

## 'The Minotaur of war has been loosed'

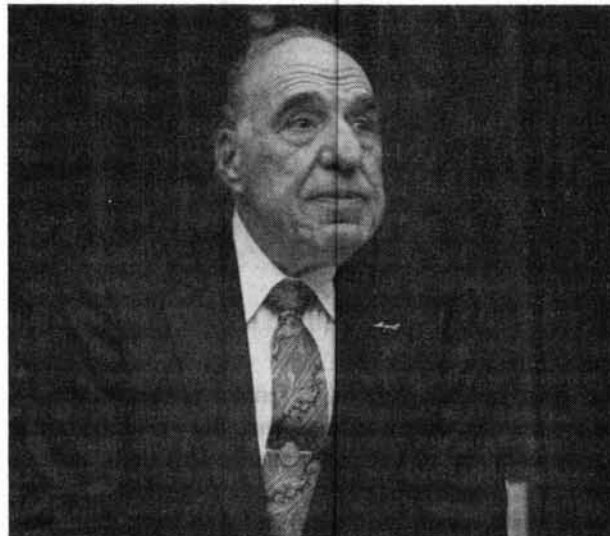
*Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.) sent the following letter to a Virginia peace activist on Feb. 15.*

I appreciate your support for impeachment of the President because of Operation Desert Storm. For the reasons I state below, I introduced a Resolution of Impeachment (H.Res.34) of the President on Jan. 16. The decision to introduce this legislation was made over a number of months, and it was a very difficult decision which I did not take lightly. However, the pain I feel for our country, and particularly for the men and women from around the world who will die in this war, compelled me to act. I support our troops, for they are obeying their Commander in Chief, but this is not a war they should have to fight.

There is no question that I had tried every other means available to a Member of Congress to stop this war since Aug. 2—I called for Congress to end its August recess and later to refrain from adjourning in October; I implored the Speaker to bring the question of war to the floor for full and open debate; I introduced legislation twice to invoke federal law to require the President to report on his war-making to Congress so that the path to a violent resolution could be forestalled while peaceful measures were explored; finally, I was forced to resort to the only legal means left—a Resolution of Impeachment. I hope that if hearings are conducted on the Resolution in the near future, there will be an opportunity not only to stop the war but to investigate a number of issues that have been raised in connection with President Bush's conduct in the Persian Gulf crisis. With the current level of censorship being exercised by the administration, it is more imperative now than ever to raise issues to the public's awareness.

There are five grounds for my Resolution of Impeachment. The first is that the President has violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution by exploiting the lack of economic opportunities available in our society to poor whites, to blacks, and to Mexican-Americans. By failing to provide viable economic opportunity to these people, the government has effectively forced them into military service. This is not right, and it violates these individuals' right to equal protection.

The second basis for my Resolution is that the President violated the United Nations Charter and other laws in bribing and threatening U.N. Security Council members into voting for the use of force in the Middle East.



This is clear: Egypt's \$7 billion debt to us was "forgiven"; China was promised \$140 million; over \$7 billion was promised to the Soviet Union; Zaire was promised military assistance and partial forgiveness of its debt; Saudi Arabia was promised at least \$12 billion in arms; Yemen was threatened with the termination of support; and the United States finally paid off \$187 million of its debt to the United Nations.

The third basis is that the President is using weapons of massive force that will result in the killing of tens of thousands of civilians. This is outrageously immoral, and it is a violation of law. The fourth basis is that the President never took his case to Congress when there could be full and open debate on the question of war—instead, the President waited until 500,000 troops' lives were on the line, and the majority in Congress believed they had no choice but to support the President, particularly since he stated he would go to war even if Congress prohibited it. The fifth basis is that the President has generally, and in every way, breached the peace by his unwarranted commitment to violence. We have violence in our streets—San Antonio's murder rate is soaring, as is the murder rate in our nation's capital and other cities around the nation. How can we preach to our children and our adult citizens that violence is not the way to solve conflict when our nation is engaging in violence of such magnitude?

How soon forgotten the last wars: the basket cases, the armless, the legless, the sightless. The Minotaur once again is turned loose by cynical old men to consume our young. How tragic!

Sincerely  
Henry B. Gonzalez