Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation. By passing H.R. 2779, Congress can act to enhance the competitiveness of American industry, protect small businesses, save thousands of union jobs from foreign competition, and save the American taxpayer money. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise with mixed emotions on the bill H.R. 2779, the Savings in Construction Act. While I believe that the Science Committee's actions have improved H.R. 2779 substantially, I regret that we did not use this legislation to develop a more imaginative approach to measurement policy questions.

At the outset, I also want to make sure our colleague from Tennessee, Mr. TANNER receives credit for the pivotal role he played in the improvements in H.R. 2779. His March 5 letter to Under Secretary of Commerce Mary Good, which was co-signed by most of the other committee Democrats, began the chain of events which has permitted this bill to move forward. The end results of his efforts are a more favorable atmosphere within the administration for the concrete block and recessed lighting industries and the improved legislative language now before us. This bill is no longer harmful to the Federal procurement process, and its potential damage to our national policy of metric conversion has been limited.

H.R. 2779, as reported, does a credible job in solving $10,000 problems of a number of small businesses, but it lets a billion dollar national problem fester. As Congressman EHLERS so eloquently pointed out during Science Committee deliberations on this bill, our Nation's failure to adopt the metric system of measurement in a timely manner has cost U.S. companies billions of dollars in lost trade opportunities. This situation is ongoing and has the potential to get worse. The United States is the only industrialized nation to hold onto the English system of measurement. We can increasingly expect our trading partners to require American exports to their countries to be designed and manufactured using the internationally accepted metric system of measurement. If, as in this bill, we restate English measurements in metric terms rather than actually design and measure in metric, we will not fool anyone. American companies that are unwilling or unable to manufacture in rational metric units will lose out to foreign companies that will.

The case was made in our hearings on H.R. 2779 that some block manufacturers have difficulty bidding on construction projects which require their products to be dimensioned in rational metric. However, exempting these companies from metric usage is just one possible solution and one that represents a ''can't do'' rather than a ''can do'' attitude. With more time, we could have looked for ways to solve the block manufacturers problems while advancing the cause of metrication. We could have made sure that metric block molds are an allowable expense under Federal construction contracts. We could have funded research in the design of adjustable molds which could be used for making both metric and English-dimensioned block. As a minimum, we could have limited the duration of the metric block exemption and committed to finding a better solution to this problem during that time. I hope the Senate will take a closer look than we were able to do at alternative ways to help block manufacturers and at setting appropriate limits on the duration of this exemption.

Our solution for lighting industry metrication problems may turn out to be more appropriate. Our lighting industry is positioned to begin manufacturing metric lighting products; a number of the affected companies already have issued metric lighting catalogs. H.R. 2779, through its lighting standards trigger, will allow the exemption to be ignored when the reason for it no longer exists.

The ombudsman concept is a dramatic improvement over the procurement bureaucracy contained in section 4 of the introduced version of H.R. 2779, but the jury is still out on whether it is really necessary. The Government has built a dozen major buildings using metric measurement and only two industries have not been willing to go along. One would think if metric were a problem for other building subcontractors that the problem would have arisen by now.

The busiest time for the metric ombudsmen will probably be at the time of enactment when agencies must figure out what to do with the hundreds of metric-dimensioned construction projects which are in various stages of design and construction. H.R. 2779's silence on this point is likely to lead to problems of interpretation. I urge the Senate to come up with a set of principles to cover ongoing projects and urge the ombudsmen to use common sense in these cases.

In summary, my desire to see the concrete masonry industry get relief leads me not to oppose this bill, but I regret that we did not have more time to perfect our work product. Perhaps the Senate will have the time to make a conscious effort to improve the bill. Then we will be able to feel comfortable that the entire Congress did its best to meet the long-term needs of the companies we are all trying to help.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute and on the bill.

The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and (three-fifths having voted in favor thereof) the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2779.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

NATO ENLARGEMENT FACILITATION ACT OF 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3564) to amend the NATO Participation Act of 1994 to expedite the transition to full membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization of emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3564

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Since 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has played an essential role in guaranteeing the security, freedom, and prosperity of the United States and its partners in the Alliance.

(2) The NATO Alliance is, and has been since its inception, purely defensive in character, and it poses no threat to any nation. The enlargement of the NATO Alliance to include as full and equal members emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe will serve to reinforce stability and security in Europe by fostering their integration into the structures which have created and sustained peace in Europe since 1945. Their admission to NATO will not threaten any nation. America's security, freedom, and prosperity remain linked to the security of the countries of Europe.

(3) The sustained commitment of the member countries of NATO to a mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe. Members of the Alliance can and should play a critical role in addressing the security challenges of the post-Cold War era and in creating the stable environment needed for those emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe to successfully complete political and economic transformation.

(4) The United States continues to regard the political independence and territorial integrity of all emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe as vital to European peace and security.

(5) NATO has enlarged its membership on 3 different occasions since 1949.

(6) Congress has sought to facilitate the further enlargement of NATO at an early date by enacting the NATO Participation

Act of 1994 (title II of Public Law 103–447; 22 U.S.C. 1928 note) and the NATO Participation Act Amendments of 1995 (section 585 of Public Law 104–107).

(7) The Partnership for Peace, created in 1994 under American leadership, has fostered cooperation between NATO and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and offers a path to future membership in the Alliance and a permanent security relationship between participants in the Partnership for Peace and members of NATO.

(8) As new members of NATO assume the responsibilities of Alliance membership, the costs of maintaining stability in Europe will be shared more widely. The concurrent assumption of greater responsibility and development of greater capabilities by the European members of NATO in pursuit of a European security and defense identity will further reinforce burdensharing. Facilitation of the enlargement process will require current members of NATO, and the United States in particular, to demonstrate the political will needed to build on successful ongoing programs such as the Warsaw Initiative and the Partnership for Peace by making available the resources necessary to supplement efforts prospective new members are themselves undertaking.

(9) New members will be full members of the Alliance, enjoying all rights and assuming all the obligations under the Washington Treaty.

(10) In order to assist emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe that have expressed interest in joining NATO to be prepared to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership, the United States should encourage and support efforts by such countries to develop force structures and force modernization priorities that will enable such countries to contribute to the full range of NATO missions, including, most importantly, territorial defense of the Alliance.

(11) Cooperative regional peacekeeping initiatives involving emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe that have expressed interest in joining NATO, such as the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion, the Polish-Lithuanian Joint Peacekeeping Force, and the Polish-Ukrainian Peacekeeping Force, can make an important contribution to European peace and security and international peacekeeping efforts, can assist those countries preparing to assume the responsibilities of possible NATO membership, and accordingly should receive appropriate support from the United States.

(12) NATO remains the only multilateral security organization capable of conducting effective military operations and preserving security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region.

(13) NATO is an important diplomatic forum and has played a positive role in defusing tensions between members of the Alliance and, as a result, no military action has occurred between two Alliance member states since the inception of NATO in 1949.

