

numerous times. This is a pet project for Ken. Ken, congratulations; you got a lot to be proud of. I want to thank Steve Aquafresca, the former State representative out of the State of Colorado representing that area. I want to thank Wayne Keith, and I want to thank the currently-elected officials that represent that area, Kaye Alexander, Jim Dyer and many of the other elected local officials and so on, the communities of Crawford, Paonia, Montrose, Olathe, Cedar Ridge, Hotchkiss, Delta; the counties, Club 20. There are a lot of people, the staff members of the BLM, Dave Roberts, the Forest Service. They all pitched in to help us show off to all of you the spectacular beauty of the Black Canyon National Park.

Now amongst all of those walls right there, and here you can see the river up close. Now let me tell my colleagues, our water, water sports in Colorado on the hottest day of the summer will still make your teeth chitter, but there is a lot of excitement in seeing this kind of water, pure water. It is said to be so pure; look at the second picture here; that you can stand up on some of these cliffs, obviously not at 2,000 feet, but you can stand up on some of these cliffs and actually spot trout in the clear water in the pools down below.

This is also the home for habitat of bears, bobcats, all kinds of animal species. It is beautiful, and you should take that opportunity to come out and see Colorado.

□ 2015

One more quick picture before it falls. Look at the walls here again. Two thousand feet, you can see the walls here. There is a tree right there where the red dot is, straight down.

Let me wrap up my remarks by telling you, of course, all throughout our country the fall is a beautiful season, the colors, the smell, the blue sky. But if you have an opportunity, come out and enjoy our State.

Finally, as my final remarks, let me reemphasize my remarks at the beginning of my discussion with you this evening, and that is to our friends, our family, to people we do not know in the state of North Carolina: The other 49 states of this country will not abandon you. The other 49 states of this country will be there to help you through the tragedy that you recently suffered. I know that it may seem remote at this time, that kind of help, but there are prayers from all across the country coming your direction. There are resources, including monetary resources and everything from generators to lanterns to batteries to fresh water, resources from all across this country, coming to help you out.

Again, North Carolina, you will not be forgotten.

WHITE HOUSE APPEASING CASTRO REGIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 15 minutes as the designee of the Majority Leader.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say I just got back from Colorado Springs a couple of weeks ago, and what the gentleman said about Colorado is absolutely true. It is a gorgeous state.

Mr. Speaker, once again I underestimated the lengths to which the White House would go to appease the Castro regime, the most violent sponsor of terrorism in the Western Hemisphere.

If you think freeing over one dozen FALN terrorists responsible for the deaths of his own countrymen is unexplainable, what the White House is doing right now is baffling.

Mr. Speaker, today I am disturbed by reports that as the White House was preparing to grant clemency to 16 imprisoned terrorists, it told the State Department to grant a visa to a notorious Cuban spy named Fernando Garcia Bielsa. This visa would allow Mr. Bielsa to work under diplomatic cover at the Cuban Interests Section just blocks from the White House.

Ironically, Mr. Bielsa is a high-ranking Cuban communist party official in charge of supporting the very terrorist groups to which the prisoners belonged. President Clinton is asking the State Department to issue a visa to Bielsa, in spite of the evidence in intelligence reports linking him with the FALN terrorists and other terrorist groups.

I was particularly impressed by reports that the FBI strongly objected to granting a visa to him. Yet, apparently when the State Department pressured the FBI, the Bureau had to drop its objections.

It has been reported that Mr. Bielsa serves as the chief of the American Department of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee. The American Department, known by its initials DA, has a long tradition of being Castro's main instrument for coordinating terrorism in the Western Hemisphere, including agent influence activity and support for Puerto Rican terrorism against the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the State Department continues to classify Cuba as a state sponsor of international terrorism. In fact, the State Department's report, Patterns of Terrorism Report for 1998, Cuba reportedly maintains, "close ties to other state sponsors of terrorism and leftist insurgent groups in Latin America. For instance, Columbia's two main terrorist groups, the FARC and the ELN, maintain representatives in Cuba. Moreover, Havana continues to provide a safe haven to a number of international terrorists and U.S. terrorist fugitives."

Make no mistake about it: Cuba believes what the FALN stands for and has a history of supporting them in very material ways. Senate hearings in 1982 revealed that Cuban intelligence helped organize the FALN terrorists and other related groups. Here are a few examples.

Cuba continues to provide asylum to FALN terrorist fugitives, including William Morales, who escaped in 1979 while serving a 99 year sentence for bombing and murder. He fled to Mexico, where he fled a policeman and was finally granted asylum by the Castro government.

Just last year, in 1998, Mr. Bielsa flew to Puerto Rico to meet with leaders of a Puerto Rican terrorist group. What I want to know is why did not the Clinton Administration automatically refuse Mr. Bielsa's visa application? Under U.S. law, the State Department cannot independently issue visas to foreigners believed to be entering the country for the purpose of hostile intelligence activity.

A 1981 State Department report says the DA was created to "centralize Cuban control over covert activities" in support of revolutionary groups in our hemisphere. Who pressured the State Department to grant this visa for Mr. Bielsa? Was it the National Security Council? If so, who pressured the NSC?

Mr. Speaker, Castro has spies here in the U.S. For example, last year 10 people allegedly operating as a spy ring for Castro were arrested and accused of collecting information on U.S. military installations and anti-Castro groups in Florida. At the same time, the arrests ended the most extensive espionage effort involving Cuban agents ever uncovered in the U.S.

U.S. Attorney Thomas Scott was quoted as saying, "In scope and in depth, it is really unparalleled in recent years. This was an attempt to strike at the very heart of our national security system."

Investigators said it was the first time in memory that a Cuba-sponsored spy ring had been dismantled in Southern Florida, even though between 200 and 300 operatives are believed to have worked with impunity in the Miami area for decades.

Our intelligence has uncovered new construction and an expansion of a Russian spy base near Havana that could endanger U.S. military operations overseas. The number of satellite dishes has doubled from three to six. Workers built new buildings, new parking lots and a swimming pool for the Russian military technicians who are now running the base. From this facility, Moscow has intercepted communications from the White House, the State Department, Washington-based international financial institutions and private U.S. companies.

In fact, the Russians had intercepted advanced word on U.S. military movements during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. And, Mr. Speaker, if that doesn't frighten the American people, China's defense minister visited Havana last year to negotiate the construction of an electronic spy base next to this Russian facility. This is not fiction from a paperback novel, Mr. Speaker.

So it is obvious why U.S. counterintelligence believes that the Castro

government is placing their agents where they can influence policy decisions on issues affecting the Castro regime.

What decisions, you may ask?

How about granting clemency and allowing terrorists back on the streets, the FALN terrorists? Many in Congress have opinions about why that offer was made. Some feel it has a lot to do with what is going on New York politics today, but maybe there is more to it.

What other kinds of policy decisions would Castro want to influence? How about easing the restrictions on the U.S. embargo on Cuba? The U.S. embargo was instituted to pressure the Castro regime to abandon its dictatorial and subversive ways. Castro has been able to stay in power because the embargo was not strong enough and because of massive Soviet subsidies.

The collapse of the USSR triggered a 60 percent contraction of the Cuban economy, proving the utter bankruptcy of Castro's policies. In addition, passage of both the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 by this Congress, the Toricelli Act, and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1995, the Helms-Burton law, have further tightened U.S. policy on the totalitarian dictatorship of Fidel Castro.

These factors, as well as the complete weariness and disgust of the Cuban people with Castro, indicate that time is running out on the dictatorship in Cuba, but not if Castro can send his highest ranking spy to Washington and influence key officials to ease that embargo.

Is it working? Well, let us just see.

Earlier this year the White House expanded commercial flights to Cuba. The President allowed U.S. residents, not just those with family in Cuba, to send larger amounts of money to individual households, which simply gives Castro the hard currency he needs to prop up his communist regime. He allowed direct mail service between our countries, the President did, and finally he has authorized the sale of food and agriculture products to "private companies" in Cuba.

One more policy decision that could be influenced should be considered. Only December 3, 1998, a 7.2 metric ton cocaine shipment bound for a state-owned company, Union del Plastico, in Havana, Cuba, was seized by Colombian National Police in Cartagena, Colombia. The consigned company was a joint venture with two minority Spanish partners, who contend they were not partners, but rather shipping and purchasing agents for the Cuban government.

Cuban "spin" started the day after the seizure with Castro's anti-narcotics police searching the company's premises with drug dogs and coming up with no traces of drugs there whatsoever.

