CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

July 29, 1999

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 263 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 263

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2606) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule.

Points of order against provisions in the bill for failing to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived. Before consideration of any amendment other than one offered by a Member designated in the report may be offered only at the appropriate point in the reading of the bill. Each amendment printed in the report may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be debated for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment. All points of order against amendments printed in the report are waived. During consideration of the bill for further amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. The amendments so printed shall be considered as read. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any post electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be five minutes. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the amendment. If the amendment is agreed to, the amendment shall be in order to consider the amendment made to the House with such amendment and any amendments that may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 263 is an open rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2606, the foreign operations, export financing, and related programs appropriations bill for the fiscal year 2000. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

In addition, the rule provides the bill be open to amendment by paragraph. The rule also waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failing to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI. The rule provides that before consideration of any other amendment it shall be in order to consider the amendments printed in part A of the Committee on Rules report only in the order printed in the report. These amendments relate to limitations on the use of international population funds. Further, the rule provides the amendment printed in part B of the report may be offered only at the appropriate point in the reading of the bill. The amendment concerns child survival funding.

In addition, the rule provides for consideration of amendments printed in the Committee on Rules report to be offered only by a Member designated in
the report. The amendments shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the times specified in the report, equally divided unless the committee shall provide for one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Mr. Speaker, this bill provides a fair, a very fair, approach for the consideration of the foreign aid appropriations bill. Currently, an area which always lends itself to important debate on the floor involves family planning funds and their potential use for performing or promoting abortions and the so-called Mexico City policy which prohibits U.S. assistance to foreign organizations that perform abortions, violate abortion laws, or engage in lobbying activities to change such laws.

While I personally am a strong advocate for the rights of the unborn, our committee is providing for amendments which cover both the pro-life and the pro-choice sides of the issue. I commend my colleague the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) who is chairman, Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights for his tireless work to protect the rights of the unborn. I certainly will support his amendment on this important issue.

To clarify that two amendments referred to in part A of the Committee on Rules report, one to be offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the other to be offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) let me explain that each of these amendments has been made in order to avoid unwarranted short-sighted national shame. And I appreciate the committee urging AID to provide 1.52 million for microenterprise, 1.52 million for microenterprise which represents about a 10 percent increase over last year's level. The committee expects half of these funds to go to the poorest people. Microenterprise development is a cost-effective way to reduce poverty.

The bill provides $680 million for the child survival and disease programs fund which is more than the administration's request. This includes $110 million for the United Nations children's fund, better known as UNICEF, which is also an increase above the administration's request.

And I am pleased that the bill reauthorizes our humanitarian assistance to Cambodia including assistance for basic education activities. I was in Cambodia in April, and I witnessed the enormous poverty that is the ongoing legacy of the Pol Pot regime, and removing this restriction will help raise the low level of education that is in Cambodia and improve the lives of the people there.

And finally, I thank the committee for including language in its report stating the committee's intention to increase funding for the Peace Corps if funding becomes available. I believe that the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN) and the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI) crafted about this important bill, Mr. Hall of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) for yielding me the time.

This is an open rule. It will allow consideration of H.R. 2606 which is a bill that makes appropriations for foreign aid and export assistance in fiscal year 2000.

As my colleague has described, this rule provides for 1 hour of general debate to be equally divided and controlled by the chairman, ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, and all Members on conference. The rules that are on the desk will have the opportunity to offer germane amendments.

In addition, the rule waives points of order against three amendments to be offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS). Unfortunately, the rule does not honor the requests made by the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations' ranking minority member, the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI) who asked for regular order in the amendment process. I am also disappointed that the rule denied Ms. PELOSI the opportunity to offer an amendment. Indeed, a majority of amendments will be in order only if offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD).

I want to commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN), and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI) for their work in bringing this bill to the floor. I commend them both for maintaining the spirit of bipartisanship and compromise during the subcommittee process.

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Members can return to their districts and spend time with their constituents. But all the Members know that the Speaker has stated that if we have not completed our work on the appropriation bills, as scheduled, that that recess will not go forward until that work has been completed.