(14) The process of enlarging NATO to include emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe should be a continuing process and progress toward the admission of additional emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe will depend on the degree to which these countries meet the criteria set forth in section 203(d)(3) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994.

(15) Protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms and human rights is an integral aspect of genuine security, and in evaluating requests for membership in NATO, the human rights records of the emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe should be evaluated in light of the obligations and commitments of these countries under the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Helsinki Final Act.

(16) A number of Central and Eastern European countries have expressed interest in NATO membership, and have taken concrete steps to demonstrate this commitment; including their participation in Partnership for Peace activities.

(17) Democratic civilian control of defense forces is an essential element in the process of preparation for those states interested in possible NATO membership.

(18) The security and economic stability of the Caucasus region is important to the United States, and the countries of the Caucasus region should not be precluded from future membership in NATO. The United States should continue to promote policies that encourage economic and fiscal reforms, private sector growth, and political reforms in the Caucasus region.

(19) In recognition that not all countries which have requested membership in NATO will necessarily qualify at the same pace, the accession date for each new member may vary.

(20) The process of NATO enlargement entails the consensus agreement of the governments of all 16 NATO members and ratification in accordance with their constitutional procedures.

(21) The provision of additional NATO transition assistance should include those emerging democracies most ready for closer ties with NATO and should be designed to assist other countries meeting specified criteria of eligibility to move forward toward eventual NATO membership.

(22) Lasting security and stability in Europe requires not only the military integration of emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe into existing European structures, but also the eventual economic and political integration of these countries into existing European structures.

(23) The Congress of the United States finds that Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have made the most progress toward achieving the stated criteria and should be eligible for the additional assistance described in this bill.

(24) The evaluation of future membership in NATO for emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe should be based on the progress of those nations in meeting criteria for NATO membership, which require enhancement of NATO's security and the approval of all NATO members.

SEC. 3. UNITED STATES POLICY.

It should be the policy of the United States—

(1) to join with the NATO allies of the United States to adapt the role of the NATO Alliance to the post-Cold War world;

(2) to actively assist the emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe in their transition so that such countries may eventually qualify for NATO membership;

(3) to ensure that all countries in Central and Eastern Europe are fully aware of the costs and responsibilities of NATO membership, including the obligation set forth in Article X of the North Atlantic Treaty that new members be able to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area, and further to ensure that all countries admitted to NATO are capable of assuming those costs and responsibilities; and

(4) to work to define a constructive and cooperative political and security relationship between an enlarged NATO and the Russian Federation.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING FURTHER ENLARGEMENT OF NATO.

It is the sense of the Congress that in order to promote economic stability and security in Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Moldova, and Ukraine—

(1) the United States should continue to support the full and active participation of these countries in activities appropriate for qualifying for NATO membership;

(2) the United States Government should continue to use all diplomatic means available to press the European Union to admit as soon as possible any country which qualifies for membership; and

(3) the United States Government and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization should continue to support military exercises and peacekeeping initiatives between and among these nations and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

SEC. 5. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA.

In view of the forcible incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union in 1940 under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the refusal of the United States and other countries to recognize that incorporation for over 50 years, it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have valid historical security concerns that must be taken into account by the United States; and

(2) Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania should not be disadvantaged in seeking to join NATO by virtue of their forcible incorporation into the Soviet Union.

SEC. 6. DESIGNATION OF COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The following countries are designated as eligible to receive assistance under the program established under section 203(a) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 and shall be deemed to have been so designated pursuant to section 203(d) of such Act: Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

(b) AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE OTHER COUNTRIES NOT PRECLUDED.—The process of enlarging NATO to include emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe should not stop with the admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as full members of the NATO Alliance. Accordingly, the designation of countries pursuant to subsection (a) shall not be deemed to preclude the designation by the President of other Central and Eastern European countries pursuant to section 203(d) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 as eligible to receive assistance under the program established under section 203(a) of such Act.

SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated $60,000,000 for fiscal year 1997 for the program established under section 203(a) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated by subsection (a)—

(1) not less than $20,000,000 shall be available for the subsidy cost, as defined in section 502(5) of the Credit Reform Act of 1990, of direct loans pursuant to the authority of section 203(c)(4) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 (relating to the ''Foreign Military Financing Program'');

(2) not less than $30,000,000 shall be available for assistance on a grant basis pursuant to the authority of section 203(c)(4) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 (relating to the ''Foreign Military Financing Program''); and

(3) not more than $10,000,000 shall be available for assistance pursuant to the authority of section 203(c)(3) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 (relating to international military education and training).

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under this section are authorized to be appropriated in addition to such amounts as otherwise may be available for such purposes.

SEC. 8. REGIONAL AIRSPACE INITIATIVE AND PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Funds described in subsection (b) are authorized to be made available to support the implementation of the Regional Airspace Initiative and the Partnership for Peace Information Management System, including—

(1) the procurement of items in support of these programs; and

(2) the transfer of such items to countries participating in these programs, which may include Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, Albania, Ukraine, and Bulgaria.

(b) FUNDS DESCRIBED.—Funds described in this subsection are funds that are available—

(1) during any fiscal year under the NATO Participation Act of 1994 with respect to countries eligible for assistance under that Act; or

(2) during fiscal year 1997 under any Act to carry out the Warsaw Initiative.

SEC. 9. EXCESS DEFENSE ARTICLES.

(a) PRIORITY DELIVERY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the delivery of excess defense articles under the authority of section 203(c) (1) and (2) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 and section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 shall be given priority to the maximum extent feasible over the delivery of such excess defense articles to all other countries except those countries referred to in section 541 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1995 (Public Law 103–306; 108 Stat. 1640).

(b) COOPERATIVE REGIONAL PEACEKEEPING INITIATIVES.—The Congress encourages the President to provide excess defense articles and other appropriate assistance to cooperative regional peacekeeping initiatives involving emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe that have expressed an interest in joining NATO in order to enhance their ability to contribute to European peace and security and international peacekeeping efforts.

SEC. 10. MODERNIZATION OF DEFENSE CAPABILITY.

The Congress endorses efforts by the United States to modernize the defense capability of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and any other countries designed by the President pursuant to section 203(d) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994, by exploring with such countries options for the sale or lease to such countries of weapons systems compatible with those used by NATO members, including air defense systems, advanced fighter aircraft, and telecommunications infrastructure.

SEC. 11. TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.

(a) TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—The eligibility of a country designated pursuant to section 6(a) or pursuant to section 203(d) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 may be terminated upon determination by the President that such country no longer meets the criteria set forth in section 203(d)(3) of the NATO Participation Act of 1994.

(b) NOTIFICATION.—At least 15 days before terminating the eligibility of any country pursuant to subsection (a), the President shall notify the congressional committees specified in section 634A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 in accordance with the procedures applicable to reprogramming notifications under that section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous materials.)

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring before the House H.R. 3564, the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act.

Almost 7 years have passed since the revolutions of 1989 swept communism from most of Central and Eastern Europe. Since that date, the emerging democracies of that region have waited patiently to be invited into Western political, economic and security structures.

This bill stands for the proposition that neither we nor the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe can afford to wait any longer. Only by taking this step now can we ensure that the democratic gains of the last 7 year are not going to be reversed.

After today's vote, it is hoped that we will never hear again that the Congress does not support NATO enlargement. We will support it. Indeed, for more than 2 years now, we have been criticizing the administration for moving too slowly to enlarge NATO.

On February 20 of this year, I wrote to the President urging him to implement the NATO Participation Act which we enacted into law almost 2 years ago, and I recommended in particular the designation of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as the first countries eligible to receive assistance under that act. Earlier this year, the President rejected our recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD my exchange of correspondence with the President:

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 20, 1996.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On February 12th, you signed into law Public Law 104–107, the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1996. Section 585 of this law amends the NATO Participation Act of 1994 (title II of Public Law 103–447) to facilitate use by you of the authorities provided by the NATO Participation Act to assist the transition to full NATO membership of certain Central and Easter European countries emerging from communist domination.

In addition, section 585 expresses the sense of the Congress that, within 60 days of enactment, you should designate the first Central and Eastern European countries eligible to receive transition assistance under the NATO Participation Act.

As the principal author of the NATO Participation Act, I have been disappointed by the fact that, over fifteen months after the enactment of that Act, the Administration has yet to utilize the authority provided by the Act to expedite expansion of the NATO alliance. In light of the revisions to that Act made by section 585 of Public Law 104–107, as well as section 585's call on you to designate the first countries eligible to receive assistance under the Act, I urge you to move quickly to designate Central and Eastern European countries to receive assistance under the Act. In particular, I urge that Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic be so designated.

Prompt designation by you of, at a minimum, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as eligible countries will send a powerful signal to these countries of the determination of both the Congress and your Administration to expand NATO at an early date. It also will permit you to begin providing additional forms of assistance to facilitate the transition of these countries to full NATO membership.

I am convinced that the United States can no longer afford to delay deciding which Central and Eastern European countries will be the first admitted to NATO. We are already to the point where some are beginning to ask not whether it is too early to expand NATO, but rather whether it is too late. Further delay can only heighten the risk that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will feel abandoned by the West and will consider departing from the path of reform on which they embarked in 1989.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN,
Chairman.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, DC, May 9, 1996.

Hon. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter on the admission of new members to NATO. I am aware of your considerable efforts in support of NATO enlargement, including co-authorship of the NATO Participation Act, and I value your views on how to achieve our mutual goal. I have made this one of my top foreign policy priorities and will ensure that it remains at the top of NATO's agenda. As a result of U.S. leadership, NATO's enlargement is in progress and will happen.

At my initiative, NATO began a process in January 1994 that will result in the admission of new members to the Alliance. By taking in new members from among Europe's new democracies, NATO can help lock in the very substantial progress that has been made there in instituting democratic and market economic reforms. Enlargement will serve to erase the illegitimate lines of the Cold War and provide the security underpinning for a growing, undivided transatlantic community.

We have already made solid, steady progress, at a pace that reflects the many substantial security commitments and practical preparations necessary to admit new members to the Alliance. Last fall, NATO completed its study on the mechanisms and rationale of enlargement and presented the results to our partners in Central Europe and the New Independent States. In December, NATO agreed to move into a second phase of the process consisting of intensified preparations by both NATO and aspiring members. Practically, this means detailed, individual consultations between NATO and self-identified candidates and an enhanced program of preparatory activities, conducted nationally and through the Partnership for Peace. Eleven partners, (Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia) have thus far asked to participate in this phase.

Allies have agreed that NATO enlargement's second phase will run through 1996 and that our Foreign Ministers will address next steps at the North Atlantic Council in December. I agree that we must maintain the momentum of the NATO enlargement process. It is my objective that, as Secretary Christopher recently told his Central European counterparts, NATO will move to greater specificity on the question of enlargement's ''who and when'' at the December meeting and its immediate follow-on.

As NATO moves ahead, my Administration is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to ensure that enlargement succeeds. The first element for success lies in building and maintaining a durable Allied consensus in support of enlargement. Admission of any new member to NATO, precisely because of the seriousness of the security commitments involved, must have the full support of all of its current members. We must be careful that actions we undertake in support of the enlargement process do not have the inadvertent effect of undermining Allied consensus and thereby slowing progress.

A second element needed for success is to place NATO enlargement in the context of a broad, balanced and integrated approach to increasing stability and security throughout the transatlantic area by building a cooperative security structure in Europe. This includes a revitalized NATO, support for enlargement of the European Union, strengthening the OSCE and enhanced cooperation with other states not immediately aspiring to NATO membership or who may not be in the initial group of states invited to begin accession talks with the Alliance. It also includes a strong and productive relationship between the Alliance and Russia, given the key role Russia can play in shaping a stable and secure Europe.

A third element critical for success is encouraging prospective members to prepare seriously for the full range of military and political responsibilities they will need to assume if and when they become members. Aspiring Allies need adequate time to prepare for these obligations. NATO, too, faces a major task in preparing itself for enlargement. We have already begun a comprehensive review of the internal adjustments NATO must make to admit new Allies.

To their credit, partners have not waited to be ''designated'' as eligible for membership before undertaking the basic reforms and preparations we have made clear they must pursue. The prospect of NATO membership has proven to be a most powerful incentive for both domestic reform and the resolution of ethnic and territorial conflict. Your legislation specifically urges me to designate Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as eligible for assistance under the NATO Participation Act. These countries are indeed making substantial progress and I agree they will be strong candidates for early NATO membership when the Alliance decides to move forward. At this stage, however, writing into law a narrow list of countries eligible for special assistance could reduce our ability to work with other emerging democracies that are also making significant progress but may not be immediately eligible for assistance under the NATO Participation Act.

I firmly believe that my comprehensive strategy is the best means for carrying NATO's enlargement process through to a successful conclusion. Proof that it is working can be seen in the significant improvement in the ability of some partner forces to undertake joint missions with NATO, including in IFOR. Our clear sense is that the eleven partners participating in the second phase of the enlargement process understand and support our policy of steady, deliberate progress toward enlargement and in no way feel ''abandoned by the West'' or are considering ''departing from the path of reform,'' as you suggest. On the contrary, they are actively and enthusiastically engaged in the second phase of the enlargement process, which, as I noted earlier, will culminate in decisions by NATO Foreign Ministers in December on important next steps in the process.

My Administration is committed to continued close cooperation with you. I welcome your efforts to build bipartisan Congressional support both for the continuing engagement of the United States in Europe and for this Administration's commitment to bringing new members into the Alliance. Secretary Christopher echoed my own sentiments when he said in Prague that we are determined to keep faith with the nations of this region and to open the door that Stalin shut when he said no to the Marshall Plan. No European nation should ever again be forced to occupy a buffer zone between great powers or be abandoned to the sphere of influence of another.

