

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### AMERICA'S STAKE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

**HON. LEE H. HAMILTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 1995*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, many of us have been critical of the management and efficiency of the United Nations. Despite these shortcomings, on the 50th anniversary of the U.N. Charter it is important to remember the critical role this institution plays.

I therefore commend to my colleagues a recent policy statement by the U.N. Association of the United States of America, "America's Stake in the United Nations and Financing the United Nations." As this statement notes, every U.S. administration has turned to the United Nations for collective action to help maintain or restore peace. The United Nations helps to spread the financial, political, and military burden of interventions. I agree with the policy statement that "Increased reliance on U.N. collective security operations necessarily complements our defense savings."

The United States cannot insulate itself from an interconnected world where transnational threats such as drugs, terrorism, and diseases respect no borders. The United Nations is an imperfect but vital tool which can help respond to those threats. I fully agree with UNA/USA's statement that the U.N. requires reform, but not wrecking. I intend to continue pressing for such reform in the United Nations.

While I do not support providing any kind of tax authority to the United Nations, it seems to me that we cannot hope for a more efficient and effective United Nations so long as its finances remain unreliable. The answer, as the report states, is simple: Nations must pay their assessed contributions on time, and in full. We should not support U.N. budgets for which we do not intend to pay.

I congratulate UNA/USA on this thoughtful policy statement, and request that it be included in the RECORD.

#### AMERICA'S STAKE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Fifty years ago we, the people of the United States, joined in common purpose and shared commitment with the people of 50 other nations. The most catastrophic war in history had convinced nations that no country could any longer be safe and secure in isolation. From this realization was born the United Nations—the idea of a genuine world community and a framework for solving human problems that transcend national boundaries. Since then, technology and economics have transformed "world community" from a phrase to a fact, and if the World War II generation had not already established the U.N. system, today's would have to create it.

The founders of the United Nations were clairvoyant in many ways. The Charter anticipated decolonization; called for "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion"; and set up the institutional framework "for the promotion of

the economic and social advancement of all peoples." In meeting the Charter's challenges, we make for a more secure and prosperous world.

Through the U.N. system, many serious conflicts have been contained or concluded. Diseases have been controlled or eradicated, children immunized, refugees protected and fed. Nations have set standards on issues of common concern—ranging from human rights to environmental survival to radio frequencies. Collective action has also furthered particular U.S. government interests, such as averting a widening war in the Middle East into which Washington might otherwise be drawn. After half a century, the U.N. remains a unique investment yielding multiple dividends for Americans and others alike.

The U.N.'s mandate to preserve peace and security was long hobbled by the Cold War, whose end has allowed the institutions of global security to spring to life. The five permanent members of the Security Council now meet and function as a cohesive group, and what the Council has lost in rhetorical drama it has more than gained in forging common policies. Starting with the Reagan Administration's effort to marshal the Security Council to help bring an end to the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, every U.S. administration has turned to the U.N. for collective action to help maintain or restore peace. Common policy may not always result in success, but neither does unilateral policy—and, unlike unilateral intervention, it spreads costs and risks widely and may help avoid policy disasters.

Paradoxically, the end of the Cold War has also given rise in the U.S. to a resurgent isolationism, along with calls for unilateral, go-it-alone policies. Developments in many places that once would have stirred alarm are now viewed with indifference. When they do excite American political interest, the impulse is often to respond unilaterally in the conviction that only Washington can do the job and do it right. Without a Soviet threat, some Americans imagine we can renounce "foreign entanglements." Growing hostility to U.N. peacekeeping in some political circles reflects, in large measure, the shortsighted idea that America has little at stake in the maintenance of a peaceful world. In some quarters, resentment smolders at any hint of reciprocal obligations; but in a country founded on the rule of law, the notion that law should rule among nations ought not to be controversial.

The political impulse to go it alone surges at precisely the moment when nations have become deeply interconnected. The need for international teamwork has never been clearer. Goods, capital, news, entertainment, and ideas flow national borders with astonishing speed. So do refugees, diseases, drugs, environmental degradation, terrorists, and currency crashes.

The institutions of the U.N. system are not perfect, but they remain our best tools for concerted international action. Just as Americans often seek to reform our own government, we must press for improvement of the U.N. system. Fragmented and of limited power prone to political paralysis, bureaucratic torpor, and opaque accountability, the U.N. system requires reform—but not wrecking. Governments and citizens must press for changes that improve agencies' efficiency,

and make them accountable to the world's publics they were created to serve. Our world institutions can only be strengthened with the informed engagement of national leaders, press, and the public at large.

The American people have not lost their commitment to the United Nations and to the rule of law. They reaffirm it consistently, whether in opinion surveys or UNICEF campaigns. Recognizing the public's sentiment, the foes of America's U.N. commitment—unilateralists, isolationists, or whatever—do not call openly for rejecting the U.N. as they had earlier rejected outright the League of Nations. But the systematic paring back of our commitment to international law and participation in institutions would have the same effect.

In this 50th anniversary year, America's leaders should rededicate the nation to the promise of a more peaceful and prosperous world contained in the U.N. Charter. In that spirit, the United Nations Association of the United States calls on the people and government of the United States, and those of all other U.N. member states, to join in strengthening the United Nations system for the 21st century.

In particular, we call for action in five areas, which will be the top policy priorities of UNA-USA as we enter the U.N.'s second half-century:

Reliable financing of the United Nations system.

Strong and effective U.N. machinery to help keep the peace.

Promotion of broad-based and sustainable world economic growth.

Vigorous defense of human rights and protection of displaced populations.

Control, reduction, or elimination of highly destructive weaponry.

### POST-RATIFICATION BY MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE OF U.S. CONSTITUTION'S 13TH AMENDMENT—ABOLISHING SLAVERY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 13, 1995*

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call to the attention of my colleagues and to the attention of the American people, a very historic action taken earlier this year by the Legislature of my State of Mississippi.

A century and three decades ago, in 1865, the 38th Congress proposed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to end the inhumane practice of slavery—uniformly, throughout the entire Nation. Within a matter of months, the proposal had received the required approval of the legislatures of three-fourths of the States then in the Union and it resultantly became the Constitution's 13th amendment.

It also was during that pivotal year of 1865, that both houses of the Mississippi Legislature adopted a resolution rejecting, denouncing, and condemning the constitutional amendment to abolish slavery. Thus, the 13th amendment

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