

# African American-Jewish Alliance Stalls

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House Republican leaders were forced to postpone a vote on a foreign affairs bill partly because Jewish and African American Democrats united in opposition to the GOP legislation, despite its provision of full aid to Israel.

The black-Jewish alliance helped give the Clinton administration and House's Democratic minority a rare legislative reason to cheer when Republican leaders delayed a scheduled vote on the foreign affairs bill from yesterday until early next month. Black Democrats, upset about deep cuts in aid to Africa, vigorously lobbied their 20 Jewish colleagues to oppose the bill.

"They pulled the bill because of the alliance between Jews and blacks," said Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Republican leaders yesterday insisted that the broad legislation to slash foreign aid and reorganize the State Department would have no trouble passing when a floor vote is taken.

"We have the votes. I'm not worried about passage," House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) said after House Republicans caucused privately for the second consecutive day on the foreign affairs legislation.

But a House leadership source said Republicans were about 20 votes short within GOP ranks, and several Democrats predicted that virtually no members of their party would support a bill President Clinton has threatened to veto as an infringement on his power to conduct foreign policy. The GOP source suggested that Republican dissidents who oppose even the reduced foreign aid authorized under the bill might change their minds "just to spite" Clinton and House Democrats who have claimed victory already.

Rep. Lee H. Hamilton (Ind.), the ranking Democrat on the International Relations Committee, said Republicans had made vague overtures to him about reaching a bipartisan compromise on funding levels, State Department reorganization and foreign policy restrictions involving North Korea, China, Russia and other countries.

"It's an admission on their part they don't have the votes at this point," Hamilton said.

Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) declared it "a bad bill in the minds of a lot of Democrats for a lot of different reasons, probably more than 50."

The House Rules Committee approved an additional six hours of debate and an opportunity for International Relations Chairman Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.) to offer an unspecified amendment of his design. Hamilton said he was willing to entertain a possible compromise

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## House Vote on Foreign Aid Bill

with Gilman but added that the discussions had not reached a serious stage.

Rules Committee Chairman Gerald B.H. Solomon (R-N.Y.) predicted that 90 percent of Republicans would support the bill, which would mean it would fall about 10 votes short on a straight party-line vote.

Disputing other accounts, House Majority Leader Richard K. Arney (R-Tex.) said a vote was postponed because little debate time had been left for action on amendments filed by 25 lawmakers.

"There was no consideration given to a doubt about the vote outcome," Arney said.

Jewish lawmakers said Republicans had made no direct appeals for their support based on the bill's continued \$1.2 billion in annual aid for Israel. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) endorsed the bill despite the administration's requests that the pro-Israel lobbying group not embrace it.

Rep. Gary L. Ackerman (D-N.Y.) said GOP motives were clear because "with the exception of aid to Israel, they made the bill unacceptable to everyone on the Democratic side."

Ackerman and Rep. Howard L. Berman (D-Calif.) led Jewish Democrats into opposition to the bill. Black and Jewish lawmakers met twice Tuesday on the issue, once with Gephardt and AIPAC representatives. Ackerman concluded a Democratic Caucus meeting Wednesday with a rousing appeal to unselfishness and party unity on the bill. "There's been a glow on black and Jewish members in the House since then," he said.

Sources generally described possible Republican dissenters on the foreign affairs bill as freshmen and other hard-core opponents of foreign aid. An aide to Rep. David Funderburk (R-N.C.) said the former ambassador to Romania was undecided partly because foreign aid cuts "don't go far enough."

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