

RANKING OF MEMBERS ON COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 282) and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 282

Resolved, That Mr. Lynch of Massachusetts shall rank after Mr. Shows of Mississippi on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 283) and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 283

Resolved, That the following named Member be and is hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

Armed Services: Mr. Jeff Miller of Florida.
Veterans Affairs: Mr. Jeff Miller of Florida.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2001, TO TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2001

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Friday, November 9, 2001, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 13, 2001, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business

in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

WELCOMING PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA ON OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO UNITED STATES

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on International Relations be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 264) expressing the sense of Congress to welcome the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on the occasion of his visit to the United States, and to affirm that India is a valued friend and partner and an important ally in the campaign against international terrorism, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I yield to my friend, the gentleman from New York, so that he may explain the reasons for moving this resolution immediately to the floor.

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking minority member on the Committee on International Relations, for crafting H. Con. Res. 264, a resolution expressing the sense of the Congress to welcome the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on the occasion of his visit to our Nation, and to affirm that India is a valued friend and partner and an important ally in the campaign against international terrorism.

India and the United States share a common destiny. Our people thrive on democracy, the rule of law and the right to freely worship God, and our governments understand that these rights and freedoms are essential for our civilizations to flourish.

Mr. Speaker, this past Monday in New Delhi, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and India's Minister of Defense, George Fernandes, met and agreed to expand and intensify our mutual cooperation in the war against international terrorism. We are delighted that India and the United States are moving closer to becoming allies in every sense of the word.

An alliance between our Nation and India could specifically be used to promote democratic governments in the region and to combat drugs and terrorism. And our Nation appreciates the immeasurable contributions to our society made by the more than 1 million Americans of Indian origin.

This past summer, Russian President Putin and Chinese President Jiang

Zemin gave each other a bear hug and signed a so-called "friendship treaty." We are now embarking on a similar friendship with India and Prime Minister Vajpayee.

□ 1400

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I am delighted to speak in support of this resolution which welcomes Prime Minister Vajpayee of India to the United States and expresses the deep appreciation of the American people for the strong and immediate support India has provided us at the time of the events of September 11.

Many of our colleagues do not realize, Mr. Speaker, that India also lost over 200 of its own citizens in the dreadful attack on the World Trade Center. As a matter of fact, while this terrible terrorist act was a first for us, I think it is important for all of us to understand that some of our democratic friends and allies have been subjected to terrorist attacks for many years. Our democratic friend, India, and our democratic friend, the State of Israel, have been subjected to terrorism for over half a century. Following our tragic event on September 11, on October 7 terrorists attacked the Parliament House in Kashmir claiming the lives of scores of innocent Indian citizens.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to realize that today we have the pleasure of welcoming to our Congress the Prime Minister of the largest democracy on the face of this planet. There are 1 billion people in India, Mr. Speaker. Many were doubtful years ago that a society, at that time quite poor, in many ways undeveloped, could maintain a political democracy. There was a lot of skepticism as to whether you could have a viable political democracy with 1 billion people of enormous ethnic variety and with hundreds of millions of those people living in abject poverty.

India has proven the pessimists wrong. India today is the fourth largest economy on the face of this planet, and it is the largest political democracy on this planet. Political elections unfold, governments change peacefully, as they do here in the United States.

A great deal has been made in recent times, since September 11, of our building a global coalition against international terrorism; and we all support the effort of the President, the Secretary of State and others to move along these lines. But I think it is important to realize that some Members of this coalition share our values. India is one of them.

Not all members of the coalition are built on the same set of democratic values that our society is built on and India's society is built on. For many, this coalition is just a marriage of convenience. With respect to India, it is a marriage based on shared and common values of pluralism, respect for minorities, freedom of religion, political privileges of voting, freedom of press,

freedom of movement, and freedom of expression.

India, with its vibrant democracy and secular government, is a rich and diverse society which stands as a beacon of example to many others in that region. There is no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, that our friendship with India will continue to grow and deepen, and it is in this spirit that we welcome Prime Minister Vajpayee to the United States and to the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation of objection, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), the chairman of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

The 120-some members of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans are very excited to have the Prime Minister here in Washington, D.C. We just had a wonderful lunch where we greeted him, and we look forward to having a positive relationship develop to an even deeper level. The 11th of September was a day that jolted us all, and almost immediately Prime Minister Vajpayee was on the phone to the United States putting out his hand in help, offering bases, something that had never happened before.

