

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

I am waiting for one other speaker; so, while we are waiting, let me at least partially close.

I, first of all, thank Chairman ROYCE's staff for their hard work on this very important bill. I thank Tom Sheehy, Ed Burrier, Tom Hill, and Doug Anderson, and on my staff, Jason Steinbaum, Doug Campbell, Eric Jacobstein, Janice Kaguyutan, Sajit Gandhi, Jennifer Hendrixson White, and Mark Iozzi. We can only do as well as the wonderful staff that we have, and it is really appreciated, I know, by Chairman ROYCE and by me.

As was said before, Mr. Speaker, every single year, Congress passes a defense authorization. It happens without fail, and it should. It is a vitally important piece of legislation, and we have an obligation to give our women and men in uniform the support and the resources they need.

□ 1800

The work of our diplomats is very different, but it is also critical to our national security. These dedicated public servants help to project stability, enhance security, and diffuse crises before they start.

From a dollars-and-cents perspective, it makes a lot more sense to prevent crises than to try to stop them after they are burning out of control. We need diplomacy to succeed so that using our military remains the last resort in our foreign policy. This legislation will help ensure that our diplomacy does succeed.

I hope this bill gets across the finish line soon; I hope the Senate does its job; and I hope we make a State Department authorization a yearly priority for the Foreign Affairs Committee, for the Congress, and for the American people.

I urge a "yes" vote on this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I am a big fan of Chairman ROYCE's work, and I appreciate all the work of the committee in these difficult areas.

Sometimes in trying to bring together a big authorization bill like this, language gets inserted that can be problematic. On page 105, for example, section 713, "Recruitment and retention of individuals who have lived, worked, or studied in predominantly Muslim countries or communities," we know that one of our problems when we were trying to deal with radical Islam is, number one, our President doesn't recognize radical Islam, although some of the best experts who are radical Islamists say, yes, it exists, and Muslim friends like President el-Sisi acknowledge it is a problem.

For example, here in subsection C, it says: "The Secretary shall make every effort to recruit and retain individuals that have lived, worked, or studied in

predominantly Muslim countries or communities, including individuals who have studied at Islamic institutions of higher learning."

I know this was not submitted by a Muslim—far from it—but although we desperately need people who have lived and studied in this area, to tell the Secretary of State that the Secretary shall make every effort to get people like this is the way our enemies take advantage of us. We should not be telling the Secretary to make every effort.

As a former chief justice, that is the kind of thing—you have to say, well, he didn't make every effort or she didn't make every effort. We should not be coercing the State Department to hire people who—if they are not appropriate or have Muslim ties, they should not be pushed into the State Department.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, let me say in response that we should hire, in the State Department, people who do have some experience. We should have some people there with some experience with Muslim culture and Muslim countries, with that kind of a background. But that said, we want to work with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) on implementation of this bill to make certain that these concerns are handled.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, first, for the great bipartisan work. I really appreciate being on this committee.

I want to tell you a story that one of our Ambassadors told me that I thought was amazing. I won't say her name or where she was, but she told me she was overseas. The security that they hired was so poor that they actually had to hire criminals; and her security guard not only robbed her and her family, but killed their dog. That is just an example of some of the quality of security that we had for our Ambassadors, who deserve absolutely our utmost protection.

So I just want to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for working with me to get this provision in this bill that now is going to let our State Department get well-qualified security for Embassies, which they deserve to have.

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

I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her contribution to this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman, I also want to thank our ranking member, Mr. ENGEL. I want to thank all my committee colleagues for their contributions to this bill. I think we should take the opportunity to thank our counterparts, Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, in the Senate for working with us to bring the first State authorization bill to the President's desk in over 15 years.

Today, the Department is considering how to deploy diplomats in high-

threat, high-risk places like South Sudan, like the Central African Republic, Yemen, Libya. It is our responsibility to make sure that U.S. personnel at these posts have every available means of protection, and this bill authorizes the Department to make critical upgrades in Embassy security.

This bill also mandates that the Department uses leverage at the United Nations to make improvements that have been ignored for too long. In just the last year, we have heard horrific stories of peacekeepers sexually abusing and exploiting those they are sent to protect. Sadly, these are not the first instances of such predatory behavior, but the United Nations has failed to take steps to stop it.

Oversight is necessary at any agency. It took 5 years for the Department's inspector general position to be filled, and this bill makes sure that the Department's watchdog has all the tools it needs to perform its mandate.

This bill deserves our support. The other body should move quickly so that these critical reforms can be signed into law by the President.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1635, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GOHMERT. 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARDY) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 5015, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 6427, by the yeas and nays;

S. 1635, by the yeas and nays.