

that the other body will act on this important legislation in a timely manner.

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

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE], a member of the committee.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time, and with due respect to her and to the gentleman from the other side, I have some questions, at least, about this legislation. I do not intend to oppose it at this time, but the bottom line is that I have looked at this with some degree of care, and I have learned some interesting facts about it.

For example, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which, of course, is the regulatory agency for national banks, has confirmed that national banks have authority to issue the retirement CD under the expressed statutory powers of the National Bank Act, and the FDIC has ruled that the retirement CD qualifies as an insured deposit under the Federal Deposit Act.

It also has been supported, and I assume still is, by the American Bankers Association, the Independent Bankers Association of America, Independent Bankers Associations of various States, and America's community bankers. In fact, the small community banks have found this as a very good asset to be able to offer to their customers, and, as a result, are very supportive of it.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the arguments here, and have heard them before, concerning the issue of deposit insurance. And while I do not know enough about that to be able to argue it vehemently with anybody, I would suggest that that is a bit of a gray area in terms of what could or could not be done.

Obviously, insurance companies and others who might issue annuities of a different sort might be opposed to this, but I am concerned that we are rushing forward. I must note this piece of legislation did not go through any subcommittee or committee markup at all. I do not even know if it went through any hearings at all at that level. So, as a result, I think we need to post on the RECORD someplace that there perhaps is another side to this and some questions that need to be raised.

So having said that, hopefully, before it is all said and done, whatever legislation comes out of this will be something which is correct and which is in the best interest of all aspects of the community dealing with it.

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 1574, the Bank Insurance Fund and Depositor Protection Act, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

It is entirely appropriate that H.R. 1574 is on the Suspension Calendar today, because it is

genuinely bipartisan legislation, introduced by Congresswoman MARGE ROUKEMA, the chair of the Financial Institutions Subcommittee, along with the ranking Democratic member of the subcommittee, Congressman BRUCE VENTO, myself, and Congressman BILL MCCOLLUM of Florida.

I want to commend Chairwoman ROUKEMA, as well as full committee Chairman JIM LEACH and full committee and subcommittee ranking members HENRY GONZALEZ and BRUCE VENTO, for their bipartisan cooperation on this legislation. If all legislation considered by the 104th Congress was handled in such a cooperative, bipartisan fashion, we would not be facing gridlock on the budget and so many other issues.

H.R. 1574 is a very short, and simple bill. It is designed to permanently close a loophole which crafty lawyers attempted to use to create an insurance product, commonly known as a retirement CD, with both Federal deposit insurance and special tax-deferred status.

Fortunately, the effort to create this kind of unique retirement CD was largely thwarted by the eagle eyes of the Internal Revenue Service, which has correctly issued proposed rules stipulating that such instruments should not be allowed special tax-deferred status.

While the IRS' action has put a halt to the proliferation of these retirement CD's, there are other important policy reasons why their insurance should not be allowed.

First, they expose federally insured financial institutions to potential liabilities of unknown size which raises safety and soundness concerns for the institutions and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's deposit insurance fund. If Federal deposit insurance for retirement CD's is allowed, the Federal Government would, in effect, become the guarantor of which is now a private pension system. The deposit insurance system should not take on this enormous contingent liability.

Second, the unusual hybrid nature of these instruments, which combine features of traditional uninsured insurance annuities with certificates of deposit, raises serious disclosure issues for consumers who may not understand what they are purchasing and the extent to which it is insured by the FDIC. The FDIC has determined, for example, that deposit insurance coverage would not extend to the lifetime payment feature of such products, because that could constitute a liability substantially in excess of the amount on deposit. This is the kind of nuance most consumers would not understand.

Third, the issuance of these certificates could create an unlevel playing field in which insurance companies are at a severe competitive disadvantage to banks because bank annuity products would be insured by the FDIC, while annuity products offered by insurance companies would not. The market for traditional annuities already exceeds \$1.5 trillion, and was \$125 billion in 1993 alone. This makes it clear that neither banks nor insurance companies need Federal deposit insurance to induce customers to purchase annuities.

It is for these reasons that the bipartisan leadership of the House Banking Committee believes that this loophole needs to be permanently closed. H.R. 1574 accomplishes this goal by specifically defining this kind of product as ineligible for Federal deposit insurance.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that H.R. 1574 does not preclude anyone from of-

fering this kind of product for sale. It merely stipulates that annuity contracts issued by insured depository institutions on which the income is tax deferred are not simultaneously eligible for Federal deposit insurance.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we act now, to clear the air, before these kinds of products proliferate. Companion legislation, S. 799, has been introduced by a bipartisan group in the other body, Senator AL D'AMATO, chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, and Senator CHRIS DODD. Consequently there is good reason to believe that if the House approves H.R. 1574 it will be favorably considered by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we all learned as children that you can't have your cake and eat it too. That is exactly what the creators of the retirement CD wanted to do, they wanted to create a tax-deferred annuity which also had Federal deposit insurance. H.R. 1574 simply tells them they have to choose one Federal benefit or the other, but they cannot have both. H.R. 1574 is fair, it is equitable, and it should be supported by all Members.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, those who have requested time are not here on the floor at this moment, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VENTO. 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 gentlewoman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1574.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CONCERNING WRITER, POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER, HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE, AND NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOMINEE WEI JINGSHENG

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 117) concerning writer, political philosopher, human rights advocate, and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Wei Jingsheng, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 117

