

State mutual aid systems for dealing with national emergencies; and authorizing the National Fire Academy to train firefighters to respond to acts of terrorism and other national emergencies.

This legislation enjoys wide bipartisan support and the endorsement of many national fire groups including the Congressional Fire Services Institute, National Fire Protection Association, and the International Association of Firefighters and Fire Chiefs, among others. With the tools this bill provides, I am confident the USFA will continue to be recognized as the preeminent authority in fire education and fire prevention. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support S. 1152, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the important work done by U.S. Fire Administration R. David Paulson and his dedicated staff in Emmitsburg, MD and Washington, DC.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 established the United States Fire Administration and its National Fire Academy to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and related emergencies, through leadership, advocacy, coordination and support.

Since that time, through data collection, public education, research and training efforts, USFA has helped reduce fire deaths by at least half—making our communities and our citizens safer. For the past three years, the Fire Administrator has been tasked with administering the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, created by Congress to adequately train and equip our career and volunteer firefighters across the country.

This \$750 million program is vital to our firefighters, too many of whom risk their lives on a daily basis to protect our homes and our families without the modern equipment and advanced training they deserve. The Fire Grant program has succeeded at getting much-needed dollars to fire departments in fair, efficient manner, and USFA has been widely praised for its work in administering the program.

Authority for the Fire Grant program has now been moved to the Department of Homeland Security, and Members of the Fire Caucus, and all supporters of the fire community, will closely monitor the administration of the Grant program to guarantee that it continues to meet the needs of our fire departments.

Madam Speaker, this legislation also contains provisions important to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundations, which was established more than a decade ago through the leadership of Senator PAUL SARBANES to create an organization that would properly honor all of America's fallen fire heroes—and take care of the surviving families and loved ones as they cope with their grief and attempt to move on after their loss.

The Foundation carries out this mission with great compassion and dedication, and they have achieved a tremendous record of assisting the families of our fallen firefighters through the many programs, projects and activities they promote throughout the year. The provisions included in this legislation will allow the Foundation to continue, and to improve upon, the important work we have charged them to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this legislation, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1152.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY, ON NOVEMBER 15, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 453) condemning the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15, 2003, expressing condolences to the families of the individuals murdered and expressing sympathies to the individuals injured in the terrorist attacks, and standing in solidarity with Turkey in the fight against terrorism, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

Whereas in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15, 2003, two explosions, set off minutes apart during Sabbath morning services, devastated Neve Shalom, the city's largest synagogue, and the Beth Israel Synagogue, about three miles away;

Whereas more than 20 people, both Muslims and Jews, were killed, and more than 300 people, both Muslims and Jews, were wounded, in the bombing attacks on the synagogues;

Whereas on November 20, 2003, two bombs exploded at the Consulate of the United Kingdom in Istanbul and at the HSBC Bank;

Whereas among the more than 25 killed and 450 wounded in the November 20 bombing attacks on the consulate general and commercial buildings were Muslims and Christians—Turks, British diplomats, and visitors to the Turkish Republic;

Whereas the United Kingdom is an ally of the United States and Turkey in the global war on terrorism;

Whereas the acts of murder committed on November 15 and 20, 2003, in Istanbul, Turkey, were cowardly and brutal manifestations of international terrorism;

Whereas the Government of Turkey immediately condemned the terrorist attacks in the strongest possible terms and has vowed to bring the perpetrators to just at all costs;

Whereas the United States, the United Kingdom, and Turkey equally abhor and denounce these hateful, repugnant, and loathsome acts of terrorism;

Whereas with anti-Semitic activities escalating the safety and security of Jewish people throughout the world is a matter of serious concern;

Whereas since Turkey cherishes its traditions of hospitality and religious tolerance and in particular its history of more than five hundred years of good Jewish-Muslim relations, the attacks on synagogues and consular premises came as a special shock to the Turkish people and to their friends throughout the world;

Whereas the United States and Turkey are allied by shared values and a common interest in building a stable, peaceful, and prosperous world;

Whereas Turkey, a predominantly Muslim nation with a secular government, has close relations with Israel and is also the only predominantly Muslim member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; and

Whereas the acts of murder committed on November 15 and 20, 2003 show again that terrorism respects neither boundaries nor borders:

Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives

(1) condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15 and 20, 2003;

