

dire poverty—the Nazarbaev regime has cracked down hard on the media. Family or business associates of President Nazarbaev control most media outlets in the country, including printing houses which often refuse to print opposition or independent newspapers. Newspapers or broadcasters that try to cover taboo subjects are harassed by the government and editorial offices have had their premises raided. The government also controls the two main Internet service providers and regularly blocks the web site of the Information Analytical Center Eurasia, which is sponsored by Kazakhstan's main opposition party.

In addition, libel remains a criminal offense in Kazakhstan. Despite a growing international consensus that people should not be jailed for what they say or write, President Nazarbaev on May 3 ratified an amendment to the Media Law that increases the legal liability of editors and publishers. Furthermore, a new draft religion law was presented to the Kazakh parliament at the end of November without public consultation. If passed, it would seriously curtail the ability of individuals and groups to practice their religious faith freely.

Uzbekistan is a wholesale violator of human rights. President Karimov allows no opposition parties, permits no independent media, and has refused even to register independent human rights monitoring groups. Elections in Uzbekistan have been a farce and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) rightly refused to observe the last presidential "contest," in which Karimov's "rival" proclaimed that he was planning to vote for the incumbent.

In one respect, however, Karimov is not lacking—brazen gall. Last week, on the eve of Secretary Powell's arrival in Tashkent, Uzbek authorities announced plans to hold a referendum next month on extending Karimov's tenure in office from five years to seven. Some members of the tightly controlled parliament urged that he be made "president for life." The timing of the announcement could have had only one purpose: to embarrass our Secretary of State and to show the United States that Islam Karimov will not be cowed by OSCE commitments on democracy and the need to hold free and fair elections.

I am also greatly alarmed by the Uzbek Government's imprisonment of thousands of Muslims, allegedly for participating in extremist Islamic groups, but who are probably "guilty" of the "crime" of attending non-government approved mosques. The number of people jailed on such dubious grounds is estimated to be between 5,000 and 10,000, according to Uzbek and international human rights organizations. While I do not dismiss Uzbek government claims about the seriousness of the religion-based insurgency, I cannot condone imprisonment of people based on mere suspicion of religious piety. As U.S. Government officials have been arguing for years, this policy of the Uzbek Government also seems counterproductive to its stated goal of eliminating terrorists. Casting the net too broadly and jailing innocent people will only inflame individuals never affiliated with any terrorist cell.

In addition, Uzbekistan has not only violated individual rights, but has also implemented policies that affect religious groups. For example, the Uzbek Government has consistently used its religion law to frustrate the ability of religious groups to register, placing them in a "catch-22". By inhibiting registration, the

Uzbek Government can harass and imprison individuals for attending unregistered religious meetings, as well as deny property purchases and formal education opportunities. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, Uzbekistan's record on human rights, democratization and religious freedom is unacceptable.

I am not aware that Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akaev has been invited to Washington, but I would not be too surprised to learn of an impending visit. Once the most democratic state in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan has gone the way of its neighbors, with rigged elections, media crackdowns and repression of opposition parties. At a Helsinki Commission hearing I chaired last week on democratization and human rights in Kyrgyzstan, we heard from the wife of Felix Kulov, Kyrgyzstan's leading opposition figure, who has been behind bars since January 2001. Amnesty International and many other human rights groups consider him a political prisoner, jailed because he dared to try to run against President Akaev. Almost all opposition and independent newspapers which have sought to expose high-level corruption have been sued into bankruptcy.

With respect to the proposed religion law the Kyrgyz Parliament is drafting, which would repeal the current law, significant concerns exist. If the draft law were enacted in its current emanation, it would categorize and prohibit groups based on beliefs alone, as well as allow arbitrary decisions in registering religious groups due to the vague provisions of the draft law. I encourage President Akaev to support a law with strong protections for religious freedom. Implementing the modification suggested by the OSCE Advisory Panel of Experts on Religious Freedom would ensure that the draft religion law meets Kyrgyzstan's OSCE commitments.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I had a meeting with Ambassador Meret Orazov of Turkmenistan and personally raised a number of specific human rights cases. Turkmenistan, the most repressive state in the OSCE space, resembles North Korea: while the people go hungry, megalomaniac President Saparmurat Niyazov builds himself palaces and monuments, and is the object of a Stalin-style cult of personality. No opposition of any kind is allowed, and anyone who dares to express a view counter to Niyazov is arrested. Turkmenistan is the only country in the OSCE region where places of worship have been destroyed on government orders—in November 1999, the authorities bulldozed a Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Since then, Niyazov has implemented his plans to provide a virtual bible for his benighted countrymen; apparently, he intends to become their spiritual as well as secular guide and president for life.