Whereas Wei Jingsheng is a writer, political philosopher, and human rights advocate who is widely known and respected in China and throughout the world;

Whereas on November 21, 1995, the Government of the People's Republic of China announced the arrest of Wei Jingsheng and its intention to try him for "attempt[ing] to overthrow the government";

Whereas prior to this announcement Wei had been detained since April 1994 without formal charges or the opportunity to communicate with his family or with legal counsel, in violation of Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards prohibiting arbitrary arrest and detention;

Whereas the government had previously imprisoned Wei from 1979 until 1993 on a charge of "spreading counterrevolutionary propaganda" for his peaceful participation in the Democracy Wall movement;

Whereas Wei's analysis of democracy in 1979 as a necessary "fifth modernization" was an important theoretical and practical contribution to the movement for freedom and democracy in China and also to modern political philosophy;

Whereas during his long imprisonment Wei was subjected to beatings and other severe ill treatment which left him in extremely poor health;

Whereas after his release in 1993 Wei devoted his time to humanitarian activities, including visiting and assisting the families of victims of the June 4, 1989, massacre at Tiananmen Square, as well as the surviving victims themselves, and assisting the civilian effort to secure compensation for damages caused to the Chinese people by the Japanese Government during World War II;

Whereas, far from advocating an "overthrow" of the Government of China, Wei has been a strong advocate of nonviolence and a peaceful transition to democracy;

Whereas Wei was regarded as a leading candidate for the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize, having been nominated by parliamentarians throughout the world, including 58 members of the United States Congress;

Whereas Wei was also the recipient of the 1995 Olaf Palme Foundation Award, the 1994 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award, and the 1993 Gleitsman Foundation International Activist Award; and

Whereas because of his great courage, the force of his ideas, and his long unjust imprisonment Wei has come to embody the aspirations of the people of China for democracy and for the enjoyment of free speech and other universal and inalienable human rights, and his fate has come to symbolize their fate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the United States Congress—

(1) urges the immediate and unconditional release of Wei Jingsheng;

(2) urges, in the event Wei Jingsheng is not immediately released, that he be afforded all internationally recognized human rights, including the right to consult freely with counsel of his choice, to assist in the preparation of his defense, and to communicate with his family, and that his trial be open to the domestic and foreign press, to diplomatic observers, and to international human rights monitors;

(3) urges the United States Department of State to make the release of Wei Jingsheng and the protection of his internationally recognized human rights a particularly important objective in relations with the Government of China, and that it raise these issues forcefully and effectively in every relevant bilateral and multilateral forum; and

(4) recognizes that the efforts of Wei Jingsheng once again merit careful consideration for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 117 and I commend the chairmen and ranking minority members of the Asia and Pacific and

International Organizations and Human Rights Subcommittees for expeditiously marking up this resolution. I especially commend the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], for crafting House Concurrent Resolution 117.

During this past summer we were told by the administration that there was a cloud over United States-Sino relations because the Congress insisted that President Lee of Taiwan be allowed to enter the United States. But the storm developed many years ago when the Communist Party took control of China. The so-called cloud was just a smoke ring blown to deflect attention from the root of the problem; democracies and dictatorships are fundamentally different and will always clash.

The case of Wei Jingsheng—Way Ching Shung—is just the tip of an iceberg. According to Asia Watch there are over a thousand peaceful prodemocracy activists imprisoned in China and Tibet. Let us not overlook the hundreds of Christian priests and even a bishop some of whom are serving lengthy terms in prison for just practicing their faith.

Beijing is notorious for arresting and imprisoning high profile prodemocracy advocates so that it can be rewarded for releasing them later. The First Lady went to Beijing to attend the women's conference after American citizen Harry Wu was released after his illegal arrest. Wei Jingsheng was released after serving nearly 15 years in prison in September 1994 so that China would have a better chance at hosting the world olympics in the year 2000. He was arrested again in February 1994, and has not been heard from since, after meeting with assistant secretary of human rights John Shattuck, in February 1994.

The arrest, release, arrest, release cycle has worked to Beijing's advantage, so we should not be surprised that Wei is going on trial. The trial could be linked to the upcoming discussion at the U.N. subcommission on human rights regarding China's human rights record.

Over the last 5 years in which MFN for China has been debated, the Chinese have engaged in a pattern of releasing prominent dissidents. We have also seen this cynical action taken just before bilateral trade talks. Recently the administration has always jumped at the opportunity to use the prison release as a fig leaf for deflecting substantive action.

Whenever an effort is made by the Congress to have China abide by bilateral agreements on trade, human rights, prison labor, or weapons proliferation we are told that "now is not the time. . . there is a political transition period underway in China and if we take any strong action we will be strengthening the hand of the hardliners in Beijing."

In addition to the concern about transition periods, the administration

sweeps aside China's violations of its many accords and agreements with the United States by dismissing enforcement as an attempt to isolate or contain China.

Accusations and concerns about isolation, containment and transition periods are broad brush-stroke generalizations that avoid the hard question of how to deal pragmatically and effectively with a totalitarian Government that has enormous resources to cause havoc.

Until we hold China accountable for what it does, our response to Beijing's egregious behavior will be manipulated by these arrests, trials, imprisonments, and release incidents.

Wei is just a pawn and Beijing is the only player. If we want to get in the game we need to insist on a seat at the table. At this point we have not done so. Accordingly, I join with my colleagues in deploring the charges brought against Wei and urge my colleagues to fully support House Concurrent Resolution 117.