This is a major sea change in the relationship between India and the United States. I think all the Members of Congress who understand the importance of a stable Central and South Asia understand the strength that Prime Minister Vajpayee has brought to that area. He reached out to his neighbor, Pakistan, and took a bus trip to Pakistan, the first time an Indian Prime Minister had done that in the whole history of India-Pakistan relations. He is a man who walks the talk of peace, and he has become our friend; and we are very glad to have him here.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation of objection, I am delighted to yield to my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that I was very pleased today to have another opportunity at the India Caucus luncheon to meet and talk with Prime Minister Vajpayee. I admire him so much for all that he has done in India, both as a minority leader as well as now the Prime Minister. I have met him on many occasions and have always been very impressed by him.

I think this resolution is important; and obviously I would urge its adoption, because it sets forth three things that I think are important:

One is that India, like the United States, has historically been a victim of terrorism. India has been extremely supportive of the United States in the aftermath of September 11, in part be-

cause of their friendship with the United States, but also because they understand the negative impact of terrorism on their own state and own population, particularly as it has often occurred in Kashmir. India has been involved with the U.S. in acting against terrorism for a long time and has worked for several years with the United States in that regard and will continue to.

The second thing I would mention is that India is very important to the United States because of the growing relationship that we share on every level. Certainly when we talk about trade, the growing trade relationship, when we talk about culture, there is so much interest in India culture in the United States and vice-versa.

But more important right now, I think, is the importance of the defense relationship, and we understand that some of the conversations and talks that are taking place between the Prime Minister and President Bush relate to that defense relationship. I have been a long advocate of the need to increase our defense relationship, whether that means supplying military equipment or doing more military exercises with India.

I think many of us know that, historically, India had relied on the former Soviet Union for much of its military equipment. I would like to see that change. I think the U.S. should be the main country that they look to in that regard. So I am hopeful that this week both the trade ties, but, more important, the defense ties, between India and the United States, will see some significant positive action. I am hopeful that that will in fact be the case.

The third thing I wanted to mention, and we all know about the growing importance of the Indian-American community here in the United States, my district, my old district before the redistricting that took place a few weeks ago in New Jersey, had a very large Indian-American population. That has even increased more with the new district that I will be representing, hopefully, after this next year. I think that that Indian-American community has gone far towards building the ties between the United States and India based on democracy, based on capitalism, based on shared culture interests. The Prime Minister took note of that today at our luncheon, and I know that he is very proud of the impact that the Indian-American community has had here in the United States.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I am delighted to yield to my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the distinguished Republican cochair of the India caucus.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, today we had a luncheon where we heard from Prime Minister Vajpayee. It is always good to see the Prime Minister consulting with the Congress and the administration to strengthen the ties between India and the United States. We

all know how the ties between India and the United States have solidified over the years. However, since September 11 that relationship has reached new heights.

India has been with the United States every step of the way. India has long known the horrors of terrorism, and now the United States has joined India in the fight against terrorism. India quickly condemned the attacks and immediately offered assistance to the U.S. India has provided the intelligence support, as well as the use of its military bases and air space.

I had a chance to be there during the international fleet review in Mumbai and see why Colin Powell, our Secretary of State, said that India has the strength to keep the peace in the vast Indian Ocean and its periphery.

Today, President Bush is skillfully leading what will be a difficult struggle, but India has demonstrated that it will be a key ally in this war. For that, we are appreciative.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, today, with this resolution, the House welcomes a friend, the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The Prime Minister is in Washington in the course of visits to several capitals to emphasize India's longstanding commitment to fight terrorism.

This is a matter on which we can all agree. America and India need to step up our security and political cooperation; India's importance to world security is obvious to anyone who possesses a map. Of course, Indians and Americans agree on many other subjects, especially on the benefits of democracy and human rights and on the benefits of trade.

American-Indian relations have been getting better for many years, following the steady, upward path of bilateral trade. The fact that more and more individuals of Indian ancestry are contributing to our society, becoming citizens, and taking part in civic and business endeavors is another factor that contributes mightily to our improving relationship. As this trend continues, Americans get to know Indian culture and Indians are more likely to have friends and relatives in this country and have a realistic picture of life here.

The United States wants to help India and its neighbors live in peace in a stable South Asia. It has become clear that, in the first instance, this will require the extirpation of al Qaida and the defeat of those who harbor it, the Taliban.

India and Pakistan, rivals and sometimes enemies, are on the same side in this endeavor. I pray that they will take the opportunity to achieve some level of confidence in one another in a common struggle. I hope that American leadership will help bring them together wherever we can in fact be of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important visit. The Indian Prime Minister is a most welcome guest, and one whom we are most pleased to honor with this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 264

Whereas Congress is pleased to welcome the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on his visit to the United States;

Whereas the United States and India, the world's two largest democracies, are natural allies, based on their shared values and common interests in building a stable, peaceful, and prosperous world in the 21st century;

Whereas from the very day that the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington occurred, India has expressed its condolences for the terrible losses, its solidarity with the American people, and its pledge of full cooperation in the campaign against international terrorism;