Turkmenistan has the worst record on religious freedom in the entire 55-nation OSCE. The systematic abuses that occur almost weekly are an abomination to the internationally recognized values which undergird the OSCE. Recent actions by Turkmen security agents against religious groups, including harassment, torture and detention, represent a catastrophic failure by Turkmenistan to uphold its human rights commitments as a participating OSCE State. In addition, last January, Mukhamed Aimuradov, who has been in prison since 1995, and Baptist pastor Shageldy Atakov, imprisoned since 1999, were not included in an amnesty which freed many pris-

oners. I hope that the Government of Turkmenistan will immediately and unconditionally release them, as well as all other prisoners of conscience.

Rounding out the Central Asian countries, Tajikistan also presents human rights concerns. A report has recently emerged concerning the government's religious affairs agency in the southern Khatlon region, which borders Afghanistan. According to reliable sources, a memorandum from the religious affairs agency expressed concern about "increased activity" by Christian churches in the region, calling for them to be placed under "the most stringent control." Tajik Christians fear that this statement of intolerance could be a precursor to persecution. Keston News Service reported that law enforcement officials have already begun visiting registered churches and are trying to find formal grounds to close them down. Additionally, city authorities in the capital Dushanbe have cracked down on unregistered mosques.

Mr. Speaker, as the world focuses on Central Asia states with unprecedented energy, I wanted to bring these serious deficiencies in their commitment to human rights and democracy to the attention of my colleagues. All these countries joined the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe soon after their independence from the Soviet Union a decade ago. By becoming OSCE participating States, they agreed without reservation to comply with the Helsinki Final Act and all subsequent agreements. These documents cover a wide range of human dimension issues, including clear language on the human right of religious freedom and the right of the individual to profess and practice religion or belief. Unfortunately, as I have highlighted, these countries are failing in their commitment to promote and support human rights, and overall trends in the region are very disturbing.

The goals of fighting terrorism and steadfastly supporting human rights are not dichotomous. It is my hope that the U.S. Government will make issues of human rights and religious freedom paramount in bilateral discussions and public statements concerning the ongoing efforts against terrorism. In this context, the considerable body of OSCE commitments on democracy, human rights and the rule of law should serve as our common standard for our relations with these countries.

COLONEL KARL "KASEY" WARNER
RETIREMENT

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2001

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Colonel Karl "Kasey" Warner of the United States Special Operations Command who is retiring from the United States Army after 27 years of active duty.

Colonel Warner has served this great country with dedication and honor for over 27 years in uniform, but his service to his country has not ended. He will be taking on the duties of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of West Virginia for the term of four years.

Colonel Warner began his military career as a cadet at the United States Military Academy

at West Point. It was there that he graduated and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1974. Colonel Warner's career epitomizes leadership and selfless service. He has served his country well both as a line officer in Field Artillery and later as a Judge Advocate.

Colonel Warner attended West Virginia University School of Law and graduated in 1980. He has served primarily as a trial litigator and has been an instructor of criminal law at the Army Judge Advocate General School. His career has taken him from the parade grounds of West Point to foreign lands and harsh living conditions—he was the joint task force and multinational force staff judge advocate at Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 1994–1995.

In Haiti, he designed a procedure for detaining Haitians—as a matter of policy they determined that detainees should be afforded the same treatment accorded to detained persons under the 1949 Geneva Prisoner of War provisions (food shelter medical care)—the treatment was so good by Haitian standards that often people would “confess” in the hopes of being detained. However by all accounts the Joint Detention Facility was an unqualified success. Colonel Warner also arranged for the appointment of four judge advocates to be authorized to serve as a one-member foreign claims commissions and the appointment of three more judge advocates to serve as a three-member commission.

Prior to becoming the prestigious Special Operations Judge Advocate, Colonel Warner was the deputy legal counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In whatever challenge he was tasked with, he excelled and constantly personified the words General Douglas MacArthur made famous and synonymous with West Point: “Duty, Honor, Country.”

Colonel Warner's military decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster; two Joint Meritorious Unit Awards; and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. He is qualified to wear, in addition to Master Parachutist Wings, the coveted Ranger tab and Air Assault wings. He has also been accorded the honor of receiving the Jump Wings of the Australians, British, and Saudi Arabians.

Colonel Warner and his wife, Joanie, have four children: Margaret who is a lieutenant with the Army Corps of Engineers in Germany; Frances, a speech pathology graduate student at Vanderbilt University; Kole, who serves with the West Virginia National Guard and attends West Virginia University and Travis, age 13.

It is with great pride and honor that I wish Kasey and his family the best as he retires from the United States Army and continues his service to our great country as the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of West Virginia. He has set an inspiring example of dedication to the defense of freedom and to the protection of the basic liberties that the citizens of our country enjoy by taking his turn at “standing on the wall” and now continues to defend freedom and liberties as a U.S. Attorney.

TRIBUTE TO THE NEW YORK CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMUNITY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute and to recognize the courage and professionalism of the New York City Public Schools community during the attack on September 11, 2001.