(2) expresses its condolences to the families of the individuals murdered in the terrorist attacks, expresses its sympathies to the individuals injured in the attacks, and conveys its hope for the rapid and complete recovery of all such injured individuals;

(3) expresses its condolences to the people and government of the Turkish Republic and of the United Kingdom over the losses they have suffered; and

(4) expresses its solidarity with the United Kingdom, the Turkish Republic, and all other countries which stand united against terrorism and which work together to bring to justice the perpetrators of these and other terrorist attacks.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

Madam Speaker, the resolution before us condemns the terrorist attacks in Istanbul last Saturday as well as yesterday morning. I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my friend, for proffering this resolution and for the prompt consideration that is being given to it by our leadership in scheduling it very quickly before the body today.

This resolution conveys our deepest and heartfelt sympathy to the victims and their families and states that the United States stands in solidarity with the Turkish people in the fight against terrorism. These attacks, Madam Speaker, bear all the hallmarks of al Qaeda, and that terrorist group has claimed responsibility for these cruel and cowardly acts.

This demonstrates, once again, that the target of global terrorists is not just the United States of America, but all those who reject their hateful vision of a clash of civilizations and governments by religious extremism.

I thought President Bush in the United Kingdom the other day said it so well when he said, "I want to express my deep sympathy for the loss of life in Turkey. The nature of the terrorist enemy is evident once again. We see their contempt, their utter contempt, for innocent life. They hate freedom," the President went on. "They hate free nations. Today, once again, we saw their ambitions of murder. The cruelty is part of their strategy. The terrorists hope to intimidate; they hope to demoralize. They particularly want to intimidate and demoralize free nations. They're not going to succeed."

Madam Speaker, despite some significant human rights issues, and no one has been more of a critic of Turkey than I have in the past, although they are making some progress, despite all of that, Turkey remains one of the few successful democracies in the Muslim world, with a tradition of religious tolerance. The Turkish Republic is an example of how a predominantly Muslim country can enjoy a secular, democratic government. Turkey has shown that the Islamic faith of its citizens and a secular democracy can flourish side by side.

By targeting synagogues and Turkish citizens of the Jewish faith on Saturday, the terrorists attacked the notion that Muslims can live in peace and harmony with other faiths. It was a profoundly anti-Semitic act. The terrorists know that the successful example of Turkey lays bear the emptiness of their own hateful vision. It is working in Turkey, and yet now they are trying to give a different impression to the world.

By targeting the British Consulate General and a leading British bank, these terrorists viciously illustrated that all of our allies and their targets must remain united with our allies in the fight against terrorism.

Madam Speaker, these contemptible acts killed almost 50 people, including the British Consul General in Istanbul, and injured more than 750 innocent people. Our deepest condolences go out to their families and to their nations.

Turkey has been a strong American ally, as we all know, the underbelly of NATO for more than 50 years. By agreeing to this resolution, we affirm our mutual commitment to that common defense.

I would remind my colleagues that after the September 11 of 2001 attacks, NATO invoked its collective defense clause, declaring that the al Qaeda attacks in the United States were attacks against the entire alliance.

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I thought British Prime Minister Tony Blair summed it up very well when he said, "And when they say is this an attack directed against our alliance, indeed, it is directed against anybody who stands in the way of that fanaticism" he went on to say, "That is why our response has got to be to

say to them as clearly as we possibly can, you are not going to defeat us because our will to defend what we believe is, in actuality, and in the end, stronger, better, more determined than your will to inflict damage on innocent people."

Madam Speaker, let me conclude by saying this: Turkey and the United Kingdom both played important roles to drive al Qaeda from its base in Afghanistan and to replace the Taliban government that harbored those terrorists. They were the first two countries to command the International Security Assistance Force, which has stabilized the Kabul region and supported the Karzai government. Turkey and the United Kingdom stood by the United States when our Nation was the target of global terrorism. By passing this timely resolution today in a bipartisan way, Democrats, Republicans, moderates, liberals and conservatives, we affirm our determination to stand by our longtime allies and to defeat the terrorists who bear the guilt for these highly reprehensible acts.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I am strongly in support of this resolution.

