

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GEJDENSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

APPOINTMENT OF JAVIER SOLANA AS NATO SECRETARY GENERAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in the post-cold-war era, security considerations that used to be commonly-debated are almost never part of our political or civic discourse.

The threat of the Soviet Union, with its thousands of nuclear warheads pointed at American cities and military installations, with its dozens of army divisions poised to strike Europe, with its surrogate incursions into Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, and its financial support for terrorist groups throughout much of the world—the Soviet Union provided us all with a common enemy that kept our attention focused on the most serious security concerns of our time.

But the world has not become a safe place simply because the Soviet Union collapsed. The Soviet Union collapsed above all else because Mikhail Gorbachev failed to understand that ultimate ruthlessness and the obvious willingness to utilize terror in a consistent and systematic manner, are necessary for the retention of power by Marxist-Leninist regimes. Gorbachev believed that he could be a civilized communist, at least somewhat respectful of the rights of his citizens, and so the Soviet Union rapidly collapsed as people throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union realized that they could attempt to be free without the guarantee of fierce and merciless, forceful retaliation by their totalitarian states.

Many of the threats to the security of the United States that existed before the Soviet collapse have not gone away, however; what more shocking example of this can exist than the story of the spy for the KGB, Aldridge Ames, whose activities were directly responsible for the deaths of numerous American agents in various places throughout the world? Ames continued to spy for Russia even after the collapse of the Soviet Union and until the very moment that he was apprehended by U.S. counterintelligence personnel.

So the attitude that I believe can often be perceived from the actions of the Clinton Administration, that all is well with regard to people who would have been clearly objectionable for delicate positions in our security structure during the existence of the Soviet Union—that attitude that the past acts of former Marxists or anti-American agitators should be excused or understood as “youthful indiscretions”—

that attitude that I clearly perceive as too-often characteristic of the Clinton Administration, is risky at best.

We need to look at the latest example of that Clinton Administration attitude: the appointment of Javier Solana as Secretary General of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

NATO, of course, is the military wing of the Western Alliance. It was greatly responsible for maintaining the security of Europe throughout the Cold War, and today we are poised to intervene militarily in an armed conflict in Europe for the first time since World War II, in the Balkans, under the military shield and utilizing the military structure of NATO. Thus, though NATO was always important, it perhaps is even more so today.

So, who is the man who was named yesterday in Brussels as the new Secretary General—the Chief—of NATO? Javier Solana is the Foreign Minister of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party government. Mr. Solana opposed NATO with vehemence throughout the 1970's and 1980's. As late as 1986, when the Socialist-sponsored referendum was held in Spain to determine whether it would remain in NATO, Mr. Solana, then Culture Minister, was one of the most outspoken opponents of Spain remaining in NATO. Solana also opposed the presence of U.S. military bases on Spanish soil. As late as 1985, he contemptuously stated while discussing the issue of U.S. bases, “if need be, we'll send a copy of the Spanish Constitution to Washington so they'll know what a sovereign country is.”

Until September 29, 1979, Mr. Solana was formally a Marxist. That is the date that his party, the Socialist Workers Party, erased the word “Marxist” from its political program so as to help it win the next Spanish general election.

Despite the opposition of much of Western Europe, the Clinton administration insisted upon Mr. Solana to be the new NATO Secretary General. Much of the military and intelligence community of the NATO countries simply could not understand why the Clinton administration would insist on Solana as the new NATO head with other available candidates in contention, such as Mr. Ruud Lubbers, the former Dutch Prime Minister, who was endorsed by France, Germany and Great Britain. Mr. Lubbers is a lifelong and dedicated supporter of NATO with exemplary security credentials.

The Clinton administration insisted on imposing the Spanish Socialist Solana as we prepare to use NATO to intervene militarily in Europe for the first time since World War II, despite the fact that the Spanish government is being wracked by scandals that involve massive governmental corruption that includes even the assassination of opponents by government-created death squads, and despite, perhaps most importantly, that Spain since the Socialist-proposed referendum in Spain

on the issue of NATO in 1986, that country is officially not part of NATO's military structure. That Foreign Minister, of that country that is not part of NATO's military structure, was the Clinton administration's imposed choice for NATO Secretary General.

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CONTINUED NUCLEAR BOMBING IN SOUTH PACIFIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ENSIGN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, this may sound like a broken record, but it is not, when it involves the lives of millions of men, women, and children who live in the Pacific region. The crisis may even impact the lives of millions of Americans who live in the State of Hawaii and the Pacific Coast States like Washington, Oregon, and California.

Mr. Speaker, some of my colleagues are not aware of the fact that after our Government, that is, the United States Government conducted approximately 106 nuclear bomb explosions in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific region—yes, this was a period when we were at the height of cold war era between our country and the former Soviet Union—yes, our Government proceeded to conduct one of the most comprehensive nuclear testing programs ever recorded in history, and our national security as well as the security of the free nations of the world was at risk—so, we conducted these nuclear bomb explosions so that our nuclear capability would never be undermined by the former Soviet Union. We exploded nuclear bombs in the atmosphere, on the Earth's surface, beneath the Earth's surface, and yes, even on and under the Atoll Islands of the Marshall Islands—we did such a good job we even arranged to destroy one of the islands whereby it just simply disappeared from the face of the Earth—gone, no more in existence. Some of these islands, 60 to 28, Mr. Speaker, to this day are not fit for human resettlement because of the high degree of nuclear contamination still in existence.

Now just remember, Mr. Speaker, the former Soviet Union was also aggressively pursuing a nuclear testing program—and the Soviets were also exploding nuclear bombs in the atmosphere and on and below the Earth's surface.

