

and thus made decision-making more effective. He also decentralized the procurement and budgeting systems, and was instrumental in establishing the Western Justice Center Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the legal system by encouraging collaborative work and research.

Judge Browning is a native of Montana, and a decorated veteran of World War II. Prior to joining the Federal Court in 1961, he worked at the U.S. Department of Justice and served as a law clerk at the Supreme Court. Judge Browning is known for his collegiality, courtesy, and support and mentoring of younger judges and court employees. He is a beloved member of the Ninth Circuit.

It is fitting and proper to honor Judge Browning's distinguished career with this designation. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2804.

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. COOKSEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2804.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3986 and H.R. 2804, the measures just under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

URGING GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE TO ENSURE A DEMOCRATIC, TRANSPARENT, AND FAIR ELECTION PROCESS

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 339) urging the Government of Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to the March 31, 2002, parliamentary elections, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 339

Whereas Ukraine stands at a critical point in its development to a fully democratic so-

ciety, and the parliamentary elections on March 31, 2002, its third parliamentary elections since becoming independent more than 10 years ago, will play a significant role in demonstrating whether Ukraine continues to proceed on the path to democracy or experiences setbacks in its democratic development;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine can demonstrate its commitment to democracy by conducting a genuinely free and fair parliamentary election process, in which all candidates have access to news outlets in the print, radio, television, and Internet media, and nationally televised debates are held, thus enabling the various political parties and election blocs to compete on a level playing field and the voters to acquire objective information about the candidates;

Whereas a flawed election process, which contravenes commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on democracy and the conduct of elections, could potentially slow Ukraine's efforts to integrate into Western institutions;

Whereas in recent years, incidents of government corruption and harassment of the media have raised concerns about the commitment of the Government of Ukraine to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law;

Whereas Ukraine, since its independence in 1991, has been one of the largest recipients of United States foreign assistance;

Whereas \$154,000,000 in technical assistance to Ukraine was provided under Public Law 107-115 (the Kenneth M. Ludden Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, Fiscal Year 2002), a \$16,000,000 reduction in funding from the previous fiscal year due to concerns about continuing setbacks to needed reform and the unresolved deaths of prominent dissidents and journalists, such as the case of Heorhiy Gongadze;

Whereas Public Law 107-115 requires a report by the Department of State on the progress by the Government of Ukraine in investigating and bringing to justice individuals responsible for the murders of Ukrainian journalists;

Whereas the Presidential election of 1999, according to the final report of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of OSCE on that election, failed to meet a significant number of OSCE election-related commitments;

Whereas according to the ODIHR report, during the 1999 Presidential election campaign, a heavy proincumbent bias was prevalent among the state-owned media outlets, and members of the media viewed as not in support of the President were subject to harassment by government authorities, while proincumbent campaigning by state administration and public officials was widespread and systematic;

Whereas the Law on Elections of People's Deputies of Ukraine, signed by President Leonid Kuchma on October 30, 2001, which was cited in a report of the ODIHR dated November 26, 2001, as making improvements in Ukraine's electoral code and providing safeguards to meet Ukraine's commitments on democratic elections, does not include a role for domestic nongovernmental organizations to monitor elections;

Whereas according to international media experts, the Law on Elections defines the conduct of an election campaign in an imprecise manner which could lead to arbitrary sanctions against media operating in Ukraine;

Whereas the Ukrainian Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) on December 13, 2001, rejected a draft Law on Political Advertising and Agitation, which would have limited free

speech in the campaign period by giving too many discretionary powers to government bodies, and posed a serious threat to the independent media;

Whereas the Department of State has dedicated \$4,700,000 in support of monitoring and assistance programs for the 2002 parliamentary elections;

Whereas the process for the 2002 parliamentary elections has reportedly been affected by violations by many parties during the period prior to the official start of the election campaign on January 1, 2002; and

Whereas monthly reports for November and December of 2001 released by the Committee on Voters of Ukraine (CVU), an indigenous, nonpartisan, nongovernment organization that was established in 1994 to monitor the conduct of national election campaigns and balloting in Ukraine, cited five major types of violations of political rights and freedoms during the precampaign phase of the parliamentary elections, including—

