

known to have been held in detainment for up to twenty years. Ruling authorities continue to allow honor killings. In the North, Syrian forces have attacked unarmed Kurd populations with live ammunition. Human rights organizations working in opposition these injustices are targeted by Syrian authorities with intimidation tactics.

The Syrian government's treatment of its people can no longer be tolerated. I encourage my colleagues to pass the resolution in question and in doing so condemn the Syrian government's gross human rights violations upon its own people and support the Syrian people's struggle for a free and democratic government.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 18, as amended.

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. LANTOS. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 H. Con. Res. 18, the concurrent resolution just considered.

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN OF CONGRESS REGARDING OCCUPATION OF REPUBLIC OF LEBANON BY SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 32) expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 32

Whereas since its invasion of the Lebanese Republic in 1976, the regime of the Syrian Arab Republic has implemented a systematic policy of occupation over Lebanon that has transformed the political, social, and economic character of Lebanon;

Whereas on July 20, 1976, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria stated that "Syria and Lebanon were one state and one people";

Whereas, on October 13, 1990, the Syrian occupation of Lebanon was complete, when Syrian troops launched aerial and ground attacks and occupied the Lebanese presidential palace and the Ministry of Defense, ousting the constitutional government of Prime Minister Michel Aoun of Lebanon;

Whereas the Syrian regime appointed their own proxy government and president in occupied Lebanon, and started a large-scale persecution operation against the Lebanese people by arresting, abducting, torturing, and killing opponents of the occupation;

Whereas, on May 22, 1991, following the occupation of Beirut, Lebanon, Syria concluded the Brotherhood Treaty for Coordination and Cooperation with Lebanon;

Whereas this treaty solidified the integration of the two countries in matters of security and intelligence, finance and trade, and industry and agriculture, by establishing the mechanism for Syrian command under the cover of "joint" decisionmaking;

Whereas the Syrian regime has continued to employ a wide range of policy means to transform Lebanon into a "client state" and a Syrian political satellite;

Whereas Syria clearly tampered with the Lebanese parliamentary elections of 1992, 1996, and 2000, by amending electoral laws which delineated voting districts and laid down intricate procedures for the elections, which were rigged in a way to guarantee results favorable to Syria;

Whereas Syrian-backed ad-hoc modifications to the Lebanese constitution extended by three years the presidential tenure of Lebanese president Elias Harawi, allowed Emile Lahoud, commander of the Lebanese army, to become president, and extended Lahoud's term in contravention of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

Whereas Lebanese judicial institutions have been utilized and mobilized to impose Syrian control, including the routine issuance of death sentences *in absentia* against expatriates and opposition leaders;

Whereas Lebanese Broadcasting Law No. 382 of 1994 provided the legislative framework for controlling and restricting Lebanese radio and television;

Whereas the restrictions on the free flow of information and opinion in Lebanon is in sharp contrast to the legacy of journalism in that country;

Whereas it is widely reported that Syria has utilized the practices of kidnapping and arresting Lebanese citizens, using torture against them, and causing their virtual disappearance;

Whereas Human Rights Watch reported that in November 1999 Syrian authorities in Damascus, Syria, offering no explanation whatsoever, returned to his family the dead body of Lebanese citizen Adel Khalaf Ajouri, aged 52, who had "disappeared" in 1990;

Whereas within Lebanon itself, Syria reportedly operated detention facilities in Tripoli, Beirut, Shtaura in the Bekka Valley, and Anjar on the Lebanese-Syrian border;

Whereas "Syrian order" in Lebanon was institutionalized when Damascus led the process of disarming the Lebanese militias, except for Hezbollah, which Syria retains as a terrorist proxy engaged against the State of Israel;

Whereas Lebanon, under the control of Syria, continues to serve as a major training center for terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command;

Whereas a number of Lebanese government officials have actively facilitated and con-

tributed to the Syrian occupation and its activities, thereby threatening regional and global security;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 calls for the "strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanon", the withdrawal from Lebanon of "all remaining foreign forces", "the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias", and "the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory";

