

argument in this case, and other times it is the other side of the aisle. So everybody makes my argument one time or the other. My suggestion is if the Constitution means anything, and if article I, section 8 means anything, it ought to be applied across the board or we ought to change the Constitution and say this is a mandate from the American people that we should pursue missionary work in Africa.

But most likely nobody is going to propose a change in the Constitution, the Constitution will not be changed, so the Congress chooses to ignore the Constitution when it feel like it; therefore, we have reduced the Constitution to something that has very little value anymore.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN) who has stood out on this issue for all the time he and I have served here in Congress.

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time and for his leadership on this issue.

It is very good to stand here in support of a bipartisan bill that addresses some of the real problems in the world today. Particularly in the wake of the situation in Iraq, it is important for the United States to show the world that we care about the big problems that affect other people in other countries as well as issues that affect American interests.

Let me take a moment to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for her leadership. If anyone in this body has stood up on this issue, it is the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), as well as the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE). This is truly a bipartisan bill. I would also like to applaud the President because he has pushed this issue \$15 billion to fight AIDS in Africa. I think that is a very good thing.

I hasten to note that many of these programs started under the Clinton administration, and for years, Democratic activists have been fighting for additional money to fight AIDS in Africa. I intend to support this bill; however, the rule allows amendments which I believe are problems.

Some of my conservative brethren come to this debate and argue that we ought to give more priority to abstinence. In a tone of some self-righteousness they suggest that abstinence ought to be the preferred method, and that this reflects American values. I think on the issue of fighting AIDS, the American value is saving as many lives as we possibly can. And for that reason when later today we have this amendment to prioritize and single out abstinence, I am going to oppose it.

I think our responsibility is to make resources available to be used in the best, most efficient way possible. Abstinence does have merit, I will be the first to say that. And where it can be

used effectively and advocated to young people, I would support that. But to say that abstinence should get a specific share of the money, even if it is not the most effective proposal, does not make sense. The American value is to save lives.

Now, it seems to me that we ought to use all available approaches and use our money most effectively and most efficiently. My conservative colleagues say look at the Uganda model. And as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) just pointed out, they have somewhat distorted it. They would have us believe that Uganda, which has been very successful in reducing AIDS, primarily relies on abstinence. That is not true.

It is true that Uganda has been successful in reducing infection rates from 26 percent to 6 percent over a 20-year period. It is not true that they rely solely or even primarily on abstinence. Abstinence is only part of their Anti-aids program. In fact, Ugandans used 80 million condoms last year. 80 million condoms. Condom use by prostitutes in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, has increased from zero to 95 percent. It has been proven that condom use is an important part of the program.

What we are saying today is that we need to include all approaches: Abstinence, faithfulness, and condom use, and not single out any particular approach. Let the affected communities in Africa decide what works best and spend the money accordingly. If we do that, this is truly a great bill and we should be proud to support it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) who also has been in the leadership on this matter and serves on the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of what transpired in the Committee on International Relations this last couple of months in moving this legislation forward. It was reported out of committee by an overwhelming bipartisan majority, and it shows what we can do when we come together in a bipartisan fashion. I commend the administration for its support of a creative solution for the HIV-AIDS epidemic that Members from both parties can support.

It has been referenced that some of our colleagues have interpreted ABC as "anything but condoms," and we are going to talk about that on the floor as various amendments come forward; but I think it is critical that we take a step back and not put a political agenda ahead of a program with proven success.

I hope that my colleagues can withhold their desire to impose their standards on hundreds of millions of people that live in different countries with different cultures, in wildly different communities. There is too much at risk for global health, which certainly includes our own in this country. Addressing the AIDS epidemic, tuber-

culosis, and malaria not only benefits the health of those individuals, it is going to stabilize communities and regions that are devastating. And, yes, it is going to help us at home as we work to alleviate global issues of health, safety and security.

The SARS epidemic provides the most recent, graphic, current example of the need to address epidemics at a global level before they affect us here in America. I hope we can reflect not just on the hard work of the administration, our chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), active leaders like the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), but reflect on how when the legislative process works when we put the imperative of problem solving ahead of political concerns.

We have more at stake these days than just dealing with the AIDS epidemic. I hope that this will be a template not just moving forward in this critical area, important as it is, but this is the way that we can solve homeland security issues, economic issues, and the great issues on the international arena as well.

Mr. Speaker, I commend our friends who were there, and I urge adoption of the rule and moving forward with approval of this and then going home this weekend thinking about what we have accomplished, how we have done it and where we can take it from here.

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

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS). I reiterate and strongly believe there are few things that we could do more important than what we are going to do today. I am very proud to have been able to bring forward this rule to provide for consideration of this extraordinarily important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill H.R. 1298, which we are about to consider.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

UNITED STATES LEADERSHIP
AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBER-
CULOSIS, AND MALARIA ACT OF
2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 210 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1298.