- (1) use of government position to support particular political groups;
- (2) government pressure on the opposition and on the independent media;
- (3) free goods and services given by many political groups in order to sway voters;
- (4) coercion to join political parties and pressure to contribute to election campaigns; and
- (5) distribution of anonymous and compromising information about political opponents;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) acknowledges the strong relationship between the United States and Ukraine since Ukraine's independence more than 10 years ago, while understanding that Ukraine can only become a full partner in Western institutions when it fully embraces democratic principles;

(2) expresses its support for the efforts of the Ukrainian people to promote democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights in Ukraine;

(3) urges the Government of Ukraine to enforce impartially its newly adopted election law, including provisions calling for—

- (A) the transparency of election procedures;
- (B) access for international election observers;
- (C) multiparty representation on election commissions;
- (D) equal access to the media for all election participants;
- (E) an appeals process for electoral commissions and within the court system; and
- (F) administrative penalties for election violations;

(4) urges the Government of Ukraine to meet its commitments on democratic elections, as delineated in the 1990 Copenhagen Document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), with respect to the campaign period and election day, and to address issues identified by the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of OSCE in its final report on the 1999 Presidential election, such as state interference in the campaign and pressure on the media; and

(5) calls upon the Government of Ukraine to allow election monitors from the ODIHR, other participating states of OSCE, and private institutions and organizations, both foreign and domestic, access to all aspects of the parliamentary election process according to international practices, including—

- (A) access to political events attended by the public during the campaign period;
- (B) access to observe voting and counting procedures at polling stations and electoral

commission meetings on election day, including procedures to release election results on a district-by-district basis as they become available; and

(C) access to observe postelection tabulation of results and processing of election challenges and complaints.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and at the outset, I would like to recognize some exemplary students from Hamilton High School West and Vicki Schoeb, their dedicated teacher, and thank them for being here to observe the workings of the Hill, especially the proceedings of the House. They are very much welcomed to this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, today the House moves to the timely consideration of H. Res. 339, which urges the Government of the Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to the March 31 parliamentary elections. I would like to thank our majority leader, the gentleman from Texas, (Mr. ARMEY), for his commitment to schedule this timely and important resolution this week so that it happens before and so that, hopefully, it will have some impact on the proceedings.

I was pleased to be one of the original sponsors of this resolution which acknowledges the strong relationship between the United States and Ukraine, urges the Ukrainian Government to enforce impartially its new election law, and urges the Ukrainian Government to meet its OSCE commitments on democratic elections. I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, the Helsinki Commission, which I chair, has a long-standing record of support for human rights and democratic development in Ukraine. Commission staff will be observing the upcoming elections, as they have done for virtually every election in Ukraine since 1990. The stakes in the Ukrainian elections are high both in terms of the outcome and as an indication of the Ukrainian Government's commitment towards democratic development and integration into Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to underscore the reason for this congressional interest in Ukraine. The clear and simple reason: An independent, democratic, and economically stable Ukraine is vital to the well being of all Ukrainians to the stability and security of Europe; and we want to encourage Ukraine in recognizing its own often-stated goal of integration into Europe.

Despite the positive changes that have occurred in the Ukraine since independence in 1991, including the economic growth over the last 2 years, Ukraine is still undergoing a difficult

path towards transition. The pace of that transition has been distressing, slowed by insufficient progress in respect for the rule of law, especially by the presence of widespread corruption, which continues to exact a considerable toll on the Ukrainian people. They deserve better, Mr. Speaker, than what they have gotten.

Another source of frustration is the still-unresolved case of murdered investigative journalist, Heorhiy Gongadze. And let me say one thing about him, as well as his widow. Last year, at the OSCE parliamentary assembly which I led, to Paris, my colleagues will remember that we honored him posthumously for his great work and because he paid the ultimate price for his convictions—death.