Whereas, on February 14, 2005, a bomb exploded in Beirut, Lebanon, killing at least 15 people, including Rafik Hariri, former Prime Minister of Lebanon, and wounding approximately 100 other innocent victims;

Whereas after the bombing, President George W. Bush stated during an address in Brussels that "Our shared commitment to democratic progress is being tested in Lebanon, a once-thriving country that now suffers under the influence of an oppressive neighbor", called on Syria to "end its occupation of Lebanon", and reiterated the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

Whereas Lebanese opposition leaders gathered after Hariri was killed and issued a statement demanding Syrian troop withdrawal from Lebanon within the next three months, calling for the resignation of the current Lebanese cabinet, and declaring that "we will fight the current regime and demand our right for a neutral government that makes sure Lebanon steps forward from being a captive state to regaining its full independence and sovereignty"; and

Whereas the ongoing mass demonstrations by the Lebanese people resulted in the dramatic resignation of the Lebanese Cabinet on February 28, 2005: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Lebanese Republic is a captive country;

(2) the occupation of Lebanon represents a long-term threat to the security of the Middle East and United States efforts to promote political and economic liberalization in the region, and this issue should be raised by the President and the Secretary of State in all appropriate bilateral and multilateral forums;

(3) the President should direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to present and secure support for a United Nations Security Council Resolution classifying Lebanon as a captive country and calling for the immediate release of all Lebanese detainees in Syria and Lebanon;

(4) the President should freeze all assets in the United States belonging to Lebanese government officials who are found to support and aid the occupation of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic;

(5) all countries should fully and immediately implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

(6) it should be the policy of the United States to—

(A) support independent human rights and pro-democracy advocates in Lebanon; and

(B) seek the full restoration of sovereign democratic rule in Lebanon; and

(7) the United States should provide assistance through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative for broadcasts and civil society efforts to assist individuals, organizations, and entities that support Lebanese sovereignty and the promotion of democracy in Lebanon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and ask unanimous consent he be permitted to control the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 H. Con. Res. 32, expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank the leadership for bringing this important resolution before the House today at a time when hundreds of thousands of Lebanese are flocking to the streets issuing cries for freedom. It is critical that the United States Congress reaffirm its commitment to the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and independence and specifically acknowledge the plight that Lebanon has endured as a captive nation. House Concurrent Resolution 32 does exactly that, Mr. Speaker.

For too long Lebanon has been denied its independence by the regime in Damascus, a regime that has imposed its will upon the Lebanese people through electoral intimidation, through political persecution, through assassination of opposition leaders and brutal military force. But the Lebanese people's desire to be free and sovereign could not be silenced and could not be repressed any longer.

The protests that have followed the Valentine's Day bombing in Beirut that killed former Prime Minister Hariri ushered in an immediate demand from a unifiable and diverse Lebanese opposition for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon. The streets of Beirut earlier this week boasted the largest anti-Syrian demonstration in Lebanese history and possibly the largest pro-democracy rally in Middle East history in response to the Syrian and Iranian-sponsored Hezbollah rally a week earlier.

For the first time, a number of moderate Shiites joined the Druze, Sunnis and Christian groups whose anger and grief over the brutal tactics of the Syrian occupiers and their Lebanese collaborators have galvanized them into action, into a coordinated effort to reclaim Lebanon's sovereignty.

House Concurrent Resolution 32 clearly articulates the threat to U.S. national security interests and to regional stability posed by Syria's presence in Lebanon. And the threat is not limited to Syrian intelligence and military, but to its terrorist proxy, Hezbollah, which uses Lebanese territory as a launching pad for attacks against Israel and a training ground for terrorists targeting U.S. and other Western interests.

Thus, at a time when this body has clearly articulated our stand regarding Hezbollah just a few days ago, let us underscore that we will not tolerate an appeasement of Hezbollah in Lebanon.

