

the strength to help other families survive tragedy.

Patty and Jerry Wetterling have spent the last decade raising awareness and influencing public policy through the formation of the Jacob Wetterling Foundation. The foundation works on a national level to eradicate the abduction and exploitation of children by educating, raising awareness, and responding to the needs of victim's families.

The Jacob Wetterling Foundation has worked with over 1,500 families in the search for their missing children, they have presented workshops and seminars to thousands of people, and have shared their message of personal safety and abduction prevention to countless parents and children. Thanks to the Wetterling Foundation sex offenders are required to register in all 50 States and law enforcement agencies can notify neighborhoods when a likely-to-re-offend sex offender moves there.

The Jacob Wetterling Foundation and the family of Jacob are perhaps most widely known for their message of hope, Jacob's Hope. Today we take a moment to think about Jacob Wetterling and the thousands of missing and exploited children and we pray for their safe return. Minnesota has an unsung hero in Patty Wetterling and the Jacob Wetterling Foundation, today we recognize, in great appreciation, the work they have done to save the lives of our children.

The Wetterling's have helped others in need while never giving up on Jacob's Hope. Today we salute this courageous family.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, first, I want to associate my remarks to the Senator's comments dealing with the 10th anniversary of the disappearance of Jacob Wetterling.

Our support continues to go out to the family and also, as Senator WELLSTONE mentioned, to the Jacob Wetterling Foundation. Patty and Jerry Wetterling have worked tirelessly to aiding in the search for missing children. As the Senator said, Jacob's Hope is all of our hope.

Again, I commend the Wetterlings for their efforts. Also, our sympathy and support continues to go out to the family in the disappearance of Jacob Wetterling 10 years ago.

CONGRATULATING NAPOLEON "NAPPY" LACHANCE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to offer congratulations to one of Maine's most impressive athletes. At the age of 95, Mr. Napoleon "Nappy" LaChance of Westbrook, ME, will be our State's oldest participant in the National Senior Olympics.

Mr. LaChance, who earned a gold medal in the fast walk competition in the last Maine Senior Olympics, will travel to Orlando, FL, tomorrow, October 23, to represent the State of Maine in that event.

Equally impressive, Mr. LaChance does not excel in just one sport. Not only did he win a gold medal for fast walking in the Maine Senior Olympics, but he also has won gold medals for golfing and bowling.

Mr. LaChance has achieved success in his career as well as in athletic competitions. In 1917, Mr. LaChance began working at Valee Pharmacy as a floor sweeper and errand boy. Through hard work and dedication, he became a registered pharmacist and managed the pharmacy until his retirement. For his dedication to his community's well-being, Mr. LaChance has been rewarded with the respect, affection, and admiration of his customers, neighbors, family, and friends.

Mr. LaChance's accomplishments are an inspiration to anyone who aspires to be the best they can be. Whether old or young, athlete or artist, social worker or science teacher, those who seek to be the best share the dedication and the determination exhibited for so long by Mr. LaChance. I extend to him my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes as he competes in the National Senior Olympics representing the great State of Maine. Regardless of the outcome of the race, I know Mr. LaChance will make Maine proud.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

CRACKDOWN IN BELARUS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, just a few weeks ago, many of my Senate colleagues met a young, dynamic parliamentarian from Belarus, Mr. Anatoly Lebedko, right here on the Senate floor. He impressed us with his dedication and commitment as he advocates for democracy and the rule of law in his home country currently being rule by a repressive regime.

You can imagine how shocked and concerned I was to receive a call from the State Department this week informing me Mr. Lebedko had been picked up by the authorities as part of the latest crackdown in Belarus. I am sure my colleagues who met Mr. Lebedko share my concern for his well-being and for the safety of all of those struggling for democracy and freedom of speech.

Eight years after the break-up of the Soviet Union, Belarus finds itself increasingly isolated from the rest of Europe as a direct consequence of the authoritarian policies pursued by its present government which have stifled that country's fledging democracy and market economy.

The Helsinki Commission, which I co-chair, held a hearing a few months ago to assess democracy and human rights in Belarus. In July, a number of Commission members and I had the opportunity to hear Mr. Lebedko address the annual Parliamentary Assembly meeting of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in St. Petersburg, where he outlined developments in Belarus and the prospects for genuine political and economic reforms.

Clearly, the cycle of political and economic stagnation in Belarus will only come to an end through genuine dialogue based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Helsinki Commission has called on Belarus to adopt meaningful political and economic reforms in keeping with that country's obligations as a participating State of the OSCE.