Cuban police claimed the shipment was destined for Spain, without any proof. Castro made a speech on January 4, 1999, identifying the two Spaniards as the culprits in this scheme

which had been alleged to operate without his government's knowledge and complicity. That is baloney. The U.S. State Department has bought this story from Castro and accepted his claims as evidence and proclaims the shipment was headed for Spain.

However, two House committees and one Senate committee have conducted a thorough investigation into this shipment and determined the shipment was likely headed to the United States, 7.2 metric tons of cocaine through Mexico. The Cuban company has a subsidiary, Plastimex. There is a company bearing that name located right across the U.S. border in Juarez, Mexico.

Regardless of the final destination, the 7.2 tons of cocaine, Cuba, as a recipient of this shipment, should meet the criteria to be placed on the major list of countries who traffic or transit illicit narcotics.

The Cuban government has been complicit in drug trafficking for decades as a method of collecting much-needed hard currency to keep Fidel Castro's regime in power.

As a matter of fact, Raul Castro, Fidel's brother, is under indictment for drug trafficking in Miami, Florida. So, influencing decisions to keep Cuba off the major's list and look the other way on drug trafficking would sure help Castro, and it is working.

The Clinton Administration is assisting Castro in his coverup by sending two Coast Guard personnel to Havana to help promote the image that Fidel Castro is getting tough on drugs, and this is simply not the case. It is a public relations campaign by the Castro regime to repair its tarnished image on the drug front.

The Clinton Administration is doing nothing but strengthening Castro's position. Clearly this 7.2 ton drug seizure should place Cuba squarely on the major's list.

Not to mention the increased overflights of Cuba by drug trafficking planes, which have been unchallenged by Fidel Castro. Also drug trafficking fast boats into Cuban territorial water go without a challenge from the Cuban navy.

It seems strange that the Cuban Air Force can shoot down two unarmed American civilian planes out of the sky and Castro's Navy can sink a tugboat full of innocent women and children, yet they cannot respond to the hundreds of increased drug trafficking activities in Cuban air space and territorial waters.

Mr. Speaker, the granting of a visa for Mr. Garcia Bielsa is an affront to the national security of the United States. The American people will be outraged when they learn that a top Cuban spy known for his support of terrorism and espionage is allowed to set up shop real close to the White House here in Washington.

Why should Mr. Bielsa be allowed to live and work in Washington, D.C.? The Cuban Interests Section, as I said, is not in need of personnel. Quite the op-

posite. Prior to 1994, the Cuban Interests Section contained 24 staff and, according to the Cuban-American National Foundation, nearly all of whom were intelligence agents.

According to the Congressional sources today, the espionage presence in the Cuban Interests Section is nearly doubled. Granting a visa to Mr. Garcia Bielsa is more than misguided, because this man and his mission here pose a real threat to our Nation's security right here in the United States.

Mr. Garcia Bielsa is not just an ordinary Cuban citizen or a visiting diplomat. He is a principal spy and a leader within Castro's inner circle. With Mr. Bielsa using Washington, D.C. as a base of operations, Castro's campaign to discredit the U.S. and our commitment against communism has been invigorated.

I believe Mr. Garcia Bielsa's presence in Washington, D.C. will, without a doubt, enhance Castro's ongoing operations against the United States. That is why I sent a letter, along with four of my colleagues, to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright expressing our concerns over these troubling reports. We also asked her to provide us with answers to a few simple questions.

First, why were the views of the Federal Bureau of Investigation not respected in the decision to grant a U.S. visa to Mr. Bielsa?

□ 2030

Second, has any representative of the Department of Justice or the FBI provided any information to the State Department regarding Mr. Garcia Bielsa's anti-U.S. espionage spying or pro-terrorism activities? Did this information talk of his contact with Puerto Rican terrorists or so-called nationalist groups?

Three, if the State Department did have knowledge of Mr. Garcia Bielsa's activities, who instructed his visa be accepted?

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I hope we receive accurate and helpful responses to these questions because we now know that China has stolen classified information on every thermonuclear warhead in the U.S. ballistic missile arsenal, including the W-88 warhead, our most modern warhead; we also know that Chinese penetration of our national weapons labs spans at least the past several decades and certainly continues today; finally, because the Chinese Government used illegal fundraising channels in this country to influence the 1996 presidential elections.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the time has come for our government to cease and desist with these shortcuts that have led to a breach of our national security and initiate a more rigorous system of scrutinizing the campaigns of hostile nations against the U.S., and I believe that Mr. Bielsa's visa should not be approved.