First, let me pay tribute to my dear friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), for initiating this important legislation and to recognize the contributions of my friends, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH). I particularly want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for being so gracious late yesterday afternoon in expediting the handling of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, at least 50 people are dead and over 700 are injured in a sickening and appalling wave of suicide bombings in Istanbul over this past week. The attacks targeted Jewish places of worship and British governmental and business institutions; but the overwhelming majority of the victims are Muslim Turks, proof positive of the total cynicism and utter phoniness of these so-called Islamist assassins.

This is not just a war on the Jews, though it is also that. It is not just a war on the British or on our own country, although it is that. It is a war on the entire civilized and democratic world and its values. It is now clear that al Qaeda and its Turkish supporters have declared war on the democratic Republic of Turkey as part of that overall assault. Al Qaeda recognizes that the existence of Turkey, 99 percent Muslim, pro-Western, a secular democracy on the frontiers of the Western world, makes a mockery of al Qaeda's religious extremism. These terrorists want to roll back Western values by destabilizing and destroying Turkish democracy.

Madam Speaker, the Turkish Government has behaved admirably in this

dark hour. It condemned the action and it vowed to catch the perpetrators, and I have no doubt that they shall. Now, the hard work of finding these terrorists, destroying their cells, and preventing future attacks begins.

The Turkish Government and the Turkish people should know that the American people will be steadfast in our support of them in this dark hour. All civilized nations must do likewise. The Turkish Interior Minister is correct to dismiss what he calls the crocodile tears of those who express condolences, but do nothing to fight terrorism.

Madam Speaker, we mourn the deaths, we pray for the wounded, and our hearts go out to the families of all of the victims. And to all the citizens of Istanbul and all of Turkey whose lives have been so brutally violated, let us honor them by joining with Turkey and with all who believe in freedom to fight the extremist criminals who want to end our way of life. They will fail and we shall prevail. I strongly support this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to do likewise.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 6 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my good friend and the author of this resolution.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my good friend of long-standing here in the House of Representatives and a vigorous fighter for human rights and the protector of the rights of people who are set upon as this despicable act has done. I would also like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my friend, and have him to know that I, along with him, am deeply saddened because so many of our colleagues that we serve with in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe were affected. I have contacted Bruce George, our President's office from the U.K., and Dr. Yaleintas, or Professor Yaleintas, and expressed our condolences to them.

Most importantly, I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE), as the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) has already, for expediting this matter for us and giving us an opportunity to go to the majority leader and the minority leader; and I thank them for expediting this process. The majority leader's office has been extremely helpful in that regard.

It would be remiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), who is my good friend and my soulmate geographically in Florida, as well as in our friendship; the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) from the majority side, my good friends that I have gotten to know through our efforts, not only in this resolution, but others; and also the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY); and countless others who have had direct involvement.

I had the good fortune less than 2 months ago to travel to Turkey with Brent Scowcroft, and it was the most illuminating and enlightening experience. It was not my first visit to Turkey; I have been there now a total of seven times.

On November 15, 2003, two explosions set off minutes apart devastated Nev Shalom Synagogue, Istanbul's largest synagogue and symbolic center to the city's 25,000-member Jewish community, and the Beth Israel Synagogue about 3 miles away. In addition, yesterday, explosions hit the Turkish headquarters of the London-based HSBC Bank and the British Consulate General, killing at least 26 people, including Roger Short, someone that I knew and the British Consul-General, and wounding over 450.

In the span of 5 days, terror claimed over 50 lives and injured more than 800 people in Turkey.

The House of Representatives gathers here today united in expressing that we abhor and denounce these hateful, repugnant, and loathsome acts of terrorism. We gather here to, in unison, make sure that the world understands our outrage by this week's attacks.

The United States is determined to stand by Turkey in the fight against the scourge of terrorism. The acts of murder committed in Istanbul were a cowardly and brutal manifestation of the moral vacuum directing the disease of international terrorism. My and all of our heartfelt condolences go out to the victims and their families.

Madam Speaker, the United States and Turkey are natural allies based on our shared values and common interests in building a stable, peaceful, and prosperous world. Moreover, as a predominantly Muslim nation with a secular government, Turkey is an example, as the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) has pointed out, of a successful secular Muslim democracy. Turkey is a pivotal showcase of the Muslim world that fundamentalists hate. Turkey is an ally of the United States and a friend of Israel and is NATO's only predominantly Muslim member. It has supported the war against terrorism, commandeering and offering peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan and offering peacekeepers for Iraq.

