

take more effective measures in controlling Hamas and ending violence. But we should also ask the government of Prime Minister Sharon to do the same. We should sponsor impartial legislation supporting continued dialogue to end the violence in the Middle East—protecting the human rights of the innocent involved in the cross fire. We must balance our demands on both of these governments.

Both sides have crossed the line—it is time to get back to the negotiating table. We are not aiding this already volatile situation by giving our weighted support to one side in this conflict. For that reason, I must abstain on this resolution.

Mr. LEACH. 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 Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 294.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
H.R. 2417, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 295, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution as follows:

H. RES. 295

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2417) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a

substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my colleague and friend, who I am happy to report sits on both the Committee on Rules and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence with me, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules has granted a modified open rule for H.R. 2417, the Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004. This is the standard rule that we have used for many years for the consideration of the intelligence authorization. The rule is fair. It will allow ample time for consideration of all matters.

The rule provides for one hour of general debate equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Pro forma amendments listed in the report will be debatable under the 5-minute rule.

As in past rules for this legislation, amendments were required to be preprinted. This allowed for the vetting of amendments regarding classified matters, a procedure we have found to be a very good practice, helpful to both the committee and Members.

Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions, as was announced.

Mr. Speaker, as in past years, we thought it best to allow Members a good opportunity to review the bill and debate the issues that they feel are important, those particularly to our Nation's security at this time when national security is on our minds. Our classified annex and staff has been made available to any Member of Congress that was interested previously or is interested now in reviewing the underlying bill and reports.

□ 1600

H.R. 2417 is, in fact, must-do legislation because of the rules of the House.

It authorizes appropriations for fiscal year 2004 intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System. In effect, what that is is the 15 agencies of the intelligence community.

In the nearly 2 years since the tragic terrorist attacks on September 11, the intelligence community continues to build its capabilities to combat new threats that are threats to our Nation's safety, the well-being of Americans at home and abroad. The bill authorizes resources to improve the analytical depth and capacity in all areas of intelligence, an area that has been in crying need. This will allow us to process and disseminate the information collected in a more efficient, hopefully wiser and more timely fashion, and make sure all interested parties have access.

In addition, this legislation continues the sustained effort and long-term strategy to enhance human intelligence, an area that is vital to our current war on terrorism and is essentially the core business of intelligence, plans, and intentions of the enemy. H.R. 2417 helps to improve information sharing among Federal, State, and local governments. This is an area and a desire where we have overlapping interests with other committees in the House. This bill also provides including increased training for State and local officials on how the intelligence community can support their counterterrorism efforts, again, a matter of some overlapping interest.

Mr. Speaker, these are only a few highlights from the bill that passed the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence unanimously, in the true bipartisan fashion we like to operate our House Permanent Select Committee on. I am sure a whole breadth of topics will be discussed during our general debate; and I think that we have, in this modified open rule, provided ample opportunity for all matters to come to the floor.

I noted today in earlier debate that there was focus on one issue that was not necessarily the subject that was under debate, and that was the intelligence assessments of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Obviously, this is a topic currently under review by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and I would like all Members and all interested listeners to understand that we have been conducting a review on the House Permanent Select Committee to discharge properly our oversight responsibilities. We have been using the tools of oversight that are available to us. I think they are adequate, and I think they are being well used. I think we are using them in a thorough and in a nonpartisan manner. And, in fact, the ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), and I have taken extra steps to detail how this review will be conducted and have actually issued a public statement on that.

I think it is worth rehashing what that statement says: committee hearings, closed and open, as appropriate, that will permit Members to question senior administration officials about the prewar intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction holdings and programs, and its links to terrorism, to include questions relating to the sufficiency of intelligence collection and analytical coverage on these targets.

Granting accesses to any Member of the House who wishes, under appropriate security provisions and House rules, to review the documentation provided to the Committee by the Director of Central Intelligence in response to a May 22 letter from the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) and myself to provide information. And I am happy to report we are getting full cooperation from the Director of Central Intelligence on that.

Staff interviews of intelligence community personnel involved in drafting intelligence community analyses of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction holdings and programs and Iraqi links to terrorism.

Regular committee updates and status reports on current efforts to locate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, which, after all, is a priority, including actions of the Iraq Survey Group and other government agencies employed in that task.

And a written report suitable to the results of the committee's review, including an unclassified summary as promptly as is possible.

In fact, I would say, Mr. Speaker, the committee has taken a very important additional step in its review. We have voted to allow access to the 19 volumes that we now have on hand of information provided by the Director of Central Intelligence outlining American intelligence analysis on Iraq and the sources that supported it. I do not believe we have ever done anything that specific before.

To those who believe that the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence is not doing its job or that we are incapable of doing our job, they can come and literally read over our shoulder. I think that the committee is doing its job, and I am very proud of its members and its staff and the way it works; and I am very thankful that I have a ranking member who is anxious to preserve the nonpartisan approach that we take to the Nation's important security business.

Those who have questions about the competence of myself, my ranking member, or any of the other members on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence are welcome to express that today in a vote of no confidence; but I would urge that they not do that. We are doing our very best, and if you would like to come upstairs and help us try to do it better, we would welcome your presence.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank my good

friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS), the distinguished chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for yielding me the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to first point to the extraordinary leadership of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), and the bipartisan spirit of the unanimous consent of the entire Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in support of H.R. 2417. I rise in support of the rule providing for the consideration of that measure. It is the Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004. This is a modified open rule, and I believe that it is adequate for a bill that is relatively non-controversial and was reported from the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence by unanimous vote, as I just said.

I would like to reiterate a part of what the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) has said and state to Members who wish to do so that they can go to the committee's office to examine the classified schedule of authorizations for the National Intelligence Program. This schedule includes the CIA, as well as the Foreign Intelligence and Counterintelligence programs within the Department of Defense, the National Security Agency, the FBI, and the Departments of State, Treasury, and Imaging.

Also included in the classified documents are the authorizations for the Tactical Intelligence and related activities and the Joint Military Intelligence program of the Department of Defense.

Mr. Speaker, the Intelligence Authorization Act we consider today will provide authorizations for some of the most important national security programs in this country. This bill is the result of the committee's ongoing oversight of the intelligence community and oversight responsibilities, which include hundreds of hearings, briefings, and site visits annually.

We are well aware that the global war on terrorism has focused even greater attention on the intelligence community and its mission. The men and women who serve in this community have faced many challenges in the past 21 months and, in my judgment, have responded admirably. This bill assists them in these many challenges. It fully supports the intelligence community's efforts in the war on terrorism by providing funds for analysis, analytic tools, and a unified overhead imagery architecture.

Overall, the committee found the intelligence community is making progress in many areas, but noted that there is currently no one office in the executive branch that is charged with coordinating all elements of the intelligence and law enforcement communities to ensure they cooperate and coordinate their efforts.

The committee also called on the Director of Central Intelligence to improve diversity in the workplace and special attention on recruitment initiatives for women and minorities. I would be terribly remiss right here if I did not mention two former members, one still alive and one who is deceased: former member Louis Stokes from Ohio, and our dear departed friend Julian Dixon, from California, both of whom spearheaded efforts to ensure greater diversity in the intelligence community.

I hasten to urge that the chairman of this committee, and the now leader of the Democratic Caucus, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), and certainly the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP), who served on the committee previously, have all been vigorous in their assertions that the intelligence community must do more in the area of diversity. So I will be introducing an amendment that I believe will assist the director in attaining the goals in this critical area.

I do urge my colleagues to support this rule and the bill; and before reserving the balance of my time, I take a point of personal privilege to thank the fine staff of the majority and the minority for the rather extraordinary work that it takes in putting this measure together, and the many measures that come across their desks on a given day, including putting up with some of us as Members and our requests. I urge my colleagues to support the rule.

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I wish to thank the gentleman for his kind remarks. I also associate myself with his remarks about Lou Stokes and Julian Dixon, as well as the efforts of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), when she was ranking member in the committee, to deal with the diversity issue. It is critically important. And as the gentleman from Florida knows, I am prepared to accept his amendment at the appropriate time and pleased to have his leadership.

I would also point out that I believe the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) has shown another element that has improved our bill that we approved and were able to bring to the floor in our mark. So that is an area that has received attention because it needed attention, and I am entirely satisfied that we are taking good steps.

I would also point out for other Members that we had a number of amendments requested. I do not think any were particularly controversial as to the bill itself. We have this year, because we are dealing with standing up the Department of Homeland Security, some questions about where we plug in the intelligence piece from our foreign

intelligence community, which is a very big piece, into the homeland security apparatus. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) has been a leader on that and done excellent work and is working with the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER), the chairman and ranking member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security.

We also, obviously, are working closely in some other areas that are a little new for us with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), the chairman of the Committee on Commerce, because of some questions about how we deal with some of the Treasury aspects, and, additionally, how we deal with some of the judicial aspects as we respond to the challenge in this country of preventive enforcement for people who would take advantage of our hospitality here and do mischief. And regrettably, we do get the reports regularly that there are still some of those folks in our midst. So we are going to be working in that area.

Not all of that is going to come to a final conclusion today. We are going to go from here, from our authorization bill, to a conference process. I expect there will be progress made in some of these areas where there is some apparent overlap between now and conference time, and certainly everybody is going to be assured that this committee is interested only in the portfolio of intelligence. That is what we do, the Foreign Intelligence Program. The other committees of standing that have jurisdictional areas that are associated we will work with closely and on a friendly and nonterritorial basis. I wish to assure them all of that.

We had, I understand, some amendments that came in late and we had one amendment that was not germane; but otherwise, I understand that the Committee on Rules made six amendments in order. Five were Democratic amendments, one was a Republican amendment; and I believe that the Committee on Rules responded very fairly. I see no reason to oppose this rule and every reason to support it.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), the ranking member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I would state that I do not intend to use all the time. I will spend the first part of the debate on H.R. 2417 sharing my views about our bill and several other issues of enormous interest to the public.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and of the underlying bill, H.R. 2417. It is interesting and wonderful that both managers of this rule also ably serve on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. The gen-

tleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is our bipartisan and collaborative chairman, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) is a senior member on the Democratic side. Both have contributed enormously to this rule and, obviously, enormously to the product we will soon debate.

□ 1615

Under this rule, as has been explained, amendments will be considered under the 5-minute rule and thus debate on all amendments that were filed with the Rules Committee, germane and did not require waivers will be in order. I am certain we will have a spirited debate on several of those amendments, and I think that is exactly what we should be doing in the people's House. In that vein, I will conclude, and I look forward to a spirited debate in a few minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I, too, wish to comment and respond that all of us know that individuals who accept the responsibility of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence go to it with nothing but good intentions and a desire to provide the greatest service to this Nation, so I appreciate very much the leadership of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and our ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN). They have been unique in the shadow of the controversy of the Iraqi war to have come together on the question of weapons of mass destruction. I look forward to their work. They have come to this floor to indicate the opportunity for Members to review thousands of documents.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to pursue my position, and that is that there should be an independent commission designed to investigate the issues dealing with the weapons of mass destruction. But in light of their bipartisan effort, I wrote an amendment that indicated subsequent to the completion of their work, 6 months subsequent to that, that we would have the opportunity to design a commission that would then be able to address the questions again, and that is an independent commission separate and apart from this body and as well, of course, the executive and legislative bodies.

I believe the intent was respectful of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. I am disappointed that the amendment was not allowed to be admitted on the basis of waiving the points of order, but I will continue to insist that this is the appropriate process to proceed under.

It is not a question of whether or not we find weapons of mass destruction or not. It is not a question of whether we are in a battle over the truth. All we

need is the truth, the finding of weapons of mass destruction or not. Many made the decision to vote for the war because we were told that we were about to be under imminent attack. I think the American people are owed the ultimate determination how that decision was made.

My other amendment had to do with providing local law enforcement access to intelligence as needed and to get security clearances faster than they have been able to do so in the past. I hope we will be able to work together to ensure that happens so all of us who have local officials who need the information to perform their duties appropriately can assess this important intelligence to serve our communities. I look forward to this bill moving through the House, and working on these important issues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Rule governing floor debate on H.R. 2417, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004. I oppose this modified open Rule because it fails to make in order several amendments that improve this legislation and benefit the public.

I proposed two amendments to H.R. 2417 that were not made in order. The first amendment called for the establishment of a "National Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq." This Commission was to be responsible for reviewing and assessing the administration's knowledge of the status of and threats posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program before America went to war. The need for and the benefits of this Commission are obvious. The administration declared war, without a declaration of war by the Congress, based upon the claim that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and that the United States was in immediate danger of being attacked by the Iraqi regime. Over the several weeks of Operation Iraqi Freedom, dozens of American and British soldiers lost their lives and many more suffered grave injuries. I had the honor of personally meeting many of our valiant, injured troops on visits to Bethesda Medical Facility and Walter Reed Army Hospital. Their courage and sacrifice was overwhelming.

For many Americans, myself included, questions remain whether the deaths and injuries suffered by young Americans in Operation Iraqi Freedom were justified. To date, we have discovered no evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Many Americans are left wondering if the justifications for waging war proffered by the administration were legitimate. That is why I proposed an amendment to H.R. 2417 calling for the establishment of a National Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq. We must study the intelligence available to the administration when war with Iraq was commenced. Was Saddam Hussein producing weapons of mass destruction? Was the Iraqi regime capable of producing weapons of mass destruction? Did the Iraqi regime conceal their weapons of mass destruction after Operation Iraqi Freedom began? These questions, and many more, need answers. The Commission established under my amendment would have provided those answers.

I support the amendment offered by my colleague from California, the Honorable BARBARA LEE. Her amendment calls for a General

Accounting Office report on the degree to which U.S. intelligence services shared information about weapons of mass destruction sites with the United Nations inspections teams searching for those weapons in Iraq. Ms. LEE's timely and important Amendment will provide many of the answers the American public seeks.

I also proposed an amendment to H.R. 2417 to expand the security clearance for law enforcement agents, specified by State executives, so that classified and vital information related to homeland security can be shared. This amendment was also not made in order, but is vital to preparing or local communities to wage the war on terrorism. Protecting our homeland will be conducted by local law enforcement agencies and small communities across the country. It is vital for valuable, often classified information related to homeland security to be accessible to local law enforcement agents. My amendment would have expanded the security clearance for designated State and local officials and given them the ability to receive vital information.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate my opposition to this Rule. The Rule is too narrowly drafted and fails to make in order several valuable amendments offered by myself and my colleagues. I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the narrowly-tailored Rule and in support of the amendment to H.R. 2417 offered by my colleague Ms. BARBARA LEE.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just wish to respond to my colleague by inviting the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) to come upstairs, as all Members are permitted, and see the material being worked on by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and to read the mission of the committee in that regard. I think all Members would find that substantial work is being done, and I believe all Members of this body would be very proud of the efforts put forward by Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in investigating the continuing concern that all of us in this body have, and I dare say the members of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence are probably more directly concerned in light of the fact that we are there on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the rule for the Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004. I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), who are doing valuable work by looking into the intelligence surrounding Operation Iraqi Freedom.

By necessity and design, their work is classified. I feel strongly that their work must continue, but that this issue is beyond the scope of a single committee and is of such importance to our democracy that responsible public hearings by a select committee of users of intelligence are necessary. Members of relevant committees such

as the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on International Relations, who use intelligence to make policy decisions every day, provide valuable perspective that should be part of a broader review.

As a member of the Committee on Armed Services, I am a user of intelligence, and the information I receive shapes the decisions I make for many men and women in uniform every day. Members of Congress and military planners need to have confidence that intelligence is objective and provides a sound basis for policy decisions.

No decision is more grave than sending American fighting men and women into harm's way. We have a duty to be certain that public policy that we base these decisions on is credible and real. With American and British soldiers continuing to be killed at an alarming rate in Iraq, we have to be sure that our intelligence is providing a realistic view of the threats they have.

Having open hearings by a select committee of policymakers who are customers of intelligence would not only allow Congress to reclaim its vital oversight role, but help convince the American people that their elected officials and President have the right tools to make the right decisions to protect them.

Mr. Speaker, this is not about the purview of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. I deeply respect the work that the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence does, but with all due respect, as a customer of that intelligence, the classified work that the committee does needs to remain classified, but after that work is declassified and moves to the National Security Agency, to the Pentagon, to the military planners, to the differing alphabet soups of agencies, who then take that classified work and begin to shape public policy with it, once that work becomes declassified and is starting to be moved into the public policy realm, I and others in relevant committees, like the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on International Relations, need to understand what exactly is being done to that intelligence to either promote it or shape it to perhaps fit a preconceived decision by people in the administration or in other parts of the policy-making chain.

I want to know if the intelligence work that is being done so ably by our intelligence people and the analysis done by them has been shaped in any way that would change my mind when I make these decisions. That is why I think we need a select committee. I urge my colleagues to vote no on the rule, but I support the work of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), the ranking member.

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would just point out to the gentlewoman

from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER) that our committee is one of the users of intelligence. We are part of this community that uses intelligence information; and so it seems to me her point is right, and we are, therefore, the right committee to be assessing these questions and issues.

Second, we have already agreed on a bipartisan basis to hold public hearings as appropriate, and the subject and timing of our first hearing is under active discussion right now. I am hopeful it will be held in July. I certainly agree that the public needs to know about some of these questions. We will discuss them in more detail in a moment. I do commend her for raising this issue. We are trying to address it responsibly in the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. If we should fail, then it would be timely to set up a different committee, or a commission, or use another mechanism.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, we are in a very curious position in Congress today. We standing here debating a critical bill to provide funding for our intelligence services while we ask whether those intelligence services might have suffered a massive failure in assessing Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program.

I use the word "might" very deliberately because we do not know whether there was an intelligence failure. That is why we need an investigation, and I commend my colleague from California for pushing for an investigation within the committee because not only the public deserves to know, but we deserve to know equally.

I am puzzled by many of my colleagues' lack of curiosity on this issue. The question of where Iraq's biological, chemical and nuclear weapons now may be is critical to the security of our Nation, and yet more than 90 days after the fall of Saddam Hussein, we have still not located one chemical weapon, biological weapon, or even their precursors production facilities or delivery systems.

