

by the House of Representatives of legislation to make appropriated funds available for obligation or expenditure in the manner proposed by the President raises grave questions concerning the prerogatives of the House and the integrity of the proceedings of the House;

Whereas the exchange stabilization fund was created by statute to stabilize the exchange value of the dollar and is also required by statute to be used in accordance with the obligations of the United States under the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund; and

Whereas the commitment of \$20,000,000,000 of the resources of the exchange stabilization fund to Mexico by the President without congressional approval may jeopardize the ability of the fund to fulfill its statutory purposes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and transmit, within 7 days after the adoption of this resolution, a report to the House of Representatives containing the following:

(1) The opinion of the Comptroller General on whether any of the proposed actions of the President, as announced on January 31, 1995, to strengthen the Mexican peso and support economic stability in Mexico requires congressional authorization or appropriation.

(2) A detailed evaluation of the terms and conditions of the commitments and agreements entered into by the President, or any officer or employee of the United States acting on behalf of the President, in connection with providing such support, including the terms which provide for collateral or other methods of assuring repayment of any outlays by the United States.

(3) An analysis of the resources which the International Monetary Fund has agreed to make available to strengthen the Mexican peso and support economic stability in Mexico, including—

(A) an identification of the percentage of such resources which are attributable to capital contributions by the United States to such Fund; and

(B) an analysis of the extent to which the Fund's participation in such efforts will likely require additional contributions by member states, including the United States, to the Fund in the future.

(4) An evaluation of the role played by the Bank for International Settlements in international efforts to strengthen the Mexican peso and support economic stability in Mexico and the extent of the financial exposure of the United States, including the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, with respect to the Bank's activities.

(5) A detailed analysis of the relationships between the Bank for International Settlements and the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and between the Bank and the Secretary of the Treasury, and the extent to which such relationships involve a financial commitment to the Bank or other members of the Bank, on the part of the United States, of public money or any other financial resources under the control of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

(6) An accounting of fund flows, during the 24 months preceding the date of the adoption of this resolution, through the exchange stabilization fund established under section 5302 of title 31, United States Code, the manner in which amounts in the fund have been used domestically and internationally, and the extent to which the use of such amounts to strengthen the Mexican peso and support economic stability in Mexico represents a departure from the manner in which amounts in the fund have previously been used, including conventional uses such as short-term currency swaps to defend the dol-

lar as compared to intermediate- and long-term loans and loan guarantees to foreign countries.

□ 1450

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time or place designated by the Speaker in the legislative schedule within two legislative days of its being properly noticed. The Chair will announce the Speaker's designation at a later time. In the meantime, the form of the resolution proffered by the gentleman from Mississippi will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair is not at this point making a determination as to whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated by the Speaker for consideration of the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRES

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of this privileged resolution, I would like to inquire of the Chair at what point we might have that Speaker's ruling? At what point might this matter be scheduled for debate for the RECORD, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That will be determined by the Speaker.

Ms. KAPTUR. What would be the maximum amount of time that the Speaker might allow before making that ruling?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, that is 2 legislative days.

Ms. KAPTUR. Two legislative days. So that would mean that we would have some opinion from the Speaker by late on Tuesday at the very latest?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That would appear to be correct.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, a further parliamentary inquiry: In what form will the Speaker so inform the Members?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker will consult with the Members as to when he makes his ruling.

Ms. KAPTUR. Consult with the cosponsors, the original cosponsors of the resolution?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker will make sure that he gets the word to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I have researched this and feel very strongly that it indeed involves the privileges of the House, since this is a matter constitutional in nature that is mandatory for this body to fulfill.

It is my intention, should there be a ruling of the Chair that this is not a privileged resolution, to question the ruling of the Chair. Therefore, the timing of that ruling is of importance so that I can have the maximum number of Members who feel strongly about this issue on the floor.

Would it be possible for me to be notified in writing 24 hours in advance, giving me the time that I should expect such ruling?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker will comply with rule IX.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. At what point during the legislative business on that second day will this be brought to a vote?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The matter will be determined by the Speaker.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Is the Speaker's intention to in any way inform the Members so as to give them advanced warning of this ruling?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The current occupant of the chair cannot prejudge what the Speaker will do.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I have a further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, in past such rulings, how has the Speaker notified the Members?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker would notify the Members through the Parliamentarian or through the staff of the Speaker's office.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I want to rise today to state my support of the President's proposal to raise the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15 in 45 cent increments.

Today in West Virginia a family of three making the minimum wage is below the poverty line, making \$8,800 a year.

