

his activities, including being detained in the grotesque gulag and fined in October, 2002. Despite the continued threat of brutal retaliation for his peaceful activities, Mr. Sánchez Altarriba continued to believe in, and advocate for, freedom for the people of Cuba. Unfortunately, as part of the tyrant's heinous, March 2003, island wide crackdown on peaceful pro democracy advocates, Mr. Sánchez Altarriba was arrested by the dictatorship. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to 15 years in the totalitarian gulag.

Mr. Sánchez Altarriba is currently languishing in an inhuman gulag because of his belief in democracy. According to a letter written by fellow prisoner of conscience Léster González Pentón and published by M.A.R. por Cuba:

A cement wall is all that separates both jails, but that one has a tougher regime than this one, several guards hitting defenseless people inside the jails using "marabu" sticks. That is the reason why many prisoners suffer from aches and sicknesses behind bars, worsened by lack of medical care, this being the reason for self-inflicted wounds as a way to get care. Thousands of mosquitoes, rats, crawl around as in their own home, with the worst hygiene conditions. Eight of us brothers in the cause were removed from the cells. There only remains Claro Sánchez Altarriba, from Santiago de Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable that human beings are locked in this barbarously inhuman gulag because they believe that all men and women have a right to freedom and democratic government. While the entire world sits by and ignores the suffering of the Cuban people, brave men and women like Claro Sánchez Altarriba represent the best of mankind. My Colleagues, we must demand freedom and human rights for all people, especially those who live under the darkness of totalitarian regimes. We must demand immediate and unconditional freedom for Claro Sánchez Altarriba and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

CHINA'S PROPOSED ANTI-SECESSION LAW

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to join my colleagues in expressing my strong concern regarding China's proposed Anti-Secession Law. This unilateral initiative by the People's Republic of China, PRC, is a very provocative move that could permanently destroy the balance in the Taiwan Strait.

This proposed law, which will be voted on as early as March in the full Chinese National People's Congress, is more than just propaganda. The law assumes that China and Taiwan are now unified and that China has the rights to punish anyone expressing separatist sentiments or engaging in separatist activities. Ultimately, China can legally pursue unification of Taiwan by military force.

Because I believe this will challenge the wishes of the 23 million people of Taiwan who have chosen a democratic system of governance, I sincerely urge Chinese leaders to

abide by the wishes of the Taiwanese people and not adopt the Anti-Secession Law this March. I also urge the international community to join us in voicing their disapproval of this confrontational law.

THE BIRTH OF MADALYN ELIZABETH PRIEST

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the birth of Madalyn Elizabeth Priest. My Legislative Director, Matt Priest, and his wife Lisa welcomed little Madalyn into the world on January 31, 2005. Weighing 7 pounds 3 ounces, Madalyn has already become the pride and joy of her happy parents.

With each new birth we are reminded of just how precious life is and how amazing a design God has created in us all. We also have an opportunity to reflect on the role this body can play in protecting human life at its most innocent and vulnerable stage.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF FORMER LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER RAFIK HARIRI

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in expressing condolences to the family of Mr. Hariri, the families of others killed in the attack that took Mr. Hariri's life, and the people of Lebanon. While I support this legislation expressing sorrow over the murders, I do have some concerns that H. Res. 91 is being waved as a red flag to call for more U.S. intervention in the Middle East.

It is unfortunate that tragic occurrences like these are all too often used by those who wish to push a particular foreign policy. We don't really know who killed Mr. Hariri. Maybe an agent of the Syrian government killed him. Then again any of several other governments or groups in the Middle East or even beyond could be responsible. But already we are hearing from those who want to use this murder to justify tightening sanctions against Syria, forcing Syrian troops to leave Lebanon immediately, or even imposing U.S. military intervention against Syria. Just yesterday we heard that the U.S. ambassador to Syria has been withdrawn.

The problem is that these calls for U.S. intervention ignore the complexities of Lebanon's tragic recent history, and its slow return from the chaos of the civil war—a revival in which Mr. Hariri played a praiseworthy role. We should remember, however, that it was the Lebanese government itself that requested assistance from Syria in 1976, to help keep order in the face of a civil war where Maronite Christians battled against Sunnis and Druze. This civil war dragged on until a peace treaty was agreed to in 1989. The peace was maintained by the Syrian presence in Lebanon. So, while foreign occupation of any country

against that country's will is to be condemned, it is not entirely clear that this is the case with Syrian involvement in Lebanon. Hariri himself was not a supporter of immediate Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon. What most won't say here is that Syria has indeed been slowly withdrawing forces from Lebanon. Who is to say that this is not the best approach to avoid a return to civil war? Yet, many are convinced that we must immediately blame Syria for this attack and we must "do something" to avenge something that has nothing whatsoever to do with the United States.

So, while I do wish to express my sympathy over the tragic death of Rafik Hariri, I hope that my colleagues would refrain from using this tragedy to push policies of more U.S. interventionism in the Middle East.

HONORING A.J. YATES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO AGRICULTURE AS AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me today to pay tribute to my friend and fellow Californian, A.J. Yates, who has served as Administrator of the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) for the past four years. It has been an honor to work with him on legislative matters involving agriculture, and many of us here on the Hill have come to rely on his expertise.

President Bush appointed A.J. Yates AMS Administrator in September 2001 to oversee more than 50 programs designed to maintain a stable marketing environment for the benefit of America's farmers, ranchers, and consumers. AMS accomplishes this mission through federal marketing orders, research and promotion programs, the federal-state marketing improvement program, and the wholesale marketing development program. Agricultural transportation issues, market regulatory laws, market news, and federal grading and certification are other tools the agency uses to help ensure a steady supply of high quality food on American tables.

Mr. Yates brought to AMS many years of experience in both the agriculture industry and state government, and USDA and the American people have benefited greatly from his expertise. His background is quite impressive. Mr. Yates served as Deputy Secretary for the California Department of Food and Agriculture, CDFA, from August 1991 to December 1996 and as Under Secretary until January 1999. During his tenure at CDFA, Mr. Yates helped provide leadership to the CDFA's seven divisions and developed and implemented policy for California's agricultural industry and consumers. After leaving CDFA, Yates was a senior marketing consultant with Panagraph Marketing Solutions in Fresno, CA.

Mr. Yates graduated from California State University at Fresno in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in agronomy. As a life-long farmer from Kerman, California, he has been actively involved in organizations supporting agriculture and education, serving as President of the Fresno County Farm Bureau, State Director of the California Sugar Beet Growers Association, and Director of the Mid-Valley Irrigation District.