

percentage assessment that determines our annual UN dues. That mistake is likely to cost us hundreds of millions of dollars in lower dues payments. Assessments were renegotiated last fall, and we have had to ask to reopen those negotiations. And now it is very unlikely that we can succeed in lowering our assessment from 25 to 20 percent, as called for in this conference report.

By the year 2000, Japan's assessment will be 20 percent. Surely the United States, which has a larger economy than Japan's will be expected to pay more than Japan. Other Asian countries, which had expected to take on larger assessments, are no longer able to because of the Asian financial crisis. At best, we're likely to get our assessment lowered to 22 percent, still saving taxpayers millions of dollars every year, but only if we pay our arrearages.

The simply truth is that we will continue to suffer a loss of influence and credibility in the United Nations if we continue to fail to pay these arrearages. I see no reason why this critical international responsibility should be held hostage to an extension of our domestic abortion debate. I urge my colleagues to defeat the conference report.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the State Department Authorization bill would place an international gag rule on organizations that use their own non-U.S. funds to provide abortion services. It also threatens to cut off \$29 million from our international family planning efforts if the President attempts to defer the ban on funding to organizations that use their own private funds for abortion services. This policy is clearly unacceptable, and is not supported by the President or by the American people.

Why? Because the American people understand that family planning is necessary, successful, and addresses a critical need. According to the World Health Organization, nearly 600,000 women die each year of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. International family planning efforts have been remarkably successful and have saved women's lives. I am shocked that proponents of these so-called "Mexico City" restrictions claim that our family planning programs actually increase the number of abortions, when, in fact, the exact opposite is true. Studies show that our efforts, as part of an international strategy, have prevented more than 500 million unintended pregnancies.

International family planning improves women's health, helps reduce poverty, and protects our global environment. Our family planning programs save lives, and they should be continued without unnecessary restrictions.

There is no need to impose this type of gag rule on organizations that use their own money to further their objectives and to make women's lives safer. The "Mexico City" restrictions are pernicious, unnecessary, and harmful. If this bill were to be enacted, it would severely limit family planning efforts and simply result in more unwanted pregnancies, more fatalities among women, and more abortions. I strongly oppose these provisions of the State Department Authorization bill.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address several aspects of this legislation which authorize appropriations for activities under the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, which I chair.

First, I would like to congratulate the gentleman from New York for his hard work on

this conference report. He has produced a product that deserves our full support.

Sections 1104 and 1231 of the conference report authorize funds for International Organizations and Programs and for Migration and Refugee Affairs. There are several sub-authorizations within these sections. However, the level appropriated for the accounts in 1989 is such that these subauthorizations will not result in the earmarking of funds for the purposes specified. For fiscal year 1999, I do not feel bound by the limitations imposed by the authorizations for specific activities within these accounts. The programs mentioned may all be meritorious, but they must receive funding on the basis of a balance among all the programs within the appropriations accounts.

Section 1815 of the conference report would earmark not less than \$2,000,000 in fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for activities in Cuba. Despite the fact that the State Department has indicated that it will be obligating at least this level of funds in fiscal year 1998, this earmark does not conform with the proper roles of each committee in the allocation of appropriated funds. It is the role of the International Relations Committee to establish policy and to place a ceiling on the amount of funds that should be made available for appropriations accounts and activities. However, the allocation of funds within those authorization levels is reserved for the Appropriations Committee.

I must respectfully inform the House, and the authorization committee, that I will not be bound by such earmarks or limitations when I make my recommendations for fiscal year 1999 for the Foreign Operations appropriations act.

Once again, I congratulate the gentleman from New York for his work on this legislation. Aside from these minor matters, it is a conference report that deserves our full support.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for his remarks, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON). All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report just adopted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

EXPRESSION FOR APPRECIATION FOR HARD WORK OF MEMBERS ON CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this vote, and I appreciate the work of the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and I appreciate all the hard work that has been put into this bill. Our Members are very appreciative of all of the cooperation of all of the Members on the floor.

We think this is an excellent bill, and we want to give credit where credit is due to the Members of the House, and particularly the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary. The chairman of the Committee on International Relations has done a great service for this House, and the gentleman is to be commended for a bill that is consolidating the State Department and bringing some very needed reforms.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAY. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished whip for his kind remarks, and I just want to remind our Members that there are a number, as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) indicated, of significant provisions in the measure we have just adopted.

We consolidated foreign affairs agencies into the State Department, something that we have been advocating for a number of years, something the Senate has been advocating. We provided \$38 million in assistance to the democratic opposition in Iraq, in attempting to move Iraq away from the violations that have occurred with regard to the biological and chemical weapons. We strictly conditioned U.N. arrearage payments on a number of internal reforms that we are seeking. We initiated long-term reforms of the United Nations; that is the Helms-Burton package. We are saving taxpayers money by reducing the United States assessment at the United Nations. And most importantly, we initiated the McBride fair employment principles for the troubles in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Speaker, we have accomplished a great deal by this measure.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his remarks, and I think this is a wonderful day for the House of Representatives in reflecting this vote.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3246, FAIRNESS FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND EMPLOYEES ACT OF 1998

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 393 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the