

Mr. Speaker, I fear that if we continue to proceed in this manner, people will lose their farms and members from farming communities will be afraid to vote their consciences on the larger bill. Let's call an end to this political game. Let's free America's family farmers and give them the protection we all agree they deserve.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 808, authorizing the extension of chapter 12 of title 11 of the United States Code for an additional 6 months.

Chapter 12 provides necessary protections for family farmers with regular annual income. Farming is a way of life not only in the heartland but also in the Southwest, Midwest and Southern regions of America. We must save America's farms! Chapter 12 is temporary legislation—we need permanent legislation—we need a bankruptcy bill that takes into account the financial crisis of farmers.

It is imperative that we pass permanent legislation that will adequately protect families with annual farm income. This extension of Chapter 12 is insufficient! Farmers need permanent legislation that will provide adequate and legal protection under the shield of bankruptcy. Now is neither the time to play partisan politics with bankruptcy nor America's farmers!

We should offer permanent legislation that will ensure the viability of agriculture and the family farmer. Now is not the time to play partisan politics with bankruptcy legislation—in an attempt to garner support for a draconian bankruptcy reform bill.

Chapter 12 was enacted on a temporary basis in 1986, then extended in 1993 for an additional 5 years—today we offer an additional 6 months of relief—Chapter 12 should be available to farmers on a permanent basis!

If we are serious about bankruptcy legislation—let us work together to provide a system that will safeguard the interest of the debtor, the debtor's family obligations and creditors. If we are serious about bankruptcy legislation—let us work together to pass legislation that will provide protection for everyone, especially individuals with special circumstances like farmers. There is no legitimate rationale for enacting permanent bankruptcy legislation to assist family farmers.

We must press forward and work together to find the best way to accomplish these goals for the benefit of all of the parties involved in the bankruptcy process. Congress must come together in the spirit of bipartisanship to enact bankruptcy reform to protect everyone.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 808, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed until tomorrow.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR FREE, FAIR, AND TRANSPARENT ELECTIONS IN INDONESIA

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 32) expressing support for, and calling for actions in support of, free, fair and transparent elections in Indonesia.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 32

Whereas Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country, has the world's largest Muslim population, and has repeatedly demonstrated itself to be a good friend of the United States;

Whereas a stable and democratic Indonesia can continue to play an important leadership role in the security and stability of Southeast Asia;

Whereas Indonesian national elections in 1955 were judged to be free and fair, but more recent elections have been far more problematic;

Whereas in response to overwhelming public demand, long-time leader (32 years) Soeharto resigned on May 21, 1998;

Whereas elections for the House of Representatives of Indonesia (DPR) have been scheduled for June 7, 1999;

Whereas it is in the interests of all Indonesians and friends of Indonesia that the June 1999 elections be free, fair, and transparent;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia has welcomed international interest and technical support for the elections, under the coordination of the United Nations Development Program;

Whereas United States and international nongovernmental organizations such as the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the Asia Foundation, the International Republican Institute (IRI), the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS) are providing election assistance throughout Indonesia; and

Whereas the active participation in election monitoring by the international community, including the United States Congress, would contribute meaningfully to the Indonesian election; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the aspirations of the Indonesian people for democratic elections;

(2) urges the Government of Indonesia to take all steps, including the provision of adequate financial and administrative resources, to ensure that the parliamentary elections scheduled for June 7, 1999, are free, fair, and transparent, according to internationally recognized standards, and that an institutional capacity is put in place for free and fair elections in the future;

(3) calls upon the Government of Indonesia to enact election laws that ensure that the will of the people is respected, both in the parliamentary elections scheduled for June 7 and in the general session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) that will elect a new President and Vice President later in 1999;

(4) appeals to all political leaders and responsible persons to strive to ensure that the campaign period remains peaceful;

(5) calls upon all Indonesian political parties, the armed forces, and the public at large to respect the results of free and fair elections;

(6) recognizes with approval the activities of domestic and international nongovernmental organizations in the areas of voter

education, technical assistance, and election monitoring;

(7) acknowledges the important financial support provided by the United States Agency for International Development for the elections;

(8) calls upon other countries to provide financial support for the elections as well; and

(9) urges the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives to designate congressional observers for the June 7, 1999, election.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as original cosponsor of H. Res. 32, this Member rises to express his strong support for actions in support of free, fair and transparent elections in Indonesia.

