

TRIBUTE TO IFAD'S TWO DECADES OF OPERATIONS: SMALL, EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TURNS TWENTY

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 1998

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this year an extraordinary organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), celebrates twenty years of successful work to help the rural poor. I was pleased to recently participate in a workshop marking this milestone, in which IFAD gathered public and private sector representatives to find new ways to work together and advance in fight against rural poverty. I would like to share the recommendations made by the workshop participants, and to recognize IFAD for its many achievements in helping the impoverished citizens of the world.

For twenty years, IFAD has effectively pursued its mission of combating rural poverty and hunger in developing countries. Since 1977, IFAD has financed innovative projects that provide poor farmers with the technical assistance, training, equipment and supplies they need to increase food production and income. Throughout its work, IFAD emphasizes community-based approaches that enable the poor themselves to identify local solutions to local problems. With over 489 projects in 111 countries, IFAD has already touched the lives of over 200 million poor rural people around the world.

IFAD viewed its Twentieth Anniversary as an opportunity to take stock and prepare for challenges that lie ahead. The nature of poverty is becoming more and more complex. As it does, the need to engage an ever widening array of groups in the fight against poverty grows. Recognizing these trends, IFAD hosted an anniversary workshop in which representatives of civil society, the business community, government agencies and academia came together and explored new ways to tackle poverty through partnership.

Those who participated in IFAD's workshop examined opportunities for partnerships in microfinance—the valuable development tool through which poor people gain access to the small loans and savings facilities they need to lift their families out of poverty. They explored ways to combat desertification—the degradation of drylands that is a fundamental threat to the ability of subsistence farmers to feed their families. Finally, the workshop also took a close look at one innovative and successful alliance of public and private actors, the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Poverty and Hunger. Their recommendations in these three areas were thoughtful and valuable, and I would like to share them with my colleagues by submitting them for the RECORD.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MICROFINANCE WORKING GROUP

1. IFAD should identify its implementing partners early, and create alignments with such partners on objectives and policies while not losing its grassroots approach.

2. IFAD should continue to reinforce linkages to non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

3. Because of its grassroots perspective, IFAD has a comparative advantage in identi-

fying barriers to the development of microfinance institutions (MFIs). IFAD should capitalize on that perspective to inform and improve the policy environment for microfinance, especially in dialogues with UN agencies and other multilateral institutions.

4. IFAD should consider organizing working groups to encourage private sector engagement in the microfinance sector. Possible activities include selling products, providing training, and facilitating private sector investment in MFIs. IFAD could also consider providing grants to match private sector grants for purposes of developing MFIs.

5. IFAD should promote among governments and other policy making entities the use of alternative regulations specific to the microfinance industry, for the regulatory environment presently overseeing large, well-capitalized financial institutions may not reflect the unique nature and purpose of MFIs.

6. IFAD could develop a training agenda to promote "best practices" among MFIs, especially for those MFIs (e.g. local and indigenous NGOs) that do not have access to international best practice literature and curricula. IFAD's NGO Advisory Group could have a role in this effort.

7. IFAD should create microcredit workshops in regions around the world.

8. IFAD's NGO Advisory Group should work to create a "lateral" dialogue among other NGO Working Groups linked to multilateral organizations such as the (World Bank's).

9. IFAD should convene NGO working groups on MFIs in post-conflict countries and "reconstructing" economies.

10. IFAD should continue to explore new instruments and innovations for mobilizing and facilitating savings of the rural poor.

11. IFAD should engage in applied research on what is working in the field of microfinance (e.g., engaging in a dialogue with Ms. Marguerite Robinson of the Harvard Institute for International Development, an expert who has advised governments worldwide on MFIs).

12. IFAD should continue to explore linkages between microfinance, land tenure and desertification.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE POPULAR COALITION TO ERADICATE HUNGER AND POVERTY WORKING GROUP

1. How can the Popular Coalition broaden the leadership and input to the Coalition from NGO's, governments, multilateral institutions, faith communities, and the private sector?

Action: IFAD should convene the General Assembly from which a broad based steering committee would be chosen. Care should be taken to ensure that representatives from all faith communities (Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and others) are chosen, as well as representatives from private sector industry.

2. Beyond having overarching input from the new Steering Committee noted above, there is a need to develop more specific strategies for greater involvement of the private sector and the faith communities. How can this be achieved?

Action: In conjunction with the new Steering Committee, the Secretariat of the Popular Coalition will develop multiple strategies to increase participation of all actors, with a "menu of options" for involvement to offer them.

3. How can the Popular Coalition develop a greater awareness and recognition of its successes and needs? How can it educate and inform its current and future constituents?

