

the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SINCERE GRATITUDE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO FOREIGN ENTITIES THAT HAVE OFFERED ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 428) expressing the sincere gratitude of the House of Representatives to the foreign individuals, organizations, and governments that have offered material assistance and other forms of support to those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 428

Whereas Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the United States with devastating effect on August 29, 2005;

Whereas the United States has a long history of humanitarian response to other countries that have experienced disasters of similar magnitude;

Whereas soon after the scope of the destruction became evident, assistance was offered by foreign individuals, organizations, and governments; and

Whereas numerous messages of condolence and support for the people of the United States have been sent to the President and Congress and to government authorities in the affected area: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives expresses its sincere gratitude to the foreign individuals, organizations, and governments that have offered material assistance and other forms of support to those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

SEC. 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit enrolled copies of this resolution to the Secretary of State with a request that the Secretary transmit the copies to the foreign governments described in this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. 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 the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express the gratitude of the American people for the tremendously generous offers of support and expressions of condolences that have poured in from around the world to those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Katrina will be remembered as one of the most catastrophic natural disasters to ever hit our shores. At this point, it would appear that thousands of victims, perhaps tens of thousands, have perished in our gulf coast region. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced without knowing where to go or how they will reestablish a permanent residence. Hundreds of thousands of jobs and businesses have been lost. Infrastructure has been destroyed. It will take years to rebuild these areas that were hit hardest by the hurricane.

However, in spite of the dark hours which we witnessed during the storm and its immediate aftermath, the spirit and will of the people most affected are beginning to shine through as a result of the support which they have received from the American people and from our friends and neighbors around the world. Nearly 100 countries have offered over \$1 billion in monetary and other forms of tangible assistance. Even Sri Lanka, horribly victimized by the recent tsunami, has generously offered assistance. Such gestures will not be forgotten.

As Americans, we have a long record of providing humanitarian aid to many countries around the world that have suffered from natural and other disasters, but we have never found ourselves in this type of situation before. The compassionate offers of assistance from our global friends are welcome, and as reflected in this resolution, we accept them with heartfelt gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to do so.

The United States is the largest provider of humanitarian assistance in this world. Whether in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch or the devastation of the Asian tsunami, the United States and our military have been in the front lines of responding to the needs of starving and destitute victims of nature's fury. It is only fitting, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that when we face devastation from a deadly hurricane that overwhelmed our own disaster plans, countries around the globe should respond to our own needs with offers of assistance.

Let me join my colleagues on the other side of the aisle in expressing our gratitude for these offers.

I am not, however, satisfied with the reception of these offers by some branches of our own government. I want to commend Secretary Rice and the Department of State for making significant and successful efforts to catalog these offers from abroad, but we learned from press reports that the Federal Emergency Management Agency was unable to process them and to determine what would be of assistance and what would not. Let me give my colleagues an example.

The Swedish Government has offered water purification equipment. No item

is more desperately needed in Louisiana than water purification equipment. They have also offered a cellular phone network which could have done much to ease the communications challenges on the gulf coast. As of yesterday, these offered items remain in Sweden.

It took a week for our government to accept the offer of four Canadian rescue vessels.

A German communications company was willing to provide an integrated satellite and cellular phone system that could handle 5,000 calls at once. The company waited for days for any response.

This area is just one more example of the failures of executive agencies tasked with disaster relief in responding to this, the greatest natural disaster ever to confront our Nation.

It is simply shameful that FEMA did not realize the scope of this disaster and failed to trigger its most significant response until the end of the day when the levees broke in New Orleans. It is simply shameful that there was not a way for FEMA to accept offers of assistance from our own military as well as citizen States across the Nation. It is simply shameful that the poor and the sick and the elderly were left without supplies and protection from the marauding gangs that seeped in and around New Orleans.

I am sure that there is plenty of blame to go around in unraveling the bureaucratic bungling that contributed to this unacceptable response, but one thing, Mr. Speaker, is clear: FEMA's leadership failed, and I call on its director to resign today.

Let us find a better way to accept offers of assistance from our friends abroad, from our fellow citizens, and from our own military.

In order to address all these shortcomings, I strongly urge the appointment of a truly independent bipartisan commission made up of public figures of distinction and integrity and experts on disaster relief to investigate the failures that have cost the lives of so many. An investigation launched by the administration or dominated by one party will never be able to get to the bottom of what went wrong. We cannot afford such a flawed investigation. We need to get this right.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 428, expressing the sincere gratitude of the House of Representatives to the foreign individuals, organizations, and governments that have offered material assistance and other forms of support to those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. To date, I understand that some 95 countries have come forward with offers of assistance.

Bangladesh, one of the world's poorest nations, offered \$1 million in aid.

Thailand—still mourning its 8,000 missing and dead people after the tsunami—offered 60 nurses and shipments of rice.

Israel, the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, is returning the favor by donating tents and first-aid kits.

Oil-wealthy nations, such as Kuwait, have offered over \$500 million in oil and relief.

European nations, such as Spain, have focused on sending military and rescue gear.

Both Djibouti and Georgia, relatively smaller countries, have offered \$50,000 each.

