

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 257

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the integration of the global economy is accelerating;

Whereas capital and technology are now easily transferred across national borders and throughout the world, while labor policies remain comparatively bound by national policies and allegiances;

Whereas the importance of promoting international respect for fundamental worker rights and labor standards is crucial to building broader support for balanced, equitable, and sustainable growth in an expanding global economy;

Whereas there exists a growing body of international law and international trade agreements, some of which originated in the early 1900s, that firmly establish the free exercise of fundamental worker rights, improved working conditions, and rising living standards as essential requirements of fair competition in a healthy, open, growing global economy;

Whereas in 1941 President Franklin Roosevelt, as part of the Atlantic Charter, committed the United States to “the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic advancement, and social security”;

Whereas the United States Government during World War II recognized the crucial importance of the needs, interests, and aspirations of all working people in general and the role that trade unions in particular would play in the reconstruction of Europe and the future development of newly independent nations;

Whereas the United States Labor Attaché Corps was established within the United States Government in 1943 and individual labor attachés ever since have been posted to United States embassies in scores of foreign countries to study and encourage the concurrent development of professional labor ministries within foreign governments and strong, independent, indigenous trade unions among working people in foreign countries;

Whereas the United States Labor Attaché Corps throughout the cold war played a crucial role in the struggle against Communism and in building support for freedom and democratic values and institutions throughout the world;

Whereas there is an increasing need for the American people and their policymakers in the post-cold war era to better understand the needs, interests, and aspirations of working people abroad and the concerns that they share in common with working people in the United States;

Whereas the United States Labor Attaché Corps continues to reach beyond the traditional focus of the United States Foreign Service upon senior foreign government officials to attain a broader, in-depth understanding of grassroots concerns and developments among working people in foreign countries and the wider significance those concerns hold for political processes and socioeconomic developments within foreign countries;

Whereas the United States Labor Attaché Corps for 50 years has demonstrated repeatedly the crucial importance of free, independent, and democratic trade unions to the development of free, independent, and democratic societies, thus advancing the profound national interest of the United States in promoting the further development of democratic values, processes, and institutions throughout the world;

Whereas the United States Labor Attaché Corps facilitates many useful international exchanges between organized and unorganized United States and foreign workers and assists with a wide range of the international activities of several United States executive agencies, including the Department of State, the Department of Labor, and the Office of the United States Trade Representative;

Whereas the national labor policies and standards of foreign countries, and the extent to which the governments of foreign countries are meeting and enforcing their legal obligations in this regard, are increasingly important fac-

tors in fair trade, particularly in determining whether consumer markets with broad-based purchasing power will emerge in those countries and whether most foreign workers in those countries will ever be able to buy United States exports, thus making the monitoring and reporting functions of the United States Labor Attaché Corps of growing importance; and

Whereas President Clinton during his official visit to Europe in January 1994 reaffirmed the United States commitment to promoting respect for the fundamental rights of workers everywhere and to pursuing policies that will enable working people in the United States and abroad to share more fully in the benefits of expanding international trade and investment in the global economy: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the Congress commends the United States
4 Labor Attaché Corps for the historic role it has
5 played throughout the past 50 years in nurturing
6 freedom and assisting in the development of demo-
7 cratic values and processes throughout the world;
8 and

9 (2) the Secretary of State and the Secretary of
10 Labor should jointly—

11 (A) review the mission and organization of
12 the United States Labor Attaché Corps, and
13 determine what reforms are necessary to rede-

1 sign and assure continued relevance of the work
2 of the Corps in the post-cold war era;

3 (B) implement such reforms to the extent
4 possible under existing law, and consistent with
5 existing resources;

6 (C) design and implement an interagency
7 recruitment and training program to assure
8 sufficient qualified personnel for the Corps, and
9 to enhance the professional development of ex-
10 isting personnel, consistent with the continuing
11 need for monitoring and reporting on the needs,
12 interests and aspirations of working people in
13 foreign countries;

14 (D) develop a plan to assure that a labor
15 counselor, attaché or reporting officer is as-
16 signed to every United States Embassy abroad
17 by January 1, 1997, and determine what addi-
18 tional resources are necessary to achieve this
19 goal; and

20 (E) not later than January 1, 1995, sub-
21 mit a report to the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives and the Chairman of the Com-
23 mittee on Foreign Relations, detailing the out-
24 come of the review conducted and the steps un-
25 dertaken pursuant to this section, and rec-

1 ommending such changes in law and such addi-
2 tional resources as may be necessary to imple-
3 ment needed further reforms.

Passed the House of Representatives October 3,
1994.

Attest:

Clerk.

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 257

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending the work of the United States Labor
Attaché Corps, and for other purposes.