The fourth most populous nation in the world and a key to the stability and prosperity of the Southeast Asia region, Indonesia is undergoing a profound political transformation in the midst of a devastating economic crisis. With a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse population of 210 million people spread over 14,000 inhabited islands, Indonesia in a geographic, ethnic and linguistic sense may be the most complicated nation in the world. Achieving a free and fair multiparty election in such a country is a daunting task, particularly since more than four decades have passed since the last such election in Indonesia.

Mr. Speaker, since the resignation of former President Soeharto in May of last year, the Government of Indonesia has taken a number of important steps toward the establishment of a more open and more genuinely democratic political system. While much remains to be done, positive actions thus far include the lifting of restrictions on freedom of the press, the freeing of a number of political prisoners, and the end to the ban on the formation of new political parties. More than 140 political parties have been formed over the past few months and out of that number 48 parties have officially qualified to compete in the parliamentary elections scheduled to take place on June 7. A successful, free and fair democratic election in June is essential to ensure that the new Indonesian President and Government, to be elected later this year, in November, will have the legitimacy and popular support to carry

through on difficult but badly needed political and economic reforms.

Mr. Speaker, this Member had the opportunity to visit Indonesia in January with a bipartisan delegation of Members co-led by the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE). The delegation members witnessed at firsthand the momentous events that are occurring on a daily basis in Indonesia. As a result, this Member and the other Members on the delegation came away impressed by the importance of the election and the need to work together on a bipartisan basis to draft the resolution now before the House. Indeed, we completed most of the work during that trip.

It was clear from the delegation's meeting that the Government of Indonesia would also welcome the presence of congressional observers for the election under the coordination of the United Nations Development Program, UNDP. The resolution, therefore, expresses its support for adequate assistance for the U.S. Government to support election training programs, voter education and election monitoring. It calls upon the Speaker, therefore, and the Minority Leader to designate such observers. And it warns of the danger of missing this opportunity to promote peace and democracy in this critically important country where the consequences of failure are potentially very severe and very much contrary to the best interests of U.S.-Indonesian relations.

Mr. Speaker, although it is not the subject of the resolution now before us, many will also note with appreciation the recent dramatic developments concerning East Timor. For the first time, the Government of Indonesia has stated that if the people of East Timor do not accept the broad autonomy package now being negotiated under United Nations auspices, a breakthrough initiative in itself, then Indonesia would grant East Timor its independence. The latest round of these negotiations is taking place in New York this week. As a matter of fact, tomorrow. This Member knows that many of his colleagues will join him in wishing for a prompt and successful outcome in these negotiations between Portugal and Indonesia.

This Member notes with appreciation the cosponsorship of this resolution by the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) and all other members of the delegation that visited Indonesia in January, including the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) and the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL). This Member urges all of his colleagues to support H.Res. 32.

Mr. Speaker, I note with great appreciation the assistance of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), my dis-

tinguished ranking member, who has also cosponsored this legislation as has the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) and several other Members on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for the resolution.

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

□ 1315

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

Let me first express my appreciation to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for bringing this resolution to the body. I rise in strong support of this resolution, and, Mr. Speaker, I first visited Indonesia in 1956. It was a country of enormous promise. It clearly is one of the wealthiest nations on this planet in terms of natural resources, and it has enormous human resources which, had they been led by farsighted and democratic leadership, would now be one of the most successful societies on the face of this planet. That clearly is not the case.

Cronyism, corruption, lack of democracy, Mr. Speaker, resulted in a series of horrendously bad economic decisions which, when the Asian economic crisis erupted, forced Indonesia into an economic downward spiral. Millions of Indonesians are suffering and are on the verge of starvation and economic disaster.