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

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the House Concurrent Resolution 117 as amended, and certainly commend the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], and also my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], who is the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution has broad bipartisan support. I certainly would like to commend also the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] as the ranking Democrat on the full committee; also my colleague from California [Mr. BERMAN], who is the ranking Democrat of the subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. I commend these gentlemen and also the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI], the gentleman from California, [Mr. LANTOS], and the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON], all sponsors of this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important resolution, and it comes at an extremely opportune time. Tomorrow, Mr. Wei Jingsheng goes on trial for allegations that he attempted to overthrow the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Wei Jingsheng is probably the leading pro-democracy advocate today in China, Mr. Speaker. For 14 years of his life he was in prison, from 1979 to 1993, and was released in 1993. And yet he was arrested again in April of last year, shortly after his meeting with the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Mr. John Shattuck.

Mr. Wei Jingsheng, since last year we did not know what was happening to

him, until now we find out from the Government that he will have an open trial tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that the committee unanimously adopted this resolution last week. The resolution urges the unconditional release of Mr. Wei Jingsheng; and, in the event this does not happen, that he be afforded all the internationally recognized human and legal rights.

□ 1915

The resolution also urges the State Department to make Mr. Wei's release a particularly important objective in relations with China, and to raise the issue relevant in bilateral and multilateral forums.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the resolution recognizes Mr. Wei merits careful consideration for the Nobel Peace Prize. The resolution has been changed in a number of respects, and the administration fully supports this resolution, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing Mr. Wei is guilty of is standing as a symbol for the aspirations of the Chinese people to adhere to the basic and fundamental principles of freedom and democracy.

I am sensitive to China's enormous and difficult task in meeting the needs of her 1.3 billion citizens, while undergoing dramatic economic and social changes. But I also submit, Mr. Speaker, at the same time the People's Republic of China must show more evidence of complying with the basic provisions of the United Nations Charter, specifically that of enhancement and protection of human rights.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that the Congress of the United States speak out in very specific terms on the matter of human rights. We must say to China's political leaders that we expect them to live up to internationally accepted standards of conduct and behavior by all its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the People's Republic of China, as a full-fledged member of the United Nations, certainly should comply with the basic provisions of human rights as stated in the charter of the United Nations. I urge my colleagues to support the adoption of this resolution, and I commend again the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. GILMAN], my good friend and chairman of the Committee on International Relations, for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD articles on Wei Jingsheng.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 12, 1995]
WHY IS CHINA TAKING ON WORLD BY TRYING
DISSENT?

BEIJING.—Nine ago this month, senior leader Deng Xiaoping urged Communist Party leaders to take a hard line against domestic critics, without concern for China's international image.

"Didn't we arrest Wei Jingsheng?" Deng asked rhetorically about the democracy activist who was sentenced to a 15-year prison term in 1979. "We arrested him and haven't let him go, yet China's image has not suffered."

This week China's leaders put Wei on trial again, charged with attempting to overthrow the government. And many China watchers worry that the trial portends a resurgence of actions by China's hard-line leadership violating internationally recognized human rights.

"There's no way that this can help China internationally," said UCLA political scientist Richard Baum. "It's an unsettling sign, a jarring occurrence for a regime trying to portray itself as having joined the international community."

Like many political prisoners, Wei's reputation and stature has been growing the longer he sits in prison. While many other Chinese political activists have put aside politics to pursue business, Wei has remained an uncompromising advocate of democracy for China. Over the last decade, he has become China's most prominent dissident.

Wei's trial, scheduled for Wednesday at Beijing's Intermediate Court, has mobilized groups anxious about the outcome, which could carry punishment ranging from 10 years in prison to the death penalty. Human rights groups are prodding the U.S. Congress to adopt a resolution calling for Wei's release.

Wei's sister, Wei Shanshan, who lives in Germany, flew to the United States today to lobby lawmakers on her brother's behalf. A demonstration is being organized for Tuesday afternoon in front of the Chinese Embassy on Connecticut Ave.

Human rights groups are pressing the Clinton administration to take a strong stand in defense of Wei. Those groups say that President Clinton, by soft-pedaling human rights issues in his October meeting with Chinese President Jiang Zemin and by severing the link between human rights and trade, might have led the Chinese government to think it could sentence Wei without severe repercussions.

Among those offering to serve on Wei's defense team are: Nicholas Katzenbach and Richard Thornburgh, attorneys general under presidents Lyndon Johnson and George Bush; for French justice minister Robert Badinter; Singapore's former solicitor general Francis Seow, and former chairman of the Bar of England and Wales Lord Gareth Williams.

A Chinese court spokesman said today that the trial of Wei would be open, an unusual step in political cases. The court said, however, that foreign lawyers would not be allowed to participate. Wei's family has hired Zhang Sishi, who defended dissidents Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming when they were tried for participating in the 1989 democracy demonstrations. Each was sentenced to 13 years in prison. In China, an arrest generally is announced after police and the courts have decided they have enough evidence to convict.

Wei was the most daring and influential of the so-called Democracy Wall activists who in late 1978 printed magazines and pasted democracy manifestoes on a wall just west of the former Forbidden City, now part of the Chinese leadership compound.

At that time, Deng had returned to power and promised to deliver China from the political upheaval of the Cultural Revolution and to undertake four modernizations: in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense.

While many Chinese welcomed Deng's return after a turbulent decade, Wei and other Democracy Wall activists were critical. Wei said Deng's program would fail without a "fifth modernization"—democracy.

Unlike political reformers within the Communist Party, Wei and his associates at Exploration magazine in 1978 totally rejected Marxism-Leninism. He said Marxist coun-

tries were "without exception undemocratic and even anti-democratic autocracies."

Wei was convicted of "counter-revolutionary" activities and of leaking secret information about China's war with Vietnam to a reporter. He was sentenced to 15 years in jail and was paroled six months early in September 1993. Unrepentant, he urged the international community to deny the 2000 Olympic Games to Beijing. He was rearrested April 1, 1994, shortly after meeting Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck, and was held incommunicado until last month—when the government announced charges against him.

Analysts note several possibilities in trying to explain why Wei is being put on trial now.

Some suggest China wants to use a convicted and resented Wei as a bargaining chip to persuade other governments to back off from a critical human rights resolution at the United Nations. That concern could also help explain the Chinese government's effort to make the trial look more legitimate.

Others say that China could be preparing to boot Wei out of the country and that it needs to show its toughness by first handing him a long prison term—just as it did with Chinese-born American citizen Harry Wu, who was detained this summer while trying to enter China. Expulsion would give Wei a platform overseas but it would remove him from the Chinese political scene.

A third possibility is that hard-line officials in the Ministry of State Security, the army and the Communist Party propaganda department are using the trial as a vehicle for their political comeback—as well as a warning to anyone contemplating dissent as the 91-year-old Deng fades from power.

Whatever legal motions the government goes through, no observer consulted related Wei's incarceration to what are widely viewed as trumped-up charges. Merle Goldman, a professor of Chinese politics at Boston University, said, "I don't see what evidence they can have since he was followed every single minute he was out of jail."

[From the Reuters News Agency, Dec. 12, 1995]

CHINESE DISSIDENT'S TRIAL TO BE OPEN TO THE WEST—BUT EX-U.S. OFFICIALS CAN'T DEFEND WEI

(By Jeffrey Parker)

BEIJING, December 1.—In a highly unusual move, China has opened the trial of top dissident Wei Jingsheng to Western reporters—but will not allow him to be defended by two former U.S. attorneys general who have offered to take his case.

The Beijing Intermediate People's Court said Western reporters were asked to submit applications to attend tomorrow's session. The trial will also be open to the public, meaning close relatives and a few court-selected citizens would be allowed in.

But court spokesman Chen Xiong said Mr. Wei could not hire foreign lawyers, thus rejecting an offer by former U.S. Attorneys General Dick Thornburg and Nicholas D. Katzenbach to defend Mr. Wei against what is seen widely in the West as a political charge.

The defendant has retained Beijing lawyer Zhang Sizhi, a relative said.

China meanwhile sentenced three dissident Christian activists to up to 2½ years of re-education through labor, a form of administrative detention, sources close to the defendants said.

The Beijing Municipal Re-education Through Labor Committee sentenced the three recently, but the exact date was not clear, the sources said.

Defendants Xu Yonghai, Gao Feng and Liu Fenggang all have been active in Beijing's underground Christian circles, seeking to practice their religion outside state-sanctioned churches.

Mr. Wei's trial technically opened December 1, when prosecutors lodged the charge of "conspiring to overthrow the government," which can carry the death penalty on conviction.

The same charge was used to imprison many dissidents arrested when the Communist government crushed the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests.

Widely viewed as a father of China's democracy movement, Mr. Wei was first jailed in the late 1970's Democracy Wall era after proposing that leader Deng Xiaoping's Four Modernizations drive needed a fifth component—multi-party democracy.

Mr. Wei's relatives have denounced his prosecution, saying he did nothing but exercise his constitutional right to speak his mind.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 22, 1995]

CHINA ACCUSES DISSIDENT OF COUP ATTEMPT

BEIJING.—China formally arrested its leading critic, Wei Jingsheng, today and charged him with attempting to overthrow the Chinese government.

Under Chinese law, conviction could result in a sentence ranging from 5 years in prison to execution, according to legal experts here. In China, conviction is almost certain after a formal arrest is announced.

Wei, 44, regarded as the father of China's tiny democracy movement, thus was publicly charged nearly 20 months after his detention. He had vanished after being stopped by security agents on a road outside Beijing on April 1, 1994. Despite appeals from world leaders, China has given no indication of Wei's whereabouts nor was he allowed to see family members or attorneys.

The official New China News Agency said "an investigation by Beijing's municipal public security departments showed that Wei had conducted activities in [an] attempt to overthrow the government. * * * His actions were in violation of the criminal law and constituted crimes."

An uncompromising voice for free speech and democracy, Wei has spent all but six months of the last 18 years in detention. This year he was a strong contender for the Nobel Peace Prize. A former soldier and an electrician, Wei was jailed in 1979 for his role in the Democracy Wall movement. At that time he wrote and published an essay that criticized Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping for leaving democracy out of his reform program. Wei later branded Deng a "new dictator."

The latest charge appears to signal Beijing's continued determination to stifle overt political dissent as well as its confidence that foreign companies' eagerness to do business in China's booming economy will prevent any foreign trade restrictions in response.

The timing of the announcement—just after Chinese President Jiang Zemin's meetings with President Clinton in New York, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Beijing, and leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum in Osaka—allowed Jiang to sidestep confrontations over China's human rights conditions. But the charge against Wei also suggests that appeals those world leaders said they made on behalf of political prisoners had little effect.

In Washington, a State Department spokesman said, "We regret the government's decision to formally charge Chinese democracy activist Wei Jingsheng. We have expressed our concerns about this latest development in his case to Chinese officials."

Most people familiar with Wei express doubt that any evidence against him exists, apart from a lifetime of bold writing against what he called "political swindlers."

Wei came from a classic Communist "good family background." His parents and siblings were Communist Party cadres and Wei grew up with the party elite. Wei's father, a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official, was a devoted Maoist who forced his son to memorize a page a day from the writings of Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong. If Wei failed, he was sent to bed without dinner.

In 1968, Wei was among the millions of youths who went to Tiananmen Square to see Mao review Red Guards * * * the Cultural Revolution. The next year Wei was jailed briefly amid internecine Red Guard strife. After his release, Wei was assigned to work as an electrician at the Beijing zoo. He quit to join the People's Liberation Army, where he spent four years. He later wrote that his military service took him around the country and showed him how peasants suffer. In 1976, he returned to his job at the zoo.

In late 1978, Wei took part in the Democracy Wall movement, when activists plastered posters and political essays on walls in the center of the city. Wei ran a magazine called Explorations, produced on a handcranked printer.

While many Democracy Wall activists cautiously couched their essays in the jargon of the day, Wei lambasted the "deafening noise of 'class struggle' slogans." At a time that many Chinese were welcoming Deng's "four modernizations"—agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense—Wei said Deng's reform plan would fail without democracy, which he called the "fifth modernization."

Arrested in 1979 and sentenced to 15 years in jail, Wei served much of his time in solitary confinement. He also worked in a labor camp.

Released in 1993 when China was trying to persuade the international community to choose Beijing as the site of the 2000 Olympic Games, Wei immediately made new contacts with workers, intellectuals and foreign journalists even though he was closely monitored by Beijing police. Wei spoke out against China's treatment of political prisoners and urged the international community to pick a different site for the Olympics. The latest detention came just after Wei met with Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shatrick.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. COX].

Mr. COX of California. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Communist government of the People's Republic of China will put China's leading advocate of democracy on trial. This so-called trial speaks volumes about the abysmal state of human rights and the complete and utter denial of political freedoms in the People's Republic of China.

Wei Jingsheng is China's foremost dissident, and has become a personal target of Deng Xiaoping because he demanded that Deng's "Four Modernizations", agriculture, industry, science, and defense, be supplemented with a very important fifth: Democracy. Wei's magazine, "Exploration", repudiated not just Maoism and Leninism, but Marxism itself.

Mr. Speaker, for this he spent 14½ years of his life in some of Communist

China's most brutal and remote prison camps. Much of that time was spent in solitary confinement. His alleged offense was counterrevolutionary activities. The truth is that he led the Democracy Wall Movement. That movement, as the Speaker knows, took its name from the wall near the Forbidden City which activists used to displace their prodemocracy manifestos.

When the People's Republic of China recently was seeking international acceptance so that it could host the Olympic Games, forthcoming in the year 2000, Wei was paroled just 6 months before the expiration of that grueling 15-year sentence. This was done obviously in order to curry favor with Western governments and the International Olympic Committee.

But when Wei was released, he did not stop speaking. He called on the members of the Olympic Committee to punish Beijing for its abysmal human rights record by denying it the opportunity to host the Olympic Games. Shortly after that, in April 1994, Wei disappeared. For the past 20 months the Communist authorities have refused to tell anyone, even his family, his whereabouts.

Mr. Speaker, it is now probable that Wei will be put on trial tomorrow for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government. In truth, the sum total of his offenses against China's Communist Government has been his underlying support for democracy and human rights. His likely punishment will be a minimum of 10 years, and perhaps death.

The Chinese Government may return him to Laogai, the notorious Chinese gulag. They may expel him after imposing a Draconian sentence, which is what they did to Californian Harry Wu.

The Communist regime is no doubt retaliating against Wei because he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and because the Olympic Committee decided not to award the People's Republic of China the Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, the Wei case demonstrates the nature of justice under the current Communist government in China. Wei was arrested 20 months ago without warning and without explanation. For nearly 2 years he has been held incommunicado. Only afterward did the Communist government initiate its investigation of Wei. Then, and only then, did the Communist government announce the charges against Wei and set his trial for tomorrow.

But sadly, Mr. Speaker, this will be a sham trial. There is no doubt, absolutely none, about the result. Wei will be found guilty. The trial in China's Intermediate People's Court will be anything but the open proceeding announced in the press of the People's Republic of China. It will not be public.

American and European requests to monitor the trial have either been rejected or gone simply unanswered, and the Chinese regime has refused to allow a distinguished international team to assist Wei. In addition, two former

United States Attorneys General, Nicholas Katzenbach and Dick Thornburgh, one Republican and one Democrat, have been trying to assist in Wei's defense, and the Chinese Government has told them coldly, harshly, "No."

Wei Jingsheng, like the heroic students of Tiananmen Square, is living proof that China's people are not indifferent to democracy. They are not indifferent to human rights. They are not content with lawlessness, dictatorship and corruption.

Tomorrow, the People's Republic of China will attempt to put Wei Jingsheng on trial, but it will be China's Communist dictatorship that is in fact on trial. Mr. Speaker, the message in this resolution is clear. Wei Jingsheng should be immediately released and his sham trial should be stopped.

