

damage done by section 2104 of H.R. 1561, the American Overseas Interests Act, passed by this body on June 8. The section, dealing with the issue of Indochinese boat people, is causing all the problems that this Member and others predicted. More on that subject now.

On June 20, the Washington Post cataloged the devastating impact of this legislation in an article datelined Hong Kong. This Member quotes.

At first, no one knew exactly why a riot erupted at the Hong Kong refugee detention center on May 20th. Thousands of Vietnamese violently battled back with stones, makeshift spears and anything else they could throw, leaving 168 police officers and 73 Vietnamese injured. Refugee workers soon got a clue as to what was happening when they spotted some of the rioting Vietnamese waving tiny American flags and portraits of President Clinton.

Quoting from the Post:

The evidence became ironclad about a week later, when 200 Vietnamese who had volunteered to go home unexpectedly changed their minds, just 48 hours before their scheduled June 1st departure. They told UN officials that they would rather wait in Hong Kong camps until the U.S. Congress decided on a House-passed bill providing for the rescreening of up to 20,000 Vietnamese refugees for possible admittance into the United States.

This Member had predicted before this body that this provision in H.R. 1561 would raise false expectations of resettlement among Indochinese boat people, causing violence in the camps and stopping voluntary repatriation. Unfortunately, as the Post article amply demonstrates, this prediction has come to pass.

Whether this ill-advised provision ever becomes law—and the Clinton administration has already made it clear that this issue is among those certain to provoke a Presidential veto—the damage has already been done. The article continues, and I quote:

A carefully constructed global agreement signed six years ago in Geneva, which laid out a formula for screening the Vietnamese boat people and sending home those not deemed genuine refugees fleeing persecution, seems in danger of collapse. And a more recently agreed-upon timetable for finally resolving the two-decade-old "boat people" crisis by year's end now looks unlikely.

A Hong Kong refugee official is quoted in the article saying:

Like a bolt of lightning, initiatives were taken in Congress that have thrown this program out of gear. This provision is an unhelpful intervention which has raised false hopes.

The official concludes that resolving the boat people crisis was "not easy before Congress. It is even more difficult now."

Mr. Speaker, this body must understand that amendments we approve or reject, bills we approve, laws we enact, actions we take, and statements we make oftentimes do have an important and sometimes immediate impact in the real world, outside the beltway. The best intentions, Mr. Speaker, do not necessarily make good legislation. At the time this body debated this pro-

vision and rejected the Bereuter-Obey amendment, we had ample warning of the dangerous situation we were creating. Despite pressure brought to bear on them, several refugee advocacy groups with years of experience dealing with Indochinese refugees had already publicly denounced the provision as dangerous and irresponsible, as had the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the State Department, and many interested refugee resettlement and host governments.

The same article continues that the problem goes beyond Hong Kong, which is the host of more than 22,000 Indochinese asylum seekers—incidentally, more than one-half of whom come from North Vietnam and have no claim to refugee status based on close ties to the United States military from the Viet Nam era. The article quotes UNHCR officials stating that the legislation has stopped voluntary repatriation at camps throughout the region—not only in Hong Kong, but also in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

This Member again quotes the Post.

There also has been violence elsewhere. In Malaysia, many thousands of Vietnamese broke through the fence around the camp on June 5th and paraded through the streets waving banners. Police fired tear gas to disburse them, and 23 people were reported injured. Violence flared again in Hong Kong on June 7, when Vietnamese rioted, torched a building, stole police uniforms and looted rations. Police fired 800 rounds of tear gas to quell the disturbance. Six Vietnamese and two police officers were injured.

Mr. Speaker, this misguided provision in H.R. 1561 was based on the view that there were serious flaws in the screening process by which the boat peoples' claims to political refugee status were evaluated. The intent of this provision is to force a massive rescreening in the camps of all 40,000 camp residents to give them another chance to demonstrate their claim to refugee status. Many objective observers, including some refugee advocates, reject this contention and oppose massive rescreening. Moreover, the Southeast Asian nations where the camps are located have made it clear that they will not countenance a lengthy rescreening process which will delay closure of the camps and could prompt another refugee outflow from Vietnam.

It would be naive to think that the screening of tens of thousands of boat people by local officials, even though under close supervision by the UNHCR, could have been accomplished without error or abuse. In fact, this Member has requested UNHCR reconsideration of 15 cases of Vietnamese asylum seekers who would seem to have a plausible case for refugee status. While this Member certainly is willing to intervene when specific cases of possible error are brought to his attention, he opposes strongly massive rescreening of asylum seekers in the refugee camps.

Moreover, it appears from information provided by UNHCR and non-

government organizations monitoring boat people who have returned to Vietnam, that massive rescreening in the camps is not necessary. These organizations attest that there is no credible evidence of persecution of returnees in Vietnam. So why shouldn't the screened out asylum seekers in the camps return to Vietnam? Recent testimony by the American nongovernmental organization [NGO], World Vision, concludes that screened out boat people have been able to return to Vietnam in safety and dignity. The World Vision witness added that, in addition to the official UNHCR monitoring, the presence of American NGO's throughout Vietnam has provided returnees "a number of options should they wish to raise a question or register a concern."

