

□ 1730

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON) at 5 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2904, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2904) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. OLVER

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OLVER moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 2904 insist on the House position regarding all items included in the House passed bill for overseas military construction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

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

Mr. Speaker, I offer this motion to instruct as a bipartisan effort to help the men and women serving overseas in the defense of our country.

The motion is simple. It tells the House conferees to hold the line and support the overseas requests made by the President and those added in the House.

Mr. Speaker, September 11 has taught us that our men and women must be ready, wherever in the world they are stationed. The President requested almost \$900 million in military construction projects overseas. The committee carefully reviewed those projects, and we have supported them. It meets needs for barracks, for maintenance facilities, for runways for our air forces, for warehousing, family housing, barracks, all of those. It all will make substantial contributions to our readiness.

But the House has added, in addition, several items. Through the leadership of the chairman, he and I have had an opportunity to visit several of the bases that are involved in this. Members of the subcommittee joined us,

and other Members of the House joined us in that. We have directly visited and can bear witness to the severe inadequacy of some of these facilities. The total of that is less than 1 percent of this military construction budget as it was passed through the House. They are all very badly needed projects, as both the chairman and I can attest.

Let me just give a couple of examples.

In Japan, actually in Okinawa, which is where most of our forces in Japan are, there is a what-was-never-adequate facility for the training of our Army Special Forces in urban warfare. It is now utterly worn out and virtually unusable. That is additionally in this legislation.

In Korea, there is a barracks replacement for singles in Korea. The conditions of housing in Korea up and down the line are well known as being abysmal. Families avoid, if at all possible, deployment in Korea, so the vast majority of our deployments are in fact singles, and their housing is anywhere from rundown to positively disgusting. So that has been funded in our bill.

Then, as another example, we have a modernization of the base engineering complex for engineering and maintenance, and all of the operational facilities at our largest Air Force base. In the process of that modernization, which is in Korea at our main air base, which is at the front line of protection for our substantial forces in Korea, that will allow hundreds of housing units to then be brought within the perimeter of the protection of that base.

Those are all extremely important things to be done, and they need to be done in this legislation. Mr. Speaker, they are badly needed. They are in direct support of the missions that we know will come, even if September 11 had not happened.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor of this motion to instruct.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my ranking member for working with me on this bill, and working with me and the other members of the Committee on this issue.

We have seen what we ask our troops to do. We have asked them to do a lot of things for us, especially at this time. Today, the U.S. is blessed with the most well-trained military forces in our history. Soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen are ready and willing to accept any challenge presented by our adversaries.

Yet, for all their training, many of these facilities they work in are decrepit and falling apart. There is an increasing concern that the performance of our troops could be jeopardized by the conditions of the buildings in which they work.

As the Quadrennial Defense Review points out, the defense infrastructure

has suffered from underfunding and neglect. Facility sustainment has been funded at only 75 to 80 percent of the requirement, resulting in a backlog of repair bills estimated at almost \$60 billion. Likewise, the average rate of replacing existing facilities is 192 years, at a rate that is unacceptable, particularly with the technological changes needed to deal with today's security threats.

The result of neglecting the facilities is the decaying infrastructure that is less and less capable of supporting our troops, sailors, Marines, and airmen. The infrastructure needs of the facilities in the U.S. are important, but no less important than the infrastructure needs in bases located overseas.

Like bases in the U.S., there are antiterrorism and force protection measures we must take at all bases overseas. Similarly, housing must be decent, safe, and working conditions must not jeopardize the troops' performance.

One of the things that happened in our committee, for the first time that I can remember, is that three of the CINCs, General Ralston, General Blair, and General Schwartz, all came in and testified that overseas MILCON, and especially housing, was their number one priority on their list of priorities for their troops.

This is a time when we ask young people to go out and put their lives on the line. They should do that, and they will do that, with great honor and dignity for this country. This country owes them the same dignity in the places where they work every day and where they live.

So I want to thank my ranking member for putting up this motion, and I hope every Member of this House supports this motion.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. OLVER. 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 6 p.m.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 6 p.m.