Now the reason that we need to expeditiously do this bill tonight is that on tomorrow it is necessary for the committee to take up the last two bills that it will take up and present to the House before the House recesses for the August recess. So tomorrow we, the Committee on Appropriations, need all day tomorrow to deal with those last two bills. Because of this we cannot be on the floor with this bill tomorrow, and if the committee cannot report those last two bills tomorrow, we may get them on to the floor next week prior to the recess taking effect.

So it is essential that we expedite and get this business done tonight if we want to go on our August recess as has been scheduled.

So, other than that, Mr. Speaker, I ask support for the rule, that we expedite that support, and I ask that we do the very best we can to expedite this bill so that we can continue the appropriation process, and, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) mentioned that we passed now 10 appropriation bills. The fact is, counting the supplemands, we have passed 12 of the appropriation bills and two conference reports as well. So the Committee on Appropriations is on schedule.

We can keep on schedule if we expedite tonight.

I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I thank him also for his leadership on many of the issues that are in the foreign operations bill relating to child survival and honoring the gospel of Matthew. I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) for his participation in bringing the rule to the floor. I have great admiration for him and for my distinguished chairman of the full committee and I reluctantly rise in opposition to the rule.

In our subcommittee, Mr. Speaker, we had tried very hard to work with our distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN) to move along the legislation, to honor the schedule that our Chairman just put forth and to not hold up the works. So we agreed to set some difficulties off to a later date. This bill is a work in progress. It is seriously underfunded.

I mention this now because I want to point out that to have the bill come in a bipartisan way to the full committee for appropriations and cooperation, as my colleagues know, Mr. Speaker, is a two-way street. We were disappointed after that in full committee that $200 million in this already underefunded bill was taken out again. But nonetheless, in the interest of staying on schedule and moving the legislation along, I urged my colleagues to support the legislation in the hope that down the road there would be additional funding in the legislation.

This bill is nearly $1.5 billion. $1.3 million less than the administration’s request and more than $700 million, less than last year’s bill.

So that is why I was really quite disappointed and nothing for anyone in the bill’s direction. I was disappointed with the Smith amendment and because of the Smith amendment and because of the low funding figure, then one would think at the very least that the ranking member would receive her due, which would be an amendment to this bill, to trump legislative language which does not belong in the appropriation bills in the first place.

So that is why I come here with a degree of sadness and disappointment that once again we have to travel down this road. When this happened before, we held up the House with rollcall votes and this or that. I am not going to do this now, because this is frankly tiresome.

What I am going to do is urge my colleagues to register their disapproval of this by voting “no” on the rule, for my colleagues to do just that; and again, I wish that we could have had some cooperation, but apparently, the cooperation is only supposed to come from our side and not from the Republican side on this.

So with great regret, I urge a “no” vote.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to simply say that I am extremely sorry that our distinguished colleague from California (Ms. PELOSI) will not be supporting the rule.

The Committee on Rules made a very strong effort to be fair. We believe that we have been fair, that we are fair in this rule. It is an open rule. The issue of legislation, not appropriations measures, is always a difficult one. We do not like generally in the Committee on Rules to see, and we usually do not make in order, legislative proposals for debate on appropriations bills. Within this bill, within the context of the bill, within the text of the bill that came to us, there are 58 provisions that constitute legislation, many of which, almost 30, are unauthorized.

So I am sure the members of the Committee on Appropriations also recognize the difficulty of this and they have to deal with it also on a daily basis.

What I would like to stress, Mr. Speaker, is that the rule is fair, that it...
is an open rule, that as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) mentioned, we do need to be expediting this issue, moving it forward, and we believe on the Committee on Rules that we are doing so in a very fair way.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I also want to reiterate my opposition to the rule for the reasons that were articulated both by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) and by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), I do want to point to some underlying provisions in the legislation that I support.

I want to cite several key areas where the legislation has continued U.S. support for Armenia's economic development, while helping to jumpstart the peace process in Nagorno Karabagh.