The flawed investigations of this case and the case of another murdered Ukrainian journalist, Ihor Aleksandrov, call into question Ukraine's commitment to the rule of law. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that going on into the next weeks and months the Helsinki Commission will continue its vigilance. We plan on holding hearings to look into this even further, hopefully keeping pressure on the Ukrainian Government simply to do the right thing.

There have also been a number of disturbing cases of violence and threats of violence. For example, 78-year-old Iryna Senyk, a former political prisoner and poetess, who was campaigning for the pro-reform party, our Ukraine bloc, was badly beaten by unknown assailants.

□ 1645

Such unchecked violence has created an uncertain atmosphere.

Most of independent Ukraine's elections have met international democratic standards for elections. The 1999 presidential elections were more problematic, and the OSCE Election Mission Report on these elections asserted that they "failed to meet a significant number of the OSCE election-related commitments."

Mr. Speaker, it remains an open question as to whether the March 31 elections will be a step forward for Ukraine. With less than 2 weeks until election day, there are some discouraging indications, credible reports of various violations of the election law, including, one, campaigning by officials or use of state resources to support certain blocs or candidates; second, the denial of public facilities and services to candidates, blocs or parties; three, governmental pressure on certain parties, candidates and media outlets; and, four, a pro-government bias in the public media, especially the government's main television network, UT-1.

Mr. Speaker, these actions are inconsistent with Ukraine's freely undertaken OSCE commitments and undermine its reputation with respect to human rights and democracy. A democratic election process is a must in so-

lidifying Ukraine's democratic credentials and the confidence of its citizens and in its stated desire to integrate with the West.

During his visit to Ukraine last week, the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Adrian Severin, expressed concern over the mistrust in the election process among certain candidates as well as a general skepticism as to whether or not the elections would be truly free and fair, and encouraged Ukrainian officials to take quick measures to ensure that it is a free and fair election and that the outcome is credible.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the summary of the most recent Long Term Observation Report on the Ukrainian elections prepared by the nonpartisan Committee of Voters of Ukraine, be submitted for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Chair must remind the Member that the rules do not permit references to or introductions of persons in the galleries.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 339 and compliment the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his cosponsorship of this important resolution, for his passionate statement on the floor today, and for his work behind the scenes to get this resolution on the floor today. It was not easy to do. We were running short on time. This is the last week of our session before the Ukrainian parliamentary elections on March 31, and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) worked with dispatch and effectiveness behind the scenes. I am sure that the freedom-loving people of Ukraine are glad that the gentleman did, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) of the Committee on International Relations and subcommittee chair, the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), for their commitment to move this bill forward. There were several bumps in the road, but cooperation carried the day. We kept the bill in a strong and effective form, and I compliment all on the majority side for bringing this resolution forward.

I certainly compliment the gentleman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), co-chair with the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) of the Ukrainian Caucus in the House. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is the prime sponsor of this important legislation.

We are all here today to promote this legislation, which urges the Government of the Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair parliamentary election on March 31. The resolution also urges the Government of Ukraine to implement basic tools in order to ensure free and fair elections,

including a transparency of election procedures, access for international election observers, multiparty representation on election commissions, and equal access to the media for all election candidates.

Mr. Speaker, this is the third parliamentary election in the Ukraine since they gained their independence 10 years ago. It is the most critical. This is a big deal in the Ukraine. If they fail to continue to move forward with democratic reforms, if this is not a fair and free election, it will be a major setback to the cause of democracy in Ukraine.

It is very appropriate for this government, as friendly as we are with the people and the Government of Ukraine, to urge that the government in Ukraine do everything in its power to ensure the fairness and openness of this election process.

Ukraine has come a long way in the last 10 years. Its economy grew more than 6 percent last year. It has voluntarily given up the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world, and has consistently sought to eliminate its existing stockpile of strategic missiles. There are basic political reforms under way in the country, and we have friendly relations with the Ukraine and we want those relations to continue to be as friendly and supportive as possible.

But significant challenges remain. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and others have indicated the challenges that we have. There are restrictions on basic democratic freedoms in the country. The nuclear plants I mentioned are in desperate need of appropriate clean up. The media suffers from blatant government harassment and pressure, and government corruption runs rampant.

