

Mr. Speaker, this is the wrong weapon sale to the wrong country at the wrong time.

Earlier this month, I circulated a letter with the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] which was signed by 35 Members from both sides of the aisle, calling on President Clinton to reconsider this sale, based on our very serious concerns over how these weapons would be used. The Turkish Government's domestic and international behavior—including the ongoing campaign against the Kurdish people, the occupation of Northern Cyprus, and the blockade of Armenia—makes us deeply concerned that providing such destructive power to that Government has the potential to cause terrible, and preventable, human suffering.

Today I am joining with my colleagues, Mr. TORRICELLI and Mr. BILIRAKIS in introducing House Concurrent Resolution 124 expressing the sense of Congress that the President should suspend the proposed sale of the Army Tactical Missile System to the Government of the Republic of Turkey until the Government takes significant and concrete steps to end the military occupation of Cyprus, lift its blockade of Armenia, cease its ongoing campaign against the Kurdish people, and demonstrate progress on the protection of human and civil rights within Turkey.

Mr. Speaker, the timing of this sale is peculiar to say the least. The Foreign Operations appropriations bill includes a cut in economic assistance to Turkey. This provision, which has strong bipartisan support, was enacted in response to the concerns cited above. We believe that the message we are trying to send with this provision would be undermined by approving a new sale of military hardware at this time. In Ankara, the conclusion would inevitably be that, beyond limited symbolic measures, Americans do not take seriously the shocking breaches of international law and decency committed in the name of the Turkish Government.

The proposed transaction represents the first sale of these weapons to any foreign nation. The Turkish military track record is not consistent with what we would expect of any recipient of United States arms, much less a NATO member. The Human Rights Arms Project has cited numerous examples of the indiscriminate use of weapons by Turkish forces in Kurdish civilian areas. We are also concerned about the evidence strongly linking Turkey to unauthorized transfers of United States and NATO weapons to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

While it is our contention that the weapons sale should be halted entirely, in our letter to the President we recommended that, are the very least, strong conditions governing the use and transfer of these weapons be attached to any sale, and that these conditions be strongly enforced.

Mr. Speaker, this sale has been strongly opposed by Greek-American,

Armenian-American, and Kurdish-American organizations, as well as Human Rights Watch, the Council for a Liveable World, and the Federation of American Scientists. And for good reason.

Turkey claims it needs the ATACMS as a deep strike weapon against the threat of tanks in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Yet, in Greece, Turkey's neighbor to the west, there is deep concern about the threat posed by these offensive weapons. In the regional arms race, Turkey already has a substantial edge, with F-16 fighter jets, attack helicopters, and antiarmor missiles. In addition Turkey has imported more than 1,000 tanks from the United States alone in the past 5 years.

The Government of Turkey is conducting a war against the Kurds within Turkey and has made incursions into Kurdish areas of Iraq, resulting in thousands of civilian casualties and millions of refugees. This cruel war is one part of an overall effort to essentially negate the Kurdish people as a distinct entity within Turkey. Many people are concerned that these missiles could be used as part of this military campaign, resulting in terrible civilian casualties.

Also, Turkey continues its occupation of one-third of the territory of Cyprus, having declared a "Northern Republic of Cyprus," an entity that has no international recognition, and resisting good-faith efforts of the United States, Greece, and other nations and international bodies to end the conflict. The occupation of Cyprus is well into its 21st year. There is no sign that it will end if we continue to send the message to Ankara that there are no significant consequences to this illegal occupation, and that our protests are largely symbolic and rhetorical.

Another illegal and immoral Turkish Government policy is the blockade of its border with the Republic of Armenia. This blockade has blocked the delivery of American humanitarian aid to Armenia and complicated its delivery. In the foreign ops bill, we have language, with strong bipartisan support, known as the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act, which restricts aid to those countries that block the delivery of aid to other nations. Although the language does not mention Turkey by name, clearly that is the country that would be targeted.

Why are we taking these seemingly significant legislative steps—Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act, cutting aid to Turkey—and then turning around and giving them this terrible weapon system?

