a hard stand on Cyprus, to help enable the people of Cyprus to live under a government chosen by their people. The United States must take the lead in finding a solution to Cyprus, and demonstrate to the world that people of different ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs can successfully coexist. The people yearn for it and the country needs it.

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, it has been twenty-five years since Turkish Troops invaded Cyprus, tearing that nation in two. And for those twenty-five years, the world community has repeatedly denounced the illegal Turkish invasion. Through various United Nations' resolutions, joint communiques, and other diplomatic statements, nations around the globe have sent the clear, unequivocal message that the Turkish occupation of Cyprus is patently illegal and must end.

Nonetheless, Turkey continues to arrogantly ignore this unified message. Turkey chooses instead to complain that the world community is biased against it, but nothing could be further from the truth. The world community is simply asking that Turkey abide by the same obligations that all other peace-loving states accept. If Turkey expects to enjoy the privileges of a responsible member of the world community, it must also accept the responsibilities that come with this status.

The time has come, Mr. Speaker, for the United States to say enough is enough. We can no longer continue to ignore the fact that Turkey flaunts the very values which America has fought wars to protect: namely democracy, human rights, and the sanctity of national borders. I urge the Administration to use all possible leverage to bring Turkey, like the

rest of our NATO allies, into the fold of responsible, peaceful, democratic nations. This can only happen by bringing Turkey's occupation of Cyprus to an end.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for Florida (Mr. BLIRAKIS) and the gentlelady from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for organizing this special order.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to once again add my voice to that of many others demanding the reunification of Cyprus. Twenty-five years is twenty-five years too long for our voices to go unheard.

Defense Secretary Cohen said last week that he welcomes both sides of this conflict coming to the table to negotiate a settlement. What he did not say is that the Greek Cypriots have always been at the table. It is the Turkish Cypriots who have refused to negotiate until northern Cyprus is recognized as a sovereign nation. No country, except Turkey, has ever recognized northern Cyprus and no country should or ever will.

Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has defined himself, his side and Turkish policy by consistently obstructing reunification. In doing so, he consigns Turkish Cypriots to third class status—consigns the Turkish Cypriots to a standard of living far below those of the Republic of Cyprus, a status equal to that of most developing nations.

Approximately 35,000 Turkish troops have occupied northern Cyprus for twenty-five years. During that time, Turkey's government has shown what it is. It is not a democracy. It is a military dictatorship, in which the generals allow as much democracy as they want.

The Clinton Administration has clearly shown that its policy is one of not leaning on Turkey. It supports Turkey's application to the European Union even as Turkey continues to illegally occupy Cyprus, continues to persecute its Turkish population, continues to spurn normal relations with Armenia and continues to defy our policy of working with the Iraqi opposition to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

The time has come for the U.S. to tell Turkey to sit down and negotiate on Cyprus. It is time for the Congress to send a message to the generals, to Rauf Denktash, and to President Clinton—Twenty-five years is twenty-five years too long.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, most Americans and, indeed, most of the world, are remembering the historic landing on the moon by our brave astronauts 30 years ago today. This event will be remembered as one of the greatest events of this century and this millennium not only for the sheer technological leap that made it possible but also for the finest qualities of mankind that the journey to the moon exemplified. When one thinks of July 20th, one wants to believe in the best for mankind.

Sadly, July 20th is also the anniversary of an occasion far less noble and inspiring. Twenty-five years ago, Turkey invaded Cyprus took control of almost 40 percent of the island. In the wake of Turkey's attack, 1,619 people—including five Americans—disappeared. Their fate remains unknown.

Today, Turkish troops continue to occupy the northern portion of Cyprus, maintaining thousands of troops there in an affront to diplomacy and international law. Barbed-wire cuts across the Island separating thousands of Greek Cypriots from the towns and communities where their families had lived for generations.

