

and the opposition political parties and independent organizations that speak for the peoples of Central Asia. This is a wonderful message of hope and support for this House to send as it winds up its work in the 106th Congress.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 397, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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.

□ 1515

#### ACKNOWLEDGING AND SALUTING CONTRIBUTIONS OF COIN COLLECTORS

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 154) to acknowledge and salute the contributions of coin collectors.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. CON. RES. 154

Whereas in 1982, after a period of 28 years, the Congress of the United States resumed the United States commemorative coin programs;

Whereas since 1982, 37 of the Nation's worthy institutions, organizations, foundations, and programs have been commemorated under the coin programs;

Whereas since 1982, the Nation's coin collectors have purchased nearly 49,000,000 commemorative coins that have yielded nearly \$1,800,000,000 in revenue and more than \$407,000,000 in surcharges benefitting a variety of deserving causes;

Whereas the United States Capitol has benefitted from the commemorative coin surcharges that have supported such commendable projects as the restoration of the Statue of Freedom atop the Capitol dome, the furtherance of the development of the United States Capitol Visitor Center, and the planned National Garden at the United States Botanic Gardens on the Capitol grounds;

Whereas surcharges from the year 2000 coin program commemorating the Library of Congress bicentennial benefit the Library of Congress bicentennial programs, educational outreach activities (including schools and libraries), and other activities of the Library of Congress; and

Whereas the United States Capitol Visitor Center commemorative coin program will commence in January 2001, with the surcharges designated to further benefit the Capitol Visitor Center: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in*

*Congress assembled*, That the Congress of the United States acknowledges and salutes the ongoing generosity, loyalty, and significant role that coin collectors have played in supporting our Nation's meritorious charitable organizations, foundations, institutions, and programs, including the United States Capitol, the Library of Congress, and the United States Botanic Gardens.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BACHUS. 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 concerning Senate Concurrent Resolution 154.

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

There was no objection.

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

The resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, recognizes one of the truly unsung contributions made in this country, that of thousands of coin collectors who buy commemorative coins issued by the United States Mint. Senator LOTT introduced this resolution in the Senate, and it was passed on the Senate floor last week on October 23.

This resolution acknowledges and salutes the ongoing generosity, loyalty, and significant role that coin collectors have played in supporting our Nation's charitable organizations, foundations, institutions, and programs. While coin collecting has been a hobby for many years, collecting commemorative coins is a little different. The coins are issued in a limited quantity, and they have surcharges that make the cost much more than the face value of the coins.

The coin community has been very supportive and generous in buying commemorative coins during the last 20 years, a period of significant change for the commemorative coin program. Since 1982, when Congress resumed the commemorative coin program, which was after a 28-year break, 37 commemorative coins have been authorized.

In addition to the honor given to the recipients and the educational value of these coins, they have also raised more than \$400 million for a variety of charitable organizations and other worthy causes. That is \$407 million to be exact. Our Nation's coin collectors and coin dealers have been essential to the success of these programs. They have purchased nearly 49 million commemorative coins, which has yielded \$1.8 billion in revenue and, as I mentioned, \$407 million in contributions to very deserving causes.

This resolution recognizes the accomplishments and the contributions of the commemorative coin community and gives them the recognition that they deserve.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. Con. Res. 154. Over the last few years, Congress has passed bipartisan legislation to mint several commemorative coins, the proceeds of which have gone to a number of important organizations and projects that benefit communities across America.

Commemorative coins, which are available directly from the United States Mint, are generally approved by members of the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee. This committee was established by the 102nd Congress for the purpose of recommending, with input from the public and coin collectors, the events, persons or places that are appropriate for commemoration through congressionally mandated coins. Commemorative coins typically celebrate and honor people, places, events, and institutions.

It is fitting for Congress to honor the Nation's coin collectors, because it is largely they who purchase commemorative coins. By doing so, coin collectors ensure our national heritage, as reflected in our coins, is preserved and valued by our citizens. In addition, funds raised from commemorative coin surcharges have funded important projects that are near and dear to every Member that serves and has served in this institution. These include restoration of the Statue of Freedom on top of our Capitol Dome, the Library of Congress's bicentennial programs, the upcoming U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, and many others.

In short, Mr. Speaker, these commemorative coins pay for themselves and, in the process, pay for important projects that would otherwise be funded with taxpayers' money. We therefore thank our Nation's coin collectors through this resolution and honor their devotion to their hobby, one that certainly benefits all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge its immediate passage.

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

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

Mr. BENTSEN. 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 Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 154.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)

the rules were suspended and the Senate concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the joint resolution (House Joint Resolution 102) recognizing that the Birmingham Pledge has made a significant contribution in fostering racial harmony and reconciliation in the United States and around the world, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert:

That—

(1) Congress recognizes that the Birmingham Pledge is a significant contribution toward fostering racial harmony and reconciliation in the United States and around the world;

(2) Congress commends the creators, promoters, and signatories of the Birmingham Pledge for the steps they are taking to make the United States and the world a better place for all people; and

(3) it is the sense of Congress that a particular week should be designated as "National Birmingham Pledge Week".