House Concurrent Resolution 32 builds on recent developments and calls for the President to instruct the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations to present and secure support for a Security Council resolution classifying Lebanon as a captive nation.

It calls for the President, pursuant to existing law, to freeze all assets in the U.S. belonging to Lebanese Government officials who are found to support and aid in Syria's occupation of Lebanon.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it calls for the United States policy to include support for the independent human rights and pro-democracy advocates in Lebanon and for the full restoration of sovereign democratic rule there.

The resolution underscores the U.S. position against Syria's brutal occupation of Lebanon and U.S. policy about holding state sponsors of terrorism accountable for their actions. Calling for Syria to depart from Lebanon once and for all is in keeping with the post-9/11 approach of forcing terrorists out of their caves and placing them on the run. The U.S. position on Syrian withdrawal forces the terrorists to retreat to their own soil; and in doing so, it seeks to limit their impact so that freedom and democracy can flourish once again in Lebanon and throughout the region.

The Lebanese people have had enough, and they will not allow their territory to continue to be used as a staging ground for terrorists and their state sponsors. Let us stand with the Lebanese people and overwhelmingly adopt this resolution.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 32 and send a clear message to the Syrian terrorist regime to get out of Lebanon. Not to the border; not to the Bekaa Valley. Completely out.

God willing, as our Arab-speaking Lebanese brothers and sisters would say, inshallah, we will soon witness a free, independent, sovereign, and democratic Lebanon.

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

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

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I have taken the time in opposition to this resolution not so much to object to the well-intended notions of the gentlewoman and the promotion of freedom and liberty. It is just that I do not think this is going to achieve it. As a matter of fact, when we pursue resolutions like this and a more aggressive foreign policy of telling other countries what to do, I see it as more of a threat to our security rather than helping our security.

I, for one, would admit I personally do not know what is best for the Lebanese and the Syrians, the Iraqis, or anybody else in the region; but I would argue the case that traditionally in this country up until probably the past 100 years, we took a different position on foreign policy. We took a position of nonintervention, one where we strived for neutrality, and we argued the case that we did not have any business in the internal affairs of other nations. No matter how well intended, there always seem to be ramifications. There seem to be unintended consequences. There seems to be a condition called "blow-back," where it comes back and ends up where we suffer more than anybody else.

For instance, we are in Iraq right now with all these good intentions. We have been there for a couple of years. We have spent over \$200 billion, and this week they came out with a survey and they talked about the most dangerous city in the world and where security is the worst, and that city is not Beirut.

In the last 2 years, every one of us would have rather have been in Beirut than we would have been in Iraq. And yet we have 140,000 troops there protecting the Iraqis and promoting freedom and liberty and elections, and it sounds good. But I think if we are honest with ourselves, the results are not nearly as wonderful as we would like them to be.

The other thing that concerns me is that we lose credibility when we talk about what we want and what we will impose on other nations, because when we are claiming that the Lebanese cannot possibly have elections with the presence of foreign troops, at the same time we daily hear the bragging about the great election in Iraq where we had these 140,000 troops and total martial law in order for an election to take place. I am all for the elections, and I am a strong supporter of self-determination; but I do not correlate that with our policies.

We saw demonstrations, first a little at a demonstration orchestrated in support of getting Syria out of Lebanon, and then there was a response to that where 500,000 showed up supporting Hezbollah claiming they supported Syria, and then of course following that there was a much bigger demonstration. So the people have had freedom to express themselves. But the one thing about all the demonstrations, we never saw a sign that said,

America, come save us, come in here, tell us what to do, tell us what to do with our elections. They have had elections going on for you in Lebanon without any violence directed against Syrian troops as we see daily in Iraq. They have an election coming up in May. It has been scheduled all along. It is not like they have been avoiding them.

We complain a lot about the Syrians being there, and if I have a personal preference, since I believe in self-determination, I would have the troops out just as I would have our troops out of most other places. But I would have foreign troops out of the Golan Heights. Why are we so excited about the Syrian troops, who were invited by the Lebanese Government? Why are we not excited about foreign troops in the Golan Heights and in the over 100 countries where that we have troops?