On a day when we remember the wonder and bravery of the moon landing, we must not forget the shame and cowardice of the illegal occupation of northern Cyprus. I join my colleagues here today in the hope that we will soon be able to remember the best of this century without a reminder of the worst.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I would like first to thank my colleague from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis, for this special order to commemorate and acknowledge the 25th anniversary of the Turkish occupation of the island of Cyprus.

In the past decades we have witnessed many human rights violations such as in Kosovo and in East Timor. This has to change and this commemoration is a step towards change in Cyprus. The United States needs to show our strong support for a unified Cyprus. Until we bring about change, Cyprus and its people will continue to live divided into an island that has a North that is occupied by Turkish troops and an independent South.

There is no reason why the Cypriots should become refugees in their own country or denied access back to their homes. July 20, 1974, was a dreadful day for the Cypriots. Many, until this day, do not know what happened to their families on that day.

We have seen many changes around the world in the past years: The fall of the Berlin Wall, the beginning of peace in the Middle East, and the signing of a peace agreement in Northern Ireland. It is now time that Cyprus becomes part of the list so that freedom can prevail.

I urge my fellow colleagues join in support for a unified Cyprus so that the necessary changes will occur.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, it has been 25 years since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. In 1974, Turkish troops evicted 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes, making them refugees in their own country. And yet, the elapsing of a quarter century has not darkened the memory of the invasion. Turkey's continued violation of the Greek Cypriots' human rights, and the need for the reversal of Turkey's actions and a return to peace remains as strong today as it did in 1974.

For 25 years, Turkey has fought to increase its grip on Cyprus. In violation of international law, Turkey has moved more than 80,000 settlers into the ancestral homes of the Greek Cypriots. A campaign of harassment and the destruction of cultural sites has been used to intimidate the Greek Cypriots.

Despite these abuses, the people of Cyprus struggle to seek a way for peace to grow. The Cypriot Government called for the demilitarization of Cyprus, even with the threat of the Turkish army occupying 37% of the island's territory. Cyprus sought to advance and develop by applying for membership to the European Union. Even as it is constantly confronted with uncertainty and instability, the Cypriot Government acts in the best interest of its people.

The threat of force and noncompliance are used by Turkey to delay a peaceful resolution, even when the world community is calling for peace.

This spring the members of the G-8 and the UN Security Council again called for negotiations for peace in Cyprus. To the international community, the bitterness over the invasion of 1974 remains as strong today as it did 25 years ago. For the Greek Cypriots, who strug-

gle to move forward underneath the burden of human rights violations and refugee status, the desire for peace is unending. In the name of democracy and in the defense of human rights, we must continue to support the people of Cyprus in their efforts to bring peace and stability back to their country.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis, who has over the years assured us that this House does not fail to observe the events of July 1974 whose tragic consequences still persist today a quarter of a century later.

The occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish troops, which began some twenty-five years ago, has turned into one of the most vexing problems of the international community. It has confounded the efforts of five U.S. Presidents, four United Nations Secretaries General, and many of the world's top diplomats, including our own. Even the strong efforts last year of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and Ambassador Tom Miller ran into a brick wall as Mr. Denktash, backed by the Turkish government, came up with new conditions before they would agree to resume negotiations with President Clerides. These conditions, as the Turkish side well understood, were non-starters—the Turks insisted that northern Cyprus be regarded as a sovereign entity, and the government of Cyprus halt negotiations on joining the EU.

Although we are all disappointed that the hard-fought efforts of our envoys did not produce a breakthrough, we call upon our government and the international community not to abandon efforts to break the impasse. I agree with their assessment that the impasse is a result of the Turkish position, and that the key to breaking the current stalemate lies in Ankara. The Secretary General's invitation to the leaders of the two sides to begin talks on all the issues, without preconditions needs to be reinforced by our and other interested governments.

