

has been punished for abuse of office, however. While CVU has uncovered no evidence that state interference in the election has been ordered by senior government authorities, neither have these authorities punished any accused lawbreakers or acted preemptively to ensure neutrality on the part of their subordinates.

ELECTION COMMISSIONS

The country's central and constituency election commissions appear to be functioning relatively well. Most are following proper procedure and trying to respond to appeals in a timely manner. Where problems with district commissions do exist, they are more likely to be found in eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.

The formation of polling-place election commissions (PECs) has not gone smoothly, however. Instead, this process has been marked by confusion and numerous violations of proper procedure. Detailed information on the make-up of the country's roughly 33,000 PECs was supposed to be released by February 27 Article 21.13 of the election law, but this requirement was not observed in most areas. Hence, an analysis of the make-up of the commissions is not possible at this time.

CVU is concerned that the provisions of Ukraine's election law that provide for multi-partisan representation on election commissions have not been respected in spirit. In many areas, local executive bodies have taken advantage of the weaknesses of political parties to appoint election commissioners who nominally represent a party but who are, in practice, loyal to the local administration alone. CVU has witnessed numerous cases where election commissioners are unaware even of identity of the party they are supposed to represent. Clearly, a good deal of the blame for this problem also lies with the parties, which have been incapable of recruiting trusted members to serve as commissioners in many parts of the country.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and simply add that we take elections for granted in this country. We know how important they are, but we assume that they will be fair and open and transparent. We need to do everything in our power to encourage the same in the emerging democracies in Europe. Those countries, such as Ukraine, emerging from the tyranny of the Soviet bloc, for 10 years a new independence and freedom has been observed in Ukraine; but this election is of critical importance. They have got to get it right. We have to help them get it right, and this legislation is dedicated to that proposition.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for championing this very important resolution to put our Nation and the Congress on record in highest hopes that the elections this year in the Ukraine will ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to March 31. Their parliamentary elections will be held on that date. Of course the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), and the gentleman

from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) have traveled together to that part of the world and have made such a difference in carrying the banner of freedom's institutions into regions of our world where heretofore people had not been able to exercise their full democratic rights.

Having just returned from the Ukraine myself and having had the really historic opportunity to meet with nearly 300 of their younger citizens, and people representing non-governmental organizations that are monitoring the elections and trying to produce information so people know what they are voting about, we can see a change, a glacial change occurring there for the better. But without question, people of that nation must feel free and unintimidated as they go to the polls, and they must understand what the various candidates' platforms are; and it is safe to say that that kind of transparency and information has not been easily available.

Sometimes it is hard here, but there the systems are just not robust. It is not easy to understand how a party slate or individuals on it might actually support a certain program, and it is hard to distinguish among the major blocs and the people in those blocs. I would add an encouraging word for passage of this resolution and a great hope that the Government of Ukraine will ensure that the election process is open. Let flourish those who are attempting to help people understand the issues and understand what those who are running actually will champion in their own programs once elected to RADA or local office. This kind of information should be more broadly available. The Internet should be allowed to function so people will share information across regions and become more informed about what their vote actually means.

The task before the Ukrainian people of building a more open and free society is enormous. That is true in Russia also and many of the former republics of the Soviet Union.

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I know that I detected, especially among the young, such a great hope, such a feeling that they had the future of the country in their hands. They are looking for us to pass this resolution to give a signal that our country stands and walks alongside those who are trying to build more open and free societies. In fact many young people who are 21 years of age are running for office in some of the towns, or are trying to run for parliament, to try to change the laws in order to make property traded freely with a mortgage system. They are fighting for laws so loans can be made by a regular bank and have a free credit system established. They want an educational system that is available to all so students are able to learn critical thinking methods. All of these challenges lie ahead of those young leaders.