Terrorism respects neither boundaries nor borders. Instead, it intends to harm every nation that respects democracy, freedom, equality, and the rule of law.

These acts further demonstrate that the war on terrorism is not a war between civilizations. The attacks in Turkey were perpetrated by Muslim terrorists against a predominantly Muslim nation. They suggest that this is not a religious war, but one that is based on politics, culture, and our way of life.

Madam Speaker, I conclude by once again denouncing these vial, anti-Semitic, and anti-Muslim attacks against men, women, and children and express-

ing my sympathies to the individuals and families of the victims. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD), my good friend and colleague.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Madam Speaker, I think it is certainly appropriate that we at this time are speaking about the nation of Turkey. As the gentleman from Florida so eloquently stated, Turkey has been a loyal ally of the U.S., a member of NATO, a Muslim secular country that is a great model for a Muslim democracy. Turkey has played a vital role and I think can play a much more vital role in helping with peace in the Middle East. They have a great relationship with the country of Israel. They have a large Jewish population and, as I said earlier, it is a 99 percent Muslim country.

We all abhor violence of any kind, and these acts of terrorism that seem to become more frequent throughout the world are causing all of us great heartache: the families that are involved, the suffering that is involved, the senselessness of the acts.

So I stand here today simply to express my condolences to the families in Turkey, to the nation of Turkey, and remind the American people, once again, that Turkey is a valuable and important ally of the United States. We have common interests, and I am quite confident that our nations will continue to work for peace in the Middle East and, by acts of goodness and kindness, will eventually be able to overcome these random acts of violence, this planned terrorism around the world.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY), a distinguished member of the Committee on International Relations and a steadfast fighter against global terrorism.

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for giving me the opportunity to speak and share my thoughts with my colleagues, and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for being stellar on this issue.

I rise today, Madam Speaker, in strong support of House Resolution 453, condemning the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15 of this year and expressing my sincerest condolences to the victims and their families.

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This past Saturday, as they gathered together to observe the holy Sabbath, two explosions devastated the Jewish community in Istanbul, Turkey. The first occurred at the city's largest synagogue and symbolic center to the city's 25,000-member Jewish community and the second at Beth Israel synagogue about three miles away.

More than 20 people lost their lives and more than 300 were injured as ter-

rorism, yet again, tore the fabric of civilized society and shattered innocent lives. Most of those killed in the blasts, ironically, were Muslim Turks who lived or worked near the synagogues who were passing by when the bombs exploded. This is not the first time that al-Qaeda has targeted the Jewish institutions. In 2002, they killed 12 people in an attack at a synagogue in Tunisia.

The Turkish Government immediately condemned the terrorist attacks in the strongest possible terms and I am pleased that the Turkish people have reacted in strong solidarity with the Nation's small and long-established Jewish community.

Madam Speaker, as a youngster growing up in Las Vegas, I belonged to the Jewish youth groups, and occasionally the Anti-Defamation League would bring in films of the liberation of the concentration camps in World War II. I cannot minimize the impact of those films and their impact on my life then and now. And I would sit there and watch the films and ask myself how could one human being do such a horrific thing to another, and how is it that more people throughout the world did not stand up and vilify this horrific act.

I am here in the United States of America because my grandparents walked across Europe in order to come to this country to escape the persecution that 6 million of my fellow Jews were unable to escape in World War II. For me to have the opportunity to be on the floor of the House of Representatives and not condemn this horrific act of terrorism would be a shame and an insult to not only the 20 people that lost their lives recently in Istanbul, but the millions of other people across the world, Jewish and not Jewish, who have lost their lives senselessly and needlessly to terrorists.

I call upon my colleagues to join us, and vote for this resolution taking a strong stance against bigotry and intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism, violence and terrorism. These are very difficult and challenging times that we are living through. But it is incumbent upon all Americans, we in the House of Representatives leading the way, to stand up and condemn this sort of activity before it becomes pervasive and matter of fact.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), my good friend, a distinguished member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I want to also thank my good friend and close associate, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), and my colleagues on the Congressional Turkey Caucus for initiating this vitally important resolution condemning the horrific terrorist attacks in Turkey over the past week. I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE), the gentleman from California (Ranking Member LANTOS),

the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for especially expeditiously bringing this very important resolution to the Floor.

