EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TROUBLES IN ADDIS ABABA

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness and express my concern over the serious situation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. On April 11th while students at University College of Addis Ababa were peacefully protesting the fact that the government had disbanded the student council and closed the student newspaper, federal security police were sent in to crack down on the protests.

In the wake of this crackdown over 50 students were seriously injured. Amnesty International reported that ''over 40 students required hospital treatment from head wounds or fractures'' and two students were killed. The crackdown continued through April 17th and there have been reports of more than 41 people, including university and secondary school students, being killed during this period.

Since April 17th, Human Rights Watch reported, ''Students were dragged out of local churches and mosques, where they had sought refuge, and taken into detention [and] more than two thousand students were detained during these raids.'' The use of unprovoked and heavy violence inflicted by the federal police, who were armed with live ammunition, against peaceful student demonstrators and the public must not continue.

I am also extremely concerned about the recent arrests of key Ethiopian human rights workers such as Dr. Mesfin Wolde-Mariam and Dr. Berhanu Nega for allegedly inciting students to protest. To my knowledge, formal charges have not been filed and these men's whereabouts are not known. These men should be accorded due process of the legal system and be provided adequate medical care if needed and they should be released if no charges are filed against them.

I will be watching the events in Addis Ababa closely. I put those who would continue to harm innocent students and human rights advocates on notice that they are being monitored.

IN HONOR OF ROBERT D. DICKENS

HON. ASA HUTCHINSON

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the sad task of informing the House of the passing of Dr. Dick Dickens, Jr. of Little Rock. Dick was a neurosurgeon in private practice who was adored by his patients. They were deeply touched by his warmth as a human being, and by his dedication as a surgeon. Everyone knew that if they were being treated by Dick, they were in the skillful hands of a highly trained and committed surgeon.

Dick came from a family of doctors; his father and grandfather were doctors. Recently, Dick decided to use his background and skills to be an active participant in the effort to ensure that outstanding healthcare is available to all. He began working as an Associate Medical Director at Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Little Rock because he wanted to be well-versed in all facets of the practice of medicine, including the administrative side.

Dick was also deeply interested in the complex ethical issues which confront physicians and hospitals today. He received a Certificate of Achievement from the University of Virginia Center for Biomedical Ethics after studying these issues in depth.

Dick was a man with great zest for life. He lived his personal life with the same gusto and dedication which he applied to his professional life. He had a tremendous thirst for knowledge which evidenced itself in many ways. He was an accomplished runner who participated in several marathons, was a connoisseur of fine wines and Italian cooking, and had a true love for music of all types.

More important than Dick's extremely successful professional and personal accomplishments was the fact that he was a man who knew the value of people. He loved and was loved. He would often say that the true value of a man was not the things that had been done in life, but the people loved. It can be said of Dick by those who knew him well that they were granted a great privilege to be his friend, and as one friend said ''I am a better man today because I had the opportunity to know Dick Dickens.''

The world is a better place today because Dick Dickens lived, and a little sadder because he has passed away. I join my colleagues in the House of Representatives in sending our deepest sympathy to the Dickens family, and especially, Dick's wife Nancy and his children, Rob and Margaret Avery.

FAIRNESS FOR FOSTER CARE FAMILIES ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2001

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Fairness for Foster Care Families Act and thank my colleague Congressman RON LEWIS for taking this important step toward expanding the benefits of our foster care system.

Approximately 500,000 children are placed in foster care programs each year nationwide, including 23 counties in Maryland. According to the Maryland State Social Services report for January 2001, the number of children in foster care has risen over 20 percent from 8,178 in 1997 to 9,900. H.R. 586 addresses a growing need for foster care and foster care placement agencies.

Imagine two households of foster care families. The first one is run by John Doe, who receives his foster care payments from a nonprofit foster placement agency. His next door neighbor, Jane Doe, puts in the same amount of effort and spends the same amount of money on her foster child, and her initial foster care payments are the same. But because Jane's payments are from a for-profit foster placement agency, current law states that Jane has to pay taxes, so she effectively earns less money than John Doe even though she puts in the same amount of effort as John Doe. The Fairness for Foster Care Families Act will remedy this patently unfair system by ensuring that equal effort from foster care families merits equal reward in the form of nontaxable payment from all foster placement agencies.

Tax credits for payments from any qualified placement agency will make it easier for prospective foster care parents and placement organizations alike to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which these children can develop without worrying about profits or financial insecurity. If we do not in the House of Representatives expand tax credits to include for-profit foster care organizations, we risk jeopardizing the quality of care that foster children may receive while at the same time further complicating the screening process for foster parents.

Currently, for-profit foster care organizations that are not directly controlled by the government do not receive tax credits for the payments they make to providers of foster care. As a result, these companies must raise their payments to solicit more applicants.

Applicants for foster care undoubtedly increase as payments from foster care organizations increase. With a tax credit for all qualified foster care placement agencies we can be sure that the applicant pool of foster parents can increase in a way that boosts both quantity and quality of the applicant pool.

The Fairness for Foster Care Families Act will help expand foster care to meet a growing need that affects my constituents and the nation at large. We owe it to our children, we owe it to the future of our society, we owe it to the families who have the courage and compassion to open up their homes to those children that are, for whatever reason, without a home. Passing the Fairness for Foster Care Families Act sends the message that we care enough about our foster individuals to provide them all with an equal opportunity for proper care. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 586.

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

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