Our resolution expresses support for free, fair and transparent elections in Indonesia. It was reported out of the House Committee on International Relations last week with strong bipartisan support. We are pleased that Indonesia will have elections in June, and these elections will probably be the most important elections in the history of this young and potentially promising society.

Our resolution supports the democratic aspirations of the Indonesian people and calls on all Indonesian citizens, of whatever ethnic background, to strive for a peaceful campaign and to respect fully the results of the elections. The resolution urges the government of Indonesia to take all steps necessary to ensure that the June elections are free and fair and transparent, and it also expects that the election laws under which the elections will take place will stand up to democratic scrutiny.

Our resolution is strongly supportive of all domestic and international non-governmental organizations and the government of the United States in the areas of voter education, technical assistance and election monitoring, and the resolution calls on other democratic societies that care about the future of Indonesia to provide similar aid.

Mr. Speaker, these Indonesian elections in a country of over 200 million people could be a history-making step in making Southeast Asia an arena of democracy. It will at long last take root. It is critical that we have con-

gressional observers during the course of these elections. It is critical that the American media be represented in full force. We must not allow the still existing anti-democratic forces to take control of these elections, and I ask all of my colleagues to support H.R. 32.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

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

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the gentleman from Nebraska yielding this time to me, and I also appreciate his bringing this resolution to the floor. I rise in strong support of H. Res. 32.

In January, along with the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), I had the honor of leading an official delegation that went to Indonesia as well as other countries of Asia. I was moved by the spirit that we saw in Indonesia and struck by the daunting economic and political crisis that faces that Nation. President Soeharto, who ruled Indonesia for over 30 years, left a tremendous political void in the wake of his resignation last year. Although he had brought stability and economic growth to Indonesia during the years that he ruled, when he left there was a tremendous void of institutions equipped to handle a true democracy.

So today, with a precarious economic situation, we also find a very precarious political situation.

President Habibie faces a tremendous challenge in helping steer Indonesia toward democracy. To some degree I believe that President Habibie has met this challenge. He has instituted a series of steps, including the release of political prisoners, and he has provided greater press liberties. He has ordered investigations into human rights violations and granted labor unions and political parties the right to organize. He has introduced and supported a series of election laws which will provide the framework for elections in Indonesia in June of this year.

But the question still remains, is it too little and is it too late? Indonesia remains a very close ally of the United States. Continued stability in that country is critical. It is critical to stability throughout all of Southeast Asia and, to a lesser degree, to the rest of Asia and the rest of the developing world, and that stability in Indonesia is intimately tied to elections that are free and fair and transparent.

Should this election process fail, I think the worst could happen. Certainly we should fear the worst of civil unrest, and that would have ominous consequences for Indonesia and the region.

Unfortunately little will get done financially or economically in this country until after these elections take place. Because these elections are fundamental to creating political stability, to achieving economic reform, the

international community must take a lead role in helping to ensure that the elections are conducted freely and fairly and that they are seen as being credible.

The United States has an immense interest in ensuring that the elections are free and open, and we have an immense international credibility that we can lend to this process. If we do not have progress on the political front, it is very difficult to see how we are going to make progress on the economic front afterwards.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe the United States must take a leading role in assuring that the elections scheduled for this June are free and fair, and I pledge my strong support to assuring that that takes place. This resolution is one way for us as a Nation, as a Congress, to go on record in support of these elections, these free and open elections, and I commend the gentleman for bringing this resolution to the floor.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his eloquent statement, as well as that of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS).

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

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

Before yielding to my colleague from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), let me just say that some of us are particularly concerned with respect to Indonesia with the plight of the Chinese ethnic minority in that country. In the violent eruptions following the economic collapse there was a severe persecution of the Chinese ethnic minority involving large-scale rapes and abuse of women. The Indonesian government will need to understand that for it to be accepted into the family of civilized nations it will have to guarantee all human rights to all citizens of Indonesia irrespective of their ethnic background.

Let me also say, as one who has been seized with the issue of East Timor and its population, that we welcome the favorable direction in which matters are now moving. But the people of East Timor, as indeed the Chinese ethnic minority in Indonesia, are entitled to live under a government of their own choice. They are entitled to all human rights, as are indeed all ethnic groups on the face of this planet. This election will give Indonesia an opportunity to abandon its former failed ways and to move towards a democratic and prosperous society.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), my friend, who has just completed a very interesting and successful trip to the region.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me. I strongly identify with his comments, and it is a pleasure for me to share a few moments this afternoon with my colleagues, the gentleman

from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), who so ably led our delegation in the recent CODEL dealing with some of the economic problems of Southeast Asia. I have forever, I think, seared in my mind more than any of the other stops along the way during our visit in that troubled region, the visions of what happened in Indonesia. It has been already mentioned on the floor of this Chamber that this is a huge country. It is the fourth most populous in the world. It has the largest Muslim population. It is spread out over 15,000 islands, most of which are inhabited, but two statistics loom large in my mind:

One is that of this vast population, over half are now at or below the Indonesian poverty level and that in this context they have moved forward to move from three political parties to over 140, and in three short months they are going to attempt without any real election infrastructure to administer their first democratic election in over 40 years.

It is a country that is troubled on several levels. The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) mentioned the tragedy of East Timor, where over 200,000 people have been killed in senseless violence in the last 25 years. There is also another violence that is occurring in this vast archipelago where we have a violence against the environment, where driven by economic imperatives and poor infrastructure they are exploiting the forests, the coral reefs, the endangered species and the fishing stock. If we are not active in this region, there will be environmental damage that will have impacts throughout Southeast Asia and the world for years to come.

I strongly commend to this Chamber adoption of the resolution and our being forthright as to why these elections are so critical. Over 125,000 polling places are going to be staffed. We need to give our support for this effort.

Second and implicit here, and I hope that we find ways to make it explicit on the floor of this House and with our own personal involvement, is the American pressure to deal with these forces of transition as they try and correct their economy, as they try and have a military that makes a transition to a civil society and dealing with these environmental and ethnic issues that have been mentioned. There is an opportunity for Members of this Congress to be active both in the observation of the election process and making sure that we step forward with the appropriate aid for this giant country. I cannot conceive of any place in the world where our time and our money will be better spent, will have more impact than in Indonesia.

Mr. Speaker, for most Americans Indonesia is sort of the country that was the background for the movie, "Year of Living Dangerously". They have maybe some vague recollection of what has happened in East Timor. They may have some sense of this being the former colony of the Dutch East Indies.

□ 1330

We must, on this floor, find ways to make this image more real and more impactful, because we cannot afford to avoid making our responsibilities known as we help them deal with the change to which they are being subjected.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for his support and his assistance. It was important not only to stress the fundamental importance of this election but, as the gentleman suggested, some of the burdens or difficulties that face Indonesia in preparing for these elections. Those of us that watched the election preparations, the infrastructure being put in place in smaller, less complicated countries like Namibia or Nicaragua, are quite concerned about the ability to put everything together in time to have that free, fair and transparent election.

The United Nations Development Program is serving as the coordinating entity for all of the bilateral and international assistance from NGOs and from our government, and so I think that is a good way to proceed and we will hope that the resources that are necessary are called upon in a timely fashion by the Indonesian government.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), who has an interest in this subject.

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of House Resolution 32. I would say to my colleagues, I also had a similar resolution in the last Congress, which was House Resolution 281. This had bipartisan support with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) and also the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY), the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY).

I want to put into the record some of the things in this House resolution because I think Mr. Habibie might want to adopt some of the things that were in my House resolution, so just as a matter of record and courtesy, I would like to provide that.

My House resolution expressed a sense of Congress that the United States should support a complete transition that will lead immediately to a democratically-elected nonmilitary government in Indonesia, which includes, one, the release of all political prisoners; two, legalization of political organizing activities; international monitoring of human rights conditions; roundtable all-party discussion; a transitional government of national unity; of course, democratic elections; a truth

commission to address past political crimes; and recognition that past injustices require redress.

As many have already pointed out, we are heartened by the transitional government of President Habibie and the fact that he has scheduled elections on June 7. I hope later this year he will schedule elections for president and vice president. I think many of us would have preferred elections earlier but I can understand the need for stability in the transition.

Congress and the United States must speak with a strong voice. We are doing that this afternoon in supporting free democratic elections. This resolution does so, and I compliment the authors. The international community should understand the United States is serious here and we will make an investment of legislation and House resolutions to make our point.

We need to continue to transmit our belief to Indonesia about Americans' constitutional history that places the power of government solely in the hands of democratically elected civilians, and the House and the Senate have an opportunity to communicate those principles by adopting this House resolution.

I commend the authors, and I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for the time.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his long interest in this subject and for his support today.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD).

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding. I also thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and all of my colleagues for introducing this very timely resolution calling for fair and free elections in Indonesia.

Mr. Speaker, as the westernmost territory of the United States, Guam is the closest American neighbor to Indonesia and we are as concerned as the rest of the Asian Pacific region regarding the plight of its people. Indonesia is strategically located in the Pacific and controls important waterways vital to our American interests. In addition, as has been pointed out, it boasts the fourth largest population in the world, as well as access to rich natural resources.

These factors ensure Indonesia's pivotal role in the Southeast Asian region and the world. Its leadership roles in the Association of South East Asian Nations, the ASEAN Regional Forum and APEC are testimonies to its important role as a regional stabilizer.

We as Americans should always stand strong in support of democratic processes throughout the world in small and large nations alike, but in this particular instance, in Indonesia's in-

stance, the stability of the region depends upon seeing in place in Indonesia a country with a functioning democracy which recognizes the rule of law and the will of the people and which recognizes the ethnic diversity that is Indonesia, and which also extends the benefits of its vast resources and economic potential to all sectors of society. This is why free, fair and transparent elections are critical during the June elections this year.

Triggered by the Asian financial crisis 2 years ago, we have seen the fall of the authoritarian regime in Indonesia and the emergence of a more active and vocal Indonesian electorate ready to take on the responsibility of electing their officials.

H. Res. 32 calls for peaceful, transparent, fair and responsible elections. I fully support this resolution, not only on behalf of democracy but on behalf of national security and human rights, and I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate Indonesia for going in the right direction on East Timor.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, before yielding time to my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), let me call the attention of all Members here to the extraordinary profile that the New York Times ran on this remarkable Member of our body. I was very proud and pleased to read the well-deserved accolades that the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) received in the Times.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), to speak on this issue.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I guess I will take the same number of seconds and minutes to thank my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for what has been years and years of commitment to this very important issue and as well his both legacy and continuing service in the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important issue on human rights. Let me thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for his leadership along, with the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN), for continuously being at the cutting edge of ensuring that the words that we speak here on the Floor of the House are translated into our foreign policy and foreign relations.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to enthusiastically support H. Res. 32, which I think very succinctly calls upon the government of Indonesia to do something that we in America have come to expect, whether it is our local school bond election or city council elections, or whether or not we are electing the President of the United States. We believe in unfettered access to the right to elect those of our choice.

I believe this is an important statement to call upon the government of

Indonesia to enact election laws that ensure that the will of the people is respected, both in the parliamentary elections scheduled for June 7 and in the general session of the People's Consultive Assembly. We are appealing to all of the political leaders and responsible persons to strive to ensure that the campaign for peace remains peaceful.

I am very much aware of the good works of our committee, that deals in international relations, as it related to last week's elections in Nigeria. It is important that we mix the concepts of foreign relations, foreign policy, the idea of business exchange with the question of human rights and the free access to democracy. If we had not done that in years past, we would not have some of the stable situations going on in places where democracy had not been heard of.

In instances where the Berlin Wall stood, it was our voices that helped to bring it down, and so I would ask that we support H. Res. 32 and bring to Indonesia a friend, a shining democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 32, calling for Open Elections in Indonesia.

This body has been a fervent supporter of groups and nations, which have chosen to embrace the principles and ideals of democracy.