And so to the young people in our country, I encourage them to pay attention to Ukraine, the most important nation in Central Europe. As it goes, so will the nations around it. I rise in very strong support of House Resolution 339 and want to thank so very much the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for bringing this to the attention of the entire world, indeed. We respectfully say to the people of Ukraine, vote, vote wisely, monitor the elections, help to move your country forward, as I know the hearts of your people tell you they want.

I express my fullest support for this resolution.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, a real leader on Ukrainian issues in the House. I compliment her on her remarks.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose H. Res. 339, a bill by the United States Congress which seeks to tell a sovereign nation how to hold its own elections. It seems the height of arrogance for us to sit here and lecture the people and government of Ukraine on what they should do and should not do in their own election process. One would have thought after our own election debacle in November 2000, that we would have learned how counterproductive and hypocritical it is to lecture other democratic countries on their electoral processes. How would members of this committee—or any American—react if countries like Ukraine demanded that our elections here in the United States conform to their criteria? So I think we can guess how Ukrainians feel about this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine has been the recipient of hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign aid from the United States. In fiscal year 2002 alone, Ukraine was provided \$154 million. Yet after all this money—which we were told was to promote democracy—and more than ten years after the end of the Soviet Union, we are told in this legislation that Ukraine has made little if any progress in establishing a democratic political system.

Far from getting more involved in Ukraine's electoral process, which is where this legislation leads us, the United States is already much too involved in the Ukrainian elections. The U.S. government has sent some \$4.7 million dollars to Ukraine for monitoring and assistance programs, including to train their electoral commission members and domestic monitoring organizations. There have been numerous reports of U.S.-funded non-governmental organizations in Ukraine being involved in pushing one or another political party. This makes it look like the United States is taking sides in the Ukrainian elections.

The legislation calls for the full access of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitors to all aspects of the parliamentary elections, but that organization has time and time again, from Slovakia to Russia and elsewhere, shown itself to be unreliable and politically biased. Yet the United States continues to fund and participate in OSCE activities. As British writer John Laughland observed this week in the Guardian newspaper, "Western election monitoring has become the political equivalent of an Arthur Andersen audit. This supposedly technical

process is now so corrupted by political bias that it would be better to abandon it. Only then will countries be able to elect their leaders freely." Mr. Speaker, I think this is advice we would be wise to heed.

Other aspects of this bill are likewise troubling. This bill seeks, from thousands of miles away and without any of the facts, to demand that the Ukrainian government solve crimes within Ukraine that have absolutely nothing to do with the United States. No one knows what happened to journalist Heorhiy Gongadze or any of the alleged murdered Ukrainian journalists, yet by adding it into this ill-advised piece of legislation we are sitting here suggesting that the government has something to do with the alleged murders. This meddling into the Ukrainian judicial system is inappropriate and counter-productive.

Mr. Speaker, we are legislators in the United States Congress. We are not in Ukraine. We have no right to interfere in the internal affairs of that country and no business telling them how to conduct their elections. A far better policy toward Ukraine would be to eliminate any U.S.-government imposed barrier to free trade between Americans and Ukrainians.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, since regaining its independence in 1991, Ukraine's democracy has made significant progress but has not been without its difficult periods. Nowhere has the integrity of the country's political system been more challenged than in its electoral process.

On March 31, Ukraine will hold its third election for parliament. This election will be a critical test of the strength of Ukraine's evolving democracy and its new election laws.

Given the importance of a strong and stable Ukraine in the region, the importance of our relations with Ukraine and our keen interest in Ukraine's continued emergence as a responsible, democratic member of the international community, we are naturally interested in the electoral process as well as progress the country has made in the areas of human rights, rule of law, freedom of expression and the strength of its democratic institutions.

In this context, the United States Congress, through H. Res. 339, expresses its interest in, and concerns for, a genuinely free and fair parliamentary election process which enables all the various political parties and election blocs to compete on a level playing field; allows the voters to acquire objective information about the political candidates; and expects all parties to the election to observe their own laws.

