

Such degradation of the Holy See would be considered an affront, not only to its status as a State, but would be interpreted as a veiled attack on the moral and ethical principles it represents.

I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res. 253. This bill may very well be unconstitutional, is inappropriate, and is counter to the fundamentals I have supported since coming to Congress.

The writers of the Constitution understood the importance of the separation of church and state. While religion plays an important role in our society, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion." This resolution recognizes the establishment of the government of a religious institution, the Roman Catholic Church, as a sovereign state. Thus this bill is unconstitutional and should not have even appeared on the floor of the House.

This bill is also grossly inappropriate. The Majority party has consistently refused to pay our dues to the United Nations and has even called for its dissolution, while at the same time trying to tell the UN how to operate. This bill opposes a movement not to remove the Vatican from the United Nations but merely to put the Catholic Church in the same position that all the other non-governmental organizations have in the UN. This movement, if successful, would simply remove voting privileges from the Vatican, a right not enjoyed by any other non-governmental UN member today.

And finally, this bill "commends the Holy See for its strong commitment to fundamental human rights, including the protection of innocent human life both before and after birth." (emphasis added) I cannot vote for a bill that contains such language as I believe that it is a fundamental human right that a woman have the right to decide what happens to her body. I have fought for many years to ensure a woman's right to choose and I will not vote for any bill that suggests that a woman choosing to have an abortion is a person who violates human rights.

For these reasons I urge my fellow members of Congress to vote against this inappropriate campaign check written to make the Republican Party seem even more anti-choice.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer thoughts regarding House Concurrent Resolution 253, which objects to any effort to expel the Holy See from the United Nations. First and foremost, I believe that it is a serious matter that this body is taking the historic position of public debate of the status of any non-governmental organization or nation who may or may not be participants in the governing processes of the United Nations.

Because of our nation's status as the world's sole super power, we should be mindful that the policies and actions of the United States government are not viewed favorably by many people nor their governments who are also members of the United Nation's participant based on their stance on one issue, even if I might personally disagree with their position, would be a move in the wrong direction for this nation and the global community housed under the banner of the United Nations.

Personally, I see the participation of the Holy See in the United Nations to be an ac-

knowledgement of past world history. Since the fourth century, the Holy See has participated in diplomatic missions. For over sixteen hundred years this body has been part of world history, and in 1929, the Vatican City State came into existence with the Lateran Treaty between the Holy See and Italy. The Holy See represents not just Vatican City, but the global membership of the first Christian Church.

In September 1997, the United States reaffirmed the view that our government sees the unique position held by the Holy See in global matters as being appropriate by appointing a former member of this body Corinne "Lindy" Claiborne Boggs to be the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See.

Therefore, I would ask that my fellow members of this body remember that as we uphold the principles of democracy, one of the most important tenants of our system of government is that we do agree to disagree in a civil and organized manner. To try to silence decent through threat, or sensor, or expulsion is not the way to reach our goal of a broader more inclusive society. If our position is valid, then it will weather the test of time and we will be victorious in moving this nation and this world to broader understanding of freedom, democracy and liberty.

I encourage each of my colleagues to consider carefully their vote on this legislation.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 253.

The question was taken.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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.

□ 1145

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4528) to establish an undergraduate grant program of the Department of State to assist students of limited financial means from the United States to pursue studies at foreign institutions of higher education, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4528

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this Act to establish an undergraduate grant program for students of

limited financial means from the United States to enable such students to study at institutions of higher education in foreign countries. Such foreign study is intended to broaden the outlook and better prepare such students of demonstrated financial need to assume significant roles in the increasingly global economy.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN STUDY BY AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS OF LIMITED FINANCIAL MEANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to the availability of appropriations and under the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, the Secretary of State shall establish and carry out a program in each fiscal year to award grants of up to \$5,000, to individuals who meet the requirements of subsection (b), toward the cost of 1 academic year of undergraduate study at an institution of higher education in a foreign country. Grants under this Act shall be known as the "Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships".

(b) ELIGIBILITY.—An individual referred to in subsection (a) is an individual who—

(1) is a student in good standing at an institution of higher education in the United States (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965);

(2) has been accepted for an academic year of study at an institution of higher education outside the United States (as defined by section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965);

(3) is receiving any need-based student assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965; and

(4) is a citizen or national of the United States.

(c) APPLICATION AND SELECTION.—

(1) Grant application and selection shall be carried out through accredited institutions of higher education in the United States or combination of such institutions under such procedures as are established by the Secretary of State.

(2) In considering applications for grants under this section, priority consideration shall be given to applicants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

The Secretary of State shall report annually to the Congress concerning the grant program established under this Act. Each such report shall include the following information for the preceding year:

(1) The number of participants.

(2) The institutions of higher education in the United States that participants attended.

(3) The institutions of higher education outside the United States participants attended during their year of study abroad.

(4) The areas of study of participants.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated \$1,500,000 for each fiscal year to carry out this Act.