There have been a number of activities and accusations involving the government that are terribly disturbing. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) has talked about the unsolved murder of the brave journalist Heorhiy Gongadze in September 2000, and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and I participated in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe held last July in Paris in which the OSCE awarded a prize to the widow of Mr. Gongadze in honor of his great service and the sacrifice he made in support of freedom of the press.

I, as does the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), remember well the passionate speech that Mrs. Gongadze made in Paris a year ago. I am happy to tell the gentleman from New Jersey that Mrs. Gongadze visited my district this past weekend and spoke again with great passion at the Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center of Greater Philadelphia on a panel called to discuss the importance of the Ukrainian elections identified as "Ukraine at a Crossroads"; and her passion for democratic reforms remains unabated, as is her desire, as is

ours, to determine and hold accountable those that murdered her husband.

The OSCE, through their Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, has issued a final report on Ukraine's most recent national election, the presidential election of 1999, and indicates that that election was marred by violations of Ukrainian election law and failed to meet a number of OSCE election commitments. There was state interference with the campaign and government pressure on the media.

This month's election has been reviewed ahead of time. There is a group called the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, the leading Ukrainian watchdog group on elections; and they have reported numerous violations in the run-up to the 2002 parliamentary election. So the challenge is still present. This is a very important watershed election in Ukraine. They have got to get this right. They cannot slip back and repeat the mistakes of the 1999 presidential election. They must continue to move forward; and it is very appropriate for this Congress, this House, to urge the Government of Ukraine to run as fair and open an election as possible.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine strives to realize a more robust democracy, and it needs our encouragement and support. It has both, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 338, the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for his comments. The gentleman's statement was right on point.

I think it is important to underscore the good work that the Committee of Voters of Ukraine are actually doing. Between February 23 and March 10, 225 long-term observers visited 622 cities and 712 political party branches. They attended 578 events conducted by political groups. They are making a Herculean effort to ensure that the upcoming elections are free and fair and impartial. They deserve our highest support and praise and congratulations for being so committed to fair and free elections in Ukraine. The Committee is comprised of true patriots of Ukraine. They are brave and resourceful and they deserve the full support of every Member of this body.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the summary of the Long Term

Observation Report of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine.

SUMMARY

In October 2001, the Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU) began its long-term observation of the 2002 parliamentary election process. CVU is a non-partisan citizens' election monitoring organization with 160 branches throughout the Ukraine. CVU will report regularly until the March 31, 2002 elections.

Between February 23 and March 10, 225 long-term observers visited 622 cities and 712 political party branches, and attended 578 events conducted by political groups. CVU observed the same kinds of violations as in the previous three-week period. Some types of violations decreased in number, while others increased.

Each time a problem was reported to an observer, the head of the regional CVU organization called the individual making the report to verify it and obtain details. In many cases, witnesses are reluctant to talk about violations, fearing retribution from their employers or others.

CVU has noticed a few positive developments since its last report. In the past three weeks, voter education programs in the mass media have become more robust. Likewise, election commissioners are receiving practical training from non-governmental organizations. Some television stations have also been showing debates between various political leaders.

Nonetheless, the pre-election period continues to be marked by substantial violations of Ukrainian law. The main types of offenses recorded by CVU during the last week of February and first two weeks of March were:

Campaigning by state officials or use of state resources to support favored political candidates and groups. The block "Za Edu" (For a United Ukraine) was the principal, but not exclusive beneficiary of this support.

Government pressure on certain political parties, candidates, and media outlets.

Interference in election campaigns through violence, threats of violence or destruction of campaign materials.

Illegal campaign practices by candidates offering free goods and services to voters and distributing unregistered campaign materials.

Executive branch interference in the election process has decreased somewhat since the previous three week period, although it remains a key feature of the electoral environment. As before, the principal beneficiary of this assistance is the bloc "Za Edu" and its candidates in single mandate constituencies. Much of this interference takes place openly; in many cases, government officials involve themselves in the electoral process in an apparent attempt to win favor with their superiors. Although CVU has witnessed fewer instances of this kind of violation, this does not necessarily suggest that executive branch officials are behaving more impartially. In many cases, they have simply shifted their attention away from the parliamentary elections to oblast (state) and local races, which are not covered in this report.

