Commission, vice the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN).

CONCERNING ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN, AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO NORTHERN SOMALIA

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 20) concerning economic, humanitarian, and other assistance to the northern part of Somalia.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 20

Whereas in the area in the northern part of Somalia, referred to as Somaliland by the elected representatives of the people living there, a significant level of economic and social stability has been achieved, promising likely success for international and United States sponsored economic development and humanitarian programs;

Whereas economic development, humanitarian, and other forms of assistance to the people of such area from international organizations, the United States, and other foreign nations, has been diminished, delayed, or canceled due to questions about the assertion of sovereignty by those people as a nation separate from Somalia;

Whereas provision of economic development and humanitarian assistance to the people of such area does not constitute recognition of any particular claim to sovereignty by any de facto government of the region; and

Whereas the fundamental purpose of economic development, humanitarian, and other aid is to relieve human suffering: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) urges all international organizations, foreign countries, and agencies of the United States Government engaged in economic development, humanitarian, and other forms of bilateral or multilateral assistance to evaluate the ability of such assistance to achieve the amelioration of human suffering in each region of Somalia, including the northern part of Somalia referred to as Somaliland;

(2) urges the President not to delay, diminish, or cancel the amounts and kinds of assistance otherwise appropriate to the people of certain regions in Somalia because conditions may not be propitious for such assistance in other regions of Somalia;

(3) urges the President not to delay, diminish, or cancel the amounts and kinds of such assistance directed toward any region in Somalia waiting for a permanent resolution of the efforts now underway to forge a new government for Somalia;

(4) calls upon all Somali parties to continue to work toward a permanent end to the civil strife there and the adoption of a permanent governmental structure most conducive to the well-being and basic human rights of all Somali people; and

(5) calls on the President to—

(A) work with the international community to help bring an end to the suffering of the Somali people and work toward a negotiated settlement of the Somali conflict;

(B) increase the levels of humanitarian assistance provided to Somalia through local and international groups;

(C) provide funding for demobilization and demining efforts in Somalia;

(D) provide assistance in the health and education sectors of Somalia; and

(E) work with other donor groups to assist the people of Somalia in reconstruction and development.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

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 H. Con. Res. 20, the concurrent resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, the Horn of Africa is no longer as strategically important to our Nation as it once was. However, we cannot ignore it as an area of a region with past and continuing instability.

The hostility of the Islamic fundamentalist regime of Sudan toward our Nation, the regrettable ongoing war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the violent clashes between warlords in southern Somalia all bear watching. Because of these problems, it is in our national interest to identify those portions of the Horn which have demonstrated a degree of stability and governance and to encourage them. Northern Somalia, and particularly the area once defined as the British protectorate of Somaliland, is one such area.

Our distinguished colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), traveled to that remote region last year. We are grateful to them for their energetic diligent service on the Subcommittee on Africa. This resolution is a direct result of their eyewitness accounts of a people rebuilding their lives and economies after a long troubled period.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to fully support this measure, H. Con. Res. 20.

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

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

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, H. Con. Res. 20.

□ 1300

Let me once again thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN); the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), chairman of the subcommittee; and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON) for bringing this resolution to the floor.

I would also like to thank the primary sponsor, the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), who traveled on CODEL Campbell to Somaliland last year, where we had the opportunity to meet with President Egal.

This resolution expresses several points: Support for humanitarian and targeted development assistance for Somaliland. It encourages efforts at democratization and transparency. It recognizes the level of stability in the region. It encourages freedom of the press. It encourages dialogue with other regions in Somalia, and it also calls on the U.S. to provide funding for health and education.

When Somalia gained independence from Britain and Italy, Somalia was left with two distinct systems of governing by virtue of the fact that they were controlled by different colonial powers.

The governing body of Northern Somalia was colonized by the British. In the south it was colonized by the Italians. As we know, Djibouti, an independent country before their independence, was colonized by the French.

The various systems have something to do we believe with the relative stability and instability of these regions. Northern Somalia, which was colonized by the British, was sort of left intact by the colonial hierarchy. They continued to allow traditional leaders to function. They allowed local leaders to be able to project themselves, therefore creating a more stable environment when independence came.