On September 3, the government and opposition in Belarus began consultations at the office of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group in Minsk. These talks, long urged by the international community and the Helsinki Commission could represent an important step in beginning the process of reversing the bleak human rights and democratization picture in Belarus.

Until recently I had been encouraged by what appeared to be the start of a dialog between the Belarusian Government and opposition. However, there have been a number of disturbing developments, including continued harassment of opposition members, a renewed crackdown on the independent media in recent weeks, and now the detainment of Mr. Lebedko.

We recently wrote to Secretary of State Albright voicing concern about the situation in Belarus and called on the State Department to intensify its work in this area. This most recent development underscores our concerns.

I ask unanimous consent that copies of our letter to the Secretary of State, a letter we sent to the President of Belarus, along with recent news clips be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,

Washington, DC, October 15, 1999.

Hon. MADELEINE KORBEL ALBRIGHT,
Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SECRETARY: We are writing to voice our growing concern over violations of the principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Belarus under the authoritarian leadership of Aleksandr Lukashenka, who remains in power despite the expiration of his legal presidential mandate last July. The fledgling opposition in Belarus deserves both our moral and material support as they seek to overcome the legacy of Communism and authoritarianism and build a democratic society firmly rooted in the rule of law.

Many of us recently had an opportunity to meet with Anatoly Lebedko of the United Civic Party of Belarus, a young political leader who, despite personal risk, continues to openly criticize the Lukashenka regime. His personal safety is of particular concern as he returns to Belarus following an intense crackdown against the opposition.

In recent weeks, Lukashenka has reportedly authorized a series of measures designed to further suppress Belarus' already beleaguered opposition. Border controls have apparently been tightened and officials in Minsk and other large cities have been instructed to ban public protests and demonstrations. The few remaining independent opposition newspapers, including Naviny and Kuryer, have likewise come under increased pressure from the authorities.

Lukashenka's campaign of harassment and intimidation of the political opposition has intensified. Former Premier Mikhail Chigir, arrested in March on politically-motivated charges, remains imprisoned. A number of other former government officials and political opposition figures continue to be subjected to lengthy pre-trial detention on similar charges. In a particularly disturbing development, several prominent opposition leaders, including Viktor Gonchar, Tamara Vinnikova, and Yuri Zakharenka, have simply disappeared.

Madam Secretary, we urge you to intensify pressure on the Lukashenka regime for the immediate release of all political detainees in Belarus and a full accounting of those who have disappeared. We further urge you to ensure that adequate resources are made available on an urgent basis to support those programs aimed at strengthening independent media, human rights, civil society, independent trade unions and the democratic opposition in Belarus.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
M.C.,
Chairman.

STENY H. HOYER, M.C.,
Ranking Member,
House.

WILLIAM V. ROTH, Jr.,
U.S.S.

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, M.C.

ALCEE L. HASTINGS, M.C.

BEN NIGHTHORSE
CAMPBELL, U.S.S.,
Co-Chairman.

TRENT LOTT, U.S.S.

KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON,
U.S.S.

FRANK R. WOLF, M.C.
JESSE HELMS, U.S.S.

COMMISSION ON SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Washington, DC, October 19, 1999.

His Excellency ALYAKSANDR LUKASHENKA,
President,
Republic of Belarus,
Minsk, Belarus.

DEAR PRESIDENT LUKASHENKA: We are writing to express our serious and growing concerns about recent developments in Belarus. Until recently, we were becoming more helpful that meaningful dialogue between the Belarusian Government and opposition would take place. Within the last month, however, violations of the principles of human rights, democracy and rule of law have come to our attention that, frankly, lead us to question your government's seriousness in finding a solution to the problems of democracy in Belarus. We were disturbed to learn of the arrest earlier today of democratic opposition leader Anatoly Lebedko, for allegedly participating in "an unsanctioned march."

Our concerns include the following:

The continued imprisonment of former Prime Minister Mikhail Chygir, who was supposed to be released from investigative detention where he has been held for six months.

The disappearances of former Central Election Commission Chairman Viktor Gonchar, his colleague Yuri Krasovskiy, former Interior Minister Yuri Zakharenka, and former National Bank Chair Tamara Vinnikova.

Increased attempts to stifle freedom of expression, including the annualing of registration certificates of nine periodicals, and especially the harassment of Naviny through the use of high libel fees clearly designed to silence this independent newspaper.