Action: The Secretariat of the Popular Coalition in conjunction with the regional nodes of the Popular Coalition will refine the

mission and develop a "niche slogan" in a "building-block architecture" that can convey the many activities and goals of the Popular Coalition. The mission and slogan will not be overly complex, so as not to create confusion, but will not be overly simplistic either.

4. How can the Popular Coalition members in the South link with already existing coalitions in the North?

Action: The Secretariat should task a committee comprised of members from the regional nodes to do the following:

a. conduct an inventory of existing coalitions in the North via sectoral activities (technical assistance for agricultural development, legal and negotiating expertise for land reform, etc.) to understand what the possible assets are; and

b. develop specific requests from Popular Coalition members that could be developed into a list of concrete assistance needs to be presented to northern coalitions.

5. How can the Popular Coalition target their success stories and their needs to northern NGO's, governments, multilateral institutions, and the private sector? What kind of information moves people to action and involvement on the issues the Popular Coalition addresses?

Action: The Secretariat will engage an outside evaluator to conduct market research into how the success stories of the Knowledge Networks can be communicated to potential partners in the north with the end goal in mind of strengthening the Coalition members and leveraging resources to build their capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DESERTIFICATION WORKING GROUP

1. Discussants should support, as a group, U.S. ratification of the Convention to Combat Desertification before the end of the 105th Session. Reasons:

It provides the leadership the world expects from the United States on such issues, and will provide the U.S. an opportunity to influence decisions at the Second Conference of Parties to the Convention;

It is good for U.S. business and for the U.S. university/academic community where desertification expertise resides;

The humanitarian need is urgent;

The practical need is also urgent: biodiversity is declining, food sources are dwindling;

National security could be threatened by environmental flash points in fires and other natural disasters where desertification is a factor, and in conflicts over water and other scarce natural resources;

Migration within nations and across borders is prompted by spreading deserts, causing conflict within and among nations;

Desertification is linked to global climate change, and amelioration could help slow global warming;

The treaty's provisions interlink with U.S. obligations under existing treaties, such as national environmental action plans, measures to promote women's rights and sustainable development, and so on;

The treaty would enable the use of revolutionary strategies and methods to combat the spread of deserts; and

It would improve coordinated work with U.S. partners in other areas including foreign aid programs, and global cooperation is an avowed U.S. policy goal.

2. Raise awareness and understanding among the media and the U.S. private sector to generate support for the CCD. The treaty is not about "deserts," for example, as media reports have said, but about preservation of drylands in their current useful state for agriculture.

3. Mobilize scientific analysis of the relationship between desertification and other

phenomena such as fires, climate change, damage to the ozone layer, etcetera.

4. Change U.S. trade policies to discourage actions abroad that contribute to desertification.

5. Support coordination between scientists, government agencies, NGOs and localities to develop useful technologies and methodologies to prevent and combat desertification.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF JESSE HOLMAN JONES

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 1998

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the efforts of Houston Endowment Inc. to highlight the life of Jesse Holman Jones, who during his lifetime was widely known as one of the most powerful leaders in the nation, and because of his vast contributions to the growth of the City of Houston, became known as "Mr. Houston."

On November 10, 1998, Houston Endowment Inc. will host a Centennial Celebration of the remarkable contributions of Jesse Holman Jones, beginning with a champagne reception followed by the world premiere of the documentary, "Brother, Can You Spare a Billion? The Story of Jesse H. Jones."

Jesse H. Jones was born in Tennessee but moved to Texas at the age of seventeen, first working in a lumberyard for his uncle, then later establishing his own 60 lumberyards across the Southwest. As an extension of the lumberyards, he began building small houses south of downtown Houston, which he financed for working class families by offering 20-year mortgages, a new concept at the time. He eventually progressed to commercial structures, and in 1907 he announced that he would build the city's three tallest buildings. The nine-story Bristol Hotel, Houston's first "skyscraper", elevated Houston's stature; the 10-story Houston Chronicle Building brought Mr. Jones half interest in a thriving newspaper; and the 10-story Texas Company Building helped make Texaco and the petroleum industry a permanent part of the city's business community. Within 25 years, he had transformed Houston's Main Street and downtown into the region's most prominent business district, filled with office buildings, movie theaters, hotels, apartment buildings, department stores, and parking garages.

Mr. Jones' role in developing Houston's economy was as important as his role in building its skyline. He invested in local banks and became Chairman of the National Bank of Commerce, later to become Texas Commerce Bank and today's Chase Bank of Texas. His portrait still hangs in the majestic lobby of the bank's flagship office. Through his banking interests, Mr. Jones helped industrialize and internationalize Houston. He supported other growing industries, such as the radio and television industry, while convincing the federal government to enter into a public-private partnership to build the Houston Ship Channel, which today includes the Port of Houston, the nation's second busiest port. Such public-private partnerships were unheard of at the time.