We look forward to working you on this historic task.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

It was only after I received this letter from the President that I introduced the measure that is before us today. This measure finally implements the NATO Participation Act, and I am gratified that the administration has, upon careful reflection, decided not to oppose this legislation. I continue to believe, however, that enactment of this legislation is essential if we wish to keep the pressure on the administration for prompt NATO enlargement.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 3564.

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

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of H.R. 3564.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman GILMAN for his leadership in bringing this bill to the House floor.

This bill helps us to begin the debate on what will become one of the most important foreign policy issues facing the United States—the question of NATO enlargement. Are we prepared to commit American lives and treasure to defend new NATO countries? I am impressed with how casually we are considering this issue. I am afraid that this bill is driven by domestic politics more than it should be.

But, I appreciate Chairman GILMAN's efforts to put this important issue before us.

At the outset I want to make clear what this bill does and does not do.

This bill takes two basic steps: It finds that three countries—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—have made the most progress toward achieving the criteria of NATO membership; and makes these three countries eligible for up to $60 million in military assistance—grants, loans, and training—to help them in the enlargement process.

Just as significant is what this bill does not do: It does not prejudice U.S. or NATO policy by stating that any specific country should be admitted to NATO; it establishes no date certain for the entry of new members into NATO.

This bill is a distinct improvement over H.R. 7, considered by the House in early 1995, as well as other efforts to dictate the nature and the timetable of NATO enlargement.

There is some common ground between the administration and the sponsors of this bill.

The administration agrees that Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have made more progress than others toward NATO membership.

The administration supports the authorization of military assistance to help these countries prepare for NATO membership.

The only differences are technical. The administration opposes earmarking assistance for these countries through the NATO Participation Act, which undercuts flexibility in the use of assistance funds intended for a wider range of Partnership for Peace countries.

I intend to vote for this bill for three reasons.

First, this bill supports current U.S. policy: enlarging NATO will help integrate the democratic nations of Central and Eastern Europe into the Western family of nations.

Second, this bill highlights that NATO enlargement is a gradual and deliberate process. That process will evolve over several months and years: A NATO meeting in December 1996, will prepare the way for a NATO summit in 1997, at which certain countries will be named and accession talks begin; accession talks will likely take a year or two; and NATO governments must then approve, by consensus, the accession agreements; all 16 NATO governments must then ratify those agreements, which will require parliamentary approval.

So, as a practical matter, the actual enlargement of NATO is several years down the road. That is the prudent course.

Third, this bill contains several important findings on NATO enlargement: It states that NATO membership is not a free ride; that prospective members must be able to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area and assume the costs and responsibilities of NATO membership; it sets out that enlargements will require agreement of all 16 NATO states; it notes the important role of Partnership for Peace in the enlargement process and in fostering cooperation between NATO and the states of Central Europe; and it states that lasting security and stability in Europe requires not just military steps but economic and political integration, especially the integration of Central and East Europe into the European Union.

I intend to vote for this bill, but I have many questions about NATO enlargement, and I want to state them briefly:

I have no doubt that NATO enlargement will advance the interests of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, but how will it advance United States interests?

Why is NATO enlargement necessary, when the threat to peace and security in Central and Eastern Europe has never been less?

Will NATO enlargement increase stability and security if NATO admits some countries—but not others countries—in Central and Eastern Europe? Or does it risk new lines of confrontation in Europe, especially if Russia believes that NATO enlargement is a new policy of containment?

Are the American people prepared to undertake the financial and security obligations that NATO enlargement will entail?

This bill may authorize a modest amount of funds, but we should not set a precedent where we pay countries to meet the conditions of NATO membership.

Should we undertake these obligations? A Congressional Budget Office study estimates that NATO enlargement could cost $60 to $125 billion over a 15-year period, with the United States paying $5 to $19 billion.

Are we ready to provide a United States nuclear guarantee, and commit American soldiers to the security of Slovakia or Slovenia?

It is clear what NATO can do for new members—but what will they contribute to NATO? So far, we don't have good answers to many of these questions.

I also share the administration's concerns about earmarking assistance, and undercutting flexibility to provide assistance to all Partnership for Peace countries.

I would hope that some compromise on this issue is possible as the legislative process moves forward.

Now, in the course of this debate, we will hear criticism that the administration is dragging its feet on NATO enlargement. That criticism is way off the mark. Whether you support or oppose NATO enlargement, let's be clear here: The administration is driving the train. The question of enlargement is a NATO's agenda only because the United States has made it such a high priority. Yet, any decision on enlargement must be by NATO consensus. The United States cannot dictate the outcome. Leadership is not the same as arm-twisting. A successful outcome on NATO enlargement will require the support of all NATO members.

In conclusion, I see common ground between this bill and administration policy, other than on details of a funding mechanism. Both agree that three countries in Central and Eastern Europe have made the most progress toward NATO membership. Both agree that a modest amount of military assistance should be provided to them to help in this process. This bill is the first step in what I hope will be a full debate on the merits of NATO enlargement.

I support the bill.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the ranking minority member, for his supporting arguments on behalf of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of our Committee on International Relations.

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as original cosponsor of this legislation, and as a leader of this body's delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly, this Member rises in strong support of the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act.

This Member would commend the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, for his leadership in promoting this important national security legislation. In addition, this Member would pay tribute to the former majority leader of the other body, the distinguished former Senator from Kansas, Mr. Dole. It is clear that, were it not for the leadership of Senator Dole, we would not be considering this visionary legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a great deal of confusion, both in this body as well as among the countries and interested parties in Eastern and Central Europe, about what this legislation really does. In order to produce or eliminate any confusion, this Member would like to take a moment and attempt to succinctly explain what this legislation will do and what it will not do.

First, contrary to what has frequently been said, this legislation would not admit new countries into NATO; that is something that can be done only with the parliamentary concurrence of all 16 Members of NATO. The legislation does, however, take appropriate note of the three Central European countries Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, which have made the greatest strides toward qualifying for NATO membership. For these nations, the legislation sets forth a modest training and assistance package to help them acquire some of the infrastructure items that are essential for NATO membership, for example, air defense radars, and telecommunications infrastructure.

□ 1130

The legislation also recognizes that there are other Central European nations which have taken positive steps for Partnership for Peace. That is true of Eastern European nations as well. These countries may at some future date also be qualified for NATO membership.

Second, this legislation does not establish new ideological or strategic lines or boundaries across Europe. The nations of Eastern and Central Europe, particularly those which are not cited in the first tier of eligibility, are understandably worried that they would have the option of NATO membership permanently closed to them. Some nations fear that they will be caught on the wrong side of a new Iron Curtain, forever excluded from the closer cooperation with the West.

H.R. 3564 does not set those rigid boundaries. The lessons of Yalta must not be forgotten. We fully recognize that NATO is likely to continue to enlarge in the future, but only when aspiring members are able to fulfill the conditions of membership and capable of contributing to the common defense.

Third, H.R. 3564 is not an open-ended promise of eventual NATO membership to interested Eastern and to Central European nations. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is not a social club or paper organization; rather it is the most successful collective defensive organization in the history of mankind. It is perhaps inevitable that some nations, which have expressed an interest in NATO, may fail to meet the basic criteria for membership, but this is in part also somewhat of a self-qualification process.

The nations which have adopted free markets and adopted a full range of truly democratic institutions and practices will be more likely to be considered for membership. Those countries which fail to liberalize their economies or fail to become real democracies or repress their citizens are unlikely to enter NATO.

In addition, of course, NATO membership will only be offered to those nations which are willing to assume the shared cost and defense responsibilities of the alliance.

Last, this legislation should not be seen to threaten Russia or any other nation. The NATO alliance remains a defensive alliance. The Russian leadership must understand that NATO will not launch unprovoked attacks against a peaceful neighbor. The far more serious threat to Russian interest is internal instability and instability along her borders.

It is desperately important for the Russian people that its government complete fundamental economic and political reforms, but these reforms will be impossible if it is constantly threatened with civil war and political instability along its borders. Thus, the stability that NATO can project into Central and Eastern Europe should be helpful to Russian economic modernization and to its political stability.

Mr. Speaker, it most assuredly is true that the nature of some of the security challenges which face the NATO alliance have fundamentally changed since the days of the cold war. At that earlier time, defending Europe from Soviet or Warsaw Pact attack was

NATO's paramount mission. Now projecting stability and democracy eastward is perhaps the most important function that the alliance can serve.

Where once the Warsaw Pact enforced an involuntary order, now in too many places there is merely a power vacuum. No one wants to return to a time when border conflicts, aggressive nationalism, ethnic divisions, and political intrigue was the norm in Eastern and Central Europe.

But it is clear that could well reemerge unless stability is projected into the region. It should be obvious that NATO is the best instrument to fill that power vacuum, and it can do so in a nonthreatening manner.

Mr. Speaker, as the body completes consideration of the NATO Enlargement Act, this Member would remind his colleagues that we are considering very serious future treaty commitments. As this Member already has noted, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is the most successful defensive alliance in the history of the world. Its success is anchored in the article 5 commitment North Atlantic Treaty, which states that an attack against one is an attack against all. Members must acknowledge that the admission of a new nation to NATO means that this nation will go to war to defend that country. Thus, this Congress should voice its support for NATO expansion in the months and years ahead only after careful consideration, and only if specific expansions are in the U.S. national interest. By passage of this act, we are moving forward to facing these future decisions on countries which can better prepare themselves to take on the full responsibilities of NATO membership.

This Member believes it is indeed in the national interest to expand NATO for those nations which meet all the criteria for membership. A carefully crafted policy of NATO enlargement can project stability into a volatile region of the world without drawing new boundaries, and it can do so in a way that should not undermine stability in Russia. By providing basic assistance through H.R. 3564 to those nations which have thus far made the greatest progress toward fulfilling the criteria for membership in a defensive alliance among the democratic nations of North America and Europe.

Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of whether NATO will expand, but when it will expand. Clearly, the enactment of H.R. 3564 will speed the day when NATO expands in a responsible, stabilizing manner. This Member urges adoption of H.R. 3564.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON].

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend both the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the ranking member, and the gentleman from New York, Chairman GILMAN, for the action today.

My father was in the Polish army in the late 1930's, 1939, as the war broke out. Poland, like Czechoslovakia first, saw both the Germans and the Russians coming in and divide them. Then the Russians were pushed back. The Germans took all of Poland. My father's entire family was exterminated. The the Russians came in and took over, and the dark days in Poland continued.

Czechoslovakia, of course, was Hitler's first grab with the Sudeten. Then again, as the Germans were pushed back, the Russians took it and imposed their terror on the Czech people for many years.

I think this legislation comes at the right time. There could have been a debate prior to the election in the Soviet Union. We could have argued at that point that, while the election was going on, we should be a little cautions in doing anything that would impact the outcome. The Soviet election, the Russian election is over. These countries, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, are moving in the right direction. If we needed to learn anything from history, it is that, when we have the opportunity to put peace in place, we ought to take that opportunity.

We have seen sufficient turmoil in the post-Soviet era to understand that, just because the Soviet Union has come to an end, does not mean that we are guaranteed peace on the European continent. The worst horrors we have seen in Europe in the last 50 years occurred after the fall of the Soviet Union in the former country of Yugoslavia as it disintegrated.

I think this action will ensure stability. We need to work with the Russians and others in the region to make sure that they understand this is not a move to threaten anybody's sovereignty or security. This is a move that hopefully will use the power and the strength of the West to ensure stability in Eastern Europe and help build not just a secure Eastern Europe but a more prosperous former Soviet bloc and that goes as well for the Russians.

These people in particular, the Poles, the Hungarians, and the Czechs, have suffered significantly throughout this century. This will give them some of the security that they rightly demand.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. COX], the chairman of the Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. COX of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

The collapse of the Soviet empire is the most significant geopolitical event of the second half of the 20th century. It marks an enormous victory in the global struggle for freedom. Its direct beneficiaries are the liberated peoples of Europe and Asia that comprise the former captive nations so long dominated by the Warsaw Pact.

Unlike NATO, which was organized to protect and defend its members from Soviet expansionism, the Warsaw Pact subjugated its own member states, as we saw when Warsaw Pact troops invaded Hungary and Czechoslovakia to depose their governments and snuff out the people's freedom.

The captive nations, whose people fought and struggled against communism for so many dark years, deserve membership in NATO more than any other people on earth. NATO membership will accelerate the growth of their democracies and the pace of their economic reforms, and it will make our own world more secure. History demonstrates that democracies and free people do not threaten their neighbors.

This legislation is necessary now because action by the Clinton administration is long overdue, because the window of opportunity will not remain open forever. It has been 5 long years since the collapse of the Soviet empire. Let us begin this process now, in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and let us work with the Baltic nations and the other former captive nations of central and economic Europe to expand the family of democracies and the respecters and promoters of free enterprise on our planet so that our world will indeed soon be a safer place.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida [Mr. JOHNSTON].

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I know that I am chasing windmills when it comes to this particular bill because it has a degree of unanimity in this body, the State Department and the President. But, probably for cathartic reasons, I must oppose the bill.

For the past 36 months, I have heard a chorus from this body, both Democrats and Republicans, that we must cut foreign aid and foreign assistance, notwithstanding the fact that the United States is the lowest per capita contributor of foreign aid of all of the industrialized countries in the world. I have also heard from this podium that no American troops should be sent to Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, or Bosnia.

How many times have you heard that the United States cannot be the policeman of the world?

Well, how many of you have read this bill? How many of you have read the NATO Charter? How many of you have any idea what the expansion of our military obligation will be when we expand NATO? Do you have any idea of the cost of equipping these armies to bring them up to NATO standards? You're talking about billions of dollars. The Marshall plan will look like petty cash compared to this expansion.

Let me read from Congressional Research Service:

> A Rand study concluded that a conservative estimate of NATO expansion to include the Visegrad States, (that's Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic) will require ten to fifty billion dollars over 10 years, or as much as one hundred billion dollars or more should more vigorous measures be necessary to develop a strong defense posture.

In March 1996 CBO issued a report assessing cost of NATO enlargement under five possible options ranging from assisting a new member engaged in a border skirmish, or a conflict with a regional power to the permanent stationing of forces and equipment of current member states on the territory of

new members to prepare for a border conflict. The study assumed that Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia would be the initial new members and would bear the brunt of the cost of military modernization; that the cost would be spread over 1996–2010 and that current allies would pay a percentage of modernization cost equal to their proportionate share in NATO's Security Investment Program.

In such circumstances, cost at the low end for option 1 would be $60 billion with the United States share being $4.8 billion, and at the high end, $125 billion with the United States share being $18.9 billion.

Once you start the expansion—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Repubic—politically, you cannot stop. In this bill you encourage admission to NATO of the Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—to one previous Yugoslavian country, Slovenia, and the most insulting and offensive to the Russians, two former Soviet Union countries, Muldova and Ukraine.

Are you willing now to commit American soldiers to a border dispute between Lithuania and Russia over the enclave of Kaliningrad? Are you willing to send troops to Latvia because they have a fight with Belarus? Are you willing to send troops to Ukraine because of a conflict with Russia over the Black Sea fleet and Crimea? Think about it.

Let me make it perfectly clear. I am not an isolationist. Serving on the Foreign Affairs Committee for 8 years has given me a global view. I wanted to send troops into Rwanda long before the slaughter there. Serving on the Committee on International Relations has given me a global view. But how can you give a blank check to the white Eastern European nations and totally abandon black Africa?

This is a major step and one that should not be taken lightly.

I leave Congress in 5 months but I plan to come back and haunt you on a yearly basis.

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

No one is contemplating early NATO membership for Ukraine or Belarus, perhaps not ever. And, indeed, we are willing to use American military force when it is in the vital interest of the United States. Clearly, instability in Central and Eastern Europe would be contrary to the vital interests of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], a member of the committee.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], my good friend, for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman GILMAN for his leadership in ensuring the timely consideration of H.R. 3564, the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996. As an original cosponsor of this legislation, a strong advocate of NATO enlargement, and Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I have consistently emphasized the importance of human rights in the expansion process. In addition, I am keenly interested in encouraging states interested in NATO membership to take concrete steps to strengthen civilian democratic control of the military.

During the International Relations Committee's consideration of this important initiative, language which proposed on each of these aspects of enlargement was approved with the Chairman GILMAN's support, for which I am grateful.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, the bill before us today includes an unqualified statement that the protection and promotion of fundamental freedoms and human rights are integral aspects of genuine security. The legislation also makes clear that the human rights records of emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe interested in joining NATO should be evaluated in light of the obligations and commitments of these countries under the U.N. Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Helsinki Final Act. I would note that all 27 states of the Partnership for Peace [PfP] are participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE]. That membership has committed each to act in accordance with all OSCE documents, including the Helsinki Final Act.

Mr. Speaker, the enlargement process provides an excellent opportunity for countries desiring membership to demonstrate their commitment to the shared values of NATO—including respect for human rights—as well as their ability to fulfill the military and political obligations expected of all member states. Prospective members should meet the criteria set forth in the NATO Participation Act of 1994 and other relevant legislation before they are admitted as full members of NATO.

It is also important to recognize that the present process of enlargement is taking place under significantly different circumstances that existed when a limited number of states were added in the past. Given the growing number of countries actively seeking full membership in the alliance, it is essential to establish clear criteria which all new members must meet.

Mr. Speaker, in recent days there has been some discussion about including Croatia among the prospective recipients of assistance under this legislation. To set the record straight, nothing in the pending legislation precludes Croatia from receiving assistance provided that country—or any other prospective recipient—meets a series of criteria, including respect for human rights. I welcome the recent decision of the OSCE to deploy a mission to Croatia and look forward to the findings and recommendations of that group which could contribute to establishing the conditions necessary for Zegreb to pursue eventual membership in NATO. In the meantime, Croatia should press for inclusion in the PfP, widely viewed as the first step toward possible NATO membership.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to turn briefly to the issue of civilian democratic control of the military. At the outset, let me say that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have made tremendous strides in overcoming the legacy of communism. Perhaps one of the most delicate aspects of this transition has been establishing civilian control of the military an important prerequisite for those wishing to join NATO. Significant progress has been made in the emerging democracies leading to increased transparency with respect to military activities and budgets. Another key component, in my view, is the naming of a civilian to serve as minister of defense. Beyond mere symbolism, this action underscores the willingness of the military to subordinate itself to the democratic civilian leadership—a fundamental aspect of democratic society. I applaud those countries which have already undertaken this important step and encourage others to pursue that course.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation as a demonstration of our determination to move NATO expansion forward and our commitment to the people of East Central Europe, including those from the Baltic States and Ukraine, as they strive to overcome the legacy of communism and pursue democracy firmly rooted in respect for the rights and freedoms of the individual.

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Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR].

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR].

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR] is recognized for 2 minutes and 30 seconds.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, this is important legislation for the reasons already explained. Because it is important, I regret that it does not go a step further and include, along with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, Slovenia.

Let me explain why. With only 8 percent of the population of former Yugoslavia, Slovenia accounted for 19 percent of the country's gross domestic product, one-third of its exports, one half of its dairy production, 40 percent of all of its taxes.

The Slovenes, post election, have been a model of parliamentary democracy. Local government has been expanded; 158 new municipalities have been created, local elections held. They have received the highest human rights respect status awarded by Amnesty International.

Inflation in the postwar, and it was only a 9-day war imposed by the Serb Army, only 68 people died, the Slovenes let the Serb Army return to its land without killing anyone, inflation was at 1,200 percent. It is now down to under 9 percent. They have a $3 billion positive international balance of payments. They have the 20th largest per capita exporting country record.

Ninety percent of the former socialist economy has been privatized. The banks have been privatized. They have balanced their budget. Unemployment rate is down to around 7 percent. Slovenia, in short, is Europe's best kept democratic secret.

When our Secretary of Defense, Mr. Perry, was in Slovenia recently, he said, Slovenia has done very well in all standards for NATO membership and is a strong candidate. Slovenia, he continued, can be a model to other Eastern Bloc and Central European countries because of its successful implementation of a democratic government, market economy, and resolving disagreements with its neighbors.

I have discussed this matter with the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and with our ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON]. I appreciate their willingness to give consideration to Slovenia at an appropriate time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the gentleman that we have reviewed Slovenia's progress and recognize it has made a significant amount of progress. I want to assure the gentleman that in the forthcoming session, providing we are all here, we will work toward trying to allow Slovenia to become a member of NATO.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the chairman's interest, understanding and support for this initiative.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, Slovenia has made remarkable progress. We recognize that. Their emergence has been so recent it did not receive full consideration.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] a member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3564, the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996, authored by Chairman GILMAN and Senator Dole.

