

President Richard Nixon. He has served, as well, under the leadership of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and certainly, now, William Jefferson Clinton. He has served for 35 years in this Congress as of November 4, 1996.

He has served on the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services from January 1962, and on many of the subcommittees. Since we have the housing bill on the floor of the House, it is certainly important to recognize him as a strong advocate for housing for Americans. It is important to be able to acknowledge that he was a civil rights leader. He was someone who many thought would not make it to the State senate, and certainly would not make it to the U.S. Congress.

Most of all, he is a gentle warrior. He stands tall for the principles he believes in. He is a lover of America, but he is a lover of the least of those in our community. He certainly is a gentle giant on this floor: kind, thoughtful, and respected.

It is my pleasure to wish to him, on behalf of the constituents of the 18th Congressional District, on tomorrow, his birthday, a very, very happy birthday, and to say to him that May 2 is a special day, because that was the day that America had as one of its own born a great American.

So Henry, happy birthday. Happy birthday on behalf of my constituents, and happy birthday on behalf of Texas, and happy birthday on behalf of America. God bless you, HENRY GONZALEZ.

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

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

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

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

A CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE WORK REQUIREMENT IN THE HOUSING BILL

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk a little bit about some of the preceding debate that occurred today on the housing bill. Let me just say, though the debate was frequently very heated and sometimes tempers and passions were quite high, I believe personally that a lot of this is very good. We need to openly debate these issues.

I rise this evening, Mr. Speaker, because I feel there were a number of

points being made by the minority which were entirely inaccurate as they pertain to my opinion on this issue of a work requirement in the housing bill, and as they pertain, I believe, to our party, the Republican Party's position on a work requirement in the housing bill.

I have experience living in government housing, living in a dormitory in a State university. It was no bigger than the average walk-in closet. I had to work 24 hours a month for the privilege of having that small dorm room. I believe it is perfectly reasonable to ask somebody who is living in a government-funded apartment to put in 8 hours a month of work time.

Mr. Speaker, in our provision we exempt the elderly, we exempt the disabled, we exempt those people who are going to school, even if it is part-time, even a vocational school, and we exempt people that have full-time jobs and part-time jobs.

The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. JACKSON] had brought forward, I think, a reasonable, well-thought-out amendment to exempt virtually every single mom. Though I feel there was some merit to that, I felt that his amendment was unreasonably broad, but that it would be reasonable to give the housing authorities some flexibility to allow them to exempt some single moms.

Many of the people on our side of the aisle felt that they should be able to eke out somewhere in their week 2 hours a week to devote to community service. Let me just say that I agree with that sentiment. There were sentiments expressed by the minority that this is some sort of mean-spirited attempt to hurt the poor. On the contrary, my motivation in this work requirement is very much one of wanting to help the poor.

I believe by, in exchange for them getting government-funded housing, requiring them to go out and work and thus having them work, we will instill a work ethic in people. We will instill in them a sense of community, and I believe that the children of these people living in public housing will benefit from seeing their parent or parents actually working.

This point was driven home to me so vividly when I met a gentleman when I was campaigning in 1994 who told me about a program that he had taken part in where he went into the housing projects and read to young children, because as many people know, the psychologists have shown that if you read to small children, you can improve their academic performance; that their reading scores will get better when they get older and that they will have just higher academic performance at school.

So he was going in and reading to these little kids, most often children of single moms that did not have a father in the house. I remember him telling something to me one day that just totally broke my heart.

He said that he once asked a group of these kids what they wanted to do when they grew up. I have told this story before on the floor of this House. They did not say "I want to be a fireman, I want to be a doctor, I want to be a teacher." They said, "I want to collect a check." I kid you not, Mr. Speaker. These little 4- and 5- and 6-year-old kids, they knew nothing other than their mom living in the project with them collecting a check, and that is the only thing they knew.

We have what I think is a very reasonable requirement suggested to us by Secretary Cuomo, supported by the administration, to require people who are able-bodied, people who are not disabled, who are not working, who are not going to school, to require them to contribute to the community in the form of community service, in the form of working in the project. I think it is an excellent idea, and it is unfortunate that our intentions are frankly maligned.

Our intention on this side of the aisle, the Republican majority, is to help these people by getting them out into the community and working, whether it is cleaning up, whether it is removing graffiti, whether it is volunteering for child care. I think any of those things is going to help instill a work ethic in people, and it is going to set a good example for their children to be able to see their mom or dad going out and being a part of the local community. I think it will go a long way to helping those communities.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the schedule for the week of May 5.

We will next meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, May 5 for a pro forma session. There will be no legislative business—and no votes—on that day.

On Tuesday, May 6, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Members should note that we will not hold any recorded votes before 5 p.m. on Tuesday.

We will first debate—under suspension of the rules—H.R. 1463, an authorization bill for the Customs Service, U.S. Trade Representative, and ITC.

After consideration of the suspension on Tuesday, the House will resume consideration of amendments to H.R. 2, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act of 1997.

On Wednesday, May 7 and Thursday, May 8, the House will consider the following bills, all of which will be subject to rules: H.R. 478,

the Flood Prevention and Family Protection Act of 1997; H.R. 3, the Juvenile Crime Control Act of 1997; and the Fiscal Year 1997 Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Mr. Speaker, we should finish legislative business and have Members on their way home to their families by 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 8.

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

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

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE KURDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to focus my colleagues' attention this evening on the plight of the Kurds, an ancient people living in the Middle East in a land that should be a nation called Kurdistan, a proud people numbering some 30 million, perhaps the largest people in the world today lacking in the exercise of their right to self-determination.

