

Mr. HOYER. Because there is so much interest in that bill on our side, Mr. Leader, would it be fair to say that that decision would be made prior to the close of business on Monday so that we would have some notice of that in time to fairly consider it?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We will try our best, in consultation with you, to give you some idea of when we could possibly bring that bill, and if it is going to be considered next week and we can fit into the schedule, then certainly we would let you know by probably the end of business Monday.

□ 1230

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we would appreciate that.

The other bills that I would like to talk about, the highway bill conference report the gentleman indicated as a possibility, can the gentleman inform us of the status of that conference and where we are on this bill?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding. I am very encouraged. I serve on the conference committee, so I am very encouraged by the accomplishments and progress that has been made over the course of this week.

I believe there is really only one major issue left to be resolved by the conferees, and that relates to transit funding. Hopefully, that can be resolved prior to the Wednesday night expiration of the current short-term funding measure, and then, as normal, there are a lot of smaller issues that can be resolved by then. I am very hopeful that we can pass that conference report before we leave here next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I presume, am I correct, that the gentleman's effort would be to try to pass it prior to the expiration of the last temporary extension, or would the gentleman anticipate another, which I guess would be the tenth or the eleventh extension; or does the gentleman think he can perhaps get it through prior to Wednesday night?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. Everyone is working as hard as they can. As the gentleman knows, this bill has taken a long time to work out the differences between the House and the Senate. We get very close every time we reach the deadline of an expiration date.

The expiration date is set on Wednesday. Everybody is going to be working over the weekend, and we are working as hard as we can with the goal to bring that conference report to the floor before the expiration of the short-term funding measure.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the leader for his comments and observations. We are certainly hopeful on our side, and I know the gentleman is on his side, that

we get this bill through. It is probably as significant a jobs creation bill as we will pass in this Congress, and it has been delayed for a very long period of time. I know the gentleman has been frustrated by it, and we have been frustrated by it, and hopefully, we can get that done by next week.

The energy bill conference report, can the gentleman tell us where that stands? I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We are working on it. We hope to get it done by the end of next week. It is a very ambitious goal, I must say, to take a bill of this magnitude and, in a matter of 2 weeks, get all the differences worked out between the House and the Senate and bring it to the floor.

This is another item that the House and Senate are working on through the weekend, and at least encouragement has been brought to my attention by the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce that, with a lot of hard work, it is very possible that we could get this energy conference report to the Members for a vote by the end of next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, in light of the fact, Mr. Leader, I will simply observe that if we get all of those things moving we are going to have a lot of work to do next week, and I presume our Members ought to be prepared for long days and, clearly, if we get all of that done, it will be Friday late before we get out of here.

In light of the fact we will not have a colloquy next week because we will be going on recess for the summer work period, can the gentleman tell us what he anticipates might be on the agenda when we come back on September 6, what might be on the agenda early in the September weeks? Clearly, appropriations bills conference reports, to the extent they are done, will be on the calendar, but other than that, can the gentleman enlighten us as to what your thoughts are? I yield to the leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We have not made any decisions yet, but obviously the gentleman knows and Members understand that the appropriations process did end with us passing our bills before the July 4 break. The Senate is working on appropriations bills, and we will be doing those conferences as they present themselves.

Also, we do know that at least the first week back, we could be looking at the Coast Guard authorization bill and possibly a research bill from the Committee on Science. That is the first week back. Other bills will be considered during the August district work period, and we will be able to make a more firm announcement to the Members as to what we anticipate having the first week back and, in addition to that, the second week also.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, there are two pieces of legislation, major pieces of legislation that the gentleman did not mention but have been talked about, and that is, of course, the Social Security legislation and the campaign finance legislation, one or the other bill, or both.

Can the gentleman give me his thoughts on where they stand and when they might come on the agenda if, in fact, they will be coming on the agenda?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. The campaign finance committees are still working on those issues. It is quite possible that we could address those issues in September. The way that I am watching the schedule of the other body, we will probably be here at least a week or two after October 1, and we would be working on those issues.

I have every expectation that the Committee on Ways and Means will put out a retirement security bill for us to consider in September or the first of October. And, I am sure the gentleman remembers, we have a reconciliation process that is ongoing. We could have a reconciliation bill in that time period.

So those are some of the major issues that we will be facing in September and October.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader for all of the information.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 25, 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE BALTIC COUNTRIES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on International Relations be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 128) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear

and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, although I will not object to this resolution, but I want to claim the time to speak in support of this resolution.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution, with 29 other Members of Congress, that calls upon Russia to acknowledge the occupation and subsequent suffering of the Baltic people under Soviet control during the period of time of the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement.