Whereas, their Italian counterparts replaced the indigenous structures and they had their own Italian model for Southern Somalia around Mogadishu. And so, the lack of local leaders being recognized in the south by the form of colonization that the Italians had as contrasted with that of the north is one of the reasons to explain the differences in those two regions.

''The Great Conference of the Northern Peoples'' convened a meeting in May of 1991 and established the part of Somalia which the people in the north call Somaliland. It also promulgated a new Constitution for that region. President Egal was reelected to office in 1997 for another 5-year term by winning 223 votes in their 315-member national communities conference.

Egal's relationship with other clans in Somalia has improved over the past years due to his efforts of reaching out to other clan leaders and once again having had visibility before independence.

Somalia is one example of a collapsed system of government by the north, as we can see in the past. And so, the opportunity for us to visit there with CODEL Campbell to see the schools, the hospitals, the civil servants functioning and our recent visit by President Egal encourages us to continue to support the efforts that are happening there.

Also, as the war continues between Ethiopia and Eritrea, we see that sides in Somalia are being taken by leaders

between Isaias and Meles. And so, to have the stability in the north is very important.

Mr. Speaker, we urge support of this resolution.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. Royce), the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Africa.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with the Members here that this resolution draws a much needed sense of attention by this Congress to Somalia, which has ceased to exist as a nation. And so, the nation's state, basically, has ended in a situation of near anarchy as a result of fighting between factions led by self-serving warlords there.

But this resolution authored by the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) recognizes that the northernmost part of Somalia has achieved a significant level of economic and social stability.

I would just like to share with the Members that November 1 in Newsweek Magazine they report: ''The people here in the north call their territory Somaliland and they want no part of the thuggery to the south. In the north, children in crisp, white shirts attend school and play cheerful games of soccer. Their parents busily rebuild broken homes, hammering new roofs or white-washing walls. And, astonishingly, not a gun is in sight.''

The article in Newsweek goes on to quote the Deputy Parliament Speaker, who says, ''We want a nod from Uncle Sam that we're going in the right direction. We've established a healthy haven in a very rough neighborhood.''

Well, this should be a given and this resolution does that. However, the resolution should not be construed as a call for diplomatic recognition of Somaliland per se. In fact, the resolution calls for all Somalia parties to work with the international community to achieve a permanent end to the civil strife there and the adoption of a permanent government structure most conducive to the well-being and basic human rights of all Somalia people.

I would like to commend again the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) for offering this resolution and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Africa. I would also like to recognize the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), our full committee chairman, for his work on this resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), who is one of the original sponsors of this measure.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the chairman of our full committee, but for whom we would not have this resolution on the floor today, for his generous support for this resolution and, more generally, for his support for matters of great importance to all of us in regard to Africa.

I wish to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the subcommittee chairman, who has taken the time to learn the subject matter, to become an expert, and to lead our Congress on matters of importance to all of us regarding Africa.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), my cosponsor and the ranking Democrat on the subcommittee, with whom I have traveled to Africa, who has constantly shared with me his extensive knowledge about Africa, gleaned not only from his years in Congress but also from his remarkable public service prior thereto in connection with his work with the YMCA and humanitarian and refugee assistance. From all these sources I have learned a great deal.

The resolution has a very simple purpose. The United States and international assistance agencies ought to help where we can do the most good, and we should not hold back that help pending a final and perfect resolution of the difficulties in Mogadishu. That is the heart of this resolution.

We do not have to get into the issue of recognition of any country, or subcategories or any countries, contrary to the accepted standards of our State Department. All we have to do is recognize that if there is in place an instrument that can accept assistance from the World Bank, from the Africa Development Bank, from AID, that we then ought to go ahead and offer that assistance if we can help needy people.

What is happening today instead, Mr. Speaker, is that such assistance by the World Bank, by the Africa Development Bank, by United States AID, is held up because there is no recognized government in Mogadishu. That should not be a reason to hold back useful assistance to some remarkable people in the northern part of the former country of Somalia, who have achieved so much.

Secondly, the legal status is exactly as my good friend and colleague, the subcommittee chairman, has stated. However, bear in mind that Somaliland was an independent sovereign state, admittedly for a short period, for 6 days; but as they came out of colonial status from Britain, they were an independent country. They voluntarily gave up that independence to join with formerly Italian colony of Somalia to form the State of Somalia.

