

AHI 2006 Questionnaire for Congressional Candidates

By Gene Rossides

The American Hellenic Institute has prepared and sent the following questions to all Congressional candidates, incumbents and challengers.

CYPRUS

2006 marks the 32-year anniversary of the Turkey's invasion of Cyprus and occupation of 37.3 % of Cyprus. Since 1974, U.S. policy on the Cyprus problem has been a foreign policy failure. On May 1, 2004 Cyprus became a member of the European Union as a divided and occupied nation, its northern part being under illegal Turkish military occupation.

The effort by the UN to resolve the Cyprus problem in 2003-4 under the so-called Annan Plan was flawed because, as written, it was undemocratic, unworkable, not financially viable and rewarded the aggressor Turkey and punished the victims, the Greek Cypriots. It also violated key UN resolutions and the EU's democratic norms and *acquis communautaire*.

The U.S. in its own interests of providing peace and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean needs to support a solution for Cyprus based on democratic values.

QUESTIONS:

(1) Do you support a settlement of the Cyprus problem through negotiations based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in a sovereign state, incorporating the norms of constitutional democracy, the EU *acquis communautaire*, UN resolutions on Cyprus, and the pertinent decisions of the European Court of Humans Rights?

Yes No

(2) Do you support a settlement for Cyprus that would be democratic, fair, workable, financially viable and just for all the people of Cyprus?

Yes No

(3) Do you support the immediate demilitarization of Cyprus?

Yes No

(4) Do you support the prompt return to Turkey of the over 120,000 illegal Turkish settlers in Cyprus in violation of the Geneva Convention of 1949.

Yes **No**

(5) Do you support the tearing down of the Turkish Green Line barbed wire fence across the face of Cyprus?

Yes **No**

(6) Do you support the rights of all Cypriots to buy property and live wherever they chose without being limited by ethnic quotas?

Yes **No**

(7) Will you support legislation in the 110th Congress similar to H.R. 857, American- Owned Property in Occupied Cyprus Claims Act?

On February 16, 2005 Representative Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) introduced the bipartisan *American Owned Property In Occupied Cyprus Claims Act*, H.R. 857. The bill, initiated by the American Hellenic Institute, now has 32 co-sponsors. This bill will enable U.S. citizens who own property in the Turkish occupied territory of Cyprus to seek financial remedies in U.S. courts from either the current illegal inhabitants of their land or the Turkish government.

Yes **No**

AEGEAN SEA BOUNDARY

Turkey has made claim to one-half of the Aegean Sea and refuses to take its claim to the International Court of Justice at the Hague (ICJH) for a binding ruling. The U.S. should publicly state that the maritime boundary in the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey has been long-established by treaties. The relevant agreements are the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, the Italy-Turkey Convention of January 4, 1932, the Italy-Turkey Protocol of December 28, 1932 and the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty, under which the Dodecanese Islands and adjacent islets were ceded by Italy to Greece.

The U.S. is a signatory to the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty and is obligated by

U.S. law to carry out its provisions. The State Department has failed to declare publicly what the law is and should do so now. The U.S. should urge Turkey to submit its claim to the ICJH for binding arbitration.

H.Con.Res.137, a bipartisan resolution with 31 co-sponsors was introduced by Representative Robert E. Andrews (D-NJ) in April of 2005, expressing the view of the House that the boundary between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean has been long-established by treaties and anyone disagreeing should take their claim to the ICJH.

QUESTION:

Will you support similar legislation in the 110th Congress?

Yes

No

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

The Turkish government has tolerated assaults against its Greek Orthodox religious minority, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and continues the illegal closure of the Greek Orthodox Halki Patriarchal School of Theology in Istanbul. The U.S. law expressed in Section 2804 of the Fiscal Year 1999 Appropriations Bill, calls for the Turkish government to safeguard the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its personnel, and its property, and to reopen the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in North America led a panel discussion at the U.S. Helsinki Commission on March 16, 2005 which presented a clear picture of how religious human rights violations by the Turkish government have been working to exterminate the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox community in that country.

U.S. Helsinki Commission Co-Chairman Congressman Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) stated: "The concern of this Commission is the protection of religious rights and freedoms. Turkey's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate violates its obligations under international human rights law." Mr. Smith blamed Turkey for systemically attempting to prevent the activities of the Patriarchate by disallowing the opening of the Halki Theological School forcibly closed in 1971, destroying churches by creating hurdles preventing their repair, denying the Patriarchate the opportunity to purchase and or sell property and not recognizing the Patriarchate's "Ecumenical" status, in effect, denying its universal status.