Conversely, legal provisions requiring free and transparent campaigning are being ignored with increasing frequency. Criminal interference in campaigns has gone up; in turn, parties and single-mandate candidates are breaking the election law more often.

Some candidates, parties, and citizens whose rights have been infringed are beginning to lodge formal complaints with election commissions and the courts. Some commissions have responded by warning parties and candidates accused of campaign violations to respect the law. No state officials

has been punished for abuse of office, however. While CVU has uncovered no evidence that state interference in the election has been ordered by senior government authorities, neither have these authorities punished any accused lawbreakers or acted preemptively to ensure neutrality on the part of their subordinates.

ELECTION COMMISSIONS

The country's central and constituency election commissions appear to be functioning relatively well. Most are following proper procedure and trying to respond to appeals in a timely manner. Where problems with district commissions do exist, they are more likely to be found in eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.

The formation of polling-place election commissions (PECs) has not gone smoothly, however. Instead, this process has been marked by confusion and numerous violations of proper procedure. Detailed information on the make-up of the country's roughly 33,000 PECs was supposed to be released by February 27. Article 21.13 of the election law, but this requirement was not observed in most areas. Hence, an analysis of the make-up of the commissions is not possible at this time.

CVU is concerned that the provisions of Ukraine's election law that provide for multi-partisan representation on election commissions have not been respected in spirit. In many areas, local executive bodies have taken advantage of the weaknesses of political parties to appoint election commissioners who nominally represent a party but who are, in practice, loyal to the local administration alone. CVU has witnessed numerous cases where election commissioners are unaware even of identity of the party they are supposed to represent. Clearly, a good deal of the blame for this problem also lies with the parties, which have been incapable of recruiting trusted members to serve as commissioners in many parts of the country.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and simply add that we take elections for granted in this country. We know how important they are, but we assume that they will be fair and open and transparent. We need to do everything in our power to encourage the same in the emerging democracies in Europe. Those countries, such as Ukraine, emerging from the tyranny of the Soviet bloc, for 10 years a new independence and freedom has been observed in Ukraine; but this election is of critical importance. They have got to get it right. We have to help them get it right, and this legislation is dedicated to that proposition.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for championing this very important resolution to put our Nation and the Congress on record in highest hopes that the elections this year in the Ukraine will ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to March 31. Their parliamentary elections will be held on that date. Of course the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), and the gentleman

from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) have traveled together to that part of the world and have made such a difference in carrying the banner of freedom's institutions into regions of our world where heretofore people had not been able to exercise their full democratic rights.

Having just returned from the Ukraine myself and having had the really historic opportunity to meet with nearly 300 of their younger citizens, and people representing non-governmental organizations that are monitoring the elections and trying to produce information so people know what they are voting about, we can see a change, a glacial change occurring there for the better. But without question, people of that nation must feel free and unintimidated as they go to the polls, and they must understand what the various candidates' platforms are; and it is safe to say that that kind of transparency and information has not been easily available.

Sometimes it is hard here, but there the systems are just not robust. It is not easy to understand how a party slate or individuals on it might actually support a certain program, and it is hard to distinguish among the major blocs and the people in those blocs. I would add an encouraging word for passage of this resolution and a great hope that the Government of Ukraine will ensure that the election process is open. Let flourish those who are attempting to help people understand the issues and understand what those who are running actually will champion in their own programs once elected to RADA or local office. This kind of information should be more broadly available. The Internet should be allowed to function so people will share information across regions and become more informed about what their vote actually means.

The task before the Ukrainian people of building a more open and free society is enormous. That is true in Russia also and many of the former republics of the Soviet Union.

□ 1700

I know that I detected, especially among the young, such a great hope, such a feeling that they had the future of the country in their hands. They are looking for us to pass this resolution to give a signal that our country stands and walks alongside those who are trying to build more open and free societies. In fact many young people who are 21 years of age are running for office in some of the towns, or are trying to run for parliament, to try to change the laws in order to make property traded freely with a mortgage system. They are fighting for laws so loans can be made by a regular bank and have a free credit system established. They want an educational system that is available to all so students are able to learn critical thinking methods. All of these challenges lie ahead of those young leaders.

