

urge all of my colleagues to join me in expressing our support to the people of El Salvador who are trying to rebuild their lives and their communities, by passing this resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the legislation before the House, H. Con. Res. 41, which speaks on behalf of the good people of El Salvador who are struggling to recover from two devastating earthquakes that struck the nation in January and February of this year.

I commend the author of the resolution, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. DAVIS, and the Chairman and Ranking Democratic Member of the House International Relations Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, Mr. BALLENGER and Mr. MENENDEZ, for introducing this important measure. I further commend the Chairman and Ranking Democratic Member of the International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE and Mr. LANTOS, for their leadership in bringing the legislation to the floor. I am honored to join my colleagues in expressing concern and sympathy for the victims of the earthquakes in El Salvador and to support ongoing aid and relief efforts.

Madam Speaker, the people of El Salvador have had more than their share of suffering. In recent decades, El Salvador has been torn apart by civil war, a deadly and costly conflict which claimed the lives of more than 70,000 men, women and children before a peace accord was reached in 1992.

A little over two years ago, one of the most destructive natural disasters ever to hit the region, Hurricane Mitch, wreaked havoc on El Salvador. In the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch's 180 mph winds and massive flooding, El Salvador and her neighbors, Nicaragua and Honduras, lost over 11,000 citizens with damages totaling over \$4 billion.

Madam Speaker, despite these major setbacks, the people of El Salvador have worked diligently and courageously to rebuild their nation and democracy. It is a tragedy and cruel fate that they have had to suffer once again.

On January 13th of this year, a huge earthquake registering 7.6 on the Richter Scale struck off the coast of El Salvador, southwest of the city of San Miguel. Exactly a month later, a second crushing earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 struck east of San Salvador.

Madam Speaker, these devastating earthquakes have taken a tremendous toll on the people of El Salvador and resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe.

Over 1,500 Salvadorans have lost their lives, with thousands more injured. At least 200,000 homes have been destroyed, displacing over a million Salvadorans. More than fifteen hundred schools and dozens of hospitals, as well as essential segments of the country's infrastructure including water systems and the Pan-American Highway, have been badly damaged.

The destruction to El Salvador is estimated to exceed \$2 billion in costs.

Madam Speaker, I would urge our colleagues to adopt this legislation which evidences our heartfelt concern for the people of El Salvador and their tragic losses.

The legislation further supports relief efforts of the United States Agency for International Development for El Salvador's reconstruction, along with the assistance of the World Bank,

the Inter-American Development Bank and the international community.

To this effect, I commend President Bush for committing \$110 million in relief aid when meeting early this month with the President of El Salvador, Francisco Flores. This is a good beginning but more aid is needed. Also important has been President Bush's work permit initiative for Salvadoran immigrants, which has allowed many Salvadorans to continue sending home substantial sums for reconstruction efforts in El Salvador.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of the measure before us.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I must vote against HCR 41. While I certainly offer my personal sympathy to the victims in El Salvador, and also join in encouraging relief agencies to increase their assistance to these individuals, I cannot support this resolution.

In the past I have complained that similar bills have come to the House Floor without going through the committee process. In this instance the committees were included and I applaud the Chairman for ensuring we had an opportunity to discuss this issue at committee. I am also grateful to the committee staff who worked with me in helping facilitate that discussion.

At the subcommittee I introduced an amendment for discussion purposes only. That amendment would have deleted the specific references to governmental assistance contained in this bill. Had that amendment been adopted I could have supported this resolution. Simply, I believe it is not proper for us to force taxpayers in this country to provide this kind of assistance by having the IRS collect these funds. Next, I believe that the Red Cross, for example, would not only be a more sympathetic entity for the purposes of collecting funds used for relief, but also that it would be a more efficient distributor of such funds than are the plethora of government agencies referenced in this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 41.

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. DELAHUNT. Madam 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.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1800

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 6 p.m.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 5(a) of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act (36 U.S.C. 101 NOTE), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission:

Mr. LAHOOD of Illinois.

There was no objection.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,

Washington, DC, March 20, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 5(a) of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act (P.L. 106-173), I hereby appoint the following individual to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission: Mr. Phelps, IL.

Yours Very Truly,

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary group:

Mr. HOUGHTON of New York, Chairman.

There was no objection.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HARRY S TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 5(d) of Public Law 93-642 (20 U.S.C. 2004(b)), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Board of Trustees of the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation: