Whereas the Task Force on the Contested Election in the 46th District of California and the Committee have been reviewing these materials and has all the information it needs regarding who voted in the 46th District and all the information it needs to make judgements concerning those votes; and

Whereas the Committee on House Oversight has after nine months of review and investigation failed to present credible evidence to change the outcome of the election of Congresswoman Sanchez and is pursuing never ending and unsubstantiated areas of review; and

Whereas, Contestant Robert Dornan has not shown or provided credible evidence that the outcome of the election is other than Congresswoman Sanchez's election to the Congress; and

Whereas, after nearly a year and the expenditure of over $500,000, the inquisition of voters of California's 46th Congressional District has resulted in the intimidation of Hispanic voters;

Whereas, the Committee on House Oversight should complete its review of this matter and bring this contest to an end Now therefore, be it;

Resolved, That unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of November 7, 1997.

□ 1545

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Without objection, the Chair's previous ruling under rule IX will be entered in the RECORD at this point.

There was no objection.

The text of the Chair's prior statement is as follows:

Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING QUESTION OF PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2 of rule IX, I hereby give notice of my intention to offer a resolution which raises a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Whereas, Loretta Sanchez was issued a certificate of election as the duly elected Member of Congress from the 46th District of California by the Secretary of State of California and was seated by the U.S. House of Representatives on January 7, 1997; and

Whereas A Notice of Contest of Election was filed with the Clerk of the House by Mr. Robert Dornan on December 26, 1996; and

Whereas the Task Force on the Contested Election in the 46th District of California met on February 26, 1997 in Washington, D.C. on April 19, 1997 in Orange County, California and October 24, 1997 in Washington, D.C.; and

Whereas Mr. Dornan's unproven allegations and the actions of the Committee on House Oversight have resulted in an unprecedented attack against Latino voters and created a chilling effect with a message to Latinos that their votes are suspect; and

Whereas the allegations made by Mr. Robert Dornan have been largely found to be without merit: charges of improper voting from a business, rather than a resident address; underage voting; double voting; and charges of unusually large number of individuals voting from the same address. It was found that voting from the same address included a Marines barracks and the domicile of nuns, that business addresses were legal residences for the individuals, including the zoo keeper of the Santa Ana zoo, that duplicate voting was by different individuals and those accused of underage voting were of age; and

Whereas the Committee on House Oversight has issued unprecedented subpoenas to the Immigration and Naturalization Service to compare their records with Orange County voter registration records, the first time in any election in the history of the United States that the INS has been asked by Congress to verify the citizenship of voters; and

Whereas the INS has complied with the Committee's request and, at the Committee's request, has been doing a manual check of its paper files and providing worksheets containing supplemental information on that manual check to the Committee on House Oversight for over five months; and

Whereas the Committee on House Oversight, subpoenaed the records seized by the District Attorney of Orange County on February 13, 1997 and has received and reviewed all records pertaining to registration efforts of that group; and

Whereas the House Oversight Committee is now pursuing a duplicate and dilatory review of materials already in the Committees possession by the Secretary of State of California; and

Whereas the Task Force on the Contested Election in the 46th District of California and the Committee have been reviewing these materials and has all the information it needs regarding who voted in the 46th District and all the information it needs to make judgments concerning those votes; and

Whereas the Committee on House Oversight has after over nine months of review and investigation failed to present credible evidence to change the outcome of the election of Congresswoman Sanchez and is pursuing never ending and unsubstantiated areas of review; and

Whereas, Contestant Robert Dornan has not shown or provided credible evidence that the outcome of the election is other than Congresswoman Sanchez's election to the Congress; and

Whereas, after nearly a year and the expenditure of over $500,000, the continued probe of the Sanchez election unfairly targets Latino voters and discourages their full participation in the democratic process; and

Whereas, the Committee on House Oversight should complete its review of this matter and bring this contest to an end and now therefore be it:

Resolved, That unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of November 7, 1997.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair's previous ruling under rule IX will be entered in the RECORD at this point.

There was no objection.

The text of the Chair's prior statement is as follows:

Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within two legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. RODRIGUEZ] will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, may I propound a parliamentary inquiry?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I have sat here for over an hour now waiting to bring before this body nine very, very important measures dealing with our relationship with the Communist People's Republic of China, and during that hour we have been delayed, we have listened to a number of notices of questions of privilege. One of them was by our good friend, and she is a good friend, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD], and as I listened to her make notice, I came across the October 31, 1997, page H9814, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, which is entitled ''An Announcement of Intention to Offer Resolution Raising Question of Privileges of the House,'' and it seems to me that the gentlewoman from California repeated exactly what she had noticed on October 31.

My question to the Chair is, it would seem, whether intentional or unintentional, that that would be deleterious in rising to make notice on the same question while one was pending. What is the parliamentary situation there?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will examine the announced resolution to determine whether it is identical to another one considered by the House on the same day.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMMITTEE ON RULES MEETING

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I have asked for this time for the purposes of making an announcement about a Committee on Rules meeting.

Mr. Speaker, we have just witnessed another, I believe, 14 or 15, I did not count the number, questions of privileges being noticed on the floor dealing with the Sanchez/Dornan situation. This brings to, just a guesstimate, to about 45 that now are pending. We have delayed the actions of the House by 1 hour, more than 1 hour just now. If we

were to entertain those 45-plus notices over the next couple of days, that would take up probably 24 legislative hours of this body.