In the 1960's and 1970's, a family of three making the minimum wage was above the poverty line, but today they would be \$3,500 below the official poverty line.

The minimum wage today is, in real dollars, \$2.25 below the real value of the minimum wage in 1968. The income gap is only widening for West Virginia families. In fact, 17 percent of our families in West Virginia earn less than \$5 per hour.

Mr. Speaker, we are asking, and rightly so, people to leave welfare. We are trying to create jobs. We are telling people the most important thing is to work.

There must be a reward to work. One of the rewards is making sure that the

minimum wage is not a truly poverty wage, as it is today.

I support the raising of the minimum wage.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1995

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

FURTHER SCHEDULING

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to underscore any confusion there has been about the time that we will be in session on Tuesday next. We will start morning business, Tuesday next, at 9:30. And we will start the House at 11.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSS. I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, as I recall, it originally had been morning hours starting on Tuesday at 10:30, with the House beginning at noon. Now the gentleman is saying that the morning hour will begin at 9:30 with the House beginning at 11.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct. There is no change. There was a misspeaking earlier. I am underscoring the correct time.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, the more repetition, I think, on this, the better as far as Members and their schedules.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, it is 9:30 for morning business and 11 for the House.

GOP'S CONTRACT ON AMERICA'S MINORITY ENTREPRENEURS

(Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, believe it or not my colleagues on the other side of the aisle see no need for continuing the vital efforts we in this body have made over the last two decades to diversify the ownership

ranks in America's broadcast and cable industries.

Last week the House Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee indicated its plans to do away with the Federal Communications Commission's [FCC] minority tax certificate program that has been instrumental in expanding the number of minority-owned and operated television, radio, and cable stations across our country and bringing more citizens into the great public policy debates of our time.

Despite the fact that diversity in the broadcast and cable industries has been constitutionally upheld as a vital goal of U.S. telecommunications policy, despite the fact that today only 2.9 percent of such firms are minority controlled, despite the fact that undercapitalization continues to be a major impediment to minority representation in these fields, the GOP sees the FCC's minority tax certificate program as a needless initiative.

Mr. Speaker, the information age is upon us but unfortunately those individuals and communities that are presently underserved and could potentially benefit most from advances in technology and access to the airwaves are still standing on the shoulder of the superhighway in the dust being kicked up by the megacorporations tooling down the road past them. Apparently, this suits the new majority party just fine. It sure is a new era in Washington.

□ 1500

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

URGING SUPPORT FOR RESOLUTION PRESERVING EARNINGS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BLIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mr. KENNELLY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. Kennelly. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the blind should continue to be able to earn as much as senior citizens under the Social Security earnings test. I will offer an amendment in the Ways and Means Committee when it marks up the Republican contract to continue the same earnings test for the blind as seniors will have under the Senior Citizen's Equity Act. This action will ensure that blind individuals can continue to be self sufficient, productive members of society.

In 1977, Congress established the same earnings exemption standard for the blind and retirees under the age of 70. In fact, this action was championed by the present chairman of the Ways

and Means Committee, and provided blind individuals with incentives to contribute as members of the work force.

Blindness is often associated with adverse social and economic consequences. It is often difficult for blind individuals to find sustained employment or for that matter employment at all. Action by Congress in 1977 provided a great deal of hope and incentive for the blind population in this country.

The Republican Contract With America raises the earnings test for senior citizens from \$11,160 a year to \$30,000 in the year 2000. However, the bill specifically de-links blind workers from this increase in the earnings test.

It is my hope that the link between senior citizens and blind individuals can continue. Let's not remove the incentive to work that we were wise enough to offer the blind in 1977. Many in this country want to work and take pride in working and contributing to society.

I have always been a supporter of the blind. When I first came to Congress in 1982 I successfully offered an amendment as a member of the Public Works and Transportation Committee that gave the blind priority to provide vending machines at rests areas and safe areas on the National Interstate Highway System. Since that time nearly every State has passed similar State laws. This action has provided lucrative revenue opportunities for over 600 blind people throughout the country and has been considered by many as a major revenue source for the blind.

We in Congress have been successful in the past 20 years in providing opportunities for the blind to succeed. Let us not go back, let us move forward and extend the increase in the earnings exemption that we are providing to seniors to the blind.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BEREUTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

PRESERVING THE REPUTATION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. VOLKMER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I view the House of Representatives as one of the most respected bodies and institutions in this world, maybe not quite to the extent that I do my church and my home, but it reaches right up there with them.

This is the greatest institution for democracy in the world. It should never be sullied, should never be soiled