Historically, since 1991, elections in Ukraine have been marred by problems such as intimidation of journalists and opposition candidates; denial of access to the media; unbalanced news coverage; abuse of power and political position by government officials; and the illegal use of public funds. Today, we have received reports from Ukraine that the current election period has been beset by similar allegations of individuals or groups illegally trying to influence the outcome of the elections.

This is not to say that the overall electoral process is seriously flawed. The Ukraine parliament has passed a positive new election law. What H. Res. 339 does say, however, is that the reported abuses of the election law have to be stopped, that the government has the responsibility to enforce its election law fairly, and that every effort must be taken to

ensure that a free, fair and transparent election take place on March 31.

This resolution we are considering today does represent a genuine concern that the reported activities of some could cast a negative cloud over these elections and the entire democratic process in Ukraine.

The authors of this Resolution are to be congratulated for bringing these problems to our attention, and we hope the resolution is seen in a positive and constructive way inside Ukraine.

By addressing these concerns, Ukraine can only be better off and its democracy made stronger.

I urge passage of this resolution and reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be joined by my colleagues, Representatives JOSEPH HOFFFEL and CHRISTOPHER SMITH, in offering this important resolution. H. Res. 339 urges the Government of Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent, and fair election process leading up to its March 31 parliamentary elections.

Just over 10 years after gaining its independence from the Soviet bloc, Ukraine stands at a crossroads. On Sunday, March 31, Ukraine will hold its third parliamentary elections since becoming independent. It is widely believed that the outcome of the parliamentary elections will determine whether Ukraine continues to pursue democratic reforms, or experiences further political turmoil.

As a founding member and Co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I have watched the growth of this new nation with keen interest. Their path to democratization has not been easy. More troubling, however, has been a series of scandals involving government corruption over the past 2 years. In April 2001, I was troubled to learn about the Ukrainian Parliament's vote to remove reform-minded Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko. This change in government came in the midst of the ongoing political turmoil resulting from allegations over the involvement of President Leonid Kuchma in the case of murdered journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. Meanwhile, reports of government corruption and harassment of the media have raised concerns about the Ukrainian government's commitment to democratic principles. I have spoken out for a more democratic Ukraine and expressed my continued concern about the lack of progress in the Gongadze case and recent political instability.

According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' final report on Ukraine's most recent national election, the presidential election of 1999 was marred by violations of Ukrainian election law and failed to meet a significant number of OSCE election commitments. There is now concern that the 2002 parliamentary elections will be compromised by similar violations. Recent reports on the 2002 parliamentary elections released by the Committee on Voters of Ukraine (CVU), a leading Ukrainian watchdog group on elections, have cited numerous violations in the campaign process.

The intent of this resolution is to make the Government of Ukraine aware that the U.S. Congress is monitoring the conduct of the parliamentary election process closely, and will not just be focusing on Election Day results. My resolution urges the Government of Ukraine to enforce impartially the new election

law signed by President Kuchma in October. The resolution also urges the Government of Ukraine to meet its commitments on democratic elections and address issues identified by the OSCE in its final report on the 1999 elections, such as state interference in the campaign and pressure on the media. Finally, the resolution calls upon the Government of Ukraine to allow both domestic and international election monitors access to the parliamentary election process.

It is my hope that this resolution will send a clear message to the Government of Ukraine that the U.S. Congress will not simply rubber stamp funding requests for Ukraine without also considering the serious issues involved in Ukraine's democratic development. In particular, the conduct of the 2002 parliamentary elections will have a major impact on funding considerations when Members of Congress are again confronted with the task of blancing their support for the U.S.-Ukrainian relationship with Ukraine's progress in making democratic reforms.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H. Res. 339, and I encourage the Government of Ukraine to conduct a democratic, transparent, and fair parliamentary election process on March 31.

Mr. HOFFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 339, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REPORT ON NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ANGOLA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-190)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report prepared by my Administration on the national emergency with respect to the