

How do they make it? How do they get through the day? Her answer was: "How do they survive? Since being in Nicaragua I have taken to answer in a matter of fact way. Often they do not. Often they do not survive the day."

Each day, even on our bad days, and we're fond of saying we've had a really bad day, but we ought to be reminded that for billions of people throughout the world, that even on our worst days, we have more food, more shelter, more clothes, more security, more health care, more of everything than our poor brothers and sisters have on their best days.

And, finally, a lot of people said, well, the reality is overwhelming. Half the world lives on \$2 a day. But we can make a difference and we can do so at a very small cost.

We've had successes. We have made a difference. Debt relief has been a success. It has improved the lives of millions of people for almost no monetary cost to this country. Since the Millennium Development Goals were set 7 years ago, the poverty rate in sub-Saharan Africa is down 6 percent. There are more children receiving health care, in fact, over a million more children in that area alone, and medical treatment. Vaccinations are up throughout Africa. The percentage of students enrolled in primary schools has gone up considerably.

So, in closing, let me simply say this: cost should never be the overriding consideration. But when we consider cost, and doing the right thing is the imperative, but when we consider the cost, let us realize that the cost of not acting is not only hopelessness and unrest throughout the world, but is also terrorism and confrontation and wars that can be avoided if these programs work.

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Global poverty is in our economic interest. It is in our national security interest as well. This bill will focus our battle against global poverty, and it is a powerful statement that Americans are committed to making this world a better place for all.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank and again appreciate the efforts of my Republican colleagues and agree with their comments. A comprehensive strategy is what we are looking for here, and that is certainly trade, efforts at economic development, capacity-building to help countries figure out how to better use trade, microcredit. There are a lot of different strategies out there that can be employed. Certainly aid and debt relief are part of it but not the only part. In fact, the better part is when you can figure out how to make the economies work, how to make the governments work in these countries so that they

can begin to develop their own economies and grow and lift themselves out of poverty in that manner. That is more sustainable and more long term. I personally believe that aid and debt relief will continue to be a significant part of the strategy for a while, but certainly the goal is also to be as comprehensive as possible and employ economic means to help lift people out of poverty as well.

I also think the other exciting thing about all this is the possibility of public-private partnerships, and I do not envision personally that the Federal Government or any federal government will wind up being the sole or even necessarily the leading organization in terms of driving the dollars out. We have a large number of groups, in my own neck of the woods, the Gates Foundation to the tune of over \$30 billion, that are pumping money into a variety of different ideas to help alleviate global poverty. Nongovernmental organizations are making an enormous difference, and I would hope that the strategy would reflect that public-private partnership to maximize those resources.

And, lastly, I just want to agree with what Representative BACHUS said at the close there about how this does impact all of us. Instability leads to all manner of problems in the world, and poverty leads to instability more quickly than anything else. It is in our best interests to try to alleviate that instability and bring greater fairness, justice, and economic opportunities to the world. And I sincerely believe that this bill will have that effect, and I urge all Members of the body to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BLUMENAUER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1302, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COUNTRIES HIT BY HURRICANES FELIX, DEAN, AND HENRIETTE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 642) expressing sympathy to and support for the people and governments of the countries of Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico which have suffered from Hurricanes Felix, Dean, and Henriette and whose complete economic and fatality toll are still unknown.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 642

Whereas on September 4, 2007, Hurricane Felix, a Category 5 storm, hit the Nicaragua-Honduras border, causing over 40,000 people in Nicaragua and Honduras to be evacuated, and killing at least 100 people;

Whereas just weeks before, Hurricane Dean, a Category 5 storm, hit Mexico and the Caribbean coast, killed 27 persons, displaced over 260,000 persons, and destroyed over 36,000 homes;

Whereas Hurricane Henriette, a Category 1 storm, made landfall along the Baja California peninsula of Mexico hours after Hurricane Felix made landfall, the first time since 1949 that two Atlantic and Pacific hurricanes hit land on the same day;

Whereas for the first time in the recorded history of hurricanes, two Category 5 storms, Hurricanes Dean and Felix, made landfall during the same year;

Whereas Hurricane Henriette, though less powerful than Hurricane Felix, killed 7 people;

Whereas the homes of at least 5,000 Central Americans were damaged or destroyed by Hurricanes Felix and Henriette;

Whereas thousands more individuals were unable to be evacuated and forced to endure these hurricanes in the shelter of their own homes;

Whereas Hurricane Felix obtained wind speeds of over 160 miles-an-hour, causing widespread destruction with heavy rains and subsequent mudslides and floods expected to follow;

Whereas Hurricane Felix hit the Miskito Coast, home to the Miskito Indians, an indigenous population of Central America;

Whereas relief organizations have reported that thousands of Miskito Indians were stranded on the coast and unable to travel to safer regions;

Whereas the poorest civilians of Honduras and Guatemala who live in hillside villages will be most susceptible to mudslides due to their inland location;

Whereas Honduras and Nicaragua, the poorest countries of Central America, have economies that rely heavily on limited agricultural exports, which make both countries extremely vulnerable to natural disasters;

Whereas major tourist destinations, including Cabo San Lucas, the Mayan Riviera, Cancun, Acapulco, and a host of Caribbean islands, were forced to evacuate due to the hurricanes, thus harming the tourist industry on which these areas depend; and