The detention and trial of Wei Jingsheng is only the latest and most striking case of China's systematic infringement of political freedoms, individual liberties, and human rights. This Congress and this resolution intends to make clear that communist China's continued violations of human rights will have consequences.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI].

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from American Samoa for his leadership, as well as that of the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], and others who have brought this legislation to the floor today. I commend them all, and am pleased to be a sponsor of the resolution before us.

Mr. Speaker, it is most fitting that we consider this bill today, the day before Wei Jingsheng is tried in a Chinese court. Today is also the day on which the U.S. Department of State is celebrating Human Rights Day. On December 5, President Clinton signed a proclamation designating the week of December 10 through 16, 1995 as Human Rights Week. President Clinton said:

We live in an era of great advances for freedom and democracy. Yet, sadly, it also remains a time of ongoing suffering and hardship in many countries. As a nation long committed to promoting individual rights and human dignity, let us continue our efforts to ensure that people in all regions of the globe enjoy the same freedoms and basic human rights that have always made America great.

Our action today on this legislation demonstrates our congressional commitment to living up to our American values of promoting human rights, basic freedoms and human dignity.

Wei Jingsheng is scheduled to be tried tomorrow, I guess it is in a few hours, taking into consideration the time difference, in a Chinese courtroom on charges of attempting to overthrow the Government, a capital offense. The charges against Wei are spu-

rious, the trial is fixed, and the entire event would be farcical if a man's life were not at stake.

The case of Wei Jingsheng, a key figure in China's pro-democracy movement, once again exposes to world view the flaws in China's judicial system and the alarming pattern of human rights abuses by China's authoritarian Government.

Wei Jingsheng was first imprisoned as a result of his 1979 democracy wall activities. His activities at that time include daring to write and to publicize material critical of Marxist-Leninism and critical of China's Communist Government. For those activities, Wei was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

He was released after serving 14½ years of that 15 year sentence and I might add, much of that in solitary confinement. As part of the public relations campaign by China's dictatorial Government to woo the International Olympic Committee into naming Beijing as an Olympics site.

Wei Jingsheng was detained again by the Chinese Government in 1994, less than 6 months after obtaining his freedom. His crime? Daring to continue to speak out against China's Communist Government.

When Wei met with foreign journalists and officials, including U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck. The Chinese Government did not like what Wei had to say or to whom he was saying it and shortly after his meeting with Assistant Secretary of State Shattuck, Wei was thrown once again into the bowels of the Chinese Government penal system.

Wei Jingsheng was held incommunicado for 20 months by China's dictators. During that time, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by an international group of parliamentarians, including 58 Members of the U.S. Congress. During those 20 months, the Chinese Government held Wei without charging him, in violation of their own laws.

Two days before the U.S. holiday of Thanksgiving, I mention that because it is clear that the Chinese Government knew this would be at a time when Congress was not in session and able to respond to the charges, the Chinese Government finally acknowledged that they were holding Wei and formally charged him with attempting to overthrow the government. Last Friday, they announced that his trial would be on Wednesday, December 13. The charges are absurd; the verdict predictable and predetermined.

Wei's family has hired a talented and dedicated attorney to defend him, the same attorney who defended prominent dissidents Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming. Unfortunately, as of 48 hours before the trial, the attorney had neither been granted access to Wei nor allowed to view the dossier against him. This is but one example of the sham trial which is about to be undertaken.

Chinese authorities had originally announced that the trial would be

open. The question here is to whom the word open applies—neither foreign journalists nor U.S. Embassy officials who have requested to attend the trial are being permitted to do so.

Wei Jingsheng's sister, Wei Shanshan, is in Washington, DC this week to appeal for help in freeing her brother. The bill before us today bolsters an international campaign on Wei's behalf. The international efforts include a campaign by prominent and distinguished international jurists, represented in the U.S. by former attorneys General Nicholas Katzenbach and Dick Thornburgh, to defend Wei and a campaign by PEN, the international authors organization, to appeal for Wei's release. House Concurrent Resolution 117 puts the strong voice and the moral authority of the United States House of Representatives on record in support of a fighter for freedom and Democratic reform, a man who embodies the values upon which our own great democracy was built.

As we commemorate human rights week, I call on the administration to live up to its rhetoric on human rights. President Clinton should communicate directly and in no uncertain terms to the Chinese Government at the highest levels that Wei Jingsheng must be released immediately and unconditionally. The United States and China cannot have a normal relationship while China insists upon violating international law and violating international norms of behavior.

I urge my colleagues to support freedom and democracy in China by supporting Wei Jingsheng. Wei is a strong symbol of, to, and for the Chinese dissidents who are risking their lives by bravely speaking out against tyranny.

Mr. Speaker, this morning we cheered the remarks of Shimon Peres as he spoke out in support of democracy and how it was important to peace. Hopefully, our colleagues will now join together in sending another strong message in support of democracy by supporting this resolution.

Once again, I commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], and the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] for giving us this opportunity to vote on this important legislation this evening.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. HASTINGS].

(Mr. HASTINGS of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], the cochairman of the Human Rights Caucus.

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

□ 1930

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, the chairman of the committee, for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, the world was outraged a month ago when the Government of Nigeria, the Abacha government, executed Ken Sarawiva and all of the Ogoni Nine. Now China, Mr. Speaker, is conducting a quiet but comprehensive campaign to quash the remainder of China's dissident movement left from the violent 1989 crackdown on democracy protesters.

