

Diputado Arias and Quijada stepped in to mediate between the doctors union and the police and to defend the protesters, and the police responded by beating them too. They identified themselves to the police as members of the Legislative Assembly, but the police continued to beat them. Fortunately their bodyguards stepped in to protect them before the were terribly injured.

We disapprove of in the strongest terms the use of police violence against the government officials. This unconscionable violation of human rights and democracy threatens the 1992 Peace Accords and could lead to grave consequences. Furthermore, we strongly disapprove of the police violence against protesters. This violence has been increasing recently with anti-CAFTA protests in El Salvador. The Salvadoran Interior Minister endorsed the police violence against protesters that occurred on April 14 and wrongfully called the protesters "terrorists."

This is not acceptable. This will not go unnoticed by the United States and by international human rights movements. Be assured that, we will pursue an investigation into this matter to the fullest.

On May 3, 2005, Ambassador León sent the following reply:

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KUCINICH: We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 29, 2005 in which you express your concern on the apparent use of police force against two congresspeople of the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly, Dr. Salvador Arias and Dr. Zoila Quijada, while seemingly defending members of the Social Security Doctors Union (SIMETRISSE).

To that respect, we have proceeded to send your letter to the pertinent authorities in El Salvador who are already aware of your preoccupation and will soon deliver you their response.

Please accept Mr. Representative Kucinich the assurances of our consideration and esteem.

INTRODUCTION OF "DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY INVESTMENT TRUST"

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my good friend and colleague Rep. RALPH REGULA (R-OH) in introducing the "Digital Opportunity Investment Trust Act."

Mr. Speaker, I have long believed that when the Federal Communications Commission decides to proceed with auctions as a means of granting licenses to the public's airwaves, that the public deserves to reap the benefits. These benefits should manifest themselves not only in the more rapid offering of new, competitive commercial wireless services or the deployment of technological innovations, but also in the "dividends" that can be reaped by re-investing the auction money wisely. The legislation we are introducing today, proposes taking auction revenue and creating a permanent trust fund in order to fund grants for public interest telecommunications initiatives. I believe harnessing this resource and re-investing it for such initiatives will be vital to our national economic security and for leaving to the next generation the cultural and educational assets of our great country in an accessible digital form.

Mr. Speaker, ensuring that the research and development into the software and telecommunications tools that will animate the technologies for use in classrooms and workplaces around the country is a sound investment. Making available additional resources for public televisions and radio stations for their needs in the digital era is also vital. Finally, our nation's libraries, museums, universities are great repositories of information and possess the tremendous wealth of our cultural heritage. These treasurers can and ought to be digitized in a way that makes them accessible to all our citizens, both online and over-the-air using our national public broadcasting system. This will help to ensure we have an informed and skilled citizenry for our civic institutions. Putting these great educational resources at the heart of the technological transformation our society is undergoing will strengthen our democracy in fundamental ways.

For all of these reasons, I believe we must rise to the challenge of funding advanced research and development for education and technology training in a way that reflects the urgent need to do so and the current, inadequate resources being put to these efforts. Telecommunications technology has an awesome potential to affect change positively by driving economic growth, preparing our citizens for the tough challenges ahead, and enriching our democracy. Yet without a plan, it will remain just that—merely the "potential" and "promise" but not the reality. That's why I believe we ought to reinvest the auction resources we obtain from winning bidders to the public's airways. A permanent trust fund built from these funds will go a long way in meeting the need and that is what our legislation is designed and intended to do.

NATIONAL ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw attention to the first annual National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day today, May 19, 2005. This day seeks to raise awareness among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders about the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on their community and to highlight AIDS prevention and treatment opportunities.

AIDS has claimed the lives of over 20 million people worldwide since it was first diagnosed in 1981, and the numbers continue to grow at an alarming rate. An estimated 5,500 of 750,000 Americans who face the perils of AIDS today are Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, but with the fastest-growing racial/ethnic population in the nation, this number is increasing at a staggering rate. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of AA/Pis living with AIDS has increased 10 percent annually over the past five years.

Many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders living with HIV/AIDS too often do not take the steps necessary to prevent and combat the disease due to cultural stigmas around issues

of sex, sexuality, and drug use. Other obstacles include the fact that nearly 40 percent of AA/Pis have limited English proficiency and 13 percent live below the federal poverty line. Nearly one in five are uninsured, and many others lack adequate health insurance. That is why this day is immensely important in communicating the facts and preventative practices regarding HIV/AIDS. With increased national awareness and improved communication, HIV/AIDS information will become more widely available and more effective in crossing the social, linguistic, and economic barriers this population faces.