Well, something happened Mr. Speaker. Not only protects foreign countries around the world, but the fact was that in some of the nuclear explosions that were conducted in the atmosphere—the winds and cloud formations shifted and carried nuclear contamination to various regions of the world—and in doing so, scientists discovered the presence of strontium 90 in milk and related products—yes, also consumed by Americans.

So at the height of the cold war, the two major superpowers of the world decided to agree not to conduct any more nuclear tests in the atmosphere because of the dangers of nuclear contamination of the food cycle to Americans, Russians—and incidently, to other human beings who live in various regions of the world.

Incidently, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if my colleagues are aware of the fact that despite our earnest efforts to advise President de Gaulle of France of the dangers of conducting nuclear explosions in the atmosphere—the French went right ahead and exploded 12 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere in the South Pacific.

And is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the thousands of Polynesian Tahitians who were exposed to nuclear contamination in the sixties and throughout the seventies—many are coming forward with stories of retarded and deformed children coming from the same parents, who historically have never experienced such traumatic problems in their lives.

It is any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the French Government either simply threw such records away or just doesn't care about the health of its own citizens—some 200,000 French citizens who live 14,000 miles from Paris and the first to be exposed to nuclear contamination when this atoll breaks open, that is, the Moruroa Atoll in French Polynesia.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not much of an artist, but I want to share with my colleagues the potential horrors of Moruroa Atoll. When this atoll leaks radioactive materials, I fear very much that the health and safety of the peoples of the Pacific will be seriously at risk.

Mr. Speaker, again I say to the French Government—shame on you for bringing the horrors of nuclear contamination to the peoples of the Pacific.

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

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana 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 Texas [Mr. BRYANT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BRYANT of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION DISSERVICE TO AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I am sure if we could get the 1996 election behind us, the misinformation that is being spread constantly would cease. What a disservice to this institution and to the other body, and to the administration and to the American people to continue this kind of misinformation day after day after day.

Recently some of my colleagues have taken to the House floor to portray their view of the Republican efforts to balance the budget in 7 years. Watching them, I found myself back in school reading Homer and Plato, Socrates, and all of those wonderful Greek myths that we all enjoyed as children. It is an appropriate reference to these works of fiction, as my colleagues would have the American people and certainly our friends in the press, swoon over the myths they portray. I would like to look at a couple of those myths tonight that I am very closely connected to.

Myth No. 1, Republicans are cutting student loans. Even the President today in his message used that misinformation. Now, the fact is that student loans will increase by nearly 50 percent, nearly 50 percent over the next 7 years from \$25 billion to \$36 billion in the year 2002. This chart shows that. Each year during that time an increase, an increase, an increase, the whole way up the line throughout the entire period. Yet, you would be led to believe that the opposite would happen.

More loans will be made available next year than ever before, rising from 6.6 million loans in 1995 to 7.1 million in 1996.

For all students, the Federal interest subsidies on student loans remains intact, and there are 75 percent of the American people that have some problems with that, but nevertheless, that is the way it will remain, including during the 6-month grace period following graduation. For all parents, the interest rate on student loans remains the same.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1995 does not include higher education cuts. There are no changes affecting student eligibility for Federal student loans; there are no changes affecting the amount of funds available for student loans; there are no changes affecting the interest rates, interest subsidies, or fees charged to the students or the parents. There are no special fees imposed on any schools.

The next myth, students will pay more for their loans under the Republican plan to balance the budget. The fact is that the Republican balanced budget will result in significantly lowered loan payments, because Alan Greenspan and others tell us that if we get to that point, interest rates will drop at least 2 percent. Now, that is at least an \$8 savings for every student out there with an average loan when they consider repayment.

The next myth: Republicans are making extreme cuts in student loans while the President wants to save these programs. The fact is that the Presi-

dent's own budget director, Alice Rivlin, issued a memo recommending the elimination of the in-school interest subsidy for student loans as a method to balance the budget. We did not follow her advice. We found ways to do this without affecting students.

By capping the President's direct loan program at 10 percent, the Congressional Budget Office has found that we will save \$1 billion over 7 years, again without harming students.

Myth: Republicans will force hard choices on parents and families. Listen to what one of my colleagues said on the floor of this House.

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They will, "in some cases have to make the very difficult choice of which child will be favored with a college education and which will be told, well, you have to fend for yourself in the job market without that education."

Mr. Speaker, I find these scare tactics to be very irresponsible. Simply put, these are scare tactics based on incorrect information. It might be better that those parents would tell their children that there are hundreds of thousands of college graduates out there today either with no job or in a job way beyond their education, and at the same time there are hundreds of thousands of technical jobs out there begging for somebody to be trained in order to take those jobs, not a 4-year college education.

I want to repeat the facts. Republicans are increasing student loan volumes and balancing the budget. There are no cuts. Zero cuts. No eligible student will be turned away from the student loan program. Anyone who claims otherwise is simply misrepresenting the facts. No student or parent will pay more for their loan under this Balanced Budget Act of 1995.

Again, I hope we can get correct information out to the public, and not play politics and use scare tactics while doing that.

IN HONOR OF GEN. MAX THURMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ENSIGN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend and one of this country's great patriots, Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman. He died December 1 at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington after a long battle with leukemia.

He was called a visionary and an innovator for the work he did to help save the All-Volunteer Army after the Vietnam war. In the early 1980's, we were not getting qualified young people into our Armed Forces. More than 50 percent of recruits at that time were reading on the eighth grade level. General Thurman saw the problem and went to work to solve it. He created the recruiting slogan still used by the U.S. Army: "Be all you can be," as well as a program that stressed how recruits could learn a skill and realize their fullest potential.