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect October 1, 2000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within

which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4528, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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 introduced H.R. 4528, the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000, along with the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) because we want to encourage undergraduate college students to study abroad. We believe, as many others do in the academic, exchange and business sectors, that Americans need to be prepared to operate in an international environment and economy. This preparation should start at a young age. It is the reason we wanted to assist college level low-income students to study abroad.

One of the best ways to prepare young people for this global society is to allow them to experience life outside the United States. H.R. 4528 will do that by authorizing \$1.5 million to be made available to the State Department for individual student grants of up to \$5,000. These grants are targeted to assist lower-income students who otherwise would not be able to consider a study abroad program. These incentive grants are to be used to cover travel or other expenses related to studying overseas.

The intention of the bill is to work within the existing college campus study abroad programs. These grants would allow colleges and universities to reach out to our low-income students that may not have been able to consider such studies because of the additional travel and living expenses. It expands the pool of students who will benefit personally and later professionally from internationally oriented education.

Developed with the assistance of college administrators and exchange experts, it is hoped that a streamlined program will encourage more students to participate in an overseas educational program and be able to motivate them to learn and apply a foreign language. These experiences and skills will serve them well as they enter the workforce. Through these grants, we want to help prepare and motivate our young students to participate in the international arena.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) for his cooperation in this measure.

Accordingly, I urge support for this measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4528. For many American college students, Mr. Speaker, a year abroad can be a life-changing experi-

ence. They are exposed when they are abroad to different cultures, languages, educational and political systems and often emerge from their study abroad experience with a greater appreciation of the complex world in which we all live.

Unfortunately, many college students with few financial resources cannot afford a semester or a year abroad. These students miss a valuable educational opportunity, particularly if they are interested in a career in international relations or foreign affairs.

While it is possible for students to use their Pell Grants and other forms of financial assistance to pay for university costs overseas, the Gilman legislation will provide a critical source of funding to cover all of the costs associated with overseas study, including living and travel expenses.

I commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) for introducing this bill. It is a very worthwhile and appropriate piece of legislation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4528.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), the sponsors of this bill, for H.R. 4528, which creates a new scholarship program to assist low-income students' studies overseas.

As I think my colleagues know, it is now called the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships. During mark-up in our subcommittee, through which it moved in a bipartisan manner, we were very happy to name it after the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the distinguished chairman of our committee.

This will help a number of low-income students who very often can get the money for the tuition but do not have the means to get to the country of destination. This will facilitate that. So I think it is an excellent bill, and I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for his leadership.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), our distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, for having considered this measure at an early date and for favorably recommending it to the House for consideration.

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), one of the original authors of this bill.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, extend my appreciation for the leadership that the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Committee on International Relations, is showing with regard to the introduction of this measure. What the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) is doing here, I think, is extremely important; and the importance of it will resound for many years, decades and longer into the future.

I also want to express my appreciation to Roger Bowen, who is the president of the State University College at New Paltz for his interest in international studies and promoting study abroad.

The bill of the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) is an extremely important measure. Obviously, it is important for these students who will be the primary beneficiaries in that they will have the opportunity to travel and study in a foreign country and get all of the benefits that flow from such an experience, benefits of interacting with the culture that is different from their own, benefits from having the opportunity to become more familiar with the language which is different from their own, and also opportunities to expand their own personal knowledge and experience.

But the beneficiaries of this bill go far beyond the individuals who will be initially benefited. In fact, I think, Mr. Speaker, the initiative of the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) will benefit the country as a whole.

As we find more and more that we are put in the position of being the principal leader militarily and economically in so many places around the world, nevertheless, at the same time, we find that so many of our students, future leaders in this country, are unaware of foreign cultures and inadequately versed in foreign languages. That leaves us unable in many ways to take the kind of leadership role which we ought to and appropriately would be taking.

The legislation of the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) is going to fill that gap. More and more students who would not have the opportunity because of their financial situation to travel and study abroad will now be given the opportunity to do so. Their benefits will inure to themselves, to their families and to their future. But those benefits also will inure in a very profound and long lasting way to the benefits of our country and the other countries around the world with which we interact.

So I think that the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) is doing something here today that is very, very important; and I hope that all of us will fully recognize the significance of his initiative and that we will all support it very enthusiastically.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4528, the International Academic Opportunity Act. A bill that I feel allows positive movement in the area of education for our country today.

This bill authorizes \$1.5 million dollars be given to a program that would enable lower income students, the opportunity to travel and learn abroad. I feel this is an excellent initiative that will serve this country well with the reaped benefits that are produced as these students return back to their communities here in the United States with a moral global mind.

I have long since stated that the economic divide is a strain that must be done away with in this country, and clearly education is a way to achieve that goal. Especially, in the case of international education opportunities, where all socio-economic groups are allowed to participate. Ensuring all students the opportunity for success and growth under our nation's academic umbrella.

This is why I am in strong support of this program that will be known as the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program. This will be an effort to help all students afford up to a year of study abroad by providing a grant of up to \$5,000, for a year to those accepted into a foreign college or university, that is in partnership with their home institution. This grant will be given only to students who already receive need-based assistance and Pell Grants to complete their education.