Sri Lanka, the small country off the coast of Africa and one that is about \$600 million in debt, offered \$25,000 in cash.

There has been some criticism that we have been slow to accept the offers pouring in. The fact is that our greatest challenge has been to match the generous offers with the needs of the American people. The last thing we need is for someone to offer us assistance that can't really be utilized. For example, Russia, made us offers and our State Department told the Russians what we needed most urgently were MREs, (Meals-Ready-to-Eat), so they sent us MREs. We did the same thing with Germany. We took the MREs.

The first aid we took, because, as the President said, it was the easiest to manage was cash. And the cash donations came in and quickly went out to Red Cross and others.

As Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I would like to particularly acknowledge the outpouring of sympathy and solidarity we have witnessed from our friends and neighbors in Latin America. All the figures are still being compiled but I'd like to highlight a few examples, but by no means all examples of the support we have received from our friends in the Western Hemisphere.

Honduras has offered to send 135 flooding and sanitation experts.

Peru has offered to send a medical team of up to 100 members.

A Mexican ship loaded with supplies set sail Monday from the Gulf Coast port of Tampico.

Venezuela has offered 1 million barrels of gasoline, \$5 million in cash and more than 50 tons of canned food and water.

Even Cuba has offered to send 1,100 doctors, and;

The Organization of American States approved the contribution of the maximum amount allowed under the statutes of the Inter-American Emergency Assistance Fund, and the establishment of a specific fund for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

These are just a few examples of the aid being offered. What is most important to remember in this situation is not the actual amount of aid offered, who offered what, and who may have offered nothing; what is important to remember, is the willingness of other nations, big and small, to come and give while we are vulnerable. It is important to appreciate the principle behind the gift.

In closing, I want to offer my personal thanks to the entire international community for their help, their thoughts and their prayers for the people of the United States who have suffered and lost friends and loved ones in this terrible tragedy. The spirit of compassionate generosity and solidarity that we have witnessed from the international community is extremely comforting and gives me great hope for the future.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH)

that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 428.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RELATING TO THE TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 427) relating to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 427

Whereas on September 11, 2001, while Americans were attending to their daily routines, terrorists hijacked four civilian aircraft, crashing two of them into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, and a third into the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C., and a fourth was prevented from also being used as a weapon against America by brave passengers who placed their country above their own lives;

Whereas four years later the country continues to, and shall forever, mourn the tragic loss of life at the hands of terrorist attackers;

Whereas by targeting symbols of American strength and success, these attacks clearly were intended to assail the principles, values, and freedoms of the United States and the American people, intimidate the Nation, and weaken the national resolve;

Whereas four years after September 11, 2001, the United States is fighting a Global War on Terrorism to protect America and her friends and allies;

Whereas recent deadly attacks in London, Madrid, and Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt, remind all Americans that the forces of evil that attacked the Nation four years ago remain committed to terrorist attacks against free peoples;

Whereas because of the skill and bravery of the members of the United States Armed Forces and due to the constant vigilance of our Nation's first responders, the United States homeland has not been successfully attacked by terrorist forces during the four years since September 11, 2001; and

Whereas while the passage of four years has not softened the memory of the American people, resolved their grief, or restored lost loved ones, it has shown that Americans will not bow to terrorists: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) extends again its deepest sympathies to the thousands of innocent victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, their families, friends, and loved ones;

(2) honors the heroic actions and the sacrifices of United States military and civilian personnel and their families who have sacrificed much, including their lives and health, in defense of their country in the the Global War on Terrorism;

(3) honors the heroic actions of first responders, law enforcement personnel, State

and local officials, volunteers, and others who aided the innocent victims and, in so doing, bravely risked their own lives and long-term health;

(4) expresses thanks and gratitude to the foreign leaders and citizens of all nations who have assisted and continue to stand in solidarity with the United States against terrorism in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks;

(5) discourages, in the strongest possible terms, any effort to confuse the Global War on Terrorism with a war on any people or any faith;

(6) reaffirms its commitment to the Global War on Terrorism and to providing the United States Armed Forces with the resources and support to wage it effectively and safely;

(7) vows that it will continue to take whatever actions necessary to identify, intercept, and disrupt terrorists and their activities; and

(8) reaffirms that the American people will never forget the sacrifices made on September 11, 2001, and will never bow to terrorist demands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. 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 the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, our deliberations today have focused, and rightly so, on the catastrophe that has befallen the people of the gulf coast and our efforts and, indeed, the world's efforts, to ameliorate their situation. We should, however, pause and take note of a somber anniversary, the fourth anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, which will occur this weekend.

I appreciate the fact that the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Ranking Member LANTOS) have worked out a text to recognize this anniversary which incorporated language from the gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLITTLE), and that the House leadership has encouraged us to bring it to the floor in a timely manner.

One year ago, we were involved in the middle stages of the efforts to pass the intelligence reform legislation recommended by the 9/11 Commission. Now we must oversee the implementation of that law and determine what additional improvements to our government's structures or substantive policies need to be made.

The resolution before us recalls the events of nearly 4 years ago, notes that the attacks were intended to assail our principles, values, and freedoms, and weaken our national resolve. It recalls