So I think we lose credibility. I think the Arab people just laugh at us and say, oh, yes, they are for these wonderful elections, and they have got to get these troops out; and at the same time we have troops all over the place.

The Syrians went into Lebanon in 1976, and if we go back and look at history, it was at the urging of the Government of the United States because there was about to be an election. And at that time, it was perceived that the election would undermine the minorities, the Christians and the Druse. So, therefore, it was in our interest at that time to interfere with the election, just as we have interfered so many times since then over the world.

Just think of the elected leader in 1953 in Iran, the elected leader, Mossadeq. But he did not follow what we wanted him to do with regards to oil. So what did we do? We sent in the CIA. We overthrew him, and then we had our puppet government, the Shah, for 25 years, which did nothing more than provide fodder for the radicals, and we radicalized the ayatollahs against us.

In a conversation with a veteran of the CIA, an expert in this region, he explained, at least he sincerely believed, that we did a tremendous favor for Osama bin Laden, and that is to go into Iraq, expose ourselves, and then create the chaos of Iraq. Where there was no al Qaeda before, it is now a haven for al Qaeda.

□ 1245

It has served as a recruiting ground for al Qaeda. So no matter how well the intentions are, we should look at the conclusions; what finally happens.

Our problem very simply comes from the violation of the basic principle that we should follow, and that is that we should be friends with nations and trade with nations, and that we should be neutral in foreign affairs, because it does not serve our interests. It costs a lot of money and it costs a lot of credibility and it costs a lot of lives.

Just think of what the interference in Iraq has cost us: Over 1,500 men; over

11,000 battle casualties, with another 9,000 sent home because of illness; and over \$200 billion. And there is no end in sight. Today we had to pass another \$82 billion, which was not put into the budget, to continue this process. My argument is it comes not because we make a misjudgment, not that this resolution is simply a misjudgment of the day; it just is that is part of the misjudgments that we have made now for many, many decades in overall foreign policy.

It is fully endorsed. The American people certainly have not been up in arms about it and have endorsed it, along with the large majority in the Congress. But long term it does not work. Just look how long the American people supported Vietnam, until finally they had to throw up their arms and demand an end to the senseless war.

But, ultimately, not only do the people get very angry and upset and frustrated with the loss of life, there are economic limitations to this as well, and that is something that I do not think anybody here hardly pays any attention to; that is how long can we continue to spend this money and not have this come back to really haunt us economically? The 1960s came back to haunt us in the 1970s, and the basic financial condition of this country is much worse than it was in the 1970s. Yet there is no hesitation.

I see resolutions like this as not restraint, but encouragement, without looking back and seeing how we participated in contributing to the problems that we have in the Middle East. So I am making the suggestion, why do we not think about overall policy with consistency, and think almost what is in our best interests?

I would like to read a quote from Ronald Reagan, because he was involved in Lebanon and our government was involved in the early 1980s. In his memoirs he admits it was a serious mistake, and we ought to take advice from Ronald Reagan on what he said about his misadventure in Lebanon. We were in there in 1983. This is what he writes in his memoirs several years later.

"Perhaps we didn't appreciate fully enough the depth of the hatred and complexity of the problems that made the Middle East such a jungle. Perhaps the idea of a suicide car bomber committing mass murder to gain instant entry into paradise was so foreign to our own values and consciousness that it did not create in us the concern for the Marines' safety that it should have."

Further quoting Ronald Reagan, "In the weeks immediately after the bombing, I believed the last thing we should do was turn tail and leave . . . yet, the irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policies there."

He concluded with advising us to stay clear. I would like to suggest that I believe that is pretty good advice.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution. Let me first pay tribute to my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her work on this resolution, and for her outstanding leadership on our Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before the House expresses the grave concern of the Congress regarding the ongoing occupation of Lebanon by Syria.

