

American decision to withdraw Peace Corps Volunteers testifies to the intensity of that internal conflict. I hope that efforts will be taken by all sides to the conflict to seek a peaceful resolution of the civil strife for only by ending this dispute will Sri Lanka realize the very bright future its people deserve.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution's adoption.

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I urge unanimous support for the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H.Res. 350.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONCERNING AFGHANISTAN

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 218) concerning the urgent need to establish a ceasefire in Afghanistan and begin the transition toward a broad-based multiethnic government that observes international norms of behavior, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

##### H. CON. RES. 218

Whereas peace and stability has not returned to Afghanistan despite the February 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan;

Whereas the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights for 1997 states: "The overall human rights situation [in Afghanistan] is poor . . . political killings, torture, rape, arbitrary detention, looting, abductions and kidnappings for ransom were committed by armed units, local commanders, and rogue individuals";

Whereas the continuing civil conflict in Afghanistan has had a grievous impact upon the Afghan people, where within its borders occurs the highest rate of infant, child, and maternal mortality in the region;

Whereas neighboring countries have provided support in the form of financial assistance and arms to the different groups warring in Afghanistan, thereby extending the length and expanding the destruction of this internal conflict;

Whereas another byproduct of this conflict is the harboring of Islamic militants and terrorist leaders in Afghanistan;

Whereas due to the tyranny and destruction caused by Taliban rule, Afghanistan is now one of the world's leading producers of opium, and over the past year alone, the production of opiates in Afghanistan has increased and resulted in a growth in the drug trade not only in the Central and South Asian regions but in Russia and the West as well;

Whereas continuing instability serves as an obstacle to international investment and the establishment of developmental projects inside Afghanistan, so necessary to Afghanistan's rejuvenation from years of conflict, and central to promoting political cooperation among Afghan factions;

Whereas the continuing conflict in Afghanistan serves as an impediment to economic

prosperity and political development throughout all of South Asia and the newly independent Central Asian nations as well; and

Whereas despite repeated efforts by the United Nations to broker an end to continuing warfare among the country's warring factions, the absence of peace has prevented Afghanistan from addressing the numerous problems facing its citizenry: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—*

(1) acknowledges that, through determination, tenacity, and courage, the Afghan people successfully waged a war against Soviet expansionism and greatly assisted in bringing an end to the cold war;

(2) calls upon all warring factions and national powers to participate in intra-Afghan dialogue (the "Frankfurt Process") and in the peace process and to actively cooperate in the acceleration of endeavors for peace;

(3)(A) deplores continuing human rights violations occurring within Afghanistan, especially against women and female children, who have suffered condoned discrimination and harassment, and the reported widespread execution of prisoners of war and civilians evidenced by the discovery of mass graves which contained an estimated 2,000 corpses; and

(B) supports the intention of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross to continue their investigation into these reported killings;

(4)(A) welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Lakhbar Brahimi as special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for Afghanistan and supports his efforts toward attaining a peaceful negotiated settlement with the assistance of the six nations bordering Afghanistan as well as representatives from the United States and Russia; and

(B) encourages a role for Afghan leaders of all factions and ethnic groups in the United Nations negotiation efforts, based on the fact that peace and national reconciliation cannot be imposed on the Afghan people by their neighbors;

(5) urges the nations of the region to cooperate in the peace process and to end immediately the supply of arms, ammunition, military equipment, training or any other military support to all parties to the conflict;

(6) urges appropriate parties in the United Nations, Afghanistan, and its neighbors to work toward the eradication of the production of opium, especially in southern Afghanistan, and to link such efforts wherever possible to realistic income alternatives;

(7) calls upon all parties within Afghanistan to prevent the reoccurrence of actions which impede the ability of humanitarian and international organizations to move food shipments and other forms of humanitarian assistance into Afghanistan;

(8) acknowledges that due to the death and destruction wrought by the February 4, 1998, earthquake in northeastern Afghanistan, where approximately 5,000 people have died and an estimated 30,000 have been left homeless, there is a continuing need for international emergency aid of food, clothing, and shelter;

(9) recognizes the continuing requirement to address the needs of more than 2,500,000 Afghan refugees in neighboring countries, three-quarters of whom are women and children;

(10) acknowledges the necessity of international efforts to clear the estimated 10,000,000 land mines buried in the Afghan countryside; and

(11) calls for the expulsion of all known terrorist leaders from Afghanistan and the

closing down of all terrorist training camps operating in the country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LUTHER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

□ 1445

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

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 218, which this Member introduced on February 1, 1998, calls for the urgent need to establish a cease-fire in Afghanistan and begin the transition towards a broad-based multi-ethnic government that observes international norms of behavior.

Today Afghanistan has no internationally recognized government. It is a country torn apart by civil war carried out by two warring factions known as the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. No parties to the conflict are heroic. All must share the blame for the destruction and division.

One of the by-products of the destruction brought about by this extended warfare is that Afghanistan has become one of the world's leading producers of opium. Over the past year alone, the production of opiates in Afghanistan has increased, and results in a growth in the drug trade throughout Central and South Asia, Russia, Europe and the United States.

Other problems currently facing Afghanistan include serious and repeated human rights violations occurring throughout the country, especially the treatment of women. The Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights for 1997 states,

The overall human rights situation in Afghanistan is poor. Political killings, torture, rape, arbitrary detention, looting, abductions and kidnappings for ransom were committed by armed units, local commanders and rogue individuals.

At the end of this decade-long conflict it would appear that Afghanistan is beginning the process of resolving these problems, as well as a number of others, including the removal of millions of land mines scattered throughout the Afghan countryside; the repatriation of over 2 million Afghan refugees currently residing in Pakistan and Iran; as well as the cessation of safe haven for terrorist leaders and activities in this war-torn Nation.

The United States officially supports no party or faction in this conflict and backs the United Nations negotiation efforts to establish a coalition government where all factions are fairly represented. Recently, on April 17, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, the Honorable Bill Richardson, brokered an agreement from the two opposing factions to establish a cease-fire and participate in structured peace talks.

If the factions follow through with their commitments, it will mark the first talks since the Islamic militia took control of the capital 1½ years ago. Fighting broke out which appeared to jeopardize the negotiations. However, recognizing the renewed U.S. attention to Afghanistan, the Taliban and the Northern Alliance have begun these important talks.

This Member commends Ambassador Richardson and his staff, as well as the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, for their efforts in successfully bringing the two warring factions to the negotiating table. In their opening statements, representatives of the two factions declared their willingness to work towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. This Member sincerely hopes that this round of negotiations will bring enduring peace to the people of Afghanistan.

In the past, similar efforts have ended in failure as agreements reached in 1992 and 1993 quickly collapsed into more fighting. But this initiative comes at a time when internal and outside parties to the conflict seem at least more ready to work towards achieving stability in Afghanistan before all hope of stability and economic development is lost. The return of stability would in turn encourage international investment projects to the region, beneficial to South Asia and the newly independent Central Asian nations as well.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 218 was considered by the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific on March 5, 1998 and was favorably reported to the full committee. On April 1 the Committee on International Relations unanimously approved this important resolution.

In conclusion, this Member again expresses appreciation to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for their support and cosponsorship of H. Con. Res. 218. This Member would also thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for his advice and support on this resolution. The gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) has visited Afghanistan on numerous occasions, and has taken an active interest in Afghanistan's history and in resolving the bitter dispute which has consumed this country for the past 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, at this critical point of the ongoing peace negotiations, this Member urges this body to send a strong message that the United States Government and the Congress, which in the past assisted Afghanistan in the war against communist aggression, are supportive of the desire for peace by so many, indeed almost all of the Afghan people. Accordingly, this Member urges adoption of H. Con. Res. 218.

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

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution. I again commend the gentleman from Nebraska for his leadership in drafting the resolution and bringing it before the House today. The scene of bitter fighting for more than 18 years, Afghanistan today is virtually forgotten by the international community. There are few nations in the world whose prospects look bleaker than Afghanistan. But I am pleased to say that over the past weekend, the various Afghan factions held the first round of what we all hope will be talks leading to the reestablishment of a just peace in Afghanistan.

This resolution seeks to refocus world attention upon Afghanistan at this important time. It calls for an end to the fighting in Afghanistan, for respect for human rights, and for the eradication of the heroin trade and the export of terrorism. This resolution deserves our support. I urge our colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on this important measure.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) who has been very responsive to the concerns of many people in his district concerned with the continued conflict in Afghanistan. For his active interest in the issue, I commend him.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Nebraska, chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for offering this very important resolution on the tragedy that is going on in Afghanistan.

What this resolution does is bring attention to a country which has been largely forgotten. America was intensely focused on Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion and throughout the years of its occupation. The Red Army was driven out in the face of a courageous resistance by the Afghan people, with the aid of America. Looking back, that unfortunately for Afghanistan was the easy part. It has been much harder winning the fight for peace and stability in Afghanistan since then, but the United States has an interest in trying. We must try.

The Afghan people are suffering. They have one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world. Millions of Afghans live as refugees, some in

neighboring countries. Tragically, some of this suffering is almost a deliberate policy of the ruling Taliban in much of Afghanistan. This regime bans girls and women from attending schools, and it is blocking the delivery of humanitarian aid to thousands of suffering people in Afghanistan. The U.S. has an interest in seeing this stopped.

More direct interests are at stake, too. Afghanistan is now one of the world's leading producers of opium. This reaches America's shores. Afghanistan harbors terrorists who have the potential to attack our Nation. Terrorists with Afghan roots have wreaked havoc throughout the world. This resolution addresses all these American interests.

For too long the U.S. has been indifferent to the fate of Afghanistan. That has been changing a bit of late. My conversations with the former king of Afghanistan, King Zahir Shah, have led me to believe there is reason for hope. Events are moving rapidly. There are plans for peace talks among the factions.

This resolution says that what happens in Afghanistan matters to the U.S. and that we have an interest in seeing the peaceful resolution of this long-running and depressing conflict. I urge its adoption by my colleagues.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for his excellent statement.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the distinguished Chairman of the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee, the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. BEREUTER and its Ranking Minority Member, the gentleman from California, Mr. BERMAN, for initially crafting this important piece of legislation.

H. Con. Res. 218 calls attention to the urgent needs of the Afghan people who have been suffering for years from the aftermath of the cold war. The current civil conflict has led to a breakdown in civil society. Large areas of Afghanistan are now training grounds for terrorism and the world's largest production grounds for opium. Millions of land mines are killing scores of people daily and women are treated as chattel.

The war has created a huge humanitarian crisis in the north where more than 2,000,000 refugees are in need of humanitarian assistance. We commend our colleague, the gentleman from California, Congressman ROHRBACHER for filling in for the State Department and AID by raising the funds to ship plane loads of medical equipment to the refugees. I hope that the administration takes this resolution as a signal that it should be doing more to resolve the crises there and that it especially supports the inter-Afghan dialogue process which would serve as a long term solution to the problems.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous support for this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 218, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

#### SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 37) expressing the sense of the Congress that Little League Baseball Incorporated was established to support and develop Little League baseball worldwide and that its international character and activities should be recognized.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. CON. RES. 37

Whereas Little League Baseball Incorporated is a nonprofit membership organization, chartered by the Congress of the United States in 1964 to promote, develop, supervise, and assist youth worldwide in participation in Little League baseball and to instill in youth the spirit and competitive will to win, values of team play, and healthful association with other youth under proper leadership;

Whereas Little League Baseball Incorporated has chartered more than 18,000 local Little League baseball or softball leagues in 85 countries, across 6 continents, through which more than 198,000 teams and 3,000,000 youth worldwide come together in healthy competition, learning the value of teamwork, individual responsibility, and respect for others;

Whereas Little League Baseball Incorporated provides administrative and other services, including financial assistance from time to time, to such leagues without any obligation to reimburse Little League Baseball Incorporated;

Whereas Little League Baseball Incorporated has established a United States foundation for the advancement and support of Little League baseball in the United States and around the world, and has also created in Poland through its representative, Dr. Creighton Hale, the Poland Little League Baseball Foundation for the construction of Little League baseball facilities and playing fields, in which youth may participate worldwide in international competitions, and is providing all the funds for such construction;

Whereas the efforts of Little League Baseball Incorporated are supported by millions of volunteers worldwide, as parents, league officials, managers, coaches, and auxiliary members and countless volunteer agencies, including sponsors, all of whom give their time and effort without remuneration, in service to others, to advance the goals of Little League Baseball Incorporated and thereby assist the economic transformation of societies worldwide, the improvement in the quality of life of all citizens and the promotion of a civil international community; and

Whereas, as demonstrated by the success of its efforts worldwide, Little League Baseball Incorporated is the largest nongovernmental international youth sports organization in the world and continues to grow: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),* That (a) it is the sense of the Congress that Little League Baseball Incorporated is international in character and has engendered international goodwill through its worldwide activities, particularly among the youth of the world.

(b) The Congress reaffirms that Little League Baseball Incorporated was established to support and develop Little League baseball worldwide, through the chartering of local leagues and the provision of assistance to such local leagues, through the creation or location of facilities in other countries, and the provision of other support as appropriate, including financial support, without right of reimbursement or repayment.

(c) The Congress calls upon the parliamentary bodies and government officials of other nations, particularly those that participate in Little League baseball, to recognize and celebrate the international character of Little League baseball.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LUTHER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote unanimously in favor of S. Con. Res. 37. This resolution makes clear that Little League Baseball Incorporated is a bona fide nongovernmental organization and that it should be treated as such by our government and those of other nations.

Little League Baseball Incorporated is a nonprofit membership organization that was chartered by Congress in 1964 to promote participation by children around the world in Little League baseball. Unfortunately, the charter did not explicitly use the words "nongovernmental organization." That phrase and its acronym, NGO, were not in vogue in those days. So there has been some confusion, particularly in nations where Little League baseball is relatively new, about the undeniable fact that this organization indeed is a not-for-profit organization.

Because the U.S. Congress originally chartered this organization, it falls to us to clarify the matter. This resolution calls on the parliamentary bodies and government officials of other nations to recognize and celebrate the international charter of Little League Baseball, the largest nongovernmental

international youth sports organization in the world, with over 18,000 local leagues in 85 countries supported by a network of many thousands of volunteers and coaches around the world.

S. Con. Res. 37 was introduced by Senator COVERDELL and has already passed the Senate. It also passed the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights by a voice vote on February 12 of this year. On April 1 the full Committee on International Relations ordered the bill favorably reported, again by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out the relentless dedication of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCDADE) on this issue. The gentleman from Pennsylvania helped draft the Senate resolution as well as a parallel House Resolution. He brought the resolution to the attention of our subcommittee and full committee, and he has pushed every step of the way to ensure the success of this resolution. He deserves the credit for its passage on the floor today.

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

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Little League baseball is international in character and has engendered international good will.

□ 1500

I commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania for introducing the companion measure in the House.

The resolution affirms congressional support for the Little League organization and calls upon other governments to recognize and celebrate the international character of Little League baseball. In the House, the companion to this resolution has received widespread bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, we all know Little League is a good organization, encouraging good, healthy life-styles for our young people, and I am happy to support its activities for kids around the world. I urge adoption of this resolution.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. Con. Res. 37, the Little League Baseball Resolution.

Senator COVERDELL and Representative MCDADE introduced this resolution last year in support of the international activities of little league baseball. The Senate has already acted on this resolution, and I support House passage today. The measure is broadly supported in the House, with a total of 42 co-sponsors.

This non-controversial measure is designed to reaffirm the importance and the values exemplified by the long-standing American institution known as "little league baseball".