

anti-Baha'i policies and actions of the government of Iran, and expresses concern that individual Baha'i continue to suffer from severely repressive and discriminatory government actions, including executions and death sentences, solely on account of their religion.

I thank my colleagues for supporting this important resolution.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly support H. Con. Res. 257, concerning the emancipation of the Iranian Baha'i community.

Thousands of human rights abuses take place around the world on a daily basis. Almost all go unnoticed by the U.S. media. The Baha'is of Iran are one such group.

Many in Congress have worked closely with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States to bring attention to this situation. The Baha'i faith was founded in what was Persia in the 1840's and has grown to the largest religious minority in Iran. In the United States today, there are approximately 300,000 Baha'is. More than 90 percent are native born, and many of the remainder are refugees from Iran who have fled persecution.

One of these refugees is Firuz Kazemzadeh, who for over 30 years was the elected leader of the Baha'is in the United States, until he stepped down 2 years ago. Dr. Kazemzadeh immigrated to the United States from Iran in the 1950's and became a professor of history at Yale University. He has devoted a great deal of his time and efforts to improving the condition of his fellow Baha'is in Iran. He has quietly, in his way, been a tremendously effective fighter for his fellow Baha'is and has clearly saved many Bahai suffering. I would like to specifically commend Dr. Kazemzadeh for his decades of work helping the Baha'is.

Baha'is have suffered persecution since their religion was founded, but the situation gravely worsened in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Many of the leaders of the Baha'i community were jailed at that time and many were executed solely for their religious beliefs. The fact the Baha'i community has survived in Iran over the past 20 years is a testament to the Baha'i people and their commitment to their faith.

This adverse situation for the Baha'i community could be completely reversed by the Iranian Government at any time. The repression of the Baha'is is spearheaded by the religious government of Iran in the form of laws and regulations that explicitly deny Baha'i basic rights accorded to other citizens of Iran, including other religious minorities. Religious intolerance has caused the world's people untold suffering and its presence is felt across the entire world. But in Iran it is institutionalized and written in law. And it is not only discrimination. In Iran it can mean torture, imprisonment, and death.

H. Con. Res. 157, similar to ones passed in previous sessions of Congress, calls on the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'is and afford to them in practice rights which should be inalienable to any human being which they are being denied. Before this administration speaks about opening relations with Iran and the positive reforms which are supposed to be taking place in that country,

the Baha'is must be granted the same rights and privileges as all other Iranian citizens.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for his dedication to human rights and to the Baha'is and to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the gentleman from New Jersey (CHRIS SMITH) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for again playing a leading role in bringing this resolution to the floor. Each of them have been dedicated leaders for the basic human rights of every person on earth. One of the real privileges and honors of being a Member of this body has been to serve side by side and work for human rights with these outstanding leaders. I urge Members to support this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the repression of the Baha'i community in Iran is one of the most egregious ongoing violations of human rights, and I am very pleased that we are calling attention to it today. I first want to commend the gentleman from New York, the Chairman of the International Relations Committee, (Mr. GILMAN) for his bringing this important resolution to the floor today.

I also want to thank particularly the sponsor of the bill, my good friend and colleagues from Illinois, Mr. PORTER. I have had the very good fortune over the past 20 years of working very closely with JOHN PORTER on a vast number of human rights issues, and I commend him for his outstanding dedication to human rights. He has unwaveringly worked to alleviate the suffering of people around the world, and thanks to his efforts we can honestly say that the world today is a better place.

Mr. Speaker, one of the human rights issues that JOHN PORTER has championed since the day he was elected to the Congress is the situation of the Baha'is in Iran. The Baha'i has suffered greatly since Iran's Revolution in 1979. The constitution created by the Ayatollahs establishes Islam as the state religion of Iran. It also recognizes Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians—religions that flourished in Persia before Islam—as "protected religious minorities" which are afforded legal rights. Iran's 350,000 Baha'i however, are not afforded these protections, and they enjoy no legal rights whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, this blatant, officially sanctioned discriminations has far-reaching and inhuman consequences. Until recently, Baha'i marriages have not been recognized in Iran. As a consequence, no Baha'i couple married according to their own religious rites since 1980 are legally married in the eyes of the Iranian government. The women have been liable to charges of prostitution and Baha'i children are considered illegitimate. It is not legal for property to be passed within Baha'i families. Baha'is cannot enroll in universities. Baha'is cannot hold government jobs, and those that once did are denied state pensions.

Baha'is cannot sue in the country's court, and they are not legally recognized to defend themselves even if they are sued. Baha'is generally cannot receive Iranian passports, which note the holder's religion. Baha'is are denied the right to assembly or to maintain administrative institutions. Since the Baha'i faith has no clergy, the inability to meet and elect officers threaten the very existence of the faith in Iran. Baha'is cannot teach or practice their faith or maintain contacts with their coreligionists abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on listing the abuses and atrocities to which the Baha'i in Iran are subjected, but these obvious violations of the most basic of human rights are a clear indication of the magnitude of the abuses that Baha'is in Iran face daily. I strongly support this resolution, which highlights these abuses and calls on the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I call on the Government of Iran to recognize the rights of Baha'is and afford them the rights by other Iranian citizens.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 257.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RWANDAN WAR CRIMES WITNESS REWARD PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 2460) to authorize the payment of rewards to individuals furnishing information relating to persons subject to indictment for serious violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 2460

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXPANSION OF REWARDS PROGRAM TO INCLUDE RWANDA.