In this time of fiscal restraint, I am encouraged that the fiscal year 2000 legislation at least ensures that the same percentage of aid will be made available to the Republic of Armenia as was available in fiscal year 1999. It is important for us to maintain our support for and partnership with Armenia as the country continues to make major strides towards democracy, most recently evidenced by the May 30 parliamentary elections, as well as market reforms and increasing integration with the West. U.S. assistance also serves to offset the difficulties imposed on Armenia's people as a result of blockades maintained by Azerbaijan and Turkey, as well as helping regions of the country to rebuild from the devastating 1988 earthquake.

The legislation also seeks to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Nagorno Karabagh. In the fiscal year 1998 bill, Congress took the historic step of providing, for the first time, U.S. humanitarian assistance to Nagorno Karabagh. Unfortunately, the administration has not delivered much of this assistance and the legislation today includes language reiterating the obligation of $20 million in U.S. aid to Nagorno Karabagh.

Mr. Speaker, the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill contains language addressing the need for a negotiated settlement to the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. Noting that the important position of intermediary for Nagorno Karabagh is currently vacant, the committee urged the Secretary of State "to move forthwith to appoint a permanent special negotiator to facilitate direct negotiations and any other contacts that will bring peace to the long suffering people of the south Caucasus."

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that one of the most positive developments of late has been the increased and direct contacts between the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The President himself has repeatedly professed the need to go to the president of Azerbaijan, and, not only well, we worked together, made our compromises so that the House, the full House, would be spared some of that controversy.

That is why, again, I was so disappointed when the rights of the minority were not respected, and I disagree with my distinguished colleague whom I respect enormously in his characterization of the bill as the rule as a fair one, because I do not think it is. As I say, if we had been coming into this, fighting to the finish, I could understand why the majority would want to suppress the minority, but we have tried to cooperate every step of the way, and indeed I have said I would support passage of the legislation if the Smith amendment does not pass.

In the interests of trying to support the bill with the Greenwood amendment as a substitute for the Smith amendment, that would still enable us to support the bill; but instead, not only did they not give the right of the minority ranking member to introduce an amendment, but also put it in the form that does not solve any problem except maybe one, to help the majority pass the rule on their side.

But if they are going to have this unfair rule, they are going to have to do it largely with Republican votes. I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that with respect to the bill itself, I think the chairman has tried to do as much as he could under the circumstances he faced.

I honestly believe that before this bill goes to the President, it is going to need a significant amount of funding for the Wye Middle East peace agreement. I think we need to promote that in every way we can.

I will vote against the rule on this bill because the rule simply does not deal with the Mexico City issue in a fair way.

What the Committee on Rules has done is to allow a nongermane amendment to be offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) on the Republican side of the aisle, and then it allows a second amendment as an alternative to that to be offered. But instead of being offered as a substitute, it allows it to be offered as a simultaneous amendment. If the amendments were to be adopted, for instance, the adoption of the Greenwood amendment would have no meaning whatsoever, because under the way we read statutes around here,
the most limiting language is the only language that governs. So in essence, the Committee on Rules has pretended to give the House a choice between alternatives when in fact it has given no real opportunity for the Greenwood amendment to have any meaning whatsoever.

To me, that is disingenuous, it is unfair, it is biased, and it means that people think they could not win the argument if they had a fair rule. I do not think that is the way the greatest parliamentary body in the world ought to act. Therefore, I would strongly urge a vote against this rule.

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

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules has gone the extra mile. We bring forth this measure not only with a fair rule, but an open rule. Any amendment Any Member wants to come up with, as long as it is germane, can be presented. So we feel really good about our work. We ask for the support of the House on both sides of the aisle for the rule.

Reiterating that, I support this rule, and urge my colleagues to vote for it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and the yeas and nays were ordered on the resolution.

Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. HILL of Illinois, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. OWENS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. DEAL of Georgia, KUCINICH, KLINE, CRAMER and KANJORSKI changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill (H.R. 2000) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 263 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2000.