Mr. Speaker, I first visited Lebanon and Syria in 1956, almost half a century ago. Lebanon was a prosperous, free, open and democratic society. I remember going to the Bekaa Valley, to the City of Ba'albak, where among the ancient Roman ruins Shakespeare was performed on alternate nights in English and French.

Since 1976, Syria has occupied Lebanon with brutal force. Our resolution appropriately demands that the occupation end now.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the people of Lebanon tore down gigantic billboards in Lebanon that portrayed the former and current Syrian dictators, Mr. Assad and his father. Just imagine having in the United States huge billboards of Joe Stalin or the ayatollahs of Tehran, how we would feel about this? Well, that is how the Lebanese people felt about having these gigantic billboards pay tribute to a country which occupies their land.

As we speak, there is no Syrian embassy in Lebanon. What could speak more eloquently of the colonial outlook that the Syrian regime has towards Lebanon? In colonial times, the colonial power did not have an embassy in its colony because it did not recognize it as an independent, sovereign nation. That is precisely the attitude of Syria towards Lebanon today.

All of us have been inspired by what the Lebanese call their "independence" uprising. By passing our resolution, the Congress will express its solidarity with the brave anti-Syrian occupation, freedom-loving demonstrators in Martyrs Square in Beirut.

Mr. Speaker, Bashar Assad, Syria's ruler, continues to play games with the international community. As his speech earlier this month showed, he still believes he can ignore the international community's demand that Syria withdraw immediately and totally from Lebanon. Let us not be fooled by his promises of gradual withdrawal delinked from time tables. If you can tell a man by his friends, all you need to know about Assad is that his only friend in Lebanon is the terrorist gang Hezbollah.

Mr. Speaker, Syria has not only persecuted the Lebanese people, arresting, abducting, torturing and killing opponents, most recently the Prime Minister of Lebanon, it has also destroyed Lebanon's lively institutions, rendering them little more than outposts of Syrian control.

These crimes have taken place on the soil of what was once the Arab world's lone democracy. That is why it is vital that the Lebanese people succeed in throwing off Syrian rule and that the Lebanese be allowed to conduct free and fair parliamentary elections this spring, unimpeded by the fist of Syria's military or the brutal machinations of its intelligence agents.

Mr. Speaker, we stand shoulder to shoulder with those who seek full restoration of sovereign, democratic rule in Lebanon. I strongly support this resolution, and urge all of my colleagues to join me in sending a message of hope to the Lebanese people.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few points regarding the unintended consequences of our foreign policy, as well as what might happen in Lebanon.

It has been said about our administration that we hope the Lebanese people will be able to express their view at the ballot box through free elections without interference and outside intimidation. That sounds like a pretty good suggestion, with the conclusion by the administration that when there is outside interference the elections are unreliable.

Once again, I ask the question, does that not raise the question of whether or not the elections in Iraq are as reliable, as is supposed?

Also, President Bush said that these elections must take place without external forces, and all the troops must be out. The UN resolution calls for the troops out as well as the security forces, but the resolution also calls for disarming the people of Lebanon.

In other words, this resolution takes the position that we should go in Lebanon and repeal the Lebanese Second Amendment rights so that nobody has any guns. I just see that as an interference that is going to lead to trouble.

We see civil strife precipitating a civil war in Iraq, and I think what our involvement here now is liable to lead to that type of situation, rather than peace and prosperity and elections.

It is said that this has all come out from the murder and killing of Hariri, and most people now just assume that the government of Syria had something to do with that. Yet there is no evidence for that. There is absolutely zero benefit for the Syrian government to have killed Hariri.

But there is a theory that some of the radical Muslims in Syria that object to Assad, because he is too moderate, because he endorsed the Persian Gulf War and because he takes some of our prisoners and he participates in the interrogations of our prisoners, that he is seen as too liberal, too friendly with the West, and some suppose that that could have been the reason that the murder had occurred, believing that it

would bring down the government of Assad.

Now, that could be an unintended consequence, that consequence that could have a great deal of significance, and that is that the radicals end up taking over, some individuals more radical than Assad, end up taking over Syria, which is always the possibility. But too often these unintended consequences occur and then we do not know how to respond to them.