I rise to express my most profound and heartfelt condolences to the Turkish people and to the Turkish Government on the terrorist attacks in Istanbul and pledge the support of each Member of Congress as we listen to this debate in the full Congress to bring to justice those individuals responsible for these heinous acts. Americans know all too well the horrors of terror, and today we mourn with the Turkish and British people for this senseless loss of life.

Madam Speaker, the recent bombings in Turkey epitomize the fact that terrorism knows no boundaries and does not distinguish between religion, nation or culture. What these attacks demonstrate the common thread of terror facing the United States, Turkey, and our allies throughout the world. They also serve as a solemn reminder of our Nation's shared principles of democracy, freedom, tolerance, and the pursuit of peace.

For over 50 years Turkey has stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States as a valued strategic partner, Nato ally, and friend. It is in this same spirit of partnership that the United States and the American people stand today with the Turkish people, ready to assist in punishing those murderers who carried out these cowardly actions. Together we will continue our pursuit of justice so that we may ensure that all victims of terror, whether in Turkey, the United States or elsewhere throughout the world, will not have died in vain.

As the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) stated earlier, I too have had the privilege of visiting Turkey on many occasions. The Turkish people are a warm and caring people. They have great national pride, they are patriots. That will continue. And we, the American people, must continue to assist them in their pursuit of terrorism within their boundaries.

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

Madam Speaker, before yielding back our time, I would merely like to mention that a number of us coming back from Baghdad were in Ankara, Turkey's capital, just a couple of weeks ago. We had a lengthy and significant discussion with the distinguished Foreign Minister of Turkey. We reaffirmed, as did our Turkish counterparts, our firm commitment to fight terrorism globally. These tragic events in Istanbul since our visit to Ankara underscore the urgency and the importance of our stand. I call on all of our colleagues to support this very important resolution.

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, this Member, as a cosponsor of the resolution and a committed friend of the Turkish people, rises in strong support of H. Res. 453. This Member would like to thank the distinguished gen-

tleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) for introducing this very timely resolution. Mr. HASTINGS has worked closely with Members and staff of the Committee on International Relations and its Europe Subcommittee—including the distinguished ranking members of the full committee and subcommittee, Mr. LANTOS and Mr. WEXLER—to craft the resolution that is before us this morning.

This Member would also like to thank the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his leadership on this issue and his very thoughtful remarks. Mr. SMITH is the leader of the U.S. delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and Mr. HASTINGS is an active member of that delegation, and this Member commends them for their work.

Madam Speaker, this Member serves as President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) and Chairman of the House Delegation. Though such assemblies, Members get to know their counterparts from other nations first-hand and to visit these nations to understand more about these lands and their people.

This Member already has written to Mr. Vahit Erdem, the chairman of the Turkish delegation, expressing our deepest sympathies to the Turkish parliament and the Turkish people, particularly the families of the victims.

One year ago, the NATO PA met in Istanbul, in a conference center overlooking the Bosphorus straits, separating Europe from Asia. From our hotel rooms, we could look south to see the Taksim neighborhood that was devastated by the bombing of the British Consulate General yesterday. Indeed, several of us had the opportunity at night to stroll the busy, historic streets of that district.

As we discussed the key issues in the transAtlantic relationship, we also had an opportunity to experience the great city of Istanbul, one of the most historically important cities in the world. Istanbul literally lies between Europe and Asia, the only city in the world on two continents, and its history is that of a bridge between east and west.

The reprehensible terrorist attacks of last Saturday, directed against Turks of the Jewish faith, were an attempt to directly assault the religious tolerance that has been a hallmark of the Turkish Republic. Yesterday's attacks, against the British Consulate and a British bank, were an attack on the strong ties between Turkey and its allies in Europe and in North America and on the long and extraordinary transAtlantic relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States of America by further inflaming the British critics of the Iraq war and our transAtlantic relationship.

Sadly, they remind us that international terrorism remains a grave threat to all nations of the North Atlantic Alliance. Two years ago, when NATO invoked Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, both Turkey and the United Kingdom showed that they were prepared to play a leading role in the war against terrorism, both alternatively taking the command of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. We remember their clear and strongly anti-terrorism, pro-American response to the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States, and in this resolution today, we pledge our support to Turkey in response to this latest terrorist atrocity.

