

DEMOCRACY DENIED IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. TURNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, the effort in the House of Representatives to reform campaign finance laws in this country has died today without a single word of debate being spoken. It died by a procedural move on the part of the Republican leadership to place this very critical issue on a suspension calendar, a calendar normally reserved for bills that are not of great controversy, that require two-thirds vote for passage, bills that normally would be heard in an uncontested manner. Yet, the most important issue of campaign finance reform was placed on that calendar for this next Monday before the House of Representatives.

It is a tragedy that with hundreds of thousands of hours of effort being put in in the last 15 months in this Congress to study the abuses of campaign finance, committee hearings that have taken place in the committee I serve on, the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, hearings in the Committee on House Oversight, and the pledge by the Republican leadership to allow this House to have an open and bipartisan debate, that has been denied by a procedural move that will not allow this House to completely debate that bill.

MCCAIN-FEINGOLD CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM BILL A DISASTER FOR AMERICA

(Mr. DOOLITTLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to praise the House leadership unabashedly for making the decision they did and allowing this to go before the House on a suspension calendar. I wholeheartedly endorse that decision. All of this folderol about the McCain-Feingold bill, it is a disastrous concept. It would hurt America. It would destroy our constitutional right to free speech.

I hear such moral indignation from the other side, but when we see the myriad of campaign abuses written about, engaged in by one branch of government in particular, everything is so muted.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that we have not properly diagnosed what the problem is in our campaign system. It is severely flawed, and we need to correct it, but rushing out here with a bill that everybody is afraid not to support, although I am happy not to support it, and many others, more than some might think, would be happy not to support it, I think we would be premature in bringing it up in that fashion.

This needs to be thoroughly discussed. The procedure of the leadership, as adopted by the supermajority,

is entirely appropriate because the subject of this bill would hurt our constitutional rights.

□ 1500

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2515.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,  
MARCH 30, 1998

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR  
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON  
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EWING addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remind our colleagues that today, March 27, marks the 65th anniversary of the creation of the Farm Credit Administration by the executive order of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

The FCA is the independent arm's length reporting of the \$78 billion Farm Credit System. It provides credit and financial services to this country's farmers, ranchers, and agricultural cooperatives.

The FCA is charged with a highly challenging mission: to promote a safe and sound, competitive Farm Credit System by creating an environment that enables System institutions to serve rural America as a dependable source of credit and financial services within the authorities established by Congress.

The FCA is ably led by a distinguished three-person board chaired by the Honorable Marsha Pyle Martin, who hails from the great State of Texas. In addition to her significant roots, Ms. Martin is the first woman chair of the FCA board and, together with fellow board members Doyle Cook and Ann Jorgensen, directs the regulatory activities of a small cadre of highly qualified professionals.

While the FCA is a small agency with only 300 personnel nationwide, it is an impressive group of dedicated professionals, possessing insightful knowledge about how to ensure that sound financial institutions thrive to better serve agriculture. It is an agency with a rich history of profound service to agriculture, and is one of the surviving entities of FDR's New Deal.

I would like to share a brief bit of FCA history with the Members today, because I believe it demonstrates how well government can work, and points clearly to the importance of those institutions which will maintain our Nation's position as the world leader in agriculture as we move forward into the next millennium.

Shortly after President Roosevelt was inaugurated in 1933, he issued an executive order that established the FCA as an independent credit agency and consolidated under it all the fragmented programs previously created to improve the availability and deliverability of agricultural credit.

The 1930s were not a good time for agriculture. Farm prices had hit an all-time low and hundreds of thousands of farmers were finding it impossible to produce enough income to pay their debts. One of the FCA's first major responsibilities was to implement the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act of 1933, designed to halt the wave of farm foreclosures by refinancing farmers' debt.

Through radio broadcasts, President Roosevelt told farmers to write or wire Washington if their farms were threatened by foreclosure. The response was an avalanche of wires, letters, and phone calls, totaling 43,000 in less than 4 months. The newly formed Farm Credit Administration moved vigorously to intercede with creditors, asking them to wait long enough to see if farms could be refinanced. Most of the farms were refinanced, and the FCA's history of dedicated service to agriculture had begun.