A basic a tenant of our democracy has been the peaceful transition of legislative and executive authority. Our nation and the world witness a shining example of this as every four years our nation holds a presidential election. Despite the acrimony of the presidential campaign, our nation has consistently transferred the power of the presidency in a peaceful and fair manner.

The peaceful transition that has characterized American elections has unfortunately not been the case in Indonesia.

Most casual observers would agree that Indonesia elections have been problematic at best. In Indonesia, free and fair elections have been replaced by anarchy, chaos, and the lack of recognition of democratically elected officials.

Beginning with Indonesia's independence, through the Presidency of Suharto, Indonesia's elections have been marred by violence.

The armed forces of Indonesia have been cited by human rights observers for human rights abuses such as torture, extra-judicial killings and the imprisonment of East Timorese advocating independence.

In light of these past abuses Mr. Speaker; it is poignant that this Body urge the Indonesian government to conduct its upcoming elections in a free and fair manner.

This Resolution would send a message to citizens, political parties, and the military community that the viability of a democracy rests in part on the respect with which this process is fulfilled.

These parties should adhere to the American model in carrying out their elections, by conducting them in a free and fair manner. This body stands ready to assist the Indonesians in the carrying forth of the election process with any assistance necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the members of this body to support this resolution and assist the

Indonesian people in strengthen their democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Without objection, the balance of the majority's time will be controlled by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

There was no objection.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), a voice for human rights in all of Asia and indeed in a global sense, my colleague and neighbor from San Francisco, who has been a champion of human rights ever since she joined us in this body. It has been with a great deal of pleasure and pride that I have followed her incredibly successful and articulate struggles for the rights of oppressed people everywhere to live in freedom and decency.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding the time, and for his very, very generous remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the makers of this resolution and rise in support of it, but in doing so I first want to acknowledge the considerable contribution of our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) to human rights throughout the world. Everyone has known for a long time, certainly in our city and in the State of California we have taken great pride in the leadership of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). Now the whole world knows more about where his leadership and his drive on promoting human rights springs from and, of course, it was his own experience in the Holocaust. He has moral authority. He has knowledge. He has exercised leadership. So I am honored to be recognized by him to speak on this important resolution.

This resolution urging free and fair elections in Indonesia is important because promoting freedom, and free and fair elections, is important, but also because Indonesia is in a fragile state at this time.

It is just a matter of months since the fall of Soeharto and now many, many parties, scores of political parties, are lining up for the elections.

We have some issues, we have, some of us in this Congress, with Indonesia, and that would be the resolution of the situation in East Timor and that looks promising now; the situation in terms of the role of the military in a civilian society, that was better before, has worsened and hopefully these elections will return the military to its appropriate role in a civilian society.

Most recently, there was concern in Congress, and it continues, on the treatment of the ethnic Chinese population in Indonesia, particularly with the rapes that happened of the Indonesian Chinese women. Those are no longer alleged. They are admitted to in

reports from the government, and many of us in Congress have written to the Indonesian government, to the President, urging that the disposition of that issue be central to our relationship with the Indonesians.

We have concerns generally about human rights in Indonesia and also about the conflicts between Muslims and Christians and how the government is dealing with that. Nothing could create a better climate for tolerance in the diverse country that Indonesia is than the legitimacy of a free and fair election.

We anticipate that with great hope. We urge the Indonesian government to do everything in its power to make sure the elections are free and fair, and we look forward to working on many issues, some of which I named here, with the newly-elected Indonesian government. That includes, of course, the members of parliament there, too.

It is a very diverse country, as I have said. There are many, many, many different fragments in Indonesia. The country could disintegrate but I think that that prospect would be diminished greatly if the elections were free and fair and the new government were legitimate and was addressing some of the concerns I mentioned in terms of respecting everyone in that diverse society, as well as respecting the appropriate role of the military in a civilian society.

Again, I commend the leadership of the committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) on the subcommittee, my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON) for their leadership in bringing this to this floor and I hope we will have a unanimous vote in support of it.

