

going a step far. I think it is something we haven't done for other folks. In this case we have taken people and their families who helped the United States and we have relocated them in the greatest country in the world with the freedom to travel all these new roads that they have never been able to travel before.

But I think, for one thing, that the idea of guaranteed employment, if they have got a lot of spirit and a lot of initiative, that is the first way to kill spirit and initiative, is to give a guaranteed lifetime job to someone. I think we ought to take these folks who have this great energy, they have obviously displayed a loyalty to the United States, help them hook up with these thousands and tens of thousands of employers, including those in the government, but not have a program that guarantees employment.

So I thank the gentleman for the spirit of his amendment.

I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank the gentleman. I would assure him that this in no way mandates a program. It asks the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State to create one, but it is totally at their discretion and provides ultimate flexibility for them.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. I thank the gentleman from New York.

The Israel amendment recognizes that we have a responsibility to the Iraqis who by helping us have put a bull's eye on their back. The interpreters every single day are in immense jeopardy. They have many people who, if their identity is determined, will kill them.

But as aggressive as Mr. ISRAEL is in promoting this amendment, he is really the second-most aggressive advocate. The most aggressive are our soldiers, who have benefited day in and day out from the services of people they have come to call their brothers. They want us to stand up for the people who have stood up for them.

And do they need a job when they come here? Of course they do. This is about doing work so that they can maintain body and soul. It is also about them having work that can continue to help our men and women in uniform.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODE).

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Chairman, I too want to salute the gentleman from New York and his work on the Armed Forces Committee, but I must respectfully disagree with this amendment and what I believe is the philosophy behind it.

We need to be encouraging Iraqis to stay in Iraq. Iraq is improving. The situation there is expanding. They need to rebuild Iraq. They need to have a better economy. And by encouraging the best and the brightest to come to this country, we are doing a disservice. We should not be encouraging the Iraqi translators to abandon their country, to leave their country. We should be promoting their staying in Iraq.

If we have jobs programs, I suggest that first, with the mandatory language that exists in this amendment, that we focus on jobs for U.S. citizens. Refugees get food stamps, SSI and Medicaid. That is often more than U.S. citizens get. We should be rolling out the red carpet for our citizens first, instead of adopting programs like this.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I would just point out to my good friend from Virginia that these translators did risk their lives to help our troops in Iraq. If they stayed in Iraq, they would in all likelihood be killed. The reason they come here is to escape assassination.

With that, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the distinguished chairman of the committee.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I go back to the basics, and that is, read the amendment before you. This amendment asks that the Secretaries jointly establish and operate a temporary program to offer employment as translators, interpreters, et cetera. This is not a mandate in the words at all that are before us. Under this amendment, these Iraqis must have assisted our country in Iraq for at least a year and be here in the United States legally.

As a practical matter, these are the Iraqis who have been brought to our country under the legislation offered by my good friend DUNCAN HUNTER that was included in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2 years ago, which is good language. We are also not talking about a large number of people. We are talking about 760 people who have been brought to the United States.

I think we can do something for them. I think a careful reading of the amendment will solve a lot of discussion today. Mr. ISRAEL is right.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the remarks of both Mr. ISRAEL and the ranking member. I am just looking at the language, and it says "shall offer employment." So it clearly says, if I was going to read that as an agency head, I would say that means I must hire these folks.

Again, this committee worked to make sure that they got over here, that they were protected and that their families were protected, and I am glad we did that. I will offer my small offices. We have had jobs fairs at Bethesda and Walter Reed for our returning wounded warriors where we bring people from industry and we bring people from the agencies and we try to get them together with our wounded vets who are returning and help them to match up and get jobs. I would be happy to do the same thing with respect to these interpreters. And, indeed, interpreters have special skills. This should be something that can be done.

The only thing I would object to is the mandated job. We don't offer that to our veterans. I just think that is a step a little bit too far. But I would be happy to work with the gentleman in terms of helping them to access jobs.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY) assumed the chair.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate having proceeded to reconsider the bill (H.R. 2419), "An Act to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes", returned by the President of the United States with his objections, to the House, in which it originated, and passed by the House on reconsideration of the same, it was

*Resolved*, That the said bill pass, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

#### NOTICE

*Incomplete record of House proceedings.*

*Today's House proceedings will be continued in the next issue of the Record.*