And so to the young people in our country, I encourage them to pay attention to Ukraine, the most important nation in Central Europe. As it goes, so will the nations around it. I rise in very strong support of House Resolution 339 and want to thank so very much the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for bringing this to the attention of the entire world, indeed. We respectfully say to the people of Ukraine, vote, vote wisely, monitor the elections, help to move your country forward, as I know the hearts of your people tell you they want.

I express my fullest support for this resolution.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, a real leader on Ukrainian issues in the House. I compliment her on her remarks.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose H. Res. 339, a bill by the United States Congress which seeks to tell a sovereign nation how to hold its own elections. It seems the height of arrogance for us to sit here and lecture the people and government of Ukraine on what they should do and should not do in their own election process. One would have thought after our own election debacle in November 2000, that we would have learned how counterproductive and hypocritical it is to lecture other democratic countries on their electoral processes. How would members of this committee—or any American—react if countries like Ukraine demanded that our elections here in the United States conform to their criteria? So I think we can guess how Ukrainians feel about this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine has been the recipient of hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid from the United States. In fiscal year 2002 alone, Ukraine was provided \$154 million. Yet after all this money—which we were told was to promote democracy—and more than ten years after the end of the Soviet Union, we are told in this legislation that Ukraine has made little if any progress in establishing a democratic political system.

Far from getting more involved in Ukraine's electoral process, which is where this legislation leads us, the United States is already much too involved in the Ukrainian elections. The U.S. government has sent some \$4.7 million dollars to Ukraine for monitoring and assistance programs, including to train their electoral commission members and domestic monitoring organizations. There have been numerous reports of U.S.-funded non-governmental organizations in Ukraine being involved in pushing one or another political party. This makes it look like the United States is taking sides in the Ukrainian elections.

The legislation calls for the full access of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitors to all aspects of the parliamentary elections, but that organization has time and time again, from Slovakia to Russia and elsewhere, shown itself to be unreliable and politically biased. Yet the United States continues to fund and participate in OSCE activities. As British writer John Laughland observed this week in the Guardian newspaper, "Western election monitoring has become the political equivalent of an Arthur Andersen audit. This supposedly technical

process is now so corrupted by political bias that it would be better to abandon it. Only then will countries be able to elect their leaders freely." Mr. Speaker, I think this is advice we would be wise to heed.

Other aspects of this bill are likewise troubling. This bill seeks, from thousands of miles away and without any of the facts, to demand that the Ukrainian government solve crimes within Ukraine that have absolutely nothing to do with the United States. No one knows what happened to journalist Heorhiy Gongadze or any of the alleged murdered Ukrainian journalists, yet by adding it into this ill-advised piece of legislation we are sitting here suggesting that the government has something to do with the alleged murders. This meddling into the Ukrainian judicial system is inappropriate and counter-productive.

Mr. Speaker, we are legislators in the United States Congress. We are not in Ukraine. We have no right to interfere in the internal affairs of that country and no business telling them how to conduct their elections. A far better policy toward Ukraine would be to eliminate any U.S.-government imposed barrier to free trade between Americans and Ukrainians.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, since regaining its independence in 1991, Ukraine's democracy has made significant progress but has not been without its difficult periods. Nowhere has the integrity of the country's political system been more challenged than in its electoral process.

On March 31, Ukraine will hold its third election for parliament. This election will be a critical test of the strength of Ukraine's evolving democracy and its new election laws.

Given the importance of a strong and stable Ukraine in the region, the importance of our relations with Ukraine and our keen interest in Ukraine's continued emergence as a responsible, democratic member of the international community, we are naturally interested in the electoral process as well as progress the country has made in the areas of human rights, rule of law, freedom of expression and the strength of its democratic institutions.