In Iraq in January of this year there was some polling done, an expression by the people on what they thought about foreign occupation. Eighty-two percent of the Sunnis, I guess understandably so, said that all foreign troops ought to leave, and 69 percent of the Shiites said all foreign troops ought to leave. I wonder why that is not important to anybody?

Instead, we are talking about occupation for years, about building 14 bases in Iraq. How long do we stay in these countries and why is it so necessary for us to be telling other people what to do and when to do it and how to do it and stirring up nothing but anti-American sentiment, while at the same time, even though our goals may be well-intentioned, they are never achieved? We just do not achieve them. And to think that the election under the conditions that we are condemning in Lebanon is the salvation, is the evidence that we are having tremendous achievement, I think is something that we are just pulling the wool over our eyes.

□ 1300

John Adams gave us some pretty good advice about what we should do overseas. And I think that when we have resolutions like this, and we do have them continuously, and we have done them for decades. It was a preliminary to our invasion of Iraq starting specifically in 1988; But Adams advised, he made a suggestion and he made a statement, he says: "America goes not abroad seeking monsters to destroy."

That statement is so appropriate. It looks like we are just looking for problems; and since the results are so poor and we cannot afford it, once again, I want to state my position that I am suggesting not so much that I know or we know exactly what is best for other people. It is that precisely we do not know and we do not have the authority, the moral, the legal, the constitutional authority to do what we do. And besides, it is a threat to our national security.

Jefferson's suggestion was for peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations and entangling alliances with none. And we have way too many entangling alliances, making these huge commitments which will come to an end not because anybody is going to pay much attention to what I say, but they will come to an end because this country is on the verge of bankruptcy.

We cannot continue to raise our national debt by \$650 billion a year and

pretend that we can police the world and at the same time increase entitlements here at home. So one day we will have to face up to these realities, and it will all come to an end.

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

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to make one point about the resolution. The statement toward the ends says: The President should direct the United States Representative to the United Nations to present and secure reports for the United Nations Security Council classifying Lebanon as a captive country in calling for the immediate release of Lebanese detainees in Syria and Lebanon.

Now that is pretty interesting that we are going to tell them who they can release and who they should release. But the question I have, and maybe the sponsors of the resolution could answer this: Will that include that we insist that they release the prisoners that we have sent to Syria?

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Yleem Poblete and Paul Ostburg Sanz, long and dedicated, hardworking members, staffers on our committee on these measures and the work of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia.

I would like to thank Chairman HYDE of the International Relations Committee, for understanding the need to support the Lebanese people at this critical time, and moving this resolution quickly through the Committee.

I would also like to commend our leadership for their commitment to freedom and democracy for all the people of the Middle East.

Lastly, I must make special mention of the efforts and cooperation of our Subcommittee Ranking Member, GARY ACKERMAN, and especially our Full Committee Ranking Member, TOM LANTOS.

TOM LANTOS has experienced first hand what happens when one appeases dictators and ignores the oppression of human beings. We cannot stand idly by and allow Syria to continue to deny the Lebanese people their rights and their nation.

Thanks to the cooperation of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, we are able to send a clear and unified message to both the Syrian oppressors and to the Lebanese people. As we did with the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration, we have an opportunity today, by supporting H. Con. Res. 32, to demonstrate a united front and show that freedom transcends party lines, geographic borders, and language barriers.

When it comes to freedom and democracy, the U.S. is speaking with one voice, as the Lebanese people are speaking with one voice.

In so doing, we become one with our brothers and sisters in Lebanon as they seek to remove the shackles of Syrian tyranny and occupation.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to encourage U.S. support of the people of Lebanon in their struggle to free themselves from Syrian occupation. Syria has illegitimately held control over its neighbor for 25 years, a situation which can no longer be permitted to continue.