The situation in Turkey is exceedingly complex: The recent elections have produced a coalition government whose partners are odd bedfellows—Center Left, Center Right with a junior member that has never been in government before but has espoused a radical and violent form of ultra-nationalism in the past. It is not likely that such a government will be strong enough to make the necessary compromises, and indeed we have already heard statements from Prime Minister Ecevit that he believes that the Cyprus problem no longer exists, that the status quo is the solution. We don't know how to put the appropriate pressure on Turkey without giving the negative influences within Turkish society grounds to say that we have turned our backs on Turkey and are not truly interested in its integration into Europe and the West.

The comments that the present situation on Cyprus—division of the island and 35,000 Turkish troops in occupation of one third—is the solution are completely unacceptable for the United States and the international community. It should also be unacceptable to Turkey because if partition is good for Cyprus, then why not for northern Iraq, or even the Kurdish areas of Turkey itself? Obviously the officials who make these ill-advised statements have not thought through the implications of partitioning Cyprus.

When I came to the Congress some twenty-seven years ago, Cyprus was one of the first

international crisis that I became involved with as a member of our Foreign Affairs Committee, as it was then called. It is one of the most frustrating facts that I face as I look back on my time in the House, that now after a quarter of a century, during which we have seen the collapse of communism in Europe, greater peace in the Middle East, a possible settlement in Northern Ireland, and conflicts resolved in the Balkan tinderbox, but no movement on Cyprus!

Although we have hit a serious obstacle to progress, The United States has no choice but to continue our efforts to get serious negotiations between the parties on Cyprus resumed. I thank the gentleman for allowing me to participate in this Special Order.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the invasion and forcible division of Cyprus. One quarter century after Turkish troops occupied Cyprus, beginning an unfortunate pattern of human rights violations, violence, and forcible evictions, thousands of Greek Cypriots are still unable to return to their ancestral homes, hundreds more are missing, and precious cultural and religious sites have been irreparably damaged.

I believe, however, that renewed interest in the plight of occupied Cyprus will lead to positive diplomatic developments in the near future. Just last month, the leaders of the G-8 urged the U.N. Secretary General to invite the two sides to participate in comprehensive negotiations. The U.N. Security Council followed suit, adopting one resolution echoing this sentiment and another reiterating its commitment to a final settlement which restores the territorial integrity and independence of Cyprus.

It is my hope that in upcoming meetings, President Clerides of the Republic of Cyprus and Mr. Denktash of the Turkish Cypriots will honor both the spirit and letter of these resolutions, negotiating in good faith to reach a solution which will restore peace, freedom, and security to Cyprus.

I urge all of my colleagues to continue their drive for a resolution to the problems plaguing Cyprus these 25 years. We are faced with an historic opportunity to reinforce the support for a settlement shown by the international community, and to bolster our allies in Greece and Turkey in their quest for peace. We must continue to keep the peace process in Cyprus at the forefront of our foreign affairs agenda if we are to put an end to a quarter century of terrible injustice for the people of Cyprus.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I join my friend, the distinguished gentleman from Florida, and my colleagues in commemorating the 25th anniversary of Turkey's military invasion and continued illegal occupation of northern Cyprus.

On July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded northern Cyprus, forcing more than 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes. Turkey's bloody invasion forced one-third of the population of the island to live as refugees. A quarter century has since passed and Turkish troops still occupy nearly 40 percent of the island in defiance of a myriad of U.N. resolutions.

Mr. Speaker, the 25th anniversary of Turkey's military occupation of northern Cyprus weighs heavily on the conscience of all civilized peoples of the world who share in the

fundamental principle that military aggression must not prevail.

Mr. Speaker, the status quo must be broken. The paralysis in U.N. sponsored negotiations must be broken. And the intercommunal strife that has torn Cypriots apart must be settled peacefully. But none of these worthy objectives can occur as long as Turkey continues to violate international law and flout U.N. resolutions condemning its oppressive occupation of 40 percent of Cypriot territory.

It is indeed a sad testament to Turkey's intransigence that a quarter of a century after its invasion of northern Cyprus, it still maintains tens of thousands of troops on the island. Turkey must realize that its military occupation of northern Cyprus stands as an obstacle to a just and permanent solution of the Cypriot problem.

Mr. Speaker, any permanent solution to the Cypriot impasse must take into consideration the anxieties and legitimate concerns of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. However, the first step toward reconciliation and peaceful reunification must be the end of Turkey's illegal occupation of northern Cyprus.

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the invasion of Cyprus by Turkish military forces.

Despite overwhelming condemnation from the international community, Turkish forces have occupied northern Cyprus for the last 25 years. On July 20, 1974, Rauf Denktash, supported by over thirty thousand Turkish troops, took control of 37 percent of the island and proclaimed it to be the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. During the invasion, Turkish troops murdered over 5,000 Greek Cypriots, evicted 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their ancestral homes and captured five Americans and 1,614 Greek Cypriots, all of whom, with just one exception, are still missing.

The United Nations has always recognized the Greek Cypriot government as the legitimate government of the island, while Turkey remains the only country that recognizes Mr. Denktash's government and supports it with a strong military scattered throughout the northern third of Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot government has repeatedly refused to negotiate a peaceful solution to the conflict.

In the past years, the international community has attempted to encourage Turkey to alter its policy on the Cyprus conflict. Most recently, the United Nations Security Council passed resolutions in December of 1998, calling for a staged process aimed at limiting and then substantially reducing the level of all troops and armaments on Cyprus. Furthermore, the United Nations has advised that for there ever to be lasting peace on the island, a Cyprus settlement must be based on a Cyprus with a single sovereignty, a single international personality, and a single citizenship.

Mr. Denktash, however, has rejected these UN resolutions on grounds that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus should be recognized by the international community as a legal and sovereign state. Denktash has also refused to meet with the internationally recognized president of Cyprus, Glafcos Clerides, until his Turkish Cypriot state is recognized as independent.

It is my belief that the international community must persuade the Turkish government—Rauf Denktash—to resume negotiations and to work diligently toward a peaceful solution to this 25 year old conflict. The United States

must make it clear that it is willing to use foreign aid, sanctions, and its power as a member of several international organizations to elicit a resolution. Mr. Speaker, we must acknowledge our position as a world leader and remain firmly committed to promoting peace and reconciliation on the island of Cyprus.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this year marks 25 years of continued injustice, 25 years of human rights violations, the displacement of people from their homes, of ethnic cleansing. This year marks the 25th year of Turkey's illegal invasion of northern Cyprus, the division of an island, a community, a culture, and a religion more than 9,000 years old.

In the last 25 years, about 40,000 Turkish troops have been stationed in Cyprus; 85,000 Turkish colonists have been moved to northern Cyprus, where they live in the houses of the more than 200,000 Cypriots forced out of their homes. We must all ask ourselves why such an unjust situation has been allowed to persist for a quarter of a century.

After 25 years, some might be tempted to throw in the towel, to become resigned to the Turkish occupation. After 25 years, some might feel that the international community is helpless to act in the face of such aggression and injustice. But they would be wrong. The United States and its international partners must not adopt such an attitude. For the cause of a united and free Cyprus is not lost. And it is important, now more than ever, for all of us to continue and strengthen our support for a peace agreement in Cyprus. Members of this House must continue to pressure the Administration to urge the Turkish government to reach a peace agreement. To date, Turkey has rejected every attempt to move forward on a peace settlement.

There is reason, however, to hope that peace can be achieved. Both Turkey and Cyprus have applied for admission to the European Union. Turkey is bitter that their application has been rejected, while Cyprus is close to being accepted into the EU.

It would serve Turkey well to reflect on how its own actions work against its acceptance. For example, the Turkish Cypriot community was invited by the government of Cyprus to participate in the Cyprus-EU negotiations; they declined the invitation. Turkey has made no effort to come to an agreement, and has recently made the situation more difficult to resolve. Turkey has established a puppet government on Cyprus, that is not recognized by any other nation except Turkey. Turkey has increased its military presence on Cyprus, retains a large armor advantage over the Cypriots, and threatened military action. Cyprus, on the other hand, does not even have a Navy, Army or Air Force, and only maintains a small National Guard.

The United States and the international community must take greater action. A moment of opportunity exists with the desire of Cyprus and Turkey to enter the European Union. We must live up to the promises we have made to the people of Cyprus. The acceptance of Cyprus into the European Union will benefit all the communities of Cyprus. We should strive to see a united Cyprus join the EU and have that action serve as a catalyst for regional economic, political and humanitarian advancement. A step in that direction is continuing the \$15 million in U.S. assistance for bi-communal projects and scholarships in Cyprus.

I urge my colleagues to join those of us who are members of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues to work more forcefully than ever to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Cyprus, to help return to their homes the some 200,000 Greek-Cypriots who were evicted from their land, to demilitarize the Turkish forces in northern Cyprus, and to find out the fate of the 1,614 Greek-Cypriots and the 5 American citizens who have been "missing" since the Turkish invasion.

I want to thank Congressman BILIRAKIS and Congresswoman MALONEY for their leadership on and dedication to this issue. I know they hope, as I do, that next year we will gather together on the floor of this House to praise a peace agreement for a united Cyprus.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues in marking the 25th Black Anniversary of Turkey's invasion of the island of Cyprus. On July 20, 1974, the government of Turkey sent troops to Cyprus and forcefully assumed control of more than one-third of the island. This action dislocated nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, forcibly evicting them from their homes and creating a refugee problem that exists to this day. Additionally, over 1600 Greek Cypriots are still missing or unaccounted for as a result of this brutal invasion.

The Turkish Cypriot community has continually shown its unwillingness to move toward a negotiated settlement with their Greek neighbors. The removal of the roughly 35,000 Turkish troops from the island of Cyprus is central to any such agreement, as is compliance with the previously agreed upon parameters for any solution. However, the Turkish government is doing the exact opposite. They have continued their arms buildup on the island, have abandoned reconciliation efforts begun on a bi-communal grassroots level, have added two new preconditions for resumption of the peace talks and are now seeking the creation of a confederation of two sovereign states. The net result of these actions is to make any sort of rapprochement all the more unlikely.

The Greek Cypriots, have continually demonstrated their flexibility and willingness to compromise in order to bring an end to this long-standing dispute. The Cyprus government has made numerous gestures of goodwill in an effort to move the peace process forward. In the last year, they have canceled the deployment of a Russian defensive surface-to-air missile system on Cyprus in an effort to head off any escalation of this conflict. In addition, Cyprus has continued to comply with the preconditions established by the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and has even put forth a plan for demilitarization of the island.

However, these efforts have failed to produce any movement toward an agreement. The U.S. government must again take bold steps to show its continued resolve to the Turkish government that it is serious about moving toward peace on Cyprus. In this regard, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of House Concurrent Resolution 100 urging the compliance by Turkey with United Nations resolutions relating to Cyprus. It is essential that the United States and the entire international community continue to work for the long awaited resolution to this tragic event.

Mr. Speaker, it is with decisive steps such as these that we can begin to hope for a brighter future for Cyprus. I wish to commend

the Gentleman from Florida. Mr. BILIRAKIS, for his steadfast work in this area. I look forward to working with him, and all my colleagues who share our concerns, to achieve a unified and peaceful Cyprus in the future.

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago today, Turkish troops advanced into the Republic of Cyprus and forcefully occupied the island. Today, Cyprus remains divided with heavily armed Turkish troops occupying approximately 37 percent of the Island. Over the past twenty five years there have been signs of hope only to be shattered by statements or displays of aggression resulting in increased tensions and little progress toward resolving the conflict over Cyprus.

Last month, the G-8 countries, at their meeting in Cologne, urged the UN to encourage the resumption of negotiations, stalled since 1997, in the Fall of this year. As a result, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1251 calling for "... all States to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus, and requesting them, along with the parties concerned, to refrain from any action which might prejudice that sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as from any attempt at partition of the island or its unification with any other country."

The Republic of Cyprus has on many occasions offered an olive branch to end this conflict. The Republic of Cyprus has offered to demilitarize the entire island, and has canceled an order of a surface-to-air missile system. Turkey has rejected these overtures and in fact continues to upgrade its military presence on Cyprus and seeks to purchase \$4 billion worth of attack helicopters.

Mr. Speaker, throughout its history the United States of America has stood firmly against the forces of oppression and aggression across the globe. We should continue to advocate and support a peaceful resolution to the problem in Cyprus. As a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 80, I continue to urge the President to take steps to end the restrictions of freedoms on the enclaved people of Cyprus by the Turkish-Cypriots and to work with our allies to peacefully resolve this unfortunate situation.

As the millennium is upon us, it is my sincere hope that we will see significant progress toward a unified Cyprus obtained by peaceful means. This can only improve the economic and political stability of the region, which is undoubtedly in the national security and economic interests of the United States.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 25th anniversary of the invasion of the Republic of Cyprus. Since the beginning of this invasion, nearly 20,000 Greek Cypriots have been evicted from their homes and forced from the land where they worked, lived, and raised their families for over 9,000 years.

Today, less than 1,000 Greek Cypriots reside in Northern Cyprus, even though a 1975 humanitarian agreement would have allowed 20,000 Greek Cypriots and Maronites to stay in Northern Cyprus. It is truly a tragedy that so few of the original residents of Northern Cyprus remain in their homeland. The basic rights that we take for granted in the United States have been denied to these citizens.

Now, 25 years after this tragedy, I hope that a resolution can be found that will reunify this island nation that has been torn apart for so

long. I join the call of Glafcos Clerides, the President of the Republic of Cyprus, who on Sunday called upon all in Cyprus to strive for a settlement that will "heal the wounds of the past." Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today in hopes that a settlement will be found, one that will bring lasting peace and unity to the entire Island of Cyprus. After 25 years, we must remember the suffering this invasion has caused, and strive for a peaceful future in Cyprus.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 25th anniversary of a tragically historical point in Greek-Turkish-Cypriot relations. On July 20, 1974, Turkish troops began a campaign to forcibly evict nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes in the northern part of the island of Cyprus. During the invasion, more than 1,600 men, women and children vanished, and to this day, the Turkish government refuses to provide information as to their whereabouts. After twenty-five years, Greek Cypriots are still prohibited from returning to their homes and remain refugees within their own country.

Turkey has actively worked to change the demographic structure in Northern Cyprus by resettling 80,000 Turkish citizens there, mostly in the homes of evacuated Greek Cypriots. Additionally, in 1983, Turkey encouraged a "unilateral declaration of independence" by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). This declaration was condemned by the U.N. Security Council, as well as the U.S. government. To date the TRNC is not officially recognized as a sovereign State by any country except for Turkey.

In light of the recent atrocities against the Kosovar people, it is time to confront the Turkish aggression against Greek Cypriots. With several failed attempts at a peaceful settlement on the island, the Greek Cypriots continue to suffer. The few remaining Greek Cypriots living in the TRNC are forbidden to attend school or work, seek medical assistance, or visit families living in the Republic of Cyprus. In blatant violation of international laws, Turkey has subjected these people to harassment and intimidation and violated their basic human rights.

Despite the continuing efforts on behalf of the U.S. and the international community to negotiate a peaceful settlement, 35,000 heavily armed Turkish troops continue to occupy more than one-third of the island. In an interview on Turkish television this past Sunday, July 12, a government official claimed that "the Cyprus problem ceased existing after the creation of the Turkish Cypriot state," and that "the entire world has to understand the reality of an independent Turkish state on Cyprus."

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, this is an affront to countless U.N. resolutions calling on Turkey to withdraw its forces and return all refugees to their homes, and for Turkey to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. This is an insult to the United States and the global community which has worked tirelessly to unify Greek and Turkish Cypriots in a peaceful manner.