□ 1345

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's observations.

We have no more requests for time.

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

I want to commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the Members who have spoken on the floor today in support of this resolution. I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) for her remarks.

I want to commend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for introducing this timely resolution that calls for free, fair and transparent elections in Indonesia, and I am proud to cosponsor this resolution.

H. Res. 32 appropriately calls for free and fair elections in Indonesia this June and supports the aspirations of the Indonesian people for democratic elections and greater political freedom.

Indonesia is a country in transition, and I believe it is incumbent upon our Nation, as a world-leading democracy, to provide the necessary support to the

Indonesian government and hopeful people of that large country, to bring about credible elections, and we all recognize it is not going to be any small task.

I also want to commend American NGOs, such as IRI, NDI and IFES, and others, for the important work that they have been doing to try to bring about a democratic transition in the world's fourth most populous nation.

Finally, I would call upon all parties in Indonesia to refrain from political, ethnic or religious violence. I hope we can achieve an early, equitable and nonviolent resolution to the East Timor issue. I would advocate continued reform in political, economic and social arenas in Indonesia's society.

Indonesia is at a critical juncture in its history. Historic changes have already taken place since President Soeharto stepped down last year. It is our hope that we will soon welcome Indonesia into the family of democratic nations after free and fair elections that will be held there this summer. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to adopt this measure, H.R. 32, in support of reform and democracy in Indonesia.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 32, and its goal of free and fair and transparent elections in Indonesia beginning with the parliamentary elections on June 7. I would like to point out however, that the resolution fails to mention the on-going and extreme occurrences of human rights abuses on the part of the Indonesian military in the areas of occupied East Timor and others. Violations of human rights continue and it is critical that these abuses are addressed as well as the need for a free and fair election.

Congress must continue to call on the U.S. administration and the Indonesian government directly for the implementation of the introduction of international monitors in East Timor, and disarming paramilitary units that the Indonesian military arming and supporting.

Last week, Secretary of State, Albright visited with Xanana Gusmao in Jakarta. At that time the Secretary said that "We see an urgent need to stabilize the situation through disarmament of all paramilitary forces, as Xanana Gusmao has proposed and General Wiranto supports," and that "We favor confidence-building measures, such as a reduction in the number of troops, and an international presence to reduce the prospects for future violence." It is critical that this Congress follow through on these statements, and assure that the East Timorese people are freed from Indonesian sponsored violence in addition to supporting free and fair elections.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. The presidential election scheduled for June is the first election for President since President Suharto stepped down last year. This is an opportunity for Indonesia to move into a new era of stability and prosperity.

Indonesia has been wracked by economic crisis. The international community wants to help the Indonesian people recover from their current economic difficulties. Indonesia has been, and should continue to be, an important regional ally for the United States. However, Indonesia's international reputation has been

tarnished by the Suharto government's brutal occupation of East Timor, the grave human rights abuses committed by the Indonesian military in East Timor and in Indonesia, its lack of respect for democracy and the corrupt cronyism that enabled the economy to grow but disenfranchised large portions of the population.

Thousands of brave Indonesians took the streets last year calling for an end to the Buharto regime and the beginning of truly democratic political system which allowed for multi-party participation. They were tired of President Suharto's administration and its corruption. They demanded free and fair elections. They deserve to have them. It is their right to have them.

This is an opportunity for Indonesia to follow the way of Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines, Asian countries who have successfully transformed themselves into pluralistic, multi-party democracies.

President Habibie has every incentive to make the June elections as free and as fair as international standards dictate. If he does so and continues to take steps to resolve the crisis in East Timor in a manner that respects the wishes and views of the people of East Timor, Indonesia's reputation will be enhanced and the international community will have great incentive to embrace the new government. There are many good benefits that can come from this—both for the Indonesian government and for the Indonesian people. The key is in the hands of the Habibie government. By the manner in which they conduct the June elections, they hold the key to the future stability and prosperity of Indonesia.

I commend Mr. BEREUTER and Mr. LANTOS for sponsoring this resolution. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution House Resolution 32.