The Kurds have resided in their present homelands for thousands of years. Kurdish Guti kings ruled Persia and Mesopotamia over 4,000 years ago. Before that, the Neolithic revolution probably first took place in Kurdistan, around 7000 B.C., 3,500 years before similar developments in Europe.

Some of the earliest towns and villages, as well as other human settlements, have been discovered in Kurdistan. Yet, one of the largest nations in the Middle East is prevented from exercising sovereignty over any part of its own land. It is an international colony, governed over by the states of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

The Kurdish people suffer from ghastly atrocities committed by all four regimes. Over one half of Kurdistan and nearly two-thirds of the Kurdish population are under Turkish control, an occupation legitimized in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which reneged on a promise to Kurds and Armenians in the earlier 1920 Treaty of Sevres. That promise envisioned the creation of a Kurdish state on Kurdish territory in the aftermath of World War I. The Lausanne Treaty legitimized the Turkish massacres against the Armenians which had already taken place and set the stage for a stepped-up campaign of genocide against the Kurds in subsequent years.

Turkish states have been responsible for a long string of ethnic cleansings ever since. Historian James Tashjian has estimated that over 2½ million people perished in a 100-year period between 1822 and 1922.

□ 1800

Among them were Greeks, Nestorians, Maronites, Syrians, Bulgarians, Yezidis, Jacobites, and Armenians. He acknowledged that these figures did not include over 500,000 Kurds murdered, deported, or displaced in the same period.

Between 1925 and 1938, an additional 1 million Kurds were reported slaughtered. Almost the entire Armenian population under Turkish control had previously been exterminated, over 1½ million people.

Today, Turkish Special Komandos actually collect rewards for the severed heads of Kurdish guerrillas and others, casually referring to their victims as Armenians, leaving no doubt as to what is in store for the Kurds and their national aspirations.

"Special action teams," as they are called, color their faces green and white. The paint, as well as 80 percent of Turkey's military hardware and equipment, is furnished by the United States, much of it at the taxpayer's expense.

Today, seven Kurdish members of parliament are in prison in Turkey. Most prominent among them is Leyla Zana, the recipient of the Sakharov Freedom Award. Andrei Sakharov came to the defense of the Kurds in 1989, when he declared, and I quote, "The tragic struggle of the Kurdish people, which has continued for so long, originates in the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, and for this reason, it is a just struggle."

Human Rights Watch, Helsinki Watch, Amnesty International and a variety of other human rights groups have devoted much attention to Turkish depredations against the Kurds in recent years. They note that over 20,000 people have been killed since 1984, over 3,000 villages destroyed with rampant torture, murder, displacement and imprisonment directed at the Kurdish population.

The repression by the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq has been more widely publicized. Over 200,000 Kurds were killed in the wake of the Iran-Iraq war, and over 4,000 Kurdish villages have been destroyed over the past three decades by Iraqi forces. Three tons of documents and other materials related to the post-Iran-Iraq war "Anfal" campaign are stored away by the U.S. Government. I call upon the State Department to release them for general inspection by interested parties. I believe they would confirm the crimes against humanity carried out by the Iraqi regime in Kurdistan.

It is imperative that we affirm a human rights linkage with any foreign aid given by the United States and to oppose the furnishing of lethal equipment to those who would use it for repressive purposes. Never again should United States-made chemical weapons be used against the Kurds or against anybody else, as they were at the ancient Kurdish city of Halabja, where

over 5,000 Kurdish civilians, mostly women and children, were gassed to death in March 1988.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, to reverse our longstanding policy and recognize the existence of Kurdistan and the rights of its citizens to exercise the prerogatives and liberties which every people without exception should and must enjoy.

We should use our influence to help resolve the Kurds' internal conflict and support their unity in the effort to achieve their inalienable right to self-determination. We must stop looking at whole nations in terms of the profitability of oil companies and as assets to be deployed in big power maneuvering. We must ban the export of chemical weapons. Both Iraq and Turkey have used lethal weapons against the Kurds which were furnished by the United States. Cluster bombs are continuing to be sold to Turkey and continuing to be used in bombing runs against Kurdish villages and areas.

Iran also continues to oppress the Kurds in its territory. The Shah's father, a Fascist sympathizer who was removed from his throne by the Allies in 1941, oversaw what was called the "sedentarization" policies which resulted in the disappearance of many Kurdish and other tribes. Khomeini's regime went after the Kurds almost immediately upon assuming power over Iran in 1979. Leaders of the major Kurdish party resisting Iranian domination have been repeatedly assassinated by agents of the government, often in European settings.

The Kurdish plight at the hands of Iran has received surprisingly little notice in America, given our oft-stated concerns over the human rights violations of that regime.

We must stop viewing freedom for the Kurds as being some kind of threat to stability and instead welcome such freedom.

As was stated by Michael van Walt van Praag, an adviser to the Dalai Lama of Tibet, and again I quote, "The potential for explosive disintegration lurks in all states where the people are prohibited from exercising their right to self-determination. We must move away from our misguided view of stability premised on immediate short-term economic and political considerations to a long-term perspective which will ensure the peaceful coexistence of all peoples. Universal recognition is the cornerstone and, indeed, the sine qua non of a truly peaceful and stable world."

According to Justice William O. Douglas, who visited the Kurds nearly 50 years ago, "The Kurds have a saying: The world is a rose; smell it and pass it to your friends."

The source of such resources as water, oil, gas and agricultural wealth, Kurdistan has much to share with neighboring peoples in the world, once the pall of oppression has been lifted and they can manage their own affairs and control their own resources and their own destiny.