One of America's most solemn obligations is to foster the growth of democracy and freedom both at home and abroad. These goals have been constants in American foreign policy since our Nation's birth—there are no two goals more clearly in our national interest and consistent with our national ideals. As Americans, we were all elated when the Communist chokehold on Eastern Europe was lifted and the cold war was won. Now we must do everything possible to encourage and protect the fragile young democracies which are emerging in Eastern Europe.

This legislation ensures that the emerging democracies will remain vital forces for freedom in Eastern Europe. This bill welcomes these nations as allies by facilitating the entrance of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO and also by providing assistance toward NATO membership for Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Moldova, and Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GILMAN for his outstanding leadership and urge my colleagues to support this visionary legislation.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY].

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to imagine that less than a decade ago, the world was a very different place.

We were in the icy grip of the cold war.

The Soviet Union was the menacing patron of repression across the globe.

The winds of democracy and freedom had not yet begun to sweep over Eastern and Central Europe.

All that has now changed.

And with this change, we should change NATO.

The bill before us recognizes that three Eastern European countries—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—have made the most progress with the criteria necessary for NATO inclusion.

As the Representative of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, one of the largest and most dynamic communities of Polish-Americans in the Nation, I am particularly pleased that this bill acknowledges Poland's extraordinary transition to democracy.

The bill also authorizes up to $60 million to these countries to facilitate the NATO expansion process.

It is critical that we recognize Poland's strategic value to the West.

The admission of Poland into NATO will enhance United States interests in Europe by bringing more stability and security to the region.

I urge the adoption of the bill, and I urge the administration to work with our allies to bring about the swift admission of Poland into Europe's most important political and military institution—NATO.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE].

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the NATO Enlargement Act of 1996. NATO, for the past 45 years, has been the cornerstone of stability in Europe and a critical element of our Nation's defense, it is the bulwark of Western democracy and free-market economics. The success of the alliance is without question.

But while I support expansion of NATO to include nations of Central and Eastern Europe, it is my unshakable conviction that NATO membership must only be granted to nations that make a fundamental commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and free market economics.

NATO membership must not be granted willy-nilly to nations that fail to make these commitments. Membership cannot be granted simply because certain nations fear their neighbors or believe that membership will enhance their prospects for democratic or economic progress or reform.

A major reason for the alliance's success has been its intolerance of authoritarian or undemocratic regimes within its ranks. Although democratic governments were overthrown by military juntas in Greece and Turkey, both countries joined NATO as democracies and both countries have reverted to democratic governments. Spain was not permitted to join NATO until it demonstrated its commitment to parliamentary democracy.

It also must be recognized that NATO is not anti-Russian. It is not even anti-Communist per se. In fact, it is not intrinsically anti anything. Rather, it is prodemocracy. NATO is and it always has been a defensive alliance under which the protection of democracies and free market economies could flourish.

Some formerly Communist nations of Central and Eastern Europe, such as the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, have clearly made the transition to free market democracies and should soon easily qualify to join NATO, as this bill calls for.

In addition, the early inclusion of those nations will also be a very powerful example and an incentive to encourage other Eastern European nations, such as Romania, Ukraine, Slovenia, and the Republic of Slovakia to hasten their unchangeable commitment to democratic institutions.

NATO membership by these newly democratic nations will help secure their place among the Central and Western European states. The stability and fate of those nations are of vital importance to the peace and security of Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. WOLF].

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to express some reservations. I commend the leadership on both sides for what they are trying to do. Eventually these

countries ought to be part of NATO, no matter what Russia thinks.

However, I have some reservations. First, Poland. In Poland I wish Lech Walesa was still the head. In Poland a former leading member of the Polish Communist government is not the new prime minister. In Hungary, foreign investors are concerned that socialism is coming back, and many people who were Communists when we knew they were Communists are now back in the government.

In Bulgaria, there are many Communists that have come back in government and, hopefully, the democratic leaning party will win in the upcoming election. In Romania, many of the same people that were in the Ceausescu government are still part of the government. So I am concerned about this.

Also I think if this does pass that we should lay the word down that we expect all of these countries to respect human rights: freedom of religion, freedom of worship, no antisemitism, freedom of movement, and freedom of expression. I am concerned that perhaps we should wait and hold out a little longer on NATO expansion to make sure these countries really do join democracy, whereby they become eligible for NATO.

So I commend the gentlemen on both sides but I want to raise some concerns. If communism comes back, these countries ought not be part of NATO.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express concern about H.R. 3564, the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996. I have some serious reservations about expanding this critical alliance at this time. Things are still too uncertain in the newly democratic countries in Eastern and Central Europe.

I support the concept of NATO expansion, but I think it's too early to be changing the formula that has worked to preserve peace in Western Europe for so long. More time need to pass to give these new governments a chance to show that they are truly committed to democracy, human rights, and being the kind of government necessary to be a trustworthy partner in NATO.

I am encouraged by the progress I have seen since 1989. Some countries are doing better than others, but for the most part we do not see today the kinds of human rights abuses we saw in the pre-1989 ear. Elections have taken place. Good constitutions have been put in place. Rule-of-law is advancing. Individual freedoms—such as freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of association—are being preserved. But, I agree with the words of University of Illinois professor Ed Kolodziej, as reported on June 18 in an article in the Christian Science Monitor, ''I don't think [these countries] are ripe by a long shot.''

I am deeply concerned that in many countries in Eastern and Central Europe, former communists are in some capacity in government. In Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria former members of the Communist party are in charge. In other countries, they are still politically active. Some of them are reformed Communists; some of them are not. It is crucial that we let enough time pass to be able to determine who is who. Actions speak louder than words. We must be able to differentiate clearly between those who are truly committed to democracy and those who are only talking the talk before we commit to protect them.

Things are better, but they are not perfect. I have heard reports that Hungarian Government representatives, at a conference in Budapest during the first week of July, adopted a provocative declaration on the status of Hungarians abroad causing concern for its neighbors. While I remain concerned over the state of Hungarian minority communities in Europe, this declaration illustrated a regrettable insensitivity toward Hungary's neighbors. There are still reports that high-profile individuals, journalists and foreigners are subject to surveillance by security agents in Romania.

When new countries join NATO, they are full-fledged partners. They are entitled to all of our military secrets and the full protection of the United States. I just do not think that the American people are ready for new commitments overseas when we can barely get support for current ones. We currently have 22,000 American troops doing a great job bringing peace to Bosnia, but I know this is not a popular idea with the American people. Would there be the support to send troops to Poland or Hungary or Romania to help governments with former Communists in power?

I don't think so. Not right now. Not before democracy has been tested and tried in Central and Eastern Europe and Communists no longer have influence.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support the concept of NATO expansion, but I don't think we should do it now. It's too early.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. CALLAHAN], chairman of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs.

(Mr. CALLAHAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I think many of my colleagues know my philosophy about Members of Congress involving themselves in foreign affairs to the extent that we try to dictate policy. But it is my understanding of this bill that we are not dictating policy. We are strongly suggesting to NATO and to the administration that they encourage the acceptance of three countries and that they expand NATO.