Syria has proved itself an utterly destructive force upon its neighbor, Lebanon. Syria has systematically deprived the Lebanese people of their many liberties. It has illegally extended the terms of pro-Syrian officials within the Lebanon government by altering the Lebanese constitution. It has and continues to intimidate Lebanese dissenters with threats of political persecution. Lebanese citizens with views not in keeping with Syrian authorities have been arrested, kidnapped, tortured and in some instances even killed. The Lebanese press has been effectively stifled in order to repress anti-Syrian sentiment. Finally, and most reprehensively, Syria has allowed and even funded the continued existence of the terrorist group Hezbollah within the southern Shebaa farm region of Lebanon. Today Hezbollah is the largest international terrorist organization on the globe, with cells in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. The presence of Hezbollah ensures continued turmoil within Lebanon and throughout the international community.

When it first sent troops to help quell the Lebanese civil war, Syria claimed its purpose was to stabilize the country. Instead Syria has consistently prevented Lebanon from becoming the stable and prosperous state for which many Lebanese patriots, including the late former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, have toiled.

Today the people of Lebanon are taking to the streets, crying out for their freedom from this foreign oppression. As an American of Lebanese descent, my heart is with them. My ancestors came to this country in search of greater freedom. Now, as I watch the Lebanese freedom movement, I am filled with the hope that the citizens of my country of origin will soon have the chance to claim the liberties for which my ancestors sought in coming to the United States.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow members to pass H. Con. Res. 32 in support of the Lebanese struggle for independence. Syria must be made to know in no uncertain terms that we expect the complete withdrawal of its troops from Lebanon, the immediate dissolution of Hezbollah, and the immediate termination of interference within Lebanon's government.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 32, as amended.

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. LANTOS. 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.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM LEHMAN

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and I ask Members in their offices who knew the person that I rise to speak about to take cognizance of the fact that we regret to announce the death of one of our revered former Members.

William Lehman died today. A real giant among human beings has passed and is transitioning. I am sure I speak for all of us in this body that knew him and especially those of us in the Florida delegation in expressing our heartfelt condolences to the Congressman's family.

The funeral arrangements are pending. It is my understanding that the funeral will be at 1 p.m. on Sunday. Those that knew Bill, he was referred to some times as Alabama Bill, he was a mentor, friend, humanitarian, and humble servant of humankind.

He provided transportation for thousands through his variety of auto dealerships and then as a distinguished Member of this body chairing the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. He helped to provide the funding for those of us that have seen his vision come alive in the form of transportation measures in south Florida and around this Nation. He will be sorely missed.

I can assure Members that it would be appropriate to stay in contact with his family with their condolences.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 154 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 154

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2006, revising appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2005, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 through 2010. The first reading of the concurrent resolution shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the concurrent resolution are waived. General debate shall not exceed five hours, with four hours of general debate confined to the congressional budget

equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and one hour of general debate on the subject of economic goals and policies equally divided and controlled by Representative Saxton of New Jersey and Representative Maloney of New York or their designees. After general debate the concurrent resolution shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. No amendment shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by an opponent and a proponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except that the adoption of an amendment in the nature of a substitute shall constitute the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment. After the conclusion of consideration of the concurrent resolution for amendment, the Committee shall rise and report the concurrent resolution to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and amendments thereto to final adoption without intervening motion except amendments offered by the chairman of the Committee on the Budget pursuant to section 305(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to achieve mathematical consistency. The concurrent resolution shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question of its adoption.

SEC. 2. After adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 95, it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table Senate Concurrent Resolution 18 and to consider the Senate concurrent resolution in the House. All points of order against the Senate concurrent resolution and against its consideration are waived. It shall be in order to move to strike all after the resolving clause of the Senate concurrent resolution and to insert in lieu thereof the provisions of House Concurrent Resolution 95 as adopted by the House. All points of order against that motion are waived.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), 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. PUTNAM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, it is a great day in our great Nation, and it is an honor to be here to begin the debate about the fiscal blueprint for our Nation, the priorities of our Nation.

House Resolution 154 is a structured rule that provides for consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 95, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2006 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 through 2010.