The trial of human rights advocate and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Wei Jingsheng, scheduled to begin tomorrow, culminates this vicious campaign. Human Rights Watch World Report 1996 reports that the formal arrest of Mr. Wei for conducting activities in an attempt to overthrow the Chinese Government was the most blatant example of the Chinese Government using trumped-up criminal charges against political dissidents.

Mr. Speaker, again and again the Chinese Government flagrantly ignores domestic and international pressure for peaceful political change. Instead relying on its economic attractiveness to foreign investors, Beijing continues to demonstrate its disdain for fundamental human rights guarantees and the rule of law.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, that that change. Mr. Speaker, it is outrageous that Mr. Wei has been detained since April 1994 without formal charges or the opportunity to communicate with his family or legal counsel. The Government of China should unconditionally release Mr. Wei. But at a minimum, Mr. Wei should be afforded all internationally recognized human rights, including the right to consult freely with counsel of his choice and to communicate with his family.

Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the world tolerates these outrageous abuses is the extent to which it encourages all repressive governments. But to the extent that we respond strongly against them, this and other governments will be restrained.

I commend the gentleman from New Jersey for offering this resolution. I commend the gentleman from New York for bringing it to the floor. I urge all Members to support its adoption.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF].

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 117, a resolution which urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately and unconditionally release Wei Jingsheng, a leader of China's modern democracy movement.

I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], and the chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], for moving this bill quickly.

I would say it is good that the Congress is speaking out both in the House and the Senate. When this comes up for a vote, it will be, hopefully, passed 435 to nothing.

I wonder, where is the business community? Why are they not speaking out on this issue? This indictment of Wei was handed down only 3 days after Vice President AL GORE met with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Osaka. Why has Wei been charged with attempting to overthrow the powerful and the repressive and weapons-laden Chinese Government? Because he dared to speak to Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, John Shattuck, shortly after he was released in 1994.

Wei, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of hero and a patriot the United States should be supporting. The Clinton administration unfortunately has just simply expressed regret at the whole incident, a wholly inappropriate response, not even a slap on the wrist. The Vice President, Mr. Speaker, has even refused to meet with Wei's sister who is in Washington lobbying on behalf of her brother. If America does not have a hand to lend in his struggle for freedom, who does? Wei is like Sakharov or Shcharansky or Solzhenitsyn or someone like this.

I urge a strong and unanimous vote. I want to again thank Chairman GILMAN, Chairman SMITH, and the gentleman from California, Ms. PELOSI, and the others for their efforts to move this bill quickly.

The Chinese Government's formal arrest of Wei in November is a classic example of what happens to China's brave democracy activists when the world turns its back on them. Mr. Speaker, through the de-linking of trade from human rights in May 1994 and the failure of the Senate to take up the China Policy Act of 1995, the United States has indeed turned its back on Wei Jingsheng and the hundreds of other political prisoners, Christians, and Tibetan Buddhists who languish in Chinese jails today. The resolution we are debating today is only a step in the right direction. What the United States really needs is a tougher overall policy towards China. Engagement just isn't working. This indictment of Wei was handed down only 3 days after Vice President AL GORE met with Chinese President Jiang Zemin in Osaka.

Why has Wei Jingsheng been charged with attempting to overthrow the powerful, repressive, weapons-laden Chinese Government? Because he dared to speak to Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs John Shattuck shortly after he was released in 1994. Because he dared to tell the world that it should keep pressure on China to address human rights problems. Because he dared to speak to foreign journalists about the need for democracy despite being banned for 3 years from doing so by Chinese authorities.

Wei Jingsheng is the kind of hero and patriot the United States should be supporting.

But the Clinton administration has simply expressed regret at the whole incident. A wholly inappropriate response. Not even a slap on the wrist. The Vice President has even refused to meet with Wei's sister who is in Washington lobbying on behalf of her brother. If America doesn't have a hand to lend to these struggling for freedom, who does? Where do they turn for help?

In July, 410 members of this Chamber supported H.R. 2058, a bill that would have given definition to the administration's China policy and commended brave democracy reformers like Wei Jingsheng. Supporters and opponents of revoking MFN status for China rallied around this unified message of disdain for China's human rights, weapons proliferation, and unfair trade policies.

It's been 6 months and the Senate has not yet taken up the bill. There are some who argue it's not the right time to tweak the Chinese Government's nose. There are some who want only to dialogue and engage and continue to let brave reformers like Wei Jingsheng suffer in jail or worse. If Congress cannot pass a statement of policy like H.R. 2058, what hope do people like Wei Jingsheng have?

I urge my colleagues to vote for H. Con. Res. 117, but I also encourage my colleagues to look inside themselves and decide when enough is enough. When Congress reconvenes in January, perhaps the MFN-human rights fight should begin anew. America must not walk away from these people.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRBACHER].

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, here we are on the floor of the House of Representatives talking about someone who languishes on in prison halfway around, on the other side of the world.

I would like to point something out here in this Chamber. Here as we stand in this bastion of democracy of the legislative branch, one of the oldest elected legislative branches in the world, we have two pictures on our walls. One is of George Washington; the other is of Lafayette. That suggests something about freedom and the way the American people think of freedom. The fact is that Lafayette heard of our struggle for freedom and democracy in far-off France, a country that was much further away from the United States in those days than we are from China today, and came to our country to help us in our struggle for freedom. We never forgot Lafayette. Years later he returned to the United States and was welcomed as a hero by the American people. Every little city and town and hamlet throughout our country welcomed him as a champion of American freedom.