NATO already has declared that the September 11, 2001, attacks by al Qaeda con-

stituted an attack on the entire Alliance. Likewise, these attacks on an ally are an attack on all allies. Article 5 has already been invoked against al Qaeda. As a result NATO today is in Afghanistan, working to defeat that terrorist organization and their Taliban allies.

In the words of Lord Robertson, the NATO secretary general: "If we fail, we will find Afghanistan on all of our doorsteps. Worse still, NATO's credibility will be shattered, along with that of every NATO government. Who will stand with us in the war against terror if we take on a commitment such as this and then fail to deliver?"

The bombings in Istanbul are a vicious reminder of the stakes in the global war on terrorism and the need to ensure that Afghanistan never again becomes a haven for those who seek to murder our people and destroy our societies. We all must provide the resources needed to win this war and protect our citizens.

Madam Speaker, in closing, this Member urges his colleague to pass this resolution.

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to offer my condolences to the Turkish people and the Turkish government for the horrific terrorist attacks in Istanbul on November 15 and 20.

As al Qaeda has proved again and again, they intend to fight this 21st Century's first global war against civilians and non-combatants. As we have proved again and again, we will fight this war wherever it flares up. And we will win, because we have the fortitude to do the right thing.

Turkey is one of our strongest allies in the fight on global terrorism—and has repeatedly stood by our side in NATO matters (as a NATO ally) and in the war on terror, in understated ways. I have a number of friends and people we know there, that I met on numerous House Armed Services Committee trips to visit NATO allies.

All South Texans condemn the cowardly and senseless killing of innocent people in Turkey, one of the finest examples of a democracy in practice, and one of the few Muslim nations to practice democracy.

We have shared principles of democracy, freedom, tolerance and the pursuit of peace—and today we stand with our Turkish friends. Those who opposed democracy will eventually learn that to kill democracy is to kill all those who love democracy. Al Qaeda doesn't have enough bombs to kill all those who love democratic principals around the world.

My family and I are praying for the families and victims injured and perished in this atrocity.

The United States Congress hereby offers our judgment that this attack was cowardly, and we stand with our Turkish friends in this hour of great loss.

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution condemning the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey on November 15 and 20, 2003. I wish to express my most sincere and heartfelt condolences to the Turkish government and the relatives of those killed or injured. My thoughts are with Turkey and its people in this time of sorrow.

If there is one thing these cowardly acts have demonstrated, it is that terrorism knows no borders. These catastrophic attacks were not just an attack on Turkey, but an attack on humanity and civilization. As Americans who have experienced terrorism firsthand, we share in Turkey's grief.

I am convinced that the United States must stand shoulder to shoulder with Turkey as it defends its safety and protects its liberty by bringing to justice those responsible for these heinous acts. Together, we must stand ready to provide any assistance deemed necessary to ensure that justice is served—not solely to account for the lives taken and injuries inflicted against the Turkish people, but in defense of freedom around the world.

In the end, Madam Speaker, these tragedies will be remembered as a time of incredible loss and sadness. But it will also mark a time when America and Turkey came even closer together to respond to global terrorism. We are united today as never to ensure that terrorism is defeated, completely and finally.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today I come to the House floor in strong support of H. Res. 453, a House resolution condemning the terrorist attacks in Istanbul, Turkey and expressing condolences to the families of the individuals murdered.

On November 15 and 20, four horrific terrorist attacks rocked Istanbul. Two Jewish synagogues, the British Consulate and the London-based HSBC bank were the targets. Faceless, cowardly terrorists who thrive on inflicting fear and terror on the innocent carried out these attacks. These recent attacks epitomize the fact that terrorism knows no boundaries and does not distinguish between religion, nationality or culture.

Terrorism must be condemned in the strongest terms whenever and wherever it occurs. The Government of Turkey appropriately did so and has vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice. But, no one country can do this alone. In order for the perpetrators of terrorism to be brought to justice, all the countries of the world must stand united against terrorism that targets the civilized world.

For over fifty years, Turkey has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S. as one of our most valued strategic partners and it is only fitting that Congress express sympathy for those murdered and wounded, extend condolences to the bereaved families and affirm our unity with Turkey in the ongoing fight against terror. I am pleased that the House Leadership scheduled H. Res. 453 for floor action today.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my sorrow and rage over the Saturday bombings of the Neve Shalom and Beth Israel synagogues and the Thursday bombings of the British Consulate and HSBC Bank in Istanbul, Turkey. Tragically, 51 innocent victims of the War on Terror have died in Turkey this week and over 750 were wounded. These victims died or were wounded simply because they gathered to pray on a Saturday morning in honor of Shabbat, the Jewish day of reflection and rest, or were going about their normal daily lives in Istanbul.