Strike out the preamble and insert:

Whereas Birmingham, Alabama, was the scene of racial strife in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s;

Whereas since the 1960s, the people of Birmingham have made substantial progress toward racial equality, which has improved the quality of life for all its citizens and led to economic prosperity;

Whereas out of the crucible of Birmingham's role in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, a present-day grassroots movement has arisen to continue the effort to eliminate racial and ethnic divisions in the United States and around the world;

Whereas that grassroots movement has found expression in the Birmingham Pledge, which was authored by Birmingham attorney James E. Rotch, is sponsored by the Community Affairs Committee of Operation New Birmingham, and is promoted by a broad cross section of the community of Birmingham;

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge reads as follows:

"I believe that every person has worth as an individual.

"I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color.

"I believe that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is in my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.

"Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions.

"I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity.

"I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.";

Whereas commitment and adherence to the Birmingham Pledge increases racial harmony by helping individuals communicate in a positive way concerning the diversity of the people of the United States and by encouraging people to make a commitment to racial harmony;

Whereas individuals who sign the Birmingham Pledge give evidence of their commitment to its message;

Whereas more than 70,000 people have signed the Birmingham Pledge, including the President, Members of Congress, Governors, State legislators, mayors, county commissioners, city council members, and other persons around the world;

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge has achieved national and international recognition;

Whereas efforts to obtain signatories to the Birmingham Pledge are being organized and conducted in communities around the world;

Whereas every Birmingham Pledge signed and returned to Birmingham is recorded at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham, Alabama, as a permanent testament to racial reconciliation, peace, and harmony; and

Whereas the Birmingham Pledge, the motto for which is "Sign It, Live It", is a powerful tool for facilitating dialogue on the Nation's diversity and the need for people to take personal steps to achieve racial harmony and tolerance in communities: Now, therefore, be it

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BACHUS. 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 House Joint Resolution 102.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, on June 14, my colleague, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD), and I introduced the National Birmingham Pledge Resolution. The resolution has over 100 cosponsors, a bipartisan group, and it passed the House on quite an overwhelming vote on September 12. It went over to the Senate; the Senate made one small change in the wording and passed it last week.

The resolution recognizes that personal efforts to address racism will contribute significantly in fostering racial harmony. Individuals can, by their actions, make a difference. Anyone who has seen the new movie, "Pay It Forward," knows that one person, by their efforts, can make a difference in the world.

The resolution additionally recognizes that the Birmingham Pledge is making a significant contribution in fostering racial harmony. It commends those involved in the creation of the Pledge, including Jim Rotch, who authored the Pledge, and those who have signed it. It expresses the sense of Congress that a National Birmingham Pledge week should be established.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the Birmingham Pledge recognizes the role that each of us can play in advancing the cause of racial harmony and tolerance in our society. Birmingham occupies an important place in the history of civil rights in America. At one time, when we thought of Birmingham, what came to mind were police dogs, fire hoses, racial strife, and Dr. Martin Luther King's letter from a Birmingham jail.

Given the history of Birmingham and the great strides made by that community since the outburst of racial violence in the 1960s, it is all together appropriate that this Congress acknowledge the contributions of those who have played a role in creating and promoting the Pledge. The Birmingham Pledge was authored by Birmingham attorney James Rotch and has been promoted by a cross-section of the Birmingham community.

I would like to particularly take note of the leadership played by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD), who introduced the measure in the House and helped shepherd its passage.

To date, I understand that more than 70,000 individuals have taken the Birmingham Pledge, including the President, First Lady, and numerous elected officials and civil rights leaders. It is through small steps like these that we can combat discrimination and increase racial tolerance.

I commend the citizens of Birmingham who have crafted the Birmingham Pledge to create more positive associations with Birmingham and civil rights, and I urge my colleagues to accept the Senate amendments.

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

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

In considering this resolution, we should all keep in mind one thing, and that is that we are not born with prejudice or bigotry. These are things that are learned. In fact, psychologists call it learned behavior. By word or by action we teach our children daily. We teach them to either be tolerant or to be intolerant; to have prejudices and biases against other people because of their race, their origin, or not to be. We teach them these things many times, even before they are old enough to choose for themselves. We can teach our children to love, or we can teach our children to hate. Intolerance is learned; therefore it can be unlearned.

The Pledge can be a part of that process. This is the message we want to send Americans today about race relations. Each of us needs to take personal responsibility to conduct ourselves in a way that will achieve greater racial harmony in our own communities.