

this resolution suggests. Unless that debt is dealt with soon, Iraq will be unable to develop as its resources and the skills of its people would otherwise allow. This is an absurd situation and an affront to any reasonable standard of justice.

The Iraqi people had absolutely nothing to do with the acquiring of this debt. Creditor nations supplied Saddam resources to build up his army to invade his neighbors and attack his own citizens; for his effort to develop weapons of mass destruction; and for his building of palaces and monuments for self-aggrandizement.

This money did not serve the needs of the Iraqi people. These loans were not used to develop the infrastructure and resources of the country. The Iraqis not only failed to benefit from this policy of relentless borrowing; they were its primary victims.

Without debt forgiveness, we are now asking the Iraqis literally to pay for Saddam Hussein's crimes for generations to come. By way of illustration, let me boil this absurd situation down to a simple truth: Without debt forgiveness, generations of Iraqi Kurds will be asked to pay the bills for developing the chemical weapons that were used to kill and maim their brethren at Halabja.

As a further absurdity: If the Iraqi people are forced to repay Saddam's debts, most of these repayment funds would be directed to creditor nations that actually opposed Iraq's liberation.

Mr. Speaker, our nation not only liberated Iraq. It has also already donated—I repeat, donated—approximately \$3 billion to provide for Iraq's humanitarian needs and rebuild its crumbling infrastructure. And now it has been asked to give more. It is time for Iraq's creditors to step up to the plate and at last do something for the Iraqi people, instead of for Saddam Hussein. As both direction to Administration policy-makers and to strengthen their hand, it is important that this body go on record with a clear demand for international debt forgiveness for Iraq.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 198. This is a resolution which I introduced several months ago to address the inadequacies of France's, Germany's, and Russia's efforts in participating in the reconstruction effort. In doing so, I believe it best to highlight the outstanding debt owed to them by Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for the consideration of its resolution. In the past year, the United States has committed its most precious commodity, the lives of our men and women, for the liberation of an oppressed people. It is not an action which we took lightly as a Congress, and one which we took after much consideration. Now we must win the peace, and in doing so, call upon the very nations who have indicated they would like to see the successful reconstruction of Iraq to forgive its debt.

The odious debt which the regime of Saddam Hussein contracted with numerous countries is not one which would be foisted upon the innocent people of Iraq. Now is the time for debt forgiveness and now is the time for the community of nations to come together and assist in solving this problem. In particular, France, Germany, and Russia must bear special responsibility for this because they represent the countries most vocal in supporting the illegitimate regime of Saddam Hussein.

The Speaker, the past policies of these countries were particularly helpful to Saddam Hussein's regime when United Nations Resolutions prohibited such relationships. They have requested that they be allowed to assist in reconstruction, and this is a first step.

Furthermore, because of their particular role over the last decade, it would be particularly helpful if they were to pledge greater amounts of money to aid in Iraq's reconstruction at the upcoming Madrid Donors' Conference. Thus, we have amended this legislation to reflect that fact.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to enter into a great debate over the substance of a Supplemental that will directly aid Iraq in its reconstruction. While there are a variety of opinions on the Supplemental, there is little doubt that America will keep her word to the Iraqi people and directly aid her in reconsideration. There is absolutely no question that we will not hold the innocent people of Iraq responsible for the actions of Saddam Hussein.

Vote "yes" on House Resolution 198.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 198

Whereas France, Germany, Russia, and other nations have expressed an interest in assisting in the reconstruction of Iraq;

Whereas France, Germany, Russia, and other nations have previously encouraged and provided debt relief as a way to assist other nations;

Whereas France, Germany, Russia, and other nations had extensive trade relationships with Iraq;

Whereas loans and other support from France, Germany, Russia, and other nations were used by the Saddam Hussein regime to support the development of its weapons of mass destruction programs, the expansion of the Iraqi Army that the regime used to invade its neighbors, and the building of palaces, monuments, and other means of aggrandizing Saddam Hussein;

Whereas the United States has already provided approximately \$3,000,000,000 in the form of grants to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people and to rebuild Iraq's crumbling infrastructure; and

Whereas France, Germany, Russia, and other nations are capable of making generous pledges for the reconstruction of Iraq at the International Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq to be held in Madrid: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that France, Germany, Russia, and other nations—

(1) should work with multilateral institutions and with creditor nations in the "Paris Club" to establish a debt forgiveness program for Iraq to aid its reconstruction;

(2) should make generous pledges for the reconstruction of Iraq at the International Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq to be held in Madrid; and

(3) should acknowledge the role that Iraq's current debt plays in hindering its reconstruction.

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE OFFERED BY MS. ROS-LEHTINEN

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute offered by Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that France, Germany, Russia, and other nations—

(1) should work with multilateral institutions and with creditor nations in the "Paris Club" to establish a debt forgiveness program for Iraq to aid its reconstruction;

(2) should make generous pledges for the reconstruction of Iraq at the International Conference on Reconstruction in Iraq to be held in Madrid; and

(3) should acknowledge the role that Iraq's current debt plays in hindering its reconstruction.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment in the nature of a substitute be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution, as amended.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

□ 1045

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Resolution 198, the resolution just considered.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3289, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE AND FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN, 2004

Mr. HASTING of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 396 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows: