

Mr. Speaker, the majority has delayed this bill long enough. I would have preferred this bill, so crucial to defending our country, be considered by unanimous consent; but I know there are many people who would be happy if this legislation never saw the light of day.

Before I close, I want to reiterate my support for the intelligence reform package. Despite my opposition to the way it has come to the floor, I intend fully to vote for it later.

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

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House voted to repeal a controversial provision in the omnibus appropriations bill that no Member knew was in the bill when the bill was filed. Yet today, having learned little, the House will rush to vote on the intelligence bill about which Members know probably just as little, and they will do so without having the language available.

I would like to be able to vote for this bill because it will probably improve the sharing of intelligence, and there are a number of other good provisions in it. But Mr. Speaker, we need to recognize that there have been two intelligence failures in the last 5 years. First was the failure to prevent the 9/11 attack. Second was the use of faulty intelligence to suck us into a dumb war in Iraq. The new layer of bureaucracy created by this bill may or may not help us on the first front, but it is likely to make it harder to correct the second. That is why I am going to vote against the bill and against this motion to speed up its consideration.

One of the bill's most glaring shortcomings is that it does not guarantee that dissenting or alternative views will ever be clearly stated to the President. That was a major problem in the decision to go to war in Iraq. To correct that problem, Senator ROBERTS included a provision in the Senate bill establishing an office and a process to provide these alternative points of view at every stage. That provision is, sadly, hugely watered down now in this bill. The bill simply leaves it up to the National Intelligence Director to decide how different points of view are factored into decisions. That is a terribly weak substitute.

Second, in emerging domestic and foreign surveillance operations, the bill does not sufficiently protect ordinary Americans from the mistakes of Big Government. The bill does contain a Presidential board to look at government-wide privacy issues, but that will do little to protect innocent Americans or to address specific grievances that may arise. That will come back to haunt us, just as certain aspects of the PATRIOT Act have.

Finally, the bill purports to increase the number of border and Customs agents; but in fact, the bill does nothing of the kind. That language is meaningless without the dollars to back it up, and this House has rejected providing those dollars, (ill-advisedly so in my view they voted that way;) the House has rejected providing those dollars four times in the past year, and this bill does absolutely nothing to change that. On that score, this bill is simply an empty institutional press release.

When this bill is corrected on those three fronts, and on others, I will be happy to vote for it, but not until.

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1633

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 4 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY S. 2845, INTELLIGENCE REFORM AND TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 2004

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-797) on the resolution (H. Res. 870) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (S. 2845) to reform the intelligence community and the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 2845, INTELLIGENCE REFORM AND TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 2004

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 870 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 870

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (S. 2845) to reform the intelligence community and the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this is a traditional rule for consideration of the conference report for the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report. It also provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule and approving the underlying conference committee report on truly historic reform legislation, S. 2845.

Mr. Speaker, final passage of this legislation today will be viewed by many as one of the most noteworthy accomplishments of the 108th Congress. Playing critical roles in getting us to this point in time have been the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) and a host of others. The American people owe these Members an enormous debt of gratitude.

A world in which the enemy is easily identifiable has changed. We face more and more states without solid institutions, national consciousness and internal cohesion which are providing new threats such as the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and an increasing number of nonstate actors such as terrorist networks.

Terrorism has existed for hundreds of years, but the last decade has seen a rise in terrorist networks and their coordination amongst themselves. Many terrorists groups actively share hostage-taking tactics, weapons training, and planning techniques with one another. More than ever the terrorist networks are finding it easier to blend into society and are becoming harder for intelligence agencies to track. Former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency James Woolsey put it best when he said, We have slain a large dragon, the U.S.S.R., but we now live in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes. In many ways, the dragon was easier to keep track of.

The job of keeping track of these terrorist networks belongs to the U.S. Intelligence Community, and we thank the CIA and all the other members of