Turkish officials have identified the bombers of the Neve Shalom and Beth Israel synagogues as Turkish militants, with possible connections to al Qaeda, who loaded bombs, each with about 500 pounds of ammonium sulfate, nitrate, and fuel oil, into trucks they pulled in front of the synagogues and detonated nearly simultaneously. Among those who died were 6 Jews and 17 Muslims—each buried near the remains of the 22 victims killed in a 1986 bombing at Neve Shalom. Initial reports indicate that truck bombs were also used in the terrorist attacks against the British

Consulate and London based HSBC Holdings, which killed at least 27 and wounded over 450 people.

Madam Speaker, approximately 30,000 Jews live in Turkey—a 99.8% Muslim nation. For years Jews have lived peacefully and freely and have in fact thrived in a predominately Muslim nation. Much of this is due to Turkey's historically good treatment of its Jewish residents—dating back to the early influx of Jews during the Spanish Inquisition and later to Turkey's refusal to deport and exterminate its Jewish population during the Holocaust despite its longstanding relationship with Germany. Today, a benevolent relationship has grown between the Turkish and Israeli governments who share close ties and hold joint military exercises.

The attacks in Turkey this week aim to undermine the relationship between Turkey, the U.S., and Britain, and highlight the growing resurgence of al Qaeda and its worldwide network. The attacks in Turkey follow the suspected hand of al Qaeda in incidents in Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Morocco. The attacks on Thursday also highlight the fact that Turkey is a secular Muslim country that leans West through its business dealings, culture, and government affairs. The terrorists are determined to undermine the links between Turkey and the Western world.

Madam Speaker, as fighting has flared up in Iraq and al Qaeda has again regrouped and gained strength, and as President Bush returns from his trip to England while Israel and the Palestinian Authority tentatively reach out to each other in hopes of a cease fire and peace, now is not the time to turn our backs on the War on Terror. Now is the time to stand together with our friends and allies around the world as we all mourn those who died in Turkey this past week and those we have lost to terror attacks in the past, while jointly taking a stand to continue to fight for our survival in our war of self-defense against these madmen. We must work to ensure that all our allies help us root out terror at its source by sharing intelligence, auditing finances and doing whatever else is necessary in the hopes that like the Jews and Muslims have done for years in Turkey: we can all live together in peace.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). 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. 453, 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. Madam 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.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE, CAPITAL ASSET, AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1156) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve and enhance provision of health care for veterans, to authorize major construction projects and other facilities matters for the Department of Veterans Affairs, to enhance and improve authorities relating to the administration of personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1156

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Health Care, Capital Asset, and Business Improvement Act of 2003".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—HEALTH CARE AUTHORITIES AND RELATED MATTERS

Sec. 101. Improved benefits for former prisoners of war.

Sec. 102. Provision of health care to veterans who participated in certain Department of Defense chemical and biological warfare testing.

Sec. 103. Eligibility for Department of Veterans Affairs health care for certain Filipino World War II veterans residing in the United States.

Sec. 104. Enhancement of rehabilitative services.

Sec. 105. Enhanced agreement authority for provision of nursing home care and adult day health care in contract facilities.

Sec. 106. Five-year extension of period for provision of noninstitutional extended-care services and required nursing home care.

Sec. 107. Expansion of Department of Veterans Affairs pilot program on assisted living for veterans.

Sec. 108. Improvement of program for provision of specialized mental health services to veterans.

TITLE II—CONSTRUCTION AND FACILITIES MATTERS

Subtitle A—Program Authorities

Sec. 201. Increase in threshold for major medical facility construction projects.

Sec. 202. Enhancements to enhanced-use lease authority.

Sec. 203. Simplification of annual report on long-range health planning.

Subtitle B—Project Authorizations

Sec. 211. Authorization of major medical facility projects.

Sec. 212. Authorization of major medical facility leases.

Sec. 213. Advance planning authorizations.

Sec. 214. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle C—Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Initiative

Sec. 221. Authorization of major construction projects in connection with Capital Asset Realignment Initiative.