In light of the recent remarks by the Turkish Government, we must reflect upon the tragic incident that occurred 25 years ago when Turkey illegally invaded the Cypriot island. Despite these setbacks, the U.S. and the international community must continue to work to find a peaceful solution to this conflict that has torn Cyprus apart.

CONDEMNING THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember 25th "black anniversary" of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Even today, an estimated 35,000 troops from Turkey continue to occupy 37 percent of Cyprus' territory.

This invasion was a violation of international law that resulted in the forced eviction of nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, making them refugees in their own country. These individuals are still unable to return to their homes. 1,618 Greek Cypriots, including four Americans of Cypriot descent, have been missing since the Turkish invasion, and their fate is still unaccounted for. Additionally, the Turks destroyed Byzantine churches and plundered much of Cyprus' rich 9,000 year-old cultural and religious heritage.

The United Nations has issued several resolutions calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the island, the return of the refugees to their homes and respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Cyprus. Despite these pleas, the government of Turkey in 1983 set up a puppet government in the area under its military occupation and effectively seceded from the island Republic, calling itself the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Turkey is the only nation to recognize this "republic".

The Cyprus government, over the course of the last 25 years, has attempted to reach out to the Turkish Cypriot community through dialogue, bicomunal contacts at local levels, and offers to cooperate in negotiations regarding Cyprus' accession to the European Union. Unfortunately, all efforts have been rebuffed.

After a quarter of a century of failed efforts to end this illegal military occupation of over a third of the sovereign territory of the Republic of Cyprus, hope is in sight. The international community is calling for a new round of comprehensive negotiations this fall to find a settlement reuniting the island in one federal, sovereign state. It is obvious that the pressure of the international community on rogue governments can yield positive results. One need only to look upon the recent NATO action in Kosovo to realize that the international community has the diplomatic wherewithal to forge a successful solution to this crisis; all that is needed is the will. For the sake of peace and stability in the region and the world at large, now is the time for a just and lasting peaceful resolution.

Mr. MCNULTY. A 25th anniversary is supposed to be a happy occasion. Not so for the Greek-Cypriots. For them it marks the forcible division of Cyprus and the invasion of their beloved island by Turkey in 1974.

In the last quarter century, Turkish invaders forced nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes to become refugees in their own land.

For example, the 1975 Vienna III Agreement would have permitted 20,000 Greek Cypriots and Maronites to remain to live normal lives in the Turkish occupied Karpas Peninsula and the Maronite villages. Today, only 500 enclaved Greek Cypriots and 160 Maronites are in the occupied area.

There are reports of all kinds of harassments and violations of civil rights and liberties, including the destruction of Byzantine churches and other places of worship. Turkish restrictions abound—on travel, education and religious practices.

This situation is unacceptable.

And yet, despite all the Turkish abuses, the Government of Cyprus continues to reach out for a peaceful solution.

The Greek Cypriots want peace. Recently, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolutions 1217 and 1218, calling for a peaceful, just, and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem. The United States Government wholeheartedly supports these resolutions and is committed to taking all necessary steps to help in its achievement.

In the final analysis, only the parties to a dispute can settle it. Ultimately, it will be Cyprus and Turkey who will have to agree on a settlement.

The Government of Cyprus is willing to come to the negotiating table.

I urge our Government to continue to press ahead to persuade Turkey to comply with the Security Council resolution and to come to the negotiating table to work out a solution to this nettling problem.

There is no quick fix to the Cyprus problem. But we must persevere.

A solution can only benefit the entire Mediterranean region.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MORELLA addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TAX CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to speak about our most recent tax cut that was put in place, and also to discuss what I think was the key element of that passage, that is, the trigger that was added in on the last round of amendments that were put in place.

Mr. Speaker, we have had projections that are almost mind-boggling when we look at the dollar amount of these surpluses we are projecting into the future. If we do not count the Social Security surplus, but just in our other accounts, we have nearly \$1 trillion worth of surplus projected. Now, with that number being projected, our tax cutters looked at it and said, well, we would like to give 80 to 90 percent of that back to the American public in the form of a tax cut.