Section 102 of the Act of October 30, 1998 (Public Law 105-323) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting "or Rwanda" after "Yugoslavia";

(2) in subsection (a)(2), by inserting "OR THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA" after "YUGOSLAVIA"; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by inserting "(1)" immediately after "REFERENCE.—"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(2) For the purposes of subsection (a), the statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda means the statute contained in the annex to Security Council Resolution 955 of November 8, 1994."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 2460.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, on April 6, 1994, a massive genocide began in Rwanda. There was no mention of Rwanda in any of our papers on that day, but soon horrific accounts of a bloody and well-planned massacre filled the pages of our newspapers. A month later, 200,000 were dead and more were being killed each and every day, but White House spokesmen still quibbled with reporters about the definition of genocide.

Too many of the masterminds of that ugly chapter in human history are still at large. An international criminal tribunal for Rwanda exists, but it has failed to bring to justice all of the leaders. Rwanda needs reconciliation, but without accountability there will be no reconciliation.

Congress extended the rewards program to those providing information leading to the indictment of Yugoslavian war criminals 2 years ago. It is now time to place a generous bounty in U.S. dollars on the heads of all who seek power through extermination. The killers have fled to Paris, to Brussels, to Kinshasa and else where. With the passage of this measure, their havens will be less safe and their sleep will be less easy.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to fully support this measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker I rise in strong support of this bill. First of all, let me commend the chairman in moving this bill through the Committee on International Relations and bringing it to the floor today. Rwanda is one of the great humanitarian disasters of this century. An estimated 800,000 people were slaughtered there earlier this decade, and only because of their ethnic identity. Expanding the State Department's reward program to persons having information leading to the conviction of persons responsible for the atrocities in Rwanda will enhance the prospect for justice for the victims.

I commend Senator FEINGOLD for moving this bill forward in the other body, and I urge my colleagues to support Senate bill 2460.

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

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

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairman and my colleague for rising to introduce this bill, S. 2460, which would authorize the payments of rewards to individuals furnishing information relating to persons subject to indictment for serious violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda. I commend them both for presenting that bill today.

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

Mr. GILMAN. 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 New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2460.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORT FOR OVERSEAS COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4673) to assist in the enhancement of the development and expansion of international economic assistance programs that utilize cooperatives and credit unions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4673

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the "Support for Overseas Cooperative Development Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) It is in the mutual economic interest of the United States and peoples in developing and transitional countries to promote cooperatives and credit unions.

(2) Self-help institutions, including cooperatives and credit unions, provide enhanced opportunities for people to participate directly in democratic decision-making for their economic and social benefit through ownership and control of business enterprises and through the mobilization of local capital and savings and such organizations should be fully utilized in fostering free market principles and the adoption of self-help approaches to development.

(3) The United States seeks to encourage broad-based economic and social development by creating and supporting—

(A) agricultural cooperatives that provide a means to lift low income farmers and rural people out of poverty and to better integrate them into national economies;

(B) credit union networks that serve people of limited means through safe savings and by extending credit to families and microenterprises;

(C) electric and telephone cooperatives that provide rural customers with power and telecommunications services essential to economic development;

(D) housing and community-based cooperatives that provide low income shelter and work opportunities for the urban poor; and

(E) mutual and cooperative insurance companies that provide risk protection for life and property to under-served populations often through group policies.

SEC. 3. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) DECLARATIONS OF POLICY.—The Congress supports the development and expansion of economic assistance programs that fully utilize cooperatives and credit unions, particularly those programs committed to—

(1) international cooperative principles, democratic governance and involvement of women and ethnic minorities for economic and social development;

(2) self-help mobilization of member savings and equity, retention of profits in the community, except those programs that are dependent on donor financing;

(3) market-oriented and value-added activities with the potential to reach large numbers of low income people and help them enter into the mainstream economy;

(4) strengthening the participation of rural and urban poor to contribute to their country's economic development; and

(5) utilization of technical assistance and training to better serve the member-owners.

(b) DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.—Section 111 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151i) is amended by adding at the end the following: "In meeting the requirement of the preceding sentence, specific priority shall be given to the following:

"(1) AGRICULTURE.—Technical assistance to low income farmers who form and develop member-owned cooperatives for farm supplies, marketing and value-added processing.

"(2) FINANCIAL SYSTEMS.—The promotion of national credit union systems through credit union-to-credit union technical assistance that strengthens the ability of low income people and micro-entrepreneurs to save and to have access to credit for their own economic advancement.

"(3) INFRASTRUCTURE.—The establishment of rural electric and telecommunication cooperatives for universal access for rural people and villages that lack reliable electric and telecommunications services.

"(4) HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES.—The promotion of community-based cooperatives which provide employment opportunities and important services such as health clinics, self-help shelter, environmental improvements, group-owned businesses, and other activities."

SEC. 4. REPORT.

Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in consultation with the heads of other appropriate agencies, shall prepare and submit to Congress a report on the implementation of section 111 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151i), as amended by section 3 of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4673.

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