In this context, the United States Congress, through H. Res. 339, expresses its interest in, and concerns for, a genuinely free and fair parliamentary election process which enables all the various political parties and election blocs to compete on a level playing field; allows the voters to acquire objective information about the political candidates; and expects all parties to the election to observe their own laws.

Historically, since 1991, elections in Ukraine have been marred by problems such as intimidation of journalists and opposition candidates; denial of access to the media; unbalanced news coverage; abuse of power and political position by government officials; and the illegal use of public funds. Today, we have received reports from Ukraine that the current election period has been beset by similar allegations of individuals or groups illegally trying to influence the outcome of the elections.

This is not to say that the overall electoral process is seriously flawed. The Ukraine parliament has passed a positive new election law. What H. Res. 339 does say, however, is that the reported abuses of the election law have to be stopped, that the government has the responsibility to enforce its election law fairly, and that every effort must be taken to

ensure that a free, fair and transparent election take place on March 31.

This resolution we are considering today does represent a genuine concern that the reported activities of some could cast a negative cloud over these elections and the entire democratic process in Ukraine.

The authors of this Resolution are to be congratulated for bringing these problems to our attention, and we hope the resolution is seen in a positive and constructive way inside Ukraine.

By addressing these concerns, Ukraine can only be better off and its democracy made stronger.

I urge passage of this resolution and reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be joined by my colleagues, Representatives JOSEPH HOFFFEL and CHRISTOPHER SMITH, in offering this important resolution. H. Res. 339 urges the Government of Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to its March 31 parliamentary elections.

Just over 10 years after gaining its independence from the Soviet bloc, Ukraine stands at a crossroads. On Sunday, March 31, Ukraine will hold its third parliamentary elections since becoming independent. It is widely believed that the outcome of the parliamentary elections will determine whether Ukraine continues to pursue democratic reforms, or experiences further political turmoil.

As a founding member and Co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I have watched the growth of this new nation with keen interest. Their path to democratization has not been easy. More troubling, however, has been a series of scandals involving government corruption over the past 2 years. In April 2001, I was troubled to learn about the Ukrainian Parliament's vote to remove reform-minded Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko. This change in government came in the midst of the ongoing political turmoil resulting from allegations over the involvement of President Leonid Kuchma in the case of murdered journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. Meanwhile, reports of government corruption and harassment of the media have raised concerns about the Ukrainian government's commitment to democratic principles. I have spoken out for a more democratic Ukraine and expressed my continued concern about the lack of progress in the Gongadze case and recent political instability.

According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' final report on Ukraine's most recent national election, the presidential election of 1999 was marred by violations of Ukrainian election law and failed to meet a significant number of OSCE election commitments. There is now concern that the 2002 parliamentary elections will be compromised by similar violations. Recent reports on the 2002 parliamentary elections released by the Committee on Voters of Ukraine (CVU), a leading Ukrainian watchdog group on elections, have cited numerous violations in the campaign process.

The intent of this resolution is to make the Government of Ukraine aware that the U.S. Congress is monitoring the conduct of the parliamentary election process closely, and will not just be focusing on Election Day results. My resolution urges the Government of Ukraine to enforce impartially the new election

law signed by President Kuchma in October. The resolution also urges the Government of Ukraine to meet its commitments on democratic elections and address issues identified by the OSCE in its final report on the 1999 elections, such as state interference in the campaign and pressure on the media. Finally, the resolution calls upon the Government of Ukraine to allow both domestic and international election monitors access to the parliamentary election process.

It is my hope that this resolution will send a clear message to the Government of Ukraine that the U.S. Congress will not simply rubber stamp funding requests for Ukraine without also considering the serious issues involved in Ukraine's democratic development. In particular, the conduct of the 2002 parliamentary elections will have a major impact on funding considerations when Members of Congress are again confronted with the task of blancing their support for the U.S.-Ukrainian relationship with Ukraine's progress in making democratic reforms.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H. Res. 339, and I encourage the Government of Ukraine to conduct a democratic, transparent, and fair parliamentary election process on March 31.

Mr. HOFFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 339, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REPORT ON NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ANGOLA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-190)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report prepared by my Administration on the national emergency with respect to the