□ 1058

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1298) to provide assistance to foreign countries to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and for other purposes, with Mr. LATOURETTE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, not since the bubonic plague swept across the world in the last millennium killing more than 250 million people has our world confronted such a horrible, unspeakable curse as we are now witnessing with the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In the very short time that we will spend today considering this legislation, thousands of people around the world will die of HIV/AIDS. The number of dead or dying is grotesquely high: 25 million already dead worldwide and growing at the rate of 8,500 every day, with the horror of entire villages populated only by orphans because the adults are dead or dying from AIDS.

I do not mean to demean the work of this House, but so much of what we do is really unimportant and trivial; but not today. Today we have an opportunity, the opportunity to do something significant and of lasting importance. Today we have an obligation, the obligation to do something reflecting our commitment to human solidarity. We have a privilege today, the privilege of doing something truly compassionate.

It is no exaggeration to compare the AIDS pandemic in Africa to the bubonic plague in medieval Europe. This plague took one-third of Europe's entire population, creating political chaos and set the course of civilization back for decades, perhaps centuries. AIDS in Africa is well on its way to doing something terribly similar, and similarly terrible. Tuesday's Wall Street Journal tells us 42 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS, 30 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

□ 1100

Today we need to consider H.R. 1298, the United States Leadership Against

HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003. We would not be here today with this bill, that I think is an excellent one, without the sincere and heartfelt and invaluable assistance of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), which makes this a truly bipartisan effort.

This legislation authorizes the President's 5-year \$15 billion emergency plan for treatment and prevention of AIDS in those countries already facing crisis. The legislation creates a more responsive, coordinated, and effective approach among the various agencies of the U.S. Government involved in this global fight. The legislation promotes an approach that provides funds for antiretroviral therapy for more than 2 million people living with HIV. It encourages a strategy that extends palliative care for people living with AIDS. It supports efforts to find vaccines for HIV/AIDS and malaria. It emphasizes the need to keep families together with particular focus on the assistance needs of children and young people with HIV. It endorses prevention programs that stress sexual abstinence and monogamy as a first line of defense against the spread of this disease and contributes to multilateral initiatives that leverage the funds of other donor nations.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is more than a humanitarian crisis. Increasingly, it is a threat to the security of the developed world. Left unchecked, this plague will further rip the fabric of developing societies, pushing fragile governments and economies to the point of collapse. So to those who suggest the U.S. has no stake in this pandemic, let me observe that the specter of failed states across the world certainly is our concern.

Africa is a central concern. Today radical Islam is spreading in several African countries, especially Nigeria. This threatens to undercut democracy and make Nigeria a failed state. It is in our interest to counter this movement by doing what we can to build democracy and a growing economy in Nigeria and elsewhere. The spread of HIV/AIDS frustrates this important mission. We also have a strong interest in seeing the development of professional African militaries, militaries capable of maintaining stability in their country, but also capable of contributing to peacekeeping operations elsewhere in Africa. Yet an examination of the HIV/AIDS rates among the armed forces of key African countries, including Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya, reveals infection rates between 30 and 40 percent. HIV/AIDS is a national security issue for those countries and for us.

The President's proposal is based on America's deep conviction about the dignity of every human life, and these proposed remedies for the AIDS crisis in Africa recognize that human dignity. In adopting this proposal, we show the world that conviction and compassion go together as we demonstrate that compassion is not a sign

of weakness but of strength. America does not have to take on the African AIDS crisis alone; but as is often the case, American leadership, political or financial, is necessary if our friends around the world are to bear their fair share of the burden. That is what the President's proposal does. It sets a pattern of American leadership that others we believe will follow.

This bill is a compromise, a delicately arrived at, painstakingly negotiated compromise between various factions interested in this legislation; but it hangs together, and it works and it will advance the cause that we so desperately need to support. AIDS is a mortal challenge to our civilization. Let us today be animated by compassion and, yes, vision that always have defined what it means to be an American.

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

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

I rise in strong support of this grand humanitarian legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to make history today by securing its passage.

Mr. Chairman, we could not have reached this day had it not been for the heroic efforts of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), my distinguished chairman and good friend. His leadership on this issue has been a true profile in courage, and I salute him. I also want to identify myself with his powerful and eloquent opening statement. Our colleagues on the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) on the Republican side, have also been critically instrumental to our success thus far as have many other members of the committee. With the support of every single Democrat and most Republicans on the Committee on International Relations, we have crafted a bipartisan piece of legislation worthy of this body's support.

Mr. Chairman, the \$15 billion authorized in this legislation to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria worldwide is an enormous sum by any measure. It is five times the amount we considered authorizing for this cause just last year. For those of us who have long called for a real commitment of resources to address the HIV/AIDS crisis, our day has arrived. As impressive as these amounts are, they are no more than the crisis demands. Every day AIDS claims the lives of thousands of innocent men, women, and, yes, children, old and young, sick and able-bodied, destitute and affluent, unemployed and professional, African, Asian, and American. This disease, Mr. Chairman, does not discriminate. It targets us all; and in doing so, it ruins families, decimates communities, and fuels the violence and bloodshed that destroys whole nations. The political, economic, social, and humanitarian impact of this scourge cannot be contained to one region or to one population. It is a