This body has been working diligently to try to complete the work of the House so that we can adjourn for this year. As everyone knows, there are three appropriation bills that are contentious. One of those deals with the Census issue which we are told now is about to be worked out. Another dealt with an abortion issue on the Foreign Operations appropriation bill. We are told that the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH] has just about completed a compromise on that, and we are told that the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING], in negotiations with the House, has just about completed a compromise on the testing.

So that the only issues really to come before this body between now and the time that we would adjourn would be those three appropriation bills, the fast track bill, whether my colleagues are for or against it, I happen to be opposed to it, and some other measures such as these nine United States-China relation bills that are terribly important on the floor, now that it is going to take about 14 or 15 hours.

My point is, we have been delayed now so that we will not be able to complete the day's work on these China bills even if we stay until midnight, which we are, incidentally. We are going to stay at least until midnight. But even then, we will have to carry over five or six of these China bills until tomorrow, and then that just delays any chance that we might have had, I think, of adjourning for the year this Saturday, and even perhaps this Sunday.

But that part is irrelevant. The part that concerns me is that in all of the notices that have been brought before the House, I believe, and I say this sincerely, with no animosity, and I will not yield until I am finished, but I will be glad to at some point, I just believe, I sincerely believe, that they are deleterious in nature, and I have discussed this with the Speaker of the House and asked him if he would not declare them deleterious, keeping in mind that if one or two wanted to be offered each day, certainly knowing the sincerity by some Members of the other side of the aisle that we ought to, as my colleagues know, go along with that. But the Speaker is hesitant to do that because he wants to keep comity in the House.

But, nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the Committee on Rules to see to it that we complete our work on this session, and that is why I have scheduled a Committee on Rules meeting, and I would make notice to the members of the Committee on Rules that we will be considering in the Committee on Rules a two-thirds waiver for remaining appropriation bills from now until Sunday, which means that if the appropriation bills were complete, we could bring them up in the same day.

This is, and when I finish I will yield, this is typical of nomenclature that we do each year. We would also include in that rule permission for suspension days to be brought up with notice to the minority any day between now and Sunday so that we could take care of those significant issues that were not controversial and perhaps deal with them between now and Sunday.

But, also, I am just going to reluctantly recommend to the leadership that we limit in some way the notices that Members can bring on questions of privilege. Perhaps, and I have not decided how we will do this, but perhaps giving that right to the minority leader and the majority leader so that we can have negotiations that try to work out some comity and complete the work of the House. It is terribly important for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from San Diego, CA [Mr. HUNTER].

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that I support what he is trying to do for the simple reason that I have heard the notices read over and over again protesting the fact that we do not have a result yet in the election contest, and I just say to my friends that the notices are written in such a way that they are totally one-sided, there is no time for debate, and I sit there looking at the newspaper headlines in California saying that the secretary of state has found that 60 percent of the registrations by one group of people who were registered and voted manipulated—it says that 60 percent of these registrations were illegal.

And yet the idea, if my colleagues listen to the text of the privileged resolutions, which, in essence, are arguments themselves, they talk about Marine barracks being questioned and nuns being questioned. And of course those may be in the huge universe of tens of thousands of people, but the fact that one group alone was found to have had 60 percent of their registrations being fraudulent, and the idea that this House should not investigate that, and that there is no chance for a debate on these privileged motions, they are simply read over and over again in rote.

□ 1600

They were obviously written in such a way as to make the argument in the resolution itself.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HUNTER. I am not going to yield until I am able to finish my sentence.

That, I think, offers no value to this deliberative body, because there is absolutely no time given on the other side, and it gives the impression to the people out in the countryside that there is not a group that had 60 percent fraudulent registrations, which in fact has been the finding of the secretary of state, which would justify any deliberative body in the world at least the idea that we should go forward and at least have a further investigation until we find all the information.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, first of all, I have to yield to the gentleman from Texas who asked me to yield in the first place, and then, if the gentlewoman would let him speak for her, because we have to get on with the regular order.

Ms. DELAURO. Well, I would like to correct the RECORD in a couple of ways, if I can.

Mr. SOLOMON. Well, Mr. Speaker, I will first yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Would the gentleman from Texas rather I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, that is fine.

Mr. SOLOMON. I just did not want to slight the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding. There are two points here. One has to do with our colleague, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD] who, in fact, has introduced two privileged motions, two different dates. Both are different, if the gentleman will check and take a look at the Record.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, would the gentlewoman explain to us how they are different?

Ms. DELAURO. Let me just finish.

Second, there is nothing, nothing, nothing we would like better on this side of the aisle on this issue than to have the opportunity for debate. Every time one of these, after the notice and the vote comes due, we would love to have a debate. In fact, what happens is that a Member gets up and calls for the motion to be tabled, so in fact, we cannot have a debate.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we have already had that debate.

Ms. DELAURO. Allow us the opportunity to have the debate on this.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, regular order. Reclaiming my time, the Gephardt debate amendment, or questions of privileges, has been debated on the floor. I now yield back.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SPEAK OUT OF ORDER

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized out of order for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, we have to continue with regular order.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York spoke out of order for 5 minutes, or longer than that.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). Objection is heard.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF NINE MEASURES RELATING TO THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I