The denial of registration of non-governmental organizations, including the Belarusian Independent Industrial Trade Union Association.

The police raid, without a search warrant, on the human rights organization Viasna-96, and confiscation of computers which stored data on human rights violations.

Criminal charges against opposition activist Mykola Statkevich and lawyer Oleg Volchek and continued interrogation of lawyer Vera Stremkovskaya.

The initial attack by riot police against peaceful protestors in last Sunday's Freedom March.

Your efforts to address these concerns would reduce the climate of suspicion and fear that currently exists and enhance confidence in the negotiation process which we believe is so vital to Belarus' development as a democratic country in which human rights and the rule of law are respected.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
M.C.,
Chairman.

STENY H. HOYER, M.C.,
Ranking Member.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 30, 1999]

BELARUS OPPOSITION PAPER TO CLOSE

MINSK, BELARUS.—A leading opposition newspaper in Belarus said it was shutting down following a court order to pay an exorbitant fine, to the minister of security over an article he said injured his reputation.

The Naviny newspaper, which has come under frequent pressure from Belarus's authoritarian government, said in its last issue that "both the suit and the trial were a cover-up for a carefully planned campaign by the authorities seeking to close down our newspaper."

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 19, 1999]

BELARUSAN OFFICIALS BLAME WEST FOR RIOTS

MINSK, BELARUS.—Belarusian authorities accused the West of being behind street clashes between some 5,000 opposition demonstrators and police in which at least 92 people were arrested. But Dmitri Bondarenko of the opposition Khartiya-97 movement said police started the fighting and another opposition member said authorities have long provoked violence by repression.

The fighting broke out Sunday in Minsk following an authorized rally by about 20,000 people. The demonstrators were protesting the disappearance of several leading opposition figures and President Alexander Lukashenka's drive to reunite Belarus, a former Soviet republic, with Russia.

FISCAL YEAR 2000 INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate has passed the conference report on the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2000. The conference report represents a good faith effort to merge the spending priorities of the House, the Senate, and the administration, and to resolve the concerns voiced by the administration about various legislative provisions in the bill. I think the conference report is a solid, bipartisan bill that deserves the overwhelming support of the Senate and the signature of the President.

The bill totals roughly \$14.5 billion in discretionary budget authority, which is a significant increase from the levels contained in the House and Senate

passed bills. Some of this increase is attributable to the House and Senate insisting upon funding for specific programs, and much of the increase is due to the efforts of the conferees to meet the spending priorities of the administration. While the bill before you represents an increase of about \$500 million over the fiscal year 1999 level, it is still \$500 million below the administration's request level.

In developing the fiscal year 2000 Interior bill, the top priority for both the House and Senate committees was to maintain the core operating programs of the land management agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian Health Service, and the cultural agencies funded in this bill. Because Interior bill agencies are highly personnel-intensive, simply keeping pace with the cost of Federal pay raises requires an increase of more than \$300 million over the fiscal year 1999 level. This leaves little room from programmatic increases and new initiatives.

The conference report before you, however, does contain significant increases for targeted, high-priority programs. The bill provides roughly \$28 million to increase the base operating budgets of more than 100 units of the National Park System, while also providing funds for a focused effort to enhance our limited understanding of the tremendous natural resources present within the Park System. The bill also includes an increase of \$25 million for the operation and maintenance of the National Fish and Wildlife Refuge System, and increases for critical grazing management, road maintenance, wildlife and fisheries management, and recreation programs within the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

For Indian programs, the bill provides the full administration request for the Office of the Special Trustee—the Secretary of the Interior's No. 1 priority within this bill. I fervently hope that these funds will enable the Secretary to clean up the Indian trust fund management mess that has been allowed to accumulate over many years. The conference agreement also provides an increase of \$130 million for the Indian Health Service, and increases within the Bureau of Indian Affairs for law enforcement, school operations, school repairs, and school construction.

With regard to the cultural agencies in this bill, I am pleased that the conferees agreed to the Senate position with regard to the National Endowment for the Humanities, thereby providing a \$5 million increase. I was disappointed that the House would not agree to a similar increase proposed by the Senate for the National Endowment for the Arts, but anticipate we will try again next year. I also note that the bill includes \$19 million for the Smithsonian to complete the federal commitment to construction of the National Museum of the American Indian on The Mall, and \$20 million to