I know that none of us will ever forget where we were and what we were doing when the attacks on the World Trade Center occurred. For the New York City Public Schools community, the attacks were not something they watched on television, they were in the middle of the mayhem. In the immediate aftermath eight schools which were located in the “frozen zone” were closed, displacing nearly 6,000 students, a number which is more than 2½ times the average school district in the U.S.

Not only did the faculty and staff in these affected schools react with extraordinary calm, grace and bravery to evacuate their schools and to ensure that every child in their care was safe and accounted for, the students and staff from these heavily impacted schools worked together in spite of the fact that over 1,500 students and 800 staff members lost a family member or loved one as a result of the disaster. Consider these snapshots from one of the most horrific days in our history.

Jordan Schiele, a junior at Stuyvesant High School, retold his experience in a recent article in *The Washington Post*. Jordan was in band class when the first plane hit Tower One. He saw the second hit, in the middle of a class debate on the best form of government. From the window, he watched what he first thought were fax machines and later realized were people falling from the Tower's top floors. As Tower One collapsed, the lights in his classroom flickered, the whole Stuyvesant building rumbled, and Jordan fled with his classmates out of the building and began running north up the West Side Highway, looking back as a cloud of dust engulfed his school. “I'll never forget when the dust engulfed Stuyvesant,” he remembers. “I felt it was engulfing my future, because school is your future at this age.”

Ada Dolch, Principal at the High School for Leadership and Public Service just four blocks from the site of the Twin Towers, made a series of decisions that students, staff and parents credit in saving innumerable lives. When the first explosion came, Principal Dolch looked outside and what she saw made her immediately fear for her 600 students. She watched in horror as debris rained down on Liberty Plaza and waves of frightened people ran into the school lobby for safety. She moved her students away from the 6-by-6-foot windows in every classroom out into the hallways and told her kids to remain calm. Then the second plane hit and Stephen Kam of the New York Police Department's Division of School Safety raced into the lobby and said to Principal Dolch that it was time to get the students out. Dolch agreed and teachers quickly moved students out of the building floor by floor.

Once outside, they met up with 750 of their peers from the High School for Economics

and Finance, which is located next door to Leadership, and their Principal, Dr. Patrick Burke. Two secretaries from Economics, Kathleen Gilson and Joan Truteneff, wanted to stay and answer calls from frantic parents but Burke told them “No way, you have to come with me.”

Right as the students got to Rector Street the first building collapsed and a dust ball, full of debris, began to chase them. One teacher shouted to her kids, “Run! Now you can run!” and they hopped over benches as many raced for Battery Park at the tip of lower Manhattan while others headed north and east. Once in Battery Park, the students hopped on ferries to Jersey City and Staten Island. Nearly 100 of the students, those who could not make it home that night, were fed and spent the night on cots in Curtis High School on Staten Island, accompanied by their teachers. Still others were housed and fed by parishioners of a Jersey City Catholic Church.

John O'Sullivan, an earth science teacher at Economic and Finance, said that when the first tower fell, he thought they were finished. “It was an optical illusion, but it looked like it was falling on us,” said the teacher. “I'll never forget the look on the face of one of my students from last year. The look of terror. It was like that picture of the little girl running from the napalm attack in Vietnam,” he said. Other teachers walked students home over the Manhattan Bridge to Brooklyn. Mr. O'Sullivan and several of his colleagues walked north with a group of students and then caught a bus to O'Sullivan's apartment. Once there, the teachers fed pizza and soda to the students and put on a video until their parents could pick them up.

What make Principal Dolch's heroism even more remarkable is that she performed all of these acts of bravery while knowing that her sister Wendy Wakeford, who worked for an investment banking firm on the 100th floor of 1 World Trade Center, was more than likely a victim of the attack. Her sister remains missing. “She was in the first building that was hit. I think that she was caught in the fireball. We haven't heard from her,” Dolch said shortly after the attack. “I prayed she was safe, but I had kids to worry about, I knew I had to get them out.”

The teachers at P.S. 234, the Independence School, which is located dangerously close to the crash site, had to evacuate 6- and 7-year old students during the most harrowing part of the disaster immediately after the second Trade Center tower collapsed and enveloped the school in a debris-filled cloud. Many of the children were screaming for parents who actually worked in the towers. As one teacher stepped into the street, a small child saw the burning bodies falling from the towers and cried out, “Look teacher, the birds are on fire!” Taking some students by the hand and carrying others on their shoulders, the teachers plunged through the rubble-strewn streets that were clogged with adults running for their lives. With their small charges in tow, they walked 40 minutes north to the nearest safe school in Greenwich Village. Some children whose parents could not come to get them by the close of the day went home with their teachers, and stayed with them until their mothers or fathers could be reached by phone.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the New York City Public City School community for their courage on September 11, and I ask my fellow