

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the gentleman that I support his effort and have no quarrel whatever with the work. I think this is the time that we should work toward the goal of taking care of the matters attendant to the field of agriculture, and to get it done as quickly as possible because it has been sitting there fermenting for quite some time.

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

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

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The motion was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will name the conferees at a later time.

THE REASON FOR CONFUSION IN THE HOUSE

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, in case people are wondering what is happening here, why the House looks so disorganized, it is for the following reason: Those of us on the Minority on the Appropriations Committee have been working with the Majority on the committee all today under the assumption that we would have a common understanding about what the schedule would be for the remainder of the day, and we had expected one and perhaps at most two motions would be made to go to conference on appropriation bills.

We were trying to cooperate with the Majority in making sure that that went smoothly on the matters that we understood might come before us. Then what happened is that evidently the House leadership decided it wanted to make a unilateral decision to have motions on five different appropriation bills. The problem is that the Majority on the Committee on Appropriations did not know that that was going to happen and neither did the Minority. In my view, that is a lousy way to run a railroad. The House is running around here now looking confused because it is confused.

It just seems to me that there is no particular purpose to be served in rushing to conference on these bills when neither side even understood that we were going to be doing that. I am still trying to cooperate under these circumstances, but I would ask the House leadership that if we cannot do this in an orderly fashion for some of the re-

maining bills that we simply deal with it tomorrow morning, if we run out of bills that we can handle in a rational fashion, because otherwise we are simply stumbling around here. And in the process, we will be denying Members the opportunity to debate questions which I know Members wanted to debate on at least two of the bills that are coming up today.

Members did not know this would be happening before they got back, and I think the leadership has an obligation to avoid situations like that.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at 5 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2605, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2605) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. VISCLOSKY

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. VISCLOSKY moves that in resolving the difference between the House and Senate, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 2605, be instructed to insist on the higher funding levels for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works program included in the House-passed bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY).

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

Mr. Speaker, I bring this motion to instruct conferees to the House floor today and would argue four points on its behalf.

First of all, I again would want to compliment the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) and the staff on both sides and members of the subcommittee because I think we in the House have put together a very good work product. I would hope that we collectively in the House could protect our prerogatives during the conference.

I would, first of all, point out as far as water projects that are important as far as the economic viability and future of this country, as well as to individual Members and their constituencies, our figure is \$454 million over the Senate figure.

Because of the misallocation between the two bodies, there is a \$1.2 billion difference between the House and Senate versions. And, essentially, if we factor that \$400 million in, the differential as far as protecting Members' interest is about 1.6. So I think it is very important that we make the point today to the other body that we want to hold firm to protect the economic infrastructure of this country and Members' prerogatives.

Secondly, since this House passed the bill to the other body, the Water Resources and Development Act has been signed into law and that has placed even more demand as far as the limited resources we have.

The third point I would make is that, even with the higher water figure in the House, we are \$320 million under what the Corps' capability is if we would fund all of the Corps' capability and projects on the boards.

Those include such important economic improvement such as harbor dredging, commercial and navigation as far as our economic infrastructure, including flood control to prevent the loss of life and property damage. It includes environmental restoration. And we have some major projects in the proposal of the beach nourishment. We recently had tropical storms and hurricanes devastate portions of the United States.

Finally, the important issue of water supply. I would close this portion of my remarks by simply saying again, given the misallocation and higher allocation with the other body, given their preponderance to oversubscribe for Department of Energy programs, I would want to protect the prerogatives of this institution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) has made I think very substantive points on his motion, and I support his motion without exception to instruct conferees.

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