That is because the people who founded our country understood that the concept of freedom and democracy is universal. It is not something that we hold dear just for Americans, but it is, instead, something that unites all peace-loving and freedom-loving people of the world everywhere.

Today another hero languishes in far-off China, in a prison in far-off China. We are putting the world on notice

that we have remained true to the principles of Washington and of Lafayette and of Jefferson because we are on his side. I ask support of this resolution and ask my colleagues to join us in supporting Wei Jingsheng and his struggle for democracy and the people of China's struggle for democracy.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], the sponsor of this measure, who is also a member of our Committee on International Relations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman, for his expeditious passage of this legislation in the full committee. I also thank the gentleman for his very strong leadership on human rights, particularly as it relates to the People's Republic of China.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA], the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], the gentleman from California [Mr. LANTOS], and the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI], who has been a real stalwart when it has come to China, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. BERMAN and the gentleman from California [Mr. COX], who spoke earlier and, of course, my good friend and colleague with whom I have traveled to China on behalf of human rights, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF], who has been tenacious in promoting human rights around the globe.

Mr. Speaker, today the American people stand united in outrage at the latest assaults on freedom, democracy and decency by the government of the People's Republic of China. The ordeal of Wei Jingsheng began in 1979 when he took the Communist government at its word and wrote articles suggesting political reform. For this they sentenced him to a 15-year jail term.

In late 1993, he was unexpectedly released on parole, a few months prior to the end of his sentence. This gesture, I would note parenthetically, was designed to induce the Olympic committee to award Beijing as host of the Olympics 2000. They did not get it, as we all know.

During his long and unjust imprisonment, he has been severely beaten and subjected to other forms of physical and psychological abuse. He was in extremely poor health, but he had also become a hero in the meantime, a symbol of courage and even of hope to a beleaguered people.

It was my privilege, Mr. Speaker, to visit with Wei Jingsheng in Beijing in January 1994, during his very brief period of freedom. I found him to be extremely articulate, compassionate and principled. He spoke of his quest for democracy and human rights with a very keen understanding. Notwithstanding his horrific ordeal in prison, he never once slandered the leadership of the People's Republic of China. I was amazed at his lack of malice and his

lack of rancor toward his jailers. I was deeply impressed by his kindness and his goodness.

A few weeks later, after meeting with Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck, he was rearrested. For 19 months the Beijing government would not even admit that they had Wei in its custody. He was cut off from communication with his family, with legal counsel, with his colleagues and admirers in the human rights movement. None of us knew for sure whether or not he was dead or alive.

When I visited Beijing in September of this year, I asked to visit Wei in prison. My request was not denied, it was just ignored as if he was persona non grata. Finally on November 21 of this year, the Beijing authorities acknowledged what the world already knew, that Wei was their prisoner. They announced their intention to try him for "attempting to overthrow the government."

This charge is clearly false, Mr. Speaker, unless it is just another way of saying that anyone who believes in freedom and democracy and who is not afraid to say so is a threat to the ultimate survival of a totalitarian regime such as the one in Beijing.

In a free country, Mr. Speaker, Wei Jingsheng would have a place of high honor in society. In today's China, the only question is whether he will be tried for a crime that is punishable by death or by a very, very long imprisonment. Wei is an innocent man, Mr. Speaker. In a free country, this would matter. In Communist China, it is his very innocence that his jailers hate and fear.

Mr. Speaker, there is disagreement among the Members of the United States Congress as to the best way to bring freedom and democracy to the People's Republic of China. Some believe that we must pursue a course of constructive engagement, that if we work closely with the Chinese officials and give them much of what they want from us, we will be in the best position to encourage them to improve their dismal human rights record. Others feel that the last 20 years of U.S. policy towards China amounts to a long and unrequired one-way love affair with a Communist dictatorship. Today, however, we all stand together, Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, pro- and anti-MFN advocates, united by one simple truth: This decent and gentle man is not a criminal.

The trial of Wei Jingsheng is set to begin in just a few hours and, looking at the clock, probably in just a few minutes. We appeal to President Zemin on his behalf. Release him. Today we pray, we hope and we can tell the truth on the floor of this House about what is happening to Wei Jingsheng. For just this one day, let us let the world know that the United States did not conduct business as usual with a government that brutalizes its own people and dishonors its heroes.

Wei Jingsheng deserves to be free. Let us send a clear, unmistakable expression of our support for him as he goes on trial and again in just a couple of minutes in China.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again commend the gentleman from New Jersey, [Mr. SMITH] as the chief sponsor of this legislation. Not only that, but I commend him not only as an outstanding leader on our committee but certainly a champion of human rights throughout the world. I want to commend him for his leadership in that capacity.

Certainly I want to thank the gentleman from New York, chairman of our Committee on International Relations, for his leadership. In the spirit of bipartisanship, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues that we support this resolution.

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

□ 1945

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. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspended the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 117, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today in the order in which that motion was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order: H.R. 2243, de novo; H.R. 2677, by the yeas and nays; H.R. 2148, by the yeas and nays; and House Concurrent Resolution 117 by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

TRINITY RIVER BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question de novo of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 2243, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by