Now, under the tremendous strain of a civil war, that union broke apart. I emphasize this because the people of the land that was Somaliland have aspirations. I do not speak against those aspirations. I note, as the subcommittee chair did, that today we do not speak on the subject of those aspirations for statehood. We leave that neutral and unsaid in this resolution.

However, so many of our colleagues remember the horror that befell American troops trying to do good in Mogadishu, and specifically, the American Rangers. That was not the fault of the good people of Somaliland. They had nothing to do with it. They had no control over Mogadishu. They were not part of the government, such as it was there. They were not part of the warring factions in Mogadishu.

Instead, what we see is a stable area capable of accepting aid and using it for needy people. And today, by this resolution, we put on record the House of Representatives and, hopefully, the other body as well in support of assisting people in ways that can be accepted and utilized.

In conclusion, I want to return to the note of thanks with which I began. We would not be here but for the chairman and the subcommittee chairman who have given priority to this resolution. It speaks volumes for their compassion and concern that they wanted to put this forward today. I thank them for doing so.

I conclude with a final word of thanks again to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), whose leadership in this area has been exemplary to us all.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying I agree with the chairman of the subcommittee that this should not be construed as recognition. But I must certainly associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) that this is a unique situation and, in the future, perhaps it is something that we need to look at. But I agree that this does not connote any type of recognition.

I do, though, in conclusion urge all independent national organizations, foreign countries, and agencies of the United States Government to engage in economic development and humanitarian and other forms of foreign assistance to evaluate the ability of such assistance to achieve the amelioration of human suffering in each region of Somalia, including the northern part of Somalia known as Somaliland.

We urge our President not to delay, diminish, or cancel the amount of assistance otherwise necessary to the people of certain regions of Somalia because the conditions in the other parts, as has been mentioned, are not stable and peaceful; and we encourage the President not to delay or diminish aid to certain areas of Somalia that are awaiting a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

We also call on all Somalia parties to continue to work towards a permanent end to the civil strife there and to adopt the permanent government structure conducive to the well-being and the basic human rights of all Somalis.

This resolution is just presented as a catalyst to deliver humanitarian assistance to Somalia and to create a dialogue that will end the suffering and confusion within Somalia.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 20, the resolution ''Concerning Economic, Humanitarian And Other Assistance To Northern Somalia.'' To understand the importance of this resolution, we must look to the recent history of politically, economically and war torn Somalia.

Cities in Somalia have traditionally been centers of trade, administration and education. Now they lie shattered. In Hargeisa, for example, 80 percent of the buildings have been destroyed, supply infrastructures like electricity and water have been smashed, the schools left roofless and ruined, the hospitals devastated and the citizens have suffered without the most basic facilities. Anti-personnel mines and unexploded shells lie buried in the rubble of the city, still deadly, forbidding the clearance of much of the debris. Such terrifying conditions in what had been stable and well-established cities symbolize the legacy of Siad Barre's disastrous years of power.

As the Africa Watch Committee set down in its 1990 report on the region, ''It is difficult to overstate the Somali government's brutality towards its own people, or to measure the impact of its murderous policies.'' Two decades of the presidency of President Siad Barre have resulted in human rights violations on an unprecedented scale, which have devastated the country. Even before the current wars, the human rights of Somali citizens were violated systematically, violently and with absolute impunity. The most bloody conflict, and the longest lasting, has been the war in the North against the Isaak clan, the largest in the region.'' Recounts given by the people who have and continue to be exposed to physical violence and verbal abuse in Somalia paints a picture of dead, wounded, displaced people and impoverished and demolished cities.

Mrs. Fozia Mohamed Awad, speaking of the problems in Northern Somalia recants ''I personally lived through the 1985 massacre, when fifty to sixty men were driven out of prison and shot by government soldiers. This happened in the city of Burao, and there were no trials or court appearances, they were just shot down. After these killings, the government confiscated our property, established control posts at the entrances of our towns and along the highways and nothing could happen without them being bribed.''