The resolution comes to the floor in a timely manner. This week is Captive Nations Week, first declared so by the U.S. Congress on July 17, 1959 as a joint resolution against continuing Communist domination of the Baltic countries. President Bush has again declared this week Captive Nations Week and urges Americans to reaffirm their commitment to all those seeking liberty, justice and self-determination. I can think of no better way to honor the memories of those who fought for freedom against Communist control than to pass this resolution.

During Communist occupation of the Baltics, hundreds of thousands of people were torn from their families and deported to Siberia, many never to be heard from again. No one can exactly be sure of the amount of those who died or fled Soviet control, but it has been estimated from 500,000 to 750,000 people. You cannot meet a person in these countries that did not have a family member or loved one who was not affected by these horrible practices. Russia has been unwavering in its nonrecognition of the mass deportations, tortures, and murders committed during the Soviet regime; a Soviet regime that was a Communist regime, not a supposedly more open Russian government that purports to be democratic today.

I feel, along with the 29 cosponsors of this resolution, that Russia needs to acknowledge the mistakes of the past so it can move forward and become a truthful State and, in turn, a stronger democracy. It is important that the United States join with our allies in the Baltics and stand for democracy and the rights of individuals to be protected everywhere. Democracy and freedom cannot exist without truth and transparency.

I would hope Russia would take a step towards this as a Nation by acknowledging the past, and I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

I also want to take the time to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman

HYDE), the gentleman from California (Ranking Member LANTOS), the gentleman from California (Chairman GALLEGLY), and the gentleman from Florida (Ranking Member Wexler) for allowing this to be moved in an expeditious manner.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 128

Whereas the incorporation in 1940 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union was an act of aggression carried out against the will of sovereign people;

Whereas the United States was steadfast in its policy of not recognizing the illegal Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the Russian Federation is the successor state to the Soviet Union;

Whereas the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, including its secret protocols, between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity to occupy and annex Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the occupation brought countless suffering to the Baltic peoples through terror, killings, and deportations to Siberian concentration camps;

Whereas the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania bravely resisted Soviet aggression first through armed resistance movements and later through political resistance movements;

Whereas the Government of Germany renounced its participation in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and publicly apologized for the destruction and terror that Nazi Germany unleashed on the world;

Whereas, in 1989, the Congress of Peoples' Deputies of the Soviet Union declared the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 void;

Whereas the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic countries is one of the largest remaining unacknowledged incidents of oppression in Russian history;

Whereas a declaration of acknowledgment of such incident by the Russian Federation would lead to improved relations between the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the people of Russia, would form the basis for improved relations between the governments of the countries, and strengthen stability in the region;

Whereas the Russian Federation is to be commended for beginning to acknowledge grievous and regrettable incidents in their history, such as admitting complicity in the massacre of Polish soldiers in the Katyn Forest in 1939;

Whereas the truth is a powerful weapon for healing, forgiving, and reconciliation, but its absence breeds distrust, fear, and hostility; and

Whereas countries that cannot clearly admit their historical mistakes and make peace with their pasts cannot successfully build their futures: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear and unambiguous statement of admission and condemnation of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Soviet Union from 1940 to 1991 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the consequence of which

will be a significant increase in good will among the affected peoples and enhanced regional stability.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

AMENDMENT TO THE PREAMBLE OFFERED BY

MR. MCCOTTER

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment to the preamble.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment to the preamble offered by Mr. MCCOTTER:

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas the incorporation in 1940 of the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union was an act of aggression carried out against the will of sovereign people;

Whereas the United States was steadfast in its policy of not recognizing the illegal Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the Russian Federation is the successor state to the Soviet Union;

Whereas the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939, including its secret protocols, between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity to occupy and annex Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania;

Whereas the occupation brought countless suffering to the Baltic peoples through terror, killings, and deportations to Siberian concentration camps;

Whereas the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania bravely resisted Soviet aggression and occupation;

Whereas the Government of Germany renounced its participation in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and publicly apologized for the destruction and terror that Nazi Germany unleashed on the world;

Whereas in 1989, the Congress of Peoples' Deputies of the Soviet Union denounced the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 and its secret protocols;

Whereas President Putin recently confirmed that the statement of the Congress of Peoples' Deputies remains the view of the Russian Federation;

Whereas the illegal occupation and annexation of the Baltic countries by the Soviet Union remains unacknowledged by the Russian Federation;

Whereas a declaration of acknowledgment of the illegal occupation and annexation by the Russian Federation would lead to improved relations between the people of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the people of Russia, would form the basis for improved relations between the governments of the countries, and strengthen stability in the region;

Whereas the Russian Federation is to be commended for acknowledging grievous and regrettable incidents in the Soviet era, such as the massacre by the Soviet regime of Polish soldiers in the Katyn Forest in 1939;

Whereas the truth is a powerful weapon for healing, forgiving, and reconciliation, but its absence breeds distrust, fear, and hostility; and

Whereas countries that cannot clearly admit their historical mistakes and make peace with their pasts cannot successfully build their futures: Now, therefore, be it

Mr. MCCOTTER (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment to the preamble be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment to the preamble offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. McCOTTER).

The amendment to the preamble was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

OPPOSING CAFTA LEGISLATION

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the sugar provisions in the Central American Free Trade Agreement would cost U.S. taxpayers \$500 million over the next 10 years, according to estimates released this week by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office. The CBO, the arm of Congress that estimates the costs of legislation, also found that revenues in the U.S. Treasury would fall by \$4.4 billion over the same 10 years if CAFTA is enacted.

So this trade agreement, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, is not just about our trade deficit, which has gone from \$38 billion to \$618 billion in the last 12 years; it is not just about lost jobs, and we have lost 3 million jobs, manufacturing jobs alone in the last 5 years; it is also about busting our budget. It is going to cost us jobs, it is going to swell the trade agreement, it is going to cost us \$4.4 billion, and it does nothing for the people of Central America or families in the United States.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

SALUTING THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are many things in America that give us cause for celebration. I am delighted to rise today and salute the Boy Scouts of America that are celebrating the jamboree and to acknowledge the service that they give to all of America.

I am a proud member of the Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scouts of America. I am a Silver Beaver, and I have an Eagle Scout as a young son. To all of those who have achieved as Boy Scouts in America, our future leaders, we congratulate them. We thank them very much for the service that they give. I am reminded of the old sign of Boy Scouts laying down a raincoat or jacket over the water to allow an elderly person to walk. It is symbolic of the service that they give.

I hope as they enjoy the wonderment of this great Capitol of the United States and the fact that they are able to see those of us who serve in the United States Congress, working the democratic way, they will be emboldened and they will be infused with a sense of energy, of leadership, and that they will carry the message of the Boy Scouts with great honor and serve their country in a very honorable way.

□ 1245

With that I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I wish them the very best. And I might see them out there. Boy Scouts equal America. God bless America, and God bless the Boy Scouts of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OTTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NOMINATION OF JUDGE ROBERTS TO SUPREME COURT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, apart from the decision to go to war, a President makes no more consequential choice than filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court of the United States. I rise today for a few short moments to say that in choosing Judge John Roberts as the next Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, President Bush has chosen wisely.

Judge Roberts built a career of excellence in the legal profession and in public service on the values of personal integrity and civility that I say proudly he learned growing up in my home State of Indiana. While he was born in Buffalo, New York, he was raised and to this day says he is from what we call the region in northwestern Indiana, going to school in La Porte, Indiana, before heading off to Harvard where he would graduate with honors and then Harvard law school where he would be a member of the Law Review and graduate with highest honors.

He is one of four children. Today he lives in Bethesda, Maryland and was, prior to being appointed to service on what is routinely referred to as the second highest court in the land, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, he built an almost unprecedented career in the law, both in and out of public service.

The National Journal actually wrote not long ago: "John Roberts seems a good bet to be the kind of judge we should all want to have. All of us, that is, who are looking less for congenial ideologues than for professionals committed to the impartial application of the law."

Indeed, his entire career has been, as the former White House counsel C. Boyden Gray reflected recently, "one of unquestioned integrity and fair-mindedness."

He is an extraordinary individual who has actually argued before the United States Supreme Court on 39 separate occasions. He is, as the President reflected during his nomination on Tuesday night, he is singularly one of the most accomplished and brilliant legal minds of his generation. And it has been acknowledged in the political process as well.

Because he personifies the very qualities that most Americans would seek on the Supreme Court, Judge Roberts was reported favorably out of the Senate Judiciary Committee just 2 short years ago for his appointment to his present post. In fact, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 16 to 3, and Judge Roberts was confirmed by the United States Senate for the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals by unanimous consent.

And let me speak to this point of timing because we are 1 week away from the August recess. As I rise today, understanding that the House of Representatives has no formal role in the confirmation of an Associate Justice to the Supreme Court, I would urge nonetheless respectfully my colleagues in the Senate to give every deliberate consideration to Judge Roberts' nomination because time is of the essence, and time is on our side.

History tells us President Clinton's two nominations to the Supreme Court took an average of 58 days from the day of nomination to confirmation. Over the past 30 years, the confirmation process has averaged 72 days from confirmation to nomination. And as we look at the calendar today, there are essentially 73 days between when the President nominated Judge Roberts and when the Court would begin its work this fall. The Senate has the time for a thoroughgoing vetting of Judge Roberts' credentials and his background and his capacity to serve in this august position, and I urge them to move with all deliberate speed and I do so with respect.

Again, I simply rise today recognizing that apart from a decision to go to war, a President makes no more consequential choice than filling a vacancy on the Supreme Court; and I say with gratitude to the President of the United States that in choosing Judge John Roberts, a son of the State of Indiana, a man who is devoted to the law and devoted to the application of the law and not the creation of the law, the President has chosen wisely.