

the Soviet Constitution, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh declared their independence. They then conducted a referendum as set forth in the same Soviet Constitution, and they are now an independent republic and should be recognized as a Nation, just like Azerbaijan, Armenia and any other former Soviet Republic. The situation has absolutely nothing to do with Armenia. The only role Armenia plays in this conflict is that country's part in peace negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that Armenia is being characterized as an abuser of human rights in the region when it is Azerbaijan who continues to maintain a blockade of both Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, and regularly threatens a new wave of violence against Nagorno-Karabakh.

Such misrepresentations will undermine our Nation's credibility as an impartial mediator and jeopardize prospects for successful peace negotiations. It could also have a negative impact on U.S.-Armenia relations.

Our common aim as a country should be to focus on workable diplomacy that brings parties together in the spirit of conflict resolution, not to cause additional tension by introducing new and controversial elements into an already complex negotiating process.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has a long history of supporting Nagorno-Karabakh's democracy and its right to live in freedom and peace. The State Department has never made assertions in previous reports about Armenia being an occupier of Azerbaijani territory and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Last week, I sent a letter to Secretary Rice with my concerns over the State Department report's language, and I urged her to quickly reverse the State Department's mischaracterization.

#### ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS A WORLD CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, France has a new President, Nicolas Sarkozy. While the world waits to see if he will give vigor and energy and leadership to his complex and sometimes difficult French people, his position on illegal immigration is quite clear.

Europe has its influx of illegals, not unlike the United States. Northern Africans are fleeing their native lands for Europe. They go mostly to Spain, where French President-elect Sarkozy accuses Spain of promoting amnesty in that Nation. Of course, once in Spain, it seems these illegals can roam Europe with ease.

Mr. Sarkozy claims Spain wants to give amnesty to now 600,000 illegals in its Nation. Mr. Sarkozy wants to ban European Nations from offering amnesty. He wants to bolster the EU border agency, the group that patrols the

African coast, with more police forces and use of the military to prevent the illegal landings in Europe.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that Morocco, one of the Nations where people illegally flee to Europe from, wants the illegal flight to stop from its Nation. Almost 40 percent of the Africans that go to Europe by sea die in the process. This is a world crisis. Morocco wants to develop its native lands with European aid to keep people home, change the despair to hope by economic development, quit sending its problem to Europe but solve its problem. African Nations see the answer to solving their economic problems is not sending their populations to the north to Europe.

Mr. Sarkozy wants the European Union to have an EU-wide policy on illegal immigration and deal with this issue head-on instead of ignore the obvious. We shall see if this cooperation with the EU and France and the African countries works to stop the illegal entry, and we wish Mr. Sarkozy well in his presidency of France.

Meanwhile, back at home, here in the United States, our borders seem to be as open as ever because our government does not have the moral will to enforce the rule of law.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. McCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### A HEALTH CHECKUP FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a very disturbing report emerged from Iraq last week. According to press reports, medical students in Iraq will be denied diplomas even though they have completed all of the coursework and passed all of the required testing. This means that they would only be allowed to practice in Iraq, and no other country will accept their medical training or let them practice in the new country, even though they have met all of the requirements.

This harkens back to the Iraq we knew under Saddam Hussein's rule. Saddam refused to grant diplomas to medical students in order to keep them in the country. Who would have thought that the new Iraq government would resort to Saddam Hussein's old tricks? This is an alarming and troubling trend, and it should be reversed immediately.

While dozens of international medical relief organizations have been forced to leave Iraq because of serious security concerns, Iraqis have fewer

and fewer medical professionals available to them.

A well-known organization, Doctors Without Borders, related the story of one doctor, Dr. Bassam. He is an Iraqi physician specializing in orthopedic surgery living with his family in Baghdad.

His story says: Now, security issues have top priority for the few existing financial resources, and medical needs are forced to take a back seat. This morning, dozens of people were killed in Fallujah. Yesterday, it was Baghdad. And that's not counting the wounded, who add to the long list of emergency cases packing the hospitals. Every day brings a new batch of dead and wounded. In this context, patients simply cannot receive proper treatment from an increasingly overwhelmed health care system. Some are forced to sell their car, or even their house, to get certain kinds of care in the few hospitals able to provide it.

That is the end of his story.

Mr. Speaker, instead of locking people in against their will, the Iraqi government ought to be working with the international community to make Iraq a safe and prosperous place where people want to raise their families, where they want to stay, where they want to put down roots and contribute to the local communities.

If this is going to happen, the United States must dedicate our energies to bringing our troops home and to working with the Iraqi people to stabilize their infrastructure and social programs, programs that will provide health care, education and jobs. These are the most important needs for the Iraqis.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, to bring our troops home. It is time to provide a future of hope for the Iraqi people.

#### RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Armed Services Chairman IKE SKELTON for including language in this year's Defense authorization bill to change the name of the Department of the Navy to be the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

I also thank Ranking Member DUNCAN Hunter who in the past has also included this language in the Defense authorization bill. This will be the sixth year that the House will send legislation to the Senate that supports this change. I hope that this year the Senate will agree that this change is long overdue.

Since 1947, Congress has twice affirmed that the Marine Corps is a separate military service within the Department of the Navy. In 1947, the National Security Act stated that we have four separate military services:

the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Marine Corps.