It is also critically important that we expand the budgets of the CDC, especially the Office of Minority Health and the National Institutes of Health, and reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act to ensure that HIV/AIDS is addressed seriously and with adequate resources. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face a serious health threat, and they are just one segment of the American population which battles this deadly disease on a daily basis. Our financial support is critical in providing information, medicine, care, and ultimately a cure for this debilitating disease.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the first National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and working to enact healthcare solutions to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

BIKE TARIFF SUSPENSION BILLS

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing seven bills that will waive tariffs for specialty bike parts not produced domestically.

The bicycle industry is an important part of our economy. There are over 6,000 bicycle shops and 2,000 companies that deal with bicycle manufacturing with tens of thousands of employees. These tariff waivers will reduce costs for the bicycle industry and will allow the savings to be passed onto the more than 57 million adult bicyclists across the country.

Similar bike components that are not produced in the United States are already exempt from tariffs in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule. Without a domestic producer of compatible components, bike companies should not be required to pay duties. This legislation will level the playing field for the industry which provides one of the cleanest, healthiest, most efficient, and environmentally friendly modes of transportation that exists.

THE SIXTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HEROIC BATTLE OF CRETE

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise proudly today to celebrate the 64th anniversary of the Battle of Crete, a World War II event of epic proportions that profoundly impacted on the

determination of many countries to resist the aggression of Nazi Germany. This is a story of the sacrifices made by a battered but brave group of individuals thrown together in a combined effort to halt the domination of a smaller, weaker nation by a larger, more powerful aggressor.

Amidst the cataclysm that engulfed the countries of Europe at the time, it seems now preposterous that a small island dared to stand up to the aggressor to preserve its freedom and defend its honor. Today, more than half a century later, the heroic events that took place in the Battle of Crete remain etched in the memory of people around the world. In commemoration of this anniversary, and for the benefit of future generations, I will share a brief account of these events as they unfolded.

In early April 1941, the German army rushed to the aid of their defeated ally, Italy, and invaded Greece. Following a valiant struggle, Greek forces had been pushed entirely off the continent and were forced to take refuge on the island of Crete.

The German army then looked covetously across the sea to Crete because of the British airfields on the island, which could be used by the Allies for air strikes against the oil fields of Rumania, thereby denying this vital war commodity to Hitler's forces now preparing for their attack on Russia. If captured, it would also provide air and sea bases from which the Nazis could dominate the eastern Mediterranean and launch air attacks against Allied forces in northern Africa. In fact, the Nazi high command envisioned the capture of Crete to be the first of a series of assaults leading to the Suez Canal. Hitler intended a short, one month, campaign, starting in March. On successful completion, his troops would be re-assigned to Russia.

Crete's defenses at the time had been badly neglected due to the deployment of Allied forces in North Africa. General Bernard Freyberg of the New Zealand Division was appointed by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill as commander of a small contingent of Allied troops which had been dispatched to the island a few months before and re-enforced by additional troops who had retreated from the Greek mainland.

Early on the morning of May 20, 1941, Crete became the theater of the first and largest German airborne operation of the war. The skies above Crete were filled with more than eight thousand Nazi paratroopers, landing in a massive invasion of the island, which was subjected to heavy bombing and attacks in what became known as "Operation Mercury."

Waves of bombers pounded the Allied positions followed by a full-scale airborne assault. Elite paratroopers and glider-borne infantry units fell upon the rag-tag Allied soldiers and were met with ferocious resistance from the Allied troops and the Cretan population.

Although General Freyberg had decided not to arm the Cretans because they were believed to be apti-royalist, they fought bravely with whatever was at hand during the invasion. As soon as the battle broke out, the people of Crete volunteered to serve in the militia. Centuries of oppression and several revolts against Venetians and Turks had taught them that freedom is won and preserved by sacrifice, and there was hardly a family without a gun stashed somewhere in the house. For the first time, the Germans met stiff partisan resistance.

War-seasoned men joined the regular troops in the effort to repel the invader. Old men, women and children participated and used whatever makeshift weapons they could find. They pointed their antiquated guns at the descending German paratroopers. They used sticks, sickles and even their bare hands, to fight those soldiers already on the ground. Most of them were illiterate villagers but their intuition, honed by the mortal risk they were facing, led them to fight with courage and bravery. "Aim for the legs and you'll get them in the heart," was the popular motto that summarized their hastily acquired battle experience.