We went to war because of the imminent threat those weapons posed. We need to find those weapons if they are there; and if they are not there, we need to ask the question what caused this massive intelligence failure that was presented to Congress as an imminent threat to our national security? Our soldiers in Iraq are still engaged in combat operations. Saddam Hussein may still be out there, Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda are still on the loose, and we need to ensure through our Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that we have solid information as we move forward.

Congress has to exercise its powers of oversight openly and honestly and look into these in a thorough way. That is what our constituents deserve. That is what the American people deserve. I

look forward to working with the committee to make sure this happens in a timely fashion.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT), a distinguished member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

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

Mr. Speaker, although I think this should be a totally open rule, as has been the tradition for dealing with this bill each year, I do think that the House should understand that the bill that is being brought to the House today is not controversial in the sense that it was agreed to unanimously within the committee. I would add to the remarks of my friend from Florida that this is, once again, a truly non-partisan and bipartisan effort. It is appropriate that the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence should operate that way, both as the committee that provides oversight for intelligence activities and a committee that is, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) points out, a consumer of intelligence product.

No doubt there will be a great deal of controversy to follow, a great deal of political discussion to follow in coming weeks and months about the intelligence that led up to the fighting and into the fighting in Iraq. In fact, I think this will be very good for the committee because it is an excellent case study of what intelligence should be, what intelligence should not be, how it can be used, and how it can be misused. I applaud the decision of the chairman and the ranking member to investigate the disturbing matter thoroughly, and I have no doubt that we will be able to investigate it thoroughly.

□ 1630

I applaud their decision to allow Members of the House to read the large volume of material that the Director of Central Intelligence has provided to the Congress. And our committee intends to issue a written report on its findings as promptly as possible.

We have only begun to examine in detail the testimony, the statements, the published intelligence relating to Iraq's weapons programs and terrorist associations. It is early in our investigation, too early in the military's search within Iraq itself to come to any definitive conclusions or explanations of our failure so far to substantiate the prewar claims and expectations of what we would find there. But I have no doubt that the House will be satisfied with the thorough and critical look that the committee will take in this issue.

There is no question that there is a lot of ambiguous information to search through. There is no doubt that there have been some exaggerated claims at least, and lives and deaths have hung on these things. We must take a thorough look at it. We will and I think the

Members of the House will be satisfied with that look.

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

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

I just wanted to add one bit of remark with regard to some of the comment we have just heard which I thought was very helpful. We understand very clearly and the Intelligence Community understands very clearly that finding the weapons of mass destruction or what happened to them or whether there was faulty intelligence is a critical issue and that is indeed ongoing. As the gentleman from New Jersey just said, we are early in the game and we have literally thousands of pages for our staff and Members to work through.

There is one thing that has not been said very clearly yet that does need to be said. I think we all share the desire to make as much of this known as possible to the public. We want the public to understand how good intelligence is and how good it is not. Frankly, I want to do everything I can to make the American people aware as well as people overseas who might be watching what we have to say here, whether they are our friends or our enemies, that our intelligence is indeed formidable and when in fact we find a place where there is a gap in it, it will be repaired and fixed and that gap will no longer be there. I think that will be a comfort to everybody. That process is partially what this bill is about. But we are doing this as regard to the debate with the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq at a time when we desire transparency but we understand that transparency might include some people who are our enemies in the Iraq area where there is still a very dangerous and difficult operational climate as we are tragically reminded every day.

I would ask that we understand that this is not just a question of going back and reviewing material at our leisure trying to come to some Solomon decision about whether it was good or bad or where we can fix it. This is matching information that we had which was the best we had at the time as far as we know with what we are beginning to find as we are able to talk to people who are captured in Iraq and other areas who are terrorists or are associated with them, document exploitation, those types of things and match that up. This process is a process that the committee has taken on. We are not just doing the prewar analysis. We are doing the what is going on now and where is it going on a daily basis.

I hope Members can be assured, we will be in a continuous position to assess, both give a score card to the community and perhaps to come back to our colleagues here and say there are some other areas where we need to invest in the Intelligence Community be-

cause a small investment will yield a greater national security return before we are through. That is an ongoing process and charge of this committee and one we take seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the rule.

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. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2417 and on the rule that was just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 295 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. 2417.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from California (Mr. OSE) to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1635

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. 2417) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes, with Mr. OSE (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Under the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS).

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

I am very pleased to bring the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 to the floor today. As always, this authorization is the culmination of both an intensive review of the intelligence budget request and the rigorous oversight of the Intelligence Community that the committee conducts on