2000 EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3908) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I am in strong opposition to the Kasich/Shays/Condit amendment, which threatens unilateral withdrawal of U.S. forces and resources from Kosova.

One year ago, Kosova was a rump province and ethnic cleansing project of Slobodan Milosevic's Greater Serbia. The world watched the systematic campaign of killing, rape, and forced displacement of ethnic Albanians, whose only crime was their religion.

We and NATO were right to intervene, and we still have a job to do. The need in Kosova for peacekeeping, reconstruction and development of civil and judicial administration is greater than all of the promises by NATO and the U.S. together.

The authors of this amendment are right in one respect. Every diplomatic effort to hold NATO allies to their agreement is entirely appropriate. But threatening to unilaterally withdraw from our freely given commitment just makes the peacekeeping job, so ably done by our deployed men and women—and the reconstruction job—a great deal harder. And if the threat were acted upon, God forbid, it will only lead to giving the final initiative back to Milosevic.

Mr. Chairman, Secretary of State Albright has said that our challenge is to ''secure the peace'' in Kosova. This amendment would assure no peace.

I urge a ''no'' vote on this amendment.

2000 EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3908) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Lewis-Spence-Murtha-Skelton amendment.

I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) for making this amendment a bipartisan amendment. We could not do it without them.

There are not many people here on this floor this evening, but, frankly, the folks that are here, are not the people that I am trying to reach. I am trying to reach the people who are in the offices listening and the American people on C–Span that might see this.

I am going to say what I said at our Republican conference this morning. And, I will say it to everyone now. We are considering emergency supplemental legislation. In prior years, we have talked about supplementals, emergency supplementals, real emergency supplementals. This is a real, real emergency supplemental from the standpoint of defense.

I know we all have different priorities. We have talked about them a lot today. We are going to continue to talk about them—all the things that are in this supplemental bill, drugs and all the rest.

But, I want to remind everyone, we would not be here as a free society, secure and prosperous, if it had not been made possible by our military, starting with the revolution when we gained our independence. Since that time, we have had World War I and World War II, big threats. Our forefathers, our fathers, our grandfathers, and their families sacrificed their lives and their health to make sure that we are free and secure, and to create this environment that permits us to discuss these matters as they come along.

There is a poem that is often attributed to General MacArthur, and also to a priest that served with the General, Father Denis Edward O'Brien, U.S. Marine Corps, that I believe sums up just how much we owe the freedom and liberty that we so often take for granted, to the military. It goes like this:

It is the soldier, not the reporter, Who has given us freedom of the press.
It is the soldier, not the poet, Who has given us freedom of speech.
It is the soldier, not the campus organizer. Who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.
It is the soldier, who salutes the flag, Who serves beneath the flag, And whose coffin is draped by the flag, Who allows the protester to burn the flag.

Some people these days talk about the arms race. Many people say we spend money on defense than all the rest of the world put together. We have to. Who else is able to do it? We are the only ones. To save ourselves, we have to save the rest of the world along with it.

The Cold War is over, yes. I agree. But, President Reagan, with a Democrat Congress, helped to restore the military and that is what brought about the end of the Cold War—we beat the Soviet Union in the arms race. They could not keep up. They could not do it any longer. That is what ended the Cold War. Today, we face a similar situation. We have more threats today than ever before. We still have the nuclear threat from now Russia, but now we have China and North Korea and all the rest of them, and we are not prepared to defend against those threats.

We also have other threats now—weapons of mass destruction other than nuclear—chemical, biological, from these same countries and lesser countries. This threat is out there, and we are unprepared to deal with it.

Finally, today we are no longer strong enough to fight one conventional war. Kosovo was a wakeup call. We devoted all of our air assets, just about everything, to that air war. And what would have happened if something big had broken out somewhere else in the world? We could not have handled it, certainly not without a large loss of life.

Now it is our turn. We have to step up to the plate. We have to make sure that our country is free, first of all, and allows us the environment to consider these other priorities, which I can sympathize with. The administration, I will give them credit, has come a long way, but not nearly enough. This amendment is going to help a whole lot, but still not enough.

I will conclude with a personal note: Twelve years ago, God gave me a second chance at life when I received a double lung transplant. God has clearly seen fit to leave me here on earth for some reason. I have dedicated this extension of my life to doing the best I can to preserve our freedom. But, I cannot do it alone. Our military cannot do it alone. We need your help. We need everyone's help. When the time comes, I want to be able to say, ''I've done my best.'' I want you to be able to say the same.

A TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE STEVEN CHEN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 3, 2000

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to call to the attention of my colleagues an article regarding Representative Steven Chen, who serves as the head of the Taipei Cultural and Economic Representative Office in Washington. The article, which ran in today's New York Times, is a fitting tribute to Taiwan's unofficial Ambassador, who has worked diligently to promote and expand relations between the United States and the 22 million citizens of Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Chen is a thorough professional who has enjoyed a long and distinguished life as a career diplomat. He has represented his government all over the world, including postings in the Philippines, Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia. His experience in the United States also is extensive. During the past 25 years, Ambassador Chen served in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and he has spent the last three years as the Representative in Washington, DC.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain my colleagues would agree that Steven Chen's charm and quiet demeanor have served Taiwan well. Whether meeting Members of Congress in their offices or Executive Branch officials in a more neutral setting, Ambassador Chen has always worked to make certain the United States and Taiwan remain strong friends.