Seven days later, the defenders of Crete—though clinging to their rocky defensive positions—knew that they would soon be overrun. The evacuation order was given, and nearly 18,000 men were rescued. These valiant survivors had bought the Allies a week's precious time free of Nazi air and sea attacks based from Crete. More importantly, they inflicted severe losses on the German airborne forces, the showpieces of the Nazi army. Although well-armed and thoroughly equipped, the Germans didn't break the Cretan's love of freedom.

Although the Germans captured the island in ten days, they paid a heavy price. Of the 8,100 paratroopers involved in this operation, close to 4,000 were killed and 1,600 were wounded. So injured were the German units that they never again attempted an airborne assault of the magnitude launched at Crete. Hitler may have won the Battle of Crete, but he lost the war. The German victory proved a hollow one, as Crete became the graveyard of the German parachute troops. In fact, it is a lesson taught in almost every major military academy in the world on what not to do.

In retaliation for the losses they incurred, the Nazis spread punishment, terror and death on the innocent civilians of the island. More than two thousand Cretans were executed during the first month alone and thousands more later. Despite these atrocities, for the four years following the Allied withdrawal from the island, the people of Crete put up a courageous guerilla resistance, aided by a few British and Allied officers and troops who remained. Those involved were known as the Andartes (the Rebels).

Cretan people of all ages joined or aided the Andartes. Children would pile rocks in the roads to slow down the German convoys. They even carried messages in their schoolbooks because it was the only place that the German soldiers never looked. These messages contained information critical to the Andartes who were hiding in the mountains and would come down for midnight raids or daytime sabotages.

The German terror campaign was meant to break the fighting spirit and morale of the Andartes. Besides the random and frequent executions, German soldiers used other means to achieve their goal. They leveled many buildings in the towns and villages, destroyed religious icons, and locked hundreds of Cretans in churches for days without food or water, but nothing worked. These actions only made the Cretans more ferocious in their quest for freedom.

Even in the face of certain death while standing in line to be executed, Cretans did not beg for their lives. This shocked the German troops. Kurt Student, the German Para-

trooper Commander who planned the invasion, said of the Cretans, "I have never seen such a defiance of death."

Finally, the Cretan people participated in one of the most daring operations that brought shame and humiliation to the German occupation forces and exhilaration and hope to the enslaved peoples of Europe. Major-General Von Kreipe, Commander of all German forces in Crete, was abducted from his own headquarters in April 1944 and transferred to a POW camp in England.

The German troops had never encountered such resistance. Hitler had initially sent 12,000 troops to Crete, thinking that the occupation would be swift. By the end of the three-and-a-half years of occupation, Hitler had sent a total of 100,000 troops, to confront a little more than 5,000 Cretan Andarte fighters. These German troops could have been deployed somewhere else. More German troops were lost during the occupation of Crete than in France, Yugoslavia and Poland combined.

Most importantly, as a result of the battle in Crete, Hitler's master plan to invade Russia before the coming of winter, had to be postponed, which resulted in the deaths of many German troops who were not properly prepared to survive the harsh Russian winter.

As we Americans know from our history, freedom does not come without a price. For their gallant resistance against the German invasion and occupation of their island, Cretans paid a stiff price. Within the first five months of the Battle of Crete, 3,500 Cretans were executed and many more were killed in the ensuing three-and-a-half years of occupation.

Mr. Speaker, there are historical reasons why we Americans appreciate the sacrifices of the Cretan people in defending their island during the Battle of Crete. We have a history replete with similar heroic events starting with our popular revolt that led to the birth of our nation more than two centuries.

We must always remember that as long as there are people willing to sacrifice their lives for the just cause of defending the integrity and freedom of their country, there is always hope for a better tomorrow. May we take inspiration from the shining example of the people of Crete in ensuring that this is indeed the case.

A TRIBUTE TO TSCL CHAIRMAN
GEORGE A. SMITH

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to George Smith. Since 2001 the TREA Senior Citizens League (TSCL) has been under the strong leadership of Board of Trustees Chairman George A. Smith. With George Smith at the helm, TSCL has gained greater credibility and respectability in the Congress and in the country as a whole. TSCL has become a significant national player on Social Security issues such as the Notch, Cost of Living Adjustment based on a Consumer Price Index for the Elderly, Mexico Totalization, and a Lock Box of Trust Funds, and on other issues such as drug importation. This has largely occurred because Chairman Smith insisted that TSCL emphasize