One morning the government army arrived at, Fozia Awad's village, approaching from a dried-up riverbed. They opened fire, killing all they could see—people and animals. They killed her mother and two other women relatives. In all, sixty people were killed on that occasion at the water point. Then they went to the nearby village and killed everybody there, except a few who fled into the bush.

Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, H. Con. Res. 46 is extremely important in that it expresses the sense of Congress deploring the escalation of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea which has resulted in the massive and senseless loss of life, as well as substantial economic hardship to the peoples of both nations. This measure strongly urges both Eritrea and Ethiopia to bring an immediate end to the violence between the two countries and strongly affirms U.S. support for the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Framework Agreement. In addition, H. Con. Res. 20 calls on the United Nations Human Rights Commission and all human rights organizations to investigate human rights abuses in connection with the forced detentions, deportations, and displacements of populations caused by this conflict.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Congressman CAMPBELL and Congressman PAYNE for introducing this important resolution. This resolution presents a commitment by the United States to the people of Somalia. It is for the spirits of the thousands of people who have died in Somalia and 60,000 more who have been detained or forced from their homes who are crying out for world intervention. This resolution is a first step.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 20.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.J. RES. 2

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of House Joint Resolution 2, of which I am not particularly fond, and to which my name was added without my knowledge in error.

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

There was no objection.

CELEBRATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF GENEVA CONVENTIONS

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 102) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the humanitarian safeguards these treaties provide in times of armed conflict.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 102

Whereas the Geneva Conventions of 1949 set basic humane standards of behavior during armed conflict, and are the major written source of international humanitarian law;

Whereas these Conventions prescribe humane treatment for civilian populations, wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel, and prisoners of war during armed conflict;

Whereas these Conventions recognize the International Committee of the Red Cross as an independent and neutral organization whose humanitarian mission is to protect and assist civilians, prisoners of war, and other victims of armed conflict;

Whereas ''the red cross in a field of white'' is not an ordinary organizational symbol, but one to which the international community has granted the ability to impose restraint during war and to protect human life;

Whereas the American Red Cross and its sister national societies are members of a world-wide organization rooted in the provisions of international humanitarian law and dedicated to the promulgation of its principles, among which are the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

Whereas the international programs of the American Red Cross bring relief from natural and manmade disasters abroad, contribute to the development of nonprofit relief organizations abroad, and include the teaching of international humanitarian law throughout the United States;

Whereas many domestic programs of the Red Cross in health and safety, disaster, blood, youth, and service to the members of the Armed Forces of the United States grew out of a response to armed conflict;

Whereas, thanks to the efforts of Clara Barton and Frederick Douglass, the United States ratified in 1882 the first convention for the amelioration of the condition of wounded and sick members of the armed forces in the field;

Whereas in 1955 the United States ratified the Geneva Conventions of 1949; and

Whereas the Geneva Conventions of 1949 are among the most universally ratified treaties in the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

The Congress—

(1) recognizes the historic and humanitarian significance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and celebrates the 50th anniversary of the signing of these treaties;

(2) exhorts combatants everywhere to respect the red cross emblem in order to protect innocent and vulnerable populations on every side of conflicts;

(3) commends the International Committee of the Red Cross and the more than 175 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, including the American Red Cross, on their continuing work in providing relief and assistance to the victims of war as prescribed by these Conventions;

(4) applauds the Promise of Humanity gathering organized by the American Red Cross in 1999 in Washington, D.C., as an important reminder of our responsibilities to educate future generations about the principles of international humanitarian law;

(5) commends the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the more than 175 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, including the American Red Cross, for their work in educating the world's citizens about the humanitarian principles of international humanitarian law as embodied in the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

(6) invites the American Red Cross during this anniversary year to assist Congress in educating its Members and staff about the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

(7) supports the anniversary theme of the International Committee of the Red Cross that ''Even War Has Limits''; and

(8) calls upon the President to issue a proclamation recognizing the anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and recognizing the Conventions themselves as critically important instruments for protecting human dignity in times of armed conflict and limiting the savagery of war.

SEC. 2. GENEVA CONVENTIONS OF 1949 DEFINED.

In this concurrent resolution, the term ''Geneva Conventions of 1949'' means the following conventions, done at Geneva in 1949:

(1) Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (6 UST 3114).