Mr. Speaker, as the article notes, Ambassador Chen is planning to retire shortly. I am certain all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Steven Chen on a distinguished diplomatic career. We in the Congress are indeed fortunate to know him, and we wish him well in the years ahead.

[From the New York Times, April 3, 2000]

A DIPLOMATIC OUTSIDER WHO LOBBIES INSIDE WASHINGTON

(By Philip Shenon)

WASHINGTON.—At an embassy that is not an embassy, the ambassador who is not an ambassador can only imagine what it is like to be a full-fledged member of Washington's diplomatic corps.

''In the evenings, you attend cocktail parties, champagne dances,'' Stephen Chen said wistfully of the black-tie world from which he is largely excluded. ''This is the very routine, beautiful picture of the diplomat in a textbook.''

Mr. Chen, the director of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, the de facto embassy here for the government of Taiwan, is a charming pariah.

While he represents the interests of 22 million of the freest and richest people in Asia, the 66-year-old diplomat might as well be invisible, at least as far as many of the State Department's China experts are concerned.

The snubs, Mr. Chen suggested, are an obvious effort to appease Beijing, and they are more than a little unfair to a government that is only weeks away from a peaceful transfer of power from one democratically elected leader to another, the first time that has happened in almost 5,000 years of Chinese history.

''There is a kind of unfairness,'' Mr. Chen tells a visitor, the wall behind his desk decorated with a painting of the delicate blossoms of the winter plum, Taiwan's national flower. ''We have been a model student for freedom, democracy and a market economy.''

''We don't mind if the United States has rapprochement with mainland China—we think it's good to bring the P.R.C. into the family of civilizations,'' he says of the People's Republic of China, which considers Taiwan to be a renegade province. ''What we ask is that the interests of Taiwan not be sacrificed.''

Because the United States has no diplomatic relations with Taiwan and has recognized the Communist government in Beijing as the sole representative of the people of China, Mr. Chen and his staff of nearly 200 are barred from the premises of the State Department.

They are not invited to diplomatic receptions at the White House, or to most of the dinner parties and glittery balls held at the embassies of nations that recognize Beijing.

When Taiwanese diplomats want to talk with Clinton administration officials, the meetings are often held in hotel coffee shops.

''We must meet in a neutral setting, that is the rule,'' says Mr. Chen, explaining the awkward logistics of the job.

Relations with China have been especially jittery since Taiwan's election last month of the new president, Chen Shui-bian, a former democracy activist who long advocated Taiwan's independence and whose victory ended half a century of Nationalist rule.

On the eve of the election, Chinese leaders all but warned of an invasion if Mr. Chen and his party were victorious. Since the election, both Mr. Chen and Beijing have softened their rhetoric, and Mr. Chen has recently insisted that he sees no need for an independence declaration.

Stephen Chen, who is not related to the new president, welcomes the moderated rhetoric from Taiwan's new government. The Communist leaders in Beijing, he says, would strike only ''if they should be unnecessarily provoked.''

''We have been dealing with them for more than 60 years,'' he said. ''We know when they are bluffing, when they are not bluffing. If we don't give them an excuse, I don't think they're going to attack.''

Mr. Chen, who was born in the Chinese city of Nanjing, last saw the mainland in 1949, when his family was on the run from the victorious Communist forces of Mao Zedong. They fled to Taiwan, his father a diplomat in the service of the Nationalist leader, Chiang Kai-shek.

His father was assigned to the embassy in the Philippines when Mr. Chen was 15, and he remained there for more than a decade, attending college in Manila, marrying his Chinese-Filipino high school sweetheart and becoming fluent in English.

In 1960, he returned to Taiwan and passed the foreign service exam. He was first sent to Rio de Janeiro, and then to Argentina and Bolivia. In 1973, he was named consul general to Atlanta, where he remained until the United States severed relations with Taiwan and recognized Beijing six years later.

Mr. Chen said he can remember sitting in his living room in Atlanta, watching the televised announcement by President Carter that the United States would recognize the Communist government. ''I felt that I was being clobbered,'' he recalled. ''A baseball bat on the head.''

''It seemed very unfair,'' he continued. ''It was as if the United States wanted to reward a bad guy, the lousy student, and to punish the good student. That was my feeling.''

In the years since, he said, Taiwanese diplomats have learned how to innovate, especially in Washington, where they employ some of the city's most powerful lobbyists and retain close ties to many prominent conservative members of Congress.

Mr. Chen says his office has an annual budget for lobbying of about $1.2 million and contracts with 15 firms. ''They help open doors, they make appointments for us,'' he said. ''But we make the presentations.''

Under a 1979 law, Taiwan can continue to buy American weapons.

And Mr. Chen has been a frequent visitor to Capitol Hill in recent weeks as his government seeks Congressional approval for the sale of a wish list of sophisticated weapons. ''If we are deprived of basic defensive weapons, then of course we are thrown to the wolves,'' he said.

Mr. Chen is considering a visit to the lair of the wolves. After 40 years in the diplomatic service, he is nearing retirement, and he is planning a vacation on the mainland, which is now permitted.

''I tell you very frankly, I would like to see the Great Wall,'' he said. ''This belongs to the legacy of China. It has nothing to do with Communism.''