I will conclude this speech of strong support with a quote I recently read from John F. Kennedy, "Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation."

These words of wisdom are a perfect guide for what we, as representatives of the people should strive to achieve. The benefit of our country lies in our youth. So I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McHUGH). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4528, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING CONDEMNATION OF USE OF CHILDREN AS SOLDIERS AND EXPRESSING BELIEF THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD SUPPORT AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, LEAD EFFORTS TO END THIS ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 348) expressing condemnation of the use of children as soldiers and expressing the belief that the United States should support and, where possible, lead efforts to end this abuse of human rights, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 348

Whereas in the year 2000 approximately 300,000 individuals under the age of 18 are

participating in armed conflict in more than 30 countries worldwide;

Whereas many of these children are forcibly conscripted through kidnaping or coercion, while others join military units due to economic necessity, to avenge the loss of a family member, or for their own personal safety;

Whereas many military commanders frequently force child soldiers to commit gruesome acts of ritual killings or torture against their enemies, including against other children;

Whereas many military commanders separate children from their families in order to foster dependence on military units and leaders, leaving children vulnerable to manipulation, deep traumatization, and in need of psychological counseling and rehabilitation;

Whereas child soldiers are exposed to hazardous conditions and risk physical injuries, sexually transmitted diseases, malnutrition, deformed backs and shoulders from carrying overweight loads, and respiratory and skin infections;

Whereas many young female soldiers face the additional psychological and physical horrors of rape and sexual abuse, being enslaved for sexual purposes by militia commanders, and forced to endure severe social stigma should they return home;

Whereas children in northern Uganda continue to be kidnaped by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which is supported and funded by the Government of Sudan and which has committed and continues to commit gross human rights violations in Uganda;

Whereas children in Sri Lanka have been forcibly recruited by the opposition Tamil Tigers movement and forced to kill or be killed in the armed conflict in that country;

Whereas an estimated 7,000 child soldiers have been involved in the conflict in Sierra Leone, some as young as age 10, with many being forced to commit extrajudicial executions, torture, rape, and amputations for the rebel Revolutionary United Front;

Whereas on January 21, 2000, in Geneva, a United Nations Working Group, including representatives from more than eighty governments including the United States, reached consensus on an optional protocol on the use of child soldiers;

Whereas this optional protocol will raise the international minimum age for conscription to age eighteen and will require governments to take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces under the age of eighteen do not participate directly in combat, prohibit the recruitment and use in armed conflict of persons under the age of eighteen by nongovernmental armed forces, encourage governments to raise the minimum legal age for voluntary recruits above the current standard of 15 and, commits governments to support the demobilization and rehabilitation of child soldiers, and when possible, to allocate resources to this purpose;

Whereas on October 29, 1998, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan set minimum age requirements for United Nations peacekeeping personnel that are made available by member nations of the United Nations;

Whereas the participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in the 1999 Charter for European Security signed in Istanbul, Turkey, committed themselves to "develop and implement measures to promote the rights and interests of children in armed conflict and postconflict situations, including refugees and internally displaced children" and to "look at ways of preventing forced or compulsory recruitment for use in armed conflict of persons under 18 years of age";

Whereas United Nations Under-Secretary General for Peace-keeping, Bernard Miyet, announced in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly that contributing governments of member nations were asked not to send civilian police and military observers under the age of 25, and that troops in national contingents should preferably be at least 21 years of age but in no case should they be younger than 18 years of age;

Whereas on August 25, 1999, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1261 (1999) condemning the use of children in armed conflicts;

Whereas in addressing the Security Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, urged the adoption of a global three-pronged approach to combat the use of children in armed conflict, first to raise the age limit for recruitment and participation in armed conflict from the present age of 15 to the age of 18, second, to increase international pressure on armed groups which currently abuse children, and third to address the political, social, and economic factors which create an environment where children are induced by appeal of ideology or by socio-economic collapse to become child soldiers;

Whereas the United States delegation to the United Nations working group relating to child soldiers, which included representatives from the Department of Defense, supported the Geneva agreement on the optional protocol;

Whereas on May 25, 2000, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the optional protocol on the use of child soldiers;

Whereas the optional protocol was opened for signature on June 5, 2000; and

Whereas President Clinton has publicly announced his support of the optional protocol and a speedy process of review and signature: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) the Congress joins the international community in—

(A) condemning the use of children as soldiers by governmental and nongovernmental armed forces worldwide;

(B) welcoming the optional protocol as a critical first step in ending the use of children as soldiers; and

(C) applauding the decision by the United States Government to support the protocol;

(2) it is the sense of the Congress that—

(A) President Clinton should be commended for signing the optional protocol and should consult closely with the Senate with the objective of building support for this protocol;

(B) the President and the Congress should work together to enact a law that establishes a fund for the rehabilitation and reintegration into society of child soldiers; and

(C) the Departments of State and Defense should undertake all possible efforts to persuade and encourage other governments to ratify and endorse the new optional protocol on the use of child soldiers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 348.