QUESTION:

Do you agree that the U.S. should use its influence with the Turkish government to ensure the protection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate by supporting Section 2804 of the Fiscal Year 1999 Appropriations Bill, as well as assuring that positive steps are taken to reopen the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology, and to establish conditions to ensure religious freedom in Turkey?

Yes

No

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM:

Participation in the visa-waiver program is of high importance to Greece, as it will facilitate short-term business travel and enhance tourism between our two nations.

Greece has met all the technical requirements for participation. The new machine-readable passports comply with all relevant provisions of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Administration officials have recognized that Greece's new "state of the art" passports should serve as a model for other countries.

Greece and the U.S. have been allied in every major international conflict of the 20th century. General Andrew J. Goodpaster, former Supreme Commander of NATO called Greece's role in WWII a turning point and its defeat of the communist insurgents in the Greek Civil War a turning point in world history.

Greece was deemed ready for prompt participation in the Visa Waiver Program in 1999. Given all that Greece has accomplished it is inconceivable that Greece remains the only Schengen country that does not participate in the program.

QUESTION:

Would you provide support by urging the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security to include Greece as a full member in the Visa Waiver Program?

Yes

No

Albania

Although some improvements have been made lately in the conditions and treatment of the Greek minority, continuing acts of discrimination and persecution are tolerated by the government of Albania against the nation's ethnic Greek minority. Albania successfully sought a census to measure the

Albanian minority in neighboring FYROM, while it resists the demand of the European Union to measure its minorities.

QUESTION:

Would you support hearings on the issue of Albania's treatment of its minorities?

Yes

No

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The "Macedonia" issue stems from the 1991 secessionist Skopje regime's naming itself in the most provocative way possible as the so-called "Republic of Macedonia" and requesting worldwide recognition

When Marshal Tito fashioned the puppet "Socialist Republic of Macedonia" from the southern Yugoslav province of Vardar-Banovina in 1945, he did so to foment disorder in northern Greece in furtherance of his plan to communize the Balkan Peninsula and gain control of the key port city of Salonica. "Macedonian" nationalism was a product of Tito's fabrications. The then U.S. Secretary of State Edward Stettinius in a circular airgram to diplomatic officers on December 26, 1944 wrote:

"This Government considers talk of Macedonian 'nation,' Macedonian 'Fatherland,' or Macedonian 'national consciousness' to be unjustified demagoguery representing no ethnic nor political reality, and sees in its present revival a possible cloak for aggressive intentions against Greece."

The Truman Doctrine with its military aid to Greece enabled the Greek forces to defeat the communist insurgents supported by Tito and Stalin in the Greek Civil War 1946-1949.

The State Department's reversal of policy on November 4, 2004 by the recognition of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as the "Republic of Macedonia" was an act of disgraceful proportions as it relates to our staunch ally and supporter in the Balkans, Greece. This act is harmful to U.S. interests in the Balkans. Since antiquity, the name Macedonia referred to a geographical region, not to a nationality.

QUESTION:

Do you support the U.S. pressing FYROM to negotiate with Greece for

**a solution to the name issue which does not include the word
“Macedonia”?**

Yes

No

U.S. POLICY TOWARDS TURKEY

Turkey is a proven unreliable ally who refused to allow the U.S. in 2003 to use bases in Turkey to open a northern front against Saddam Hussein dictatorship because she wanted \$6 billion more- in addition to \$26 billion offered by the Administration through then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz- for a total of \$32 billion. An administration official called Turkey’s negotiating tactics “extortion in the name of the alliance.”

The U.S.’s defeat of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship without access from Turkey proved Turkey’s marginality as a strategic military resource in the region. Today, the U.S. has access to alternative military facilities in the region including countries in the Balkans, Middle East, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and in Iraq itself.

Turkey’s unreliability is not new. During the Cold War, Turkey actively aided the Soviet military to the serious detriment of the U.S. During the 1973 Mid-East War, predating the Turkish invasion of Cyprus by one year, Turkey refused the U.S. military overflight rights to resupply Israel and granted the U.S.S.R. overland military convoy rights to resupply Syria and Iraq, and military overflight permission to resupply Egypt. In the 1977-78 conflict in Ethiopia, Turkey granted the Soviets military overflight rights to support the pro-Soviet minority of Ethiopian communist insurgents led by Colonel Mengistu who eventually prevailed.

Rep. Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI), a member of the International Relations Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats, said, “ It’s my belief in the larger picture, what the United States has to do is fundamentally reexamine its relationship with the nation of Turkey. If the United States comes to the realization that our interest as it has always been is in dealing with other just nations to advance the cause of constitutional government and human rights, I believe that this course of action will be beneficial to everyone.”

QUESTION:

Will you support a fundamental reexamination of United States relations with Turkey?

Yes

No