Mr. Jones attracted the attention of President Woodrow Wilson and accepted the position of Director General of Military Relief for

the American Red Cross. After the war, Mr. Jones helped reorganize the Red Cross from a loose-knit group of local societies into the permanent international relief agency it is today. In addition, in 1928 as Finance Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, he brought the party's national convention to Houston, the first major political convention to be held in the South since before the Civil War.

When the stock market crashed and the nation plunged into the Great Depression, Mr. Jones called the city's business leaders together and worked out a plan that prevented any bank failures in Houston during the Great Depression. Mr. Jones' business and financial insight were called upon when President Herbert Hoover asked him to serve on the board of the newly created Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC); President Franklin Roosevelt expanded the RFC's powers and made Mr. Jones its chairman. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae), and the Export-Import Bank are only a few of the many enduring agencies created by Mr. Jones and the RFC.

Mr. Jones would go on to be Secretary of Commerce during the "New Deal" and today scholars give Jesse Jones credit for saving the American capitalist economy, for mobilizing industry in time to fight and win World War II, and for radically changing the relationship between government, business and citizens.

After 14 years of public service in Washington, DC, Jesse Jones had won the respect of Democrats and Republicans alike, as he exercised his authority with diplomacy, patience, and equity. He and his wife, Mary Gibbs Jones, returned to Houston in 1946 and began to focus on philanthropy. By the time Jesse Holman Jones passed away on June 1, 1956, Houston Endowment Inc., the foundation he created in partnership with his wife, Mary, had helped more than 4,000 students through scholarship programs in 57 colleges and universities. Just months before he passed away, the town of 40,000 he came to in 1898 had obtained its one millionth citizen.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Houston Endowment Inc. for reminding Houstonians of the life of Jesse H. Jones, one of our most prominent citizens.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4101,
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND DRUG
ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 2, 1998

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my extreme disappointment in the President's threats to veto the FY 99 Agriculture Appropriations bill. This is legislation which will provide much needed aid for cashed-strapped farmers this fall.

American farmers are by far the most productive in the world. These hard working men and women epitomize every value that makes America great. They run their business on a dream and hard work with a constant concern

over the weather conditions, hoping for a good crop. During a bad season, some pray daily to be able to put food on the table for their families. Now, after a season of low commodity prices and bad weather, the Democrats are looking to eliminate the emergency aid to those who grow our nation's food supply by urging the President to veto the FY 99 Agriculture Appropriations Act. This is unacceptable.

The fact is, the House more than doubled the only request received from the President, from \$1.8 billion to \$4.2 billion for emergency aid to help farmers. It is irresponsible for the President to play partisan politics with people's lives.

Mr. Speaker this is no time to play politics. I urge the President to rise above the temptation to exploit this issue for his political advantage and sign the FY 99 Agriculture Appropriations Act into law.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
JERRY SOLOMON

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 1998

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I've been pleased to call JERRY SOLOMON of New York my friend for 20 years.

JERRY SOLOMON was the guy you always wanted on your side in a legislative battle. You always knew where he stood. You always knew his word was his bond.

It was as if he never left the Marine Corps, and in his mind he probably never did. JERRY SOLOMON wore an American flag pin on his lapel and his love of country on his sleeve. Few members could match his tenacity and his sense of loyalty. Never were those qualities more on display than when the House acted on national defense and veterans matters.

More recently we've seen another side of JERRY SOLOMON. It was his sense of fair play. His chairmanship of the Rules Committee made him the legislative traffic cop in the House. He took his role seriously, and his integrity earned him the respect of majority and minority alike.

His idol was Ronald Reagan, whose determination to rebuild our military found its staunchest House advocate in JERRY SOLOMAN. Our sons and daughters in the military have always been very special to him. He wanted nothing but the best for them both during and after their service.

Veterans have no greater friend than JERRY SOLOMON. He enjoyed a close relationship with that other giant of veterans' legislation, our former colleague and committee chairman Sonny Montgomery of Mississippi. Their collaboration was a golden period for America's veterans and an inspiration for those of us who followed them.

JERRY SOLOMON's proudest moment was that brisk October day at Fort McNair in 1988 when President Reagan signed into law his bill elevating the Veterans Administration to a full, cabinet-level department. That will be his lasting legacy and monument.

We will miss his passion, his perseverance, and his patriotism. "Semper Fi" was never just