The question was taken.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed until tomorrow.

SENSE OF CONGRESS URGING CRITICISM OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN CHINA AND TIBET AT ANNUAL MEETING OF UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H.Con.Res. 28) expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States should introduce and make all efforts necessary to pass a resolution criticizing the People's Republic of China for its human rights abuses in China and Tibet at the an-

nual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 28

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has signed two important United Nations human rights treaties, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China recognizes the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which calls for the protection of the rights of freedom of association, press, assembly, religion, and other fundamental rights and freedoms;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China demonstrates a pattern of continuous, serious, and widespread violations of internationally recognized human rights standards, including violations of the rights described in the preceding clause and the following:

(1) restricting nongovernmental political and social organizations;

(2) cracking down on film directors, computer software developers, artists, and the press, including threats of life prison terms;

(3) sentencing poet and writer, Ma Zhe, to seven years in prison on charges of subversion for publishing an independent literary journal;

(4) sentencing three pro-democracy activists, Xu Wenli, Wang Youcui, and Qing Yongmin, to long prison sentences in December 1998 for the announced effort to organize an alternative political party committed to democracy and respect for human rights;

(5) sentencing Zhang Shanguo to prison for ten years for giving Radio Free Asia information about farmer protests in Hunan province;

(6) putting on trial businessman Lin Hai for providing e-mail addresses to a pro-democracy Internet magazine based in the United States;

(7) arresting, harassing, and torturing members of the religious community who worship outside of official Chinese churches;

(8) refusing the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights access to the Panchen Lama, Gendun Choekyi Nyima;

(9) continuing to engage in coercive family planning practices, including forced abortion and forced sterilization; and

(10) operating a system of prisons and other detention centers in which gross human rights violations, including torture, slave labor, and the commercial harvesting of human organs from executed prisoners, continue to occur;

Whereas repression in Tibet has increased steadily, resulting in heightened control on religious activity, a denunciation campaign against the Dalai Lama unprecedented since the Cultural Revolution, an increase in political arrests, the secret trial and sentencing of former Middlebury College Fulbright Scholar and Tibetan ethnomusicologist Ngawang Choephel to 18 years in prison on espionage charges, and suppression of peaceful protests, and the Government of the People's Republic of China refuses direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives on a negotiated solution for Tibet;

Whereas the annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland, provides a forum for discussing human rights and expressing international support for improved human rights performance;

Whereas during his July 1998 visit to the People's Republic of China, President Clinton correctly affirmed the necessity of ad-

dressing human rights in United States-China relations; and

Whereas the United States did not sponsor a resolution on China's human rights record at the 1998 session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) should introduce and make all efforts necessary to pass a resolution criticizing the People's Republic of China for its human rights abuses in China and Tibet at the annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; and

(2) should immediately contact other governments to urge them to cosponsor and support such a resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 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.

I want to thank the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights and the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific for acting expeditiously on H. Con. Res. 28, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that our Nation should introduce and make all efforts necessary to pass a resolution criticizing the People's Republic of China for its human rights abuses in China and Tibet at the next annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

In a December 22, 1998 speech commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Communist Party Central Committee, China's President and Party Secretary Jiang Zemin stated that China needed to "nip those factors that undermine social stability in the bud, no matter where they come from." In that very same speech Jiang emphasized, "the Western mode of political systems must never be copied." Soon after those remarks, arrests were made of key dissidents. To this very day, the crackdown on China's fledgling democracy movement continues.

The Democracy Wall movement in the late 1970s and the Hundred Flowers Campaign in the late 1950s were periods when citizens were first encouraged to express their beliefs, and then subsequently they were severely persecuted for their criticism of the Communist Party and their desire for democracy. Similarly, the period before President Clinton visited China in June also saw an easing of political repression by the authorities, though some of us were concerned that this was only a temporary change and that the government would, as it has, indeed, revert to form.

Some so-called China experts would have us believe that this is a cyclical historical process. But having seen it done so many times, it appears to us to be a method to flush out dissidents and to be able to preserve power.