Mr. Speaker, we also have to worry about whether Turkey will see fit to transfer this technology—our technology—to other nations. Strong evidence has linked Turkey to the unauthorized transfer of United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization weapons to the Republic of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan and Armenia are engaged in a tense conflict over the region of Nagorno-Karabagh. A tenuous cease-fire is holding, and the administration

has recognized the importance of resolving this crisis by appointing a special negotiator with the rank of Ambassador. Why, again, do we turn around and take steps that will potentially undermine our efforts to negotiate a just and lasting resolution to this conflict?

International human rights organizations continue to cite Turkey for egregious violations of the basic human rights and freedoms of its own citizens. Earlier this year, an American journalist was jailed in Turkey because of her reporting on the campaign against the Kurds. She was released, thank God. Unfortunately, there has not been such a happy ending for those few brave Turkish journalists and human rights activists who try to tell their countrymen and the world the truth about what's going on. These brave souls languish in prison, largely forgotten by all but a few friends and supporters.

Mr. Speaker, I am very discouraged and disappointed by the reaction of Western governments—not only our own—to Turkey's continued flouting of international law and standards of decency. Just last week, the European Union admitted Turkey into its Customs Union, a likely first step toward full membership in the EU—despite the strong objections from many legislators and activists on the other side of the Atlantic.

Why are we doing this? Sadly, we are witnessing the triumph of Realpolitik, in other words, putting economic or strategic interests ahead of our own values. The argument is that we need Turkey because of its strategic location and as a bulwark against Islamic fundamentalism. Well, in the first place, I believe that these goals could be achieved by more positive means than weapons sales. But I also wonder whether we're making a terrible strategic mistake over the long term, investing billions, sending our most advanced weapons and otherwise hurting America's good name by associating with a regime that isn't very stable and may collapse anyway.

While it may be too late to stop this ill-advised weapons sale, I urge all my colleagues to work with me and other Members of this House to stop coddling the regime in Ankara, to stand with Turkey's neighbors, and to stop basing our foreign policy on the bad bet represented by the Government of Turkey.

It may be too late to stop this ill-advised weapons sale to Turkey. I urge all of my colleagues to work with me and other Members of this House to stop coddling the regime in Ankara, to stand with Turkey's neighbors, and to stop basing our foreign policy on the bad debt represented by the Government of Turkey.

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

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

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

WHY I AM STANDING FIRM FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, as a freshman Member of Congress, I wanted to take some time this afternoon to explain why this Member is standing firm for a balanced budget.

We are attempting to carry out the will of the people. Eighty-six percent of Americans want to have a balanced budget, and we are intent on keeping our word.

On September 27, 1994, many of us stood on the steps of the Capitol here and promised, through the Contract With America, to balance the budget within 7 years. This is nothing new to us. I know it is new for some people in America to actually expect people in Washington, DC, to keep their word, but for the freshman class that is the norm. That is what we expect.

Recently we have been criticized by the President for shutting down negotiations. But if being criticized by the President means we will hold the President to his word, then, believe me, it is worth it. We have found that it is impossible to trust what the administration has told us or what the President has said.

On November 20, 1995, the President signed into Law Public Law 104-56, and I would like to read it briefly. It says, "The President and Congress shall enact in the first session of the 104th Congress to achieve a balance budget not later than fiscal year 2002, as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office." That has not happened yet.

As was pointed out in today's Wall Street Journal on page A8, the editorial page, under the heading "Freshmen Hazing," I am going to read a paragraph from that. It says,

More than a month ago President Clinton signed an agreement to work with Congress to produce a 7-year balanced budget using updated Congressional Budget Office numbers. Since then the White House has done everything it could to slip out of that deal. The topper came Tuesday, when Mr. Clinton met with GOP leaders, and once again apparently agreed to use CBO numbers and reach a 7-year balance budget deal by the end of the year. Then Vice President Gore appeared before reporters and, when asked about the agreement, said, "Did the President agree to put down an Administration-CBO plan according to those assumptions? No, absolutely not."