Whereas Honduras and Nicaragua were still rebuilding after the devastating effects of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which killed nearly 11,000 people and left more than 8,000 people missing, destroyed the infrastructures and economies of both countries, and caused billions of dollars in damage: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its sympathy to and support for the people and governments of the countries of Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico in this time of devastation;

(2) vows its continued friendship and support for our neighbors in Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico;

(3) urges all parties to continue their efforts in evacuating and providing aid to those individuals displaced by the hurricanes;

(4) recognizes the United States Government's initial efforts to provide assistance to populations affected by the hurricanes and urges increased and continued assistance as the effects of the hurricanes continue to unfold;

(5) encourages public institutions, specialized agencies, as well as private citizens, to offer their resources; and

(6) recognizes the efforts of relief organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the international community, in aiding the people and governments involved.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 642 pertains to the hurricanes that have struck Latin America in recent weeks and expresses sympathy and support for the people and the governments of the countries of Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico, which have suffered from Hurricanes Felix, Dean, and Henriette and whose complete economic and fatality toll are still unknown.

As we all saw in the news in recent weeks, these hurricanes have devastated much of that region. We here in the House of Representatives want to express our sympathy and support for all the peoples in those regions that were impacted. We want to thank all those who have responded to the emergency with aid and various other efforts to help them and recognize the efforts of the United States in particular to do that and that we pledge to continue that help in any way we can as they try to recover from these terrible tragedies.

We in the U.S. know only too well the impacts of hurricanes and want to be as helpful as we can to our neighbors in helping them get through this very difficult time.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Hurricanes Felix, Dean, and Henriette delivered a devastating toll to the countries of Mexico, the rest of Central America, and the Caribbean. Between the three hurricanes, nearly 200 lives were lost, hundreds of thousands of people were displaced, and thousands of homes were destroyed.

I join my colleagues today to express our sincere sympathy and support for the people who have suffered as a result of these destructive storms. The resiliency of the people of these nations to overcome the tremendous power of these catastrophes has been truly tested. When Hurricane Felix hit on September 4, Honduras and Nica-

ragua were still in the midst of rebuilding following the effects of Hurricane Mitch in 1998. Especially vulnerable to natural disasters due to their dependence on agricultural exports and the potential for damaging mudslides, the historic occurrence of two category 5 storms in 1 year had an overwhelming impact for several of the countries in this region.

I commend the courage that our neighbors in Mexico, the rest of Central America, and the Caribbean continue to demonstrate in their efforts to overcome the damage wrought, and I admire the courage and the contributions made by relief agencies, private citizens, and the international community to assist in the aftermath of Hurricane Felix, Hurricane Dean, and Henriette.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of those who were harmed by the perils of this terrible storm season.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to thank the Committee on Foreign Affairs again, Mr. LANTOS, Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN, and the entire committee for their quick response to these issues. I think it is very, very important that we in the United States, particularly when we are talking about incidents in Latin America, our neighbors to the south, recognize as quickly as possible our solidarity with their struggles and their difficulties and our pledge to support and help them in any way we can.

I also want to thank Ms. SOLIS, who was the prime sponsor of this legislation, for her leadership on this issue. Not just this issue but throughout Latin America on a number of issues on the Foreign Affairs Committee, she has been a tremendous leader for us. She is supposed to be here to speak, but I believe she has been caught up in committee.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 642, a resolution I authored to express our sympathy and support for those affected by the recent hurricanes in Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean. As the only Member of Congress of Central American descent, I am very concerned about the impact of the hurricanes on this impoverished region of the world.

For the first time, two Category 5 storms, Hurricanes Dean and Felix, made landfall during the same year, both striking Central and Latin America. Earlier this month, Hurricane Felix, a Category 5 storm, made landfall along the remote border of Nicaragua and Honduras. The storm killed over 130 people and damaged or destroyed over 19,000 homes, mostly in Nicaragua. The aftermath has been devastating for thousands of families.

Hurricane Dean, another Category 5 storm, hit Mexico and the Caribbean coast and killed 27 people and damaged or destroyed over 50,000 homes. Nicaragua, in Central America, is one of the poorest countries in the area and was the hardest hit by Hurricane Felix.

The complete economic and human toll of the hurricanes is still unknown, but we must act quickly to ensure that humanitarian aid continues to flow to the communities impacted. Supplies, including food, clean water and rebuilding materials, are essential. Economic aid for the agriculture economies that those countries rely on is also badly needed.

House Resolution 642 recognizes the U.S. Government's initial humanitarian efforts and urges increased and continued assistance as the effects of the hurricanes unfold. The resolution also recognizes the efforts of humanitarian relief groups, including the International Red Cross.

Unfortunately, the United States knows all too well the damage and destruction that can result from hurricanes and other natural disasters. The area I represent in Los Angeles is prone to wildfires and earthquakes, and we are still working to support those affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Just as Hurricane Katrina showed us how disruptive and damaging natural disasters can be, they are all the worse for less developed countries. We all remember the devastation of Hurricane Mitch, which killed nearly 11,000 people and caused catastrophic mudslides in the same region nearly 10 years ago. We can and must help our neighbors in Latin America to recover from these hurricanes.

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 642.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 642.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

OPPOSING SINGLING OUT ISRAEL'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 557) strongly condemning the United Nations Human Rights Council for ignoring severe human rights abuses in various countries, while choosing to unfairly target Israel by including it as the only country permanently placed on the Council's agenda, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 557

Whereas Article II of Chapter I of the United Nations Charter states that "[t]he Organization is based on the principles of sovereign equality of all its members";