I, for one, fully agree with giving back tax dollars that are that much in surplus to those needed to run our government functions. However, when it is

done on a 10-year forecast, there is risk involved in how accurate that forecast may be. And as I looked at that, I said we need to do something to protect the tax cuts and, at the same time, ensure that we continue this path of paying down public debt.

In doing so, we came to a triggering mechanism. And the trigger works in the fashion that if we are not continuing to pay down the debt, we will not take the tax cut that year. It is a simple mechanism. Just how much interest are we paying on the debt? If that number does not get smaller each year, then we will pay more down on the debt and not have a tax cut that year.

The trigger mechanism is very important because it allows us to very responsibly manage the affairs of this government's finances by paying down our debt and reducing taxes, but not doing one at the exclusion of the other.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KUYKENDALL. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman for yielding to me, because a number of us were instrumental in helping to write this trigger.

On Friday, Mr. Speaker, I was reading the Wall Street Journal and there was a story in there and in it apparently Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, was asked before the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services what he thought about this trigger and he said this: "I think that the notion of using a potential trigger is essential," Greenspan said. He further went on to add that using the surplus to reduce the Federal debt is "an extraordinarily effective force for good in this economy."

He signed onto this. In essence, what the trigger is, it is a stoplight. If what the OMB and the CBO folks say is correct in terms of the expectations of where we are going to be with the budget surplus, things happen the way they say, and the debt, in fact, is coming down, \$5.5 trillion is what it is today, the tax cut goes forward.

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But if, in fact, something happens, if interest rates go up, if spending goes up, and, in fact, the amount of money needed to service the Federal debt goes up rather than declines, the red light goes on. So it is a safety valve. And it also is going to serve as a break on additional spending as well.

So I think that this was a very important measure that a number of us fought for. And furthermore, today I know a number of us communicated to our leadership that we are hoping that the Senate certainly adds this provision in their tax bill that they are debating this week. And if they are not able to get it included, then at least maybe in the conference, when we iron out the differences between the House and the Senate, that certainly the

House would prevail on this making sure that the taxpayers are protected by making sure that this trigger device stays in effect.

I applaud the leadership of my colleague on this. It was important as a number of us met with Republican leadership and others. It is a trigger with real teeth. It is going to do the right thing, and that is what we are here for.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate that comment.

I think the important part of this is, I have used the phrase "responsible." I think it is also discipline that it imposes upon us as a Government.

I came from local governments and State governments where our budgets had to be balanced, and we could not issue debt unless we were asking the voters to approve it. But we do not do that here. We play that role ourselves.

In this case, we have imposed a discipline with this particular triggering mechanism that I think it is essential that it come back in the conference version of this bill. And it is important, I think, that our colleagues on the Senate side hear that, as well.

We have a mechanism now that will impose discipline, give us responsible Government, control the debt, and still allow almost \$800 billion worth of tax cuts.

ON ROBERT M. TOBIAS,
PRESIDENT OF NTEU

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, in 1995, the National Treasury Employees Union, along with other Federal employee and retiree organizations, defeated the first attempt by the 104th Congress to raise Federal employees' retirement contributions and reduce their pension.

At a press conference celebrating the victory, the NTEU national president, Robert Tobias, is quoted as saying, told over 500 Federal employees in attendance, "You promised to serve the public with honesty. You promised to work hard. You promised to serve the public. And in return, you were promised fair treatment and fair pay. It sounded like a fair deal. You kept your word. Now we're asking Congress to keep its word."

Bob Tobias has spent the last 31 years making sure that the executive branch and Congress keep their promises to Federal employees. He has used lawsuits as a way to further Federal employees' causes and to escape the narrow confines of Federal collective bargaining.

He has testified before the Subcommittee on Civil Service on behalf of the 155,000 Federal employees NTEU represents on numerous cases.