In 1986, the Goldwater-Nichols Act stated that each service's commanding officer serves equally as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That is, the Marine Corps and the Navy are coequal partners. The Marines do not serve beneath the Navy; they are an equal team.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I have again introduced legislation, H.R. 346, to recognize their coequal status by changing the name of the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Not only has this change received the full House Armed Services Committee support, but also from former Navy secretaries and Marine Corps commanders.

In a statement of support for this legislation, the Honorable Wade Sanders, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Reserve Affairs, 1993-1998, stated, and I quote, "As a combat veteran and former Naval officer, I understand the importance of the team dynamic, and the importance of recognizing the contribution of team components. The Navy and Marine Corps team is just that: a dynamic partnership, and is important to symbolically recognize the balance of that partnership."

In addition, General Charles Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps stated, and I quote, "This bill is a perfectly logical evolution in a series of legislative initiatives designed, in part, to clarify and codify the role of the United States Marine Corps. . . . I enthusiastically support both the spirit and intent."

General Carl Mundy, the 30th commandant of the Marine Corps stated, and I quote, "I believe the changes you propose will do much to clarify the relationship, responsibilities and functions of the appointed civilian authority over the United States Naval services. . . . I believe that any Secretary—present, past or future—will be very proud to bear the title 'Marine,' as well as 'Navy.'"

The Honorable John Dalton, the 70th Secretary of the Navy stated, and I quote "One of the things for which I am most proud that I accomplished during my tenure was moving the headquarters of the Marine Corps into the Pentagon. It was a controversial decision, but I am convinced it was the right thing to do. . . . Your legislation would be another vital step to give that distinguished service the recognition it so greatly deserves."

Before I close, I want to point out to the House that I have beside me the Order of the Silver Star for Marines killed in Iraq. Marine Michael Bitz' family received a Silver Star in his memory. Yet when you look at this poster you will see an exact copy of the article for the Secretary of the Navy, Washington D.C., and the Navy flag.

All this legislation will do, all this legislation will do, is to make the Navy

and the Marine Corps an equal partner. You can see if these orders were issued and this bill had become law, it would say the Secretary of the Navy and the Marine Corps with the Navy flag and the Marine flag for this brave marine who gave his life for this country.

I hope this year that the House under the leadership of IKE SKELETON will demand that the Senate agree to the House position and change the name to be the Department of Navy and Marine Corps.

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#### ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERLMUTTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the millions of Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage. I would like to thank my good friend, Congressman MIKE HONDA, for leading the special orders tonight on Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and providing us with this opportunity to speak to you tonight.

I represent a heavily, heavily populated Asia Pacific community in southern California, I think the second most populated in the country. The first group that makes up a large proportion is Taiwanese and Chinese. The second group is Filipino. I am very proud to have represented them for so many years.

But I am here tonight to pay tribute to the many of them who provide us with public service in government, science, law and business, athletics and in the arts. These communities that I represent are the cities of Monterey Park, Rosemead, West Covina and the San Gabriel Valley. Well over 120,000 individuals represent that district.

They are Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean and of Cambodian decent. As you know, they work hard, like many immigrants that come to this country. Nearly 30 percent of the minority-owned businesses are owned by Asian Pacific Islanders and African-American women. In recent years, a number of Asian and Pacific Islander women-owned businesses has increased by 69 percent in the district.

According to the Chamber of Commerce, Chinese Americans own at least two-thirds of Monterey Park's more than 5,000 businesses. I have long been a supporter of a program called PACE, Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment, which was founded back in 1976 to address the employment and job training needs of Asian Pacific Islanders. Believe it or not, there are many Asian Pacific Islanders who really do need the support of the Federal Government and our various forms of government to help them succeed in our country.

Today it provides workforce development, housing services, business assist-

ance and early childhood education in Los Angeles county. I would especially like to recognize a good friend of mine, Kerry Doi, with whom I have worked for a number of years, whom I am extremely proud of. Earlier this year, his program, known as PACE, and the Association for Enterprise Opportunity Women and Company, chose 10 prominent small business owners to give \$1,000 checks to.

You may think that's not a lot of money, but for first-time business owners of Asian Pacific descent, it meant a lot. I am proud of the work they are doing to help all small business owners, including those of API heritage, to succeed.

I have also worked closely with the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center and the Monterey Park Langley Senior Center, predominantly of Asian descent. I am proud to have these organizations in my district because they are wonderful places where individuals from this community can gather and have social time, artistic time, recreational time and share their culture with each other.

At the senior center, I meet often with them. They take language courses, computer classes and different exercise courses that help them to keep busy in our community. Many of the seniors and their families and others have been touched by the immigration process recently.

In fact, I would say that the second largest case load in my district happened to be individuals of API descent. They, just as much as anyone else, want to become naturalized citizens, and they are stepping up to the plate. I was happy to host a citizenship forum that we held in the City of Irwindale recently, and I would say about 200 or more families of API descent came forward to become naturalized citizens. I am proud that is happening in our community and across the country.

I am here to support, again, the efforts of the API caucus, which MIKE HONDA leads, and to work with my colleagues there on the tri-caucus to help put forward disparities and treatment in health care issues regarding API, the Hispanic community and the African-American community. We are working together to bridge our gaps so that we can provide better services to all Americans in all residents of our country. I am happy and pleased to be able to put this forward tonight in support of the API caucus.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SHAYS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.