I might say that there is an avenue now through the Partnership for Peace where NATO can be expanded. But I think it is high time, like some of you, that we do expand NATO, that we do expedite the process, because a lot of countries have been waiting a lot of time in order to be included in there.

It is my personal philosophy that we ought to include all nations over there, because if you are going to have a successful NATO, it simply says that one of these nations will not attack another. If it does take place, then those nations that are a part of NATO will defend it. So if all of them were included, it would seem to me that we would have the best of all worlds. But we must begin with the process.

The NATO people must recognize that this process should start. It should have started a lot sooner than that. So we are not dictating to the administration. We are not dictating to NATO. We are simply saying that it is time to move on, that these three nations, specifically mentioned in here as suggestions, have been waiting a long time, that their acceptance would be an enhancement. I would encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this measure.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CALLAHAN. I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman's comments gives us an opportunity to recognize that we are not barring membership for any country through this resolution, but we are providing an infrastructure and training assistance program, a modest one, by authorizing it as a part of this proposed act.

I thank the gentleman for giving me a chance to remind our colleagues that we are not dictating NATO membership for any country, only facilitating assistance to these three countries that seem to have done an outstanding job in preparing for NATO membership. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

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Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The gentleman from New York is recognized for 2 minutes.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, in concluding our debate today I would like to note that support for this measure has grown rapidly since we first introduced it several months ago. We now have 37 co-sponsors, almost evenly divided between Members of the majority and the minority. The bill has been warmly endorsed by the coalitions representing the 23 million Americans of Central and Eastern European descent. They wrote to me stating that from their point of view this is the most important legislation we will consider this year.

And finally just this morning we received word that the administration has decided to show its support behind the bill. The administration states, and I quote: ''The administration welcomes congressional support for the enlargement of NATO as reflected in H.R. 3564.''

Accordingly, I appreciate the support of my colleagues and look forward to early approval of the measure.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GILMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguised chairman, the

gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], for yielding to me. Earlier Croatia was mentioned as a possible addition to the names of the countries that might eventually qualify for the assistance program we are authorizing by this resolutions when they moved to a greater degree of democracy and respect for human rights. That certainly is possible. Slovenia was also mentioned as a country that ought to be considered, and I fully agree that it ought to be considered for the assistance program.

Something that has not been mentioned is the recent improvements in democracy, economic reform, and human rights that has taken place in that nation which was formerly part of Yugoslavia, now called the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia [FYROM]. Its progress and potential for advancement into the front ranks for consideration for NATO membership are also to be recognized.

I thank the gentleman for recognizing me for this purpose.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996, H.R. 3564.

This legislation reflects strong bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress for welcoming the new democracies of Eastern and Central Europe into NATO when they are prepared to meet the responsibilities of membership. And it authorizes necessary assistance to help these new democracies prepare for NATO membership.

As cochairman of the Baltic freedom caucus in Congress, I particularly commend to my colleagues the provisions of H.R. 3564 relating to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. H.R. 3564 states that it is the sense of Congress that Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have valid historical security concerns that must be taken into account by the United States, and the Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia should not be disadvantaged in seeking to join NATO by virtue of their forcible incorporation into the Soviet Union. H.R. 3564 also names Lithuania, Lativa, and Estonia as countries which should participate in the Regional Airspace Initiative and the Partnership for Peace Information Management System.

The fledgling Baltic democracies, still struggling to overcome the effects of 50 years of communist domination, have made great efforts to prepare themselves for NATO membership. They are reforming their armies and instituting civilian controls and Democratic values. They have proven their ability to cooperate in multilateral efforts through the Baltic battalion. They have participated in Partnership For Peace training exercises. And they have contributed troops to the NATO-led operation in Bosnia, where they have earned the respect of their NATO allies and suffered in loss of their young soldiers.

U.S. policy in Eastern and Central Europe should be based on two goals: First, to support the security of the new democracies in the Baltics, Eastern and Central Europe; and second, to create a climate of trust in our relations with Russia, so it understands that the West has no hostile intentions toward Russia's territory or its people.

Expanding NATO membership at the appropriate time will enhance U.S. security, and strengthen democracy and free market reforms throughout Central and Eastern Europe. An expanded NATO, carefully crafted, can secure the peace for generations to come.

As a cosponsor of H.R. 3564, I urge my colleagues to support and pass the NATO Facilitation Act of 1996.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3564, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of the measure just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, is it still appropriate for a request for the yeas and nays to be ordered?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to a demand for the yeas and nays?

There was no objection.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

IRAN AND LIBYA SANCTIONS ACT OF 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill, (H.R. 3107) to impose sanctions on persons making certain investments directly and significantly contributing to the enhancement of the ability of Iran and Libya to develop its petroleum resources, and on persons exporting certain items that enhance Libya's weapons or aviation capabilities or enhance Libya's ability to develop its petroleum resources, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Clerk read the Senate amendment, as follows:

Senate amendment:

Page 7, strike out all after line 7, over to and including line 20 on page 8 and insert:

(b) Mandatory Sanctions With Respect to Libya.—

(1) VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITED TRANSACTIONS.—Except as provided in subsection (f), the President shall impose 2 or more of the sanctions described in paragraphs (1) through (6) of section 6 if the President determines that a person has, with actual knowledge, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, exported, transferred, or otherwise provided to Libya any goods, services, technology, or other items the provision of which is prohibited under paragraph 4(b) or 5 of Resolution 748 of the Security Council of the United Nations, adopted March 31, 1992, or under paragraph 5 or 6 of Resolution 883 of the Security Council of the United Nations, adopted November 11, 1993, if the provision of such items significantly and materially—

(A) contributed to Libya's ability to acquire chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons or destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons or enhanced Libya's military or paramilitary capabilities;

(B) contributed to Libya's ability to develop its petroleum resources; or

(C) contributed to Libya's ability to maintain its aviation capabilities.

(2) INVESTMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES.—Except as provided in subsection (f), the President shall impose 2 or more of the sanctions described in paragraphs (1) through (6) of section if the President determines that a person has, with actual knowledge, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, made an investment of $40,000,000 or more (or any combination of investments of at least $10,000,000 each, which in the aggregate equals or exceeds $40,000,000 in any 12-month period), that directly and significantly contributed to the enhancement of Libya's ability to develop its petroleum resources.

Mr. GILMAN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent the Senate amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

Mr. HAMILTON. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to object, but I will yield to the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] to explain the bill. I would then reclaim my time to pose some questions and make a few comments about the measure.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HAMILTON. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to bring before the House H.R. 3107, the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996, as amended, which mandates sanctions on persons making investments that would enhance the ability of Iran to explore for, extract, refine, or transport by pipeline petroleum resources.

The text of this bill is identical to that adopted by the Senate on July 16 on an amendment offered by Senators KENNEDY and D'AMATO which modified