The problem the international community now faces, however, is that the damage caused by this legislation has already been done. The Bereuter-Obey amendment which would have deleted this highly problematic section of H.R. 1561 was rejected and, as predicted by this Member, the damage was done. Therefore, this Member calls on all parties: UNHCR, resettlement and first asylum countries, Vietnam, the administration, NGO's, and Members of Congress to work out a pragmatic solution to the current impasse. The question we are now facing is how to get the 40,000 plus screened out asylum seekers to return voluntarily to Vietnam. While this Member does not have a concrete solution to offer at this time, it seems that some system of reinterviewing asylum seekers after their return to Vietnam could offer an incentive for the boat people to return, while at the same time maintain the international consensus on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, this Member pledges his support for efforts to devise concrete and pragmatic solutions to this intractable humanitarian problem which the House by its unfortunate action helped to create. This Member calls on other Members of this body, including those who disagrees with him on this legislation and supported the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], to make a similar pledge.

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this time as we close out July to talk about what we have to look forward to in August, and one of the great things we have to look forward to in August is this stamp, this 32-cent stamp will be coming out on August 26 in celebration of women having and the right to vote for 75 years in this country.

Yes, this is really something to celebrate I think, and the stamp is very

beautiful, with the Capitol in the background, suffragettes over here who worked so hard to get that right to vote; and it flows into modern-day women still trying to use that vote to move their fights forward.

This was an incredible time 75 years ago, when you think that the fight for the right to vote started way back when this Republic began, with John Adams' wife begging to have women included in the Constitution, and of course they did not; and then the first national convention in 1848 being held in Seneca Falls where women came together and again asked for the right to vote, and it took until 75 years ago before that really happened. Almost all the people at the 1848 convention were dead by the time the reality of the vote had occurred.

But this was probably one of the most revolutionary things that happened in American society without a revolution. I add, without a revolution, because there was no war to do this. It was all done within the right to petition Government, the right of people who couldn't vote, but they still petitioned Government for that right.

The suffragettes came to Washington. They bought a house; they lived there constantly. They picketed by day, and in their lovely white dresses, they chained themselves to the White House gate because they would not let them in to see the President. They would visit Senators and Congressmen who would see them, and if they were not in jail by night, they would go back to the house where they had all rented, have a piano concerto, tea, dinner, get up and do the same thing the next day, over, and over, and over.

Finally, this Congress and finally all of the States moved to ratify that.

So what happened after that? One of the very first things that happened was then the Congress moved to make motherhood safe. At the time that women were trying to get the right to vote, more women had died in America during childbirth, all throughout World War I, than American soldiers had died in Europe in World War I. Childbirth was very risky and yet the Congress was spending more money on hog cholera than they were spending on maternal child care and infant child care.

So they immediately got those priorities shifted, and today we see childbirth as something that people do not worry about having a huge high mortality rate from.

I think that as we celebrate this stamp, and there will be celebrations all throughout America, and heaven help us if we do not see more of these stamps purchased than the Marilyn Monroe stamp. I don't know what that will say about America, but let us hope that people get these and they talk about that long history and they talk about what a difference women's vote can make and have made many a time.

And I hope if we keep seeing what this extreme new group, the new Republicans, and doing to women as they

have taken over the Congress, I hope women come out one more time and use that vote to straighten it out.

Women still do not get equal pay in this country. They are now getting 72 cents for every dollar a man gets in the same job, and yet nobody gives them that kind of discount on their rent or their food or their public utility bills or anything else. So they are still not getting equal pay, and we are seeing this Congress roll back thing after thing after thing that has affected women.

They have undone Title IX. That is the one that says, in the schools, if they get public funding, they must give women the same opportunity they give men. That may sound irrelevant to a lot of young women today, but when I was growing up, believe me, it was very relevant. We had none of the gym privileges. I was one person who wanted to be an aerodynamic engineer and, of course, the gates were closed, locked and everything else.

There was no way. It was either, get into liberal arts or get out, and there were many other instances of that.

The Federal Government made a huge difference in that and now we see them trying to roll that back. They are trying to roll back student loans. They are rolling back the choice issue all across the board.

Last week in this Congress, we even had a vote saying that women who are incarcerated in prison, even if they were cocaine addicts, could not have an abortion. That is crazy.

So as we get ready to celebrate this, I hope women not only celebrate the stamp, not only know they have the vote. They now, after 75 years, learn how to use the vote and get more respect from this Congress.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning business, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 12 noon.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.) the House stood in recess until 12 noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EVERETT) at 12 noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We give thanks, gracious God, for the awesome miracles of life, miracles that brighten our world, enrich our lives and testify to Your glory. We are grateful that Your spirit of creation and renewal breaks into history and proclaims to us the riches of Your

grace and even the very purpose for our existence. Bless us, O God, and all Your people and may we be alert to the miracles that bring new life into being and are a witness every day to Your abiding grace. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EVERETT). The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MONTGOMERY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1817. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 1817 "An Act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. BURNS, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. REID, Mr. INOUE, and Mr. BYRD, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

IT IS TIME TO END GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY AS WE KNOW IT

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, wherever I go in my district I hear the same thing over and over: Uncle Sam is out of control. Regulations are choking the life out of our farmers, bankers, and small businessmen. Agents, regulators, and bureaucrats are crawling all over eastern North Carolina, hounding and penalizing hard-working people who want nothing more than to be left alone by their Government.