Whereas India, which has been on the front lines in the fight against international terrorism for many years, directly shares America's grief over the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, with the number of missing Indian nationals and persons of Indian origin estimated at 250;

Whereas the United States and India are engaged as partners in a global coalition to combat the scourge of international terrorism, a partnership that began well before the tragic events of September 11, 2001;

Whereas cooperation between India and the United States extends beyond the current international campaign against terrorism, and has been steadily developing over recent years in such areas as preserving stability and growth in the global economy, protecting the environment, combating infectious diseases, and expanding trade, especially in emerging knowledge-based industries and high technology areas; and

Whereas more than 1,000,000 Americans of Indian heritage have contributed immeasurably to American society: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) to welcome the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to the United States;

(2) to express profound gratitude to the Government of India for its expressions of sympathy for the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and its demonstrated willingness to fully cooperate with the United States in the campaign against terrorism; and

(3) to pledge commitment to the continued expansion of friendship and cooperation between the United States and India.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANTOS. 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. 264.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2500, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. ROHRABACHER 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. 2500, be instructed to insist on the language contained in section 626 of the House-passed bill and section 623 of the Senate amendment, prohibiting the use of funds in the bill by the Department of Justice or the Department of State to file a motion in any court opposing a civil action against any Japanese person or corporation for compensation or reparations in which the plaintiff alleges that, as an American prisoner of war during World War II, he or she was used as slave or forced labor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 6 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is highly unusual. It is highly unusual because the Parliamentarian's Office has not been able to find another instance in the history of this House in which a motion was offered to instruct conferees to keep something in a conference report that was approved by both the House and the Senate in identical form. In theory, such a motion should be completely unnecessary, because under the rules of both Houses, this House and the Senate, any provision that has been approved by each House in identical form is "non-conferenceable," which means it automatically goes to the conference and goes into the conference report as it passed both Houses. That is called democracy, where the majority of people in both Houses vote for something, and then it stays in the bill as the bill goes through the system.

□ 1415

Unfortunately, the lobbying of Japanese corporations and other very powerful interest groups in this city over this period of time has been unusually heavy. They have been spreading misinformation about the peace treaty with Japan, and it appears that our courageous World War II POWs will feel the brunt of this deception. The fact is that private companies did use American POWs during World War II as slave laborers.

In his recent decision, Judge William F. McDonald rejected all arguments by the State Department that such a court hearing, in terms of a hearing of our own POWs' requests for compensation from these Japanese companies that enslaved them, Judge McDonald decided that this would not violate the treaty which ended World War II, although what we have been hearing over and over and over again in this town is, my gosh, we cannot permit our greatest war heroes, the survivors of the Bataan Death March to sue the Japanese corporations that used them as slave labor in the war, because this would violate the treaty that ended the war.

Well, already we have a judge suggesting, a Federal judge suggesting that that argument does not hold water, and a reading of the treaty itself suggests that that does not hold water.

What do we have, then? We have a situation where this judge, a neutral party, an American judge, has decided that our POWs under the treaty have the right to file a claim in court.

In the past what has happened, and the reason this legislation is necessary, is our greatest American war heroes from World War II, the survivors of the Bataan Death March, not only were they left out on their own and betrayed by our country in a certain way, at least if not betrayed, let down, that we did not come to their rescue; then they served as prisoners of war and as slave labor; and then after the war, we betrayed them again, we let them down again in that they were told that the treaty prevented them from suing the corporations that had used them as slave labor.

Well, as I say, in the treaty there is a provision that says very clearly, any rights not granted to American citizens in this treaty that are granted to other citizens of other countries in other treaties, subsequent treaties, will automatically be the rights of the American people as well, and since that time, of course, Japan has signed many other treaties and other people have had the right to sue these Japanese corporations.

We are not talking about suing the Japanese Government, we are talking about suing Japanese corporations. It is the courts, not the executive branch, that will ultimately determine the meaning of what this treaty is all about. We already have a court decision.

The political question is what we need to decide, and that is what is happening today, and that is what happened in a decision in this body overwhelmingly and a decision in the Senate. Both in this House and the Senate, we decided that our American heroes of the Bataan Death March, their claims are more important than bending over backwards to try to recognize claims of big Japanese corporations that used our people as slave labor during the war. The courts have found that factual issues exist for the application of our people. That means that our POWs have a right to sue, they have an actual, factual claim, and the court has decided that the 1951 peace treaty with Japan does not, does not prevent the plaintiffs from filing action in the court.

Now, I would ask my colleagues to vote for this motion, and I would ask them to pay particular attention, and the American people to pay attention, to what is going on here. What has been voted on on the floor, some people are trying to take out behind closed doors in the conference. It is the first time in history we have a motion to recommit, to insist on language that has been passed in both Houses. I think it