Once again, this is a flipflop and shows why we cannot trust anything that comes out of the White House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I know why the President is so opposed to a balanced budget. It is because he has to protect the abuse, the blatant abuse of taxpayer dollars by the administration. Secretary O'Leary and the Department of Energy are very inefficient and wasteful in the way they spend tax dollars. Secretary O'Leary, although all her responsibilities are domestic, has traveled 16 international trips, some at

a cost of over \$800,000, each taking along as many as 50 employees and 68 guests, and many of those guests have failed to pay their portion of the trip.

She has also hired professional photographers and video crews. But she is very concerned about her image, and that is why she is trying to catch herself at her best.

She hired a personal media consultant at a cost to taxpayers of \$277 a day.

She employs over 500 public relations employees at a cost of approximately \$25 million per year to the taxpayers.

She has even hired a private investigative firm to develop a list of unfavorable, unfavorable reporters and Members of Congress. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

According to the General Accounting Office, their reports and their audits say that the Department of Energy is ineffective as a Cabinet-level agency. Vice President GORE himself, in his National Performance Review, has said parts of the Department of Energy are 40 percent inefficient and are going to cost taxpayers \$70 billion over the next 30 years if we do not do something.

Well, the President has condoned this action by keeping Secretary O'Leary in office. He condones the waste, the abuse, and you cannot balance the budget unless you cull this deadwood out.

We are not convinced the President or the administration means anything it says. That is why we are standing firm against waste and against abuse and for a balanced budget.

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR CONTINUING RESOLUTION TO ASSIST THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to thank those members on both sides of the aisle who helped and cooperated with us as we got a continuing resolution that keeps the Capital of the United States open. I recognize, particularly because I am among the Members who has a very large number of Federal employees, how frustrating a piecemeal CR has been.

On the other hand, it does seem important to get to the real principle of the thing and to the real people who are behind all of our rhetoric.

The CR that has just passed still has to go through the Senate, and I am informed that there is a difference in language between what they have passed and what we have passed, so we are still on tenterhooks.

This will not be known as the most bipartisan Congress in more than 200 years. There will be very few matters which can be pointed to which received any bipartisanship.

I must say, I would have been ashamed to have been a part of this

body, however, if that posturing and partisanship prevailed against the most needy people in our society, those on welfare and against the Capital of the United States.

So I am grateful to all involved that this matter passed. I appreciate the work of the Speaker, the majority leader, and the minority leader on our side. I appreciate the work of the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. OBEY].

If all had not, in fact worked together, I am not sure exactly where the District would have been left, but it certainly would have been twisting in the wind, and the hardship on people on AFDC would have been unspeakable.

There is still great unfinished business as far as the District of Columbia is concerned. We are one of, I think, only a couple of appropriations that have not even passed yet.

The continuing resolution lasts until January 3. Imagine what it feels like to have a continuing resolution until January 3 to spend your own money. That is the money that is locked up here in the continuing resolution, and it gives not 1 cent of Federal money to a city that is insolvent, at least technically so, and cash-strapped. It is a very small favor that the House has done, but it is a lifesaving favor.

I want to use this occasion at the end of the first year of the 104th Congress to ask the Members, come back with more bipartisanship than they left.

The balanced-budget-in-7-years matter, for example, is one that the parties have come very close together on, and yet the Government is being kept closed tight as if you needed a hammer to get the rest of the way. The rest of the way is very small.

In negotiations, you use hammers only when you are getting nowhere. We are getting somewhere, and yet the hammer of keeping Federal employees out of work, of keeping them without a paycheck even though they have been promised their pay is still there. Imagine, if you had to be without your paycheck over the Christmas holiday. There are few of us that could afford that.

So what we did here today was minimalism, but important minimalism. I hope it opens the way to a greater sense of what is really at stake here, the confidence of the country that the two parties that have essentially run this body for 200 years are capable of continuing to do it for 200 more.

When you have been tested on whether or not you will keep your own Capital City open, you have allowed your own prestige to be tested. I am afraid this will not play very well around the world, but at least the headlines will not read, "The Congress of the United States Closes Down Its Own Capital." I am grateful that it will not read that and hope that the last act of the year, and that is what we have probably seen