

Building filled our citizens with shock, horror, anger, rage, and sadness. Each story of pain and loss was shared by everyone in America, each story of heroic rescue by Federal and State safety officials made us proud, and each memorial service caused us to pause and mourn as a Nation.

The character and resilience of the Federal workforce posted in the Murrah Federal Building and the people of Oklahoma City remain a symbol of courage for the Nation, and it is only fitting and appropriate that the Congress of the United States remember, honor, and commemorate the 5th anniversary of this insane act of terrorism.

And since I have so much time left, Mr. Speaker, if it is not inappropriate, I ask my neighbor and colleague from Ohio to join me in a moment of silence for the victims in Oklahoma City.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, on April 19, 1995 the greatest act of domestic terrorism occurred in my home state of Oklahoma. This heinous bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah building was supposed to strike fear and terror into the hearts of every Oklahoman and every American. 168 people were killed. Including 19 innocent children. To this day the image of little Baylee Almon lying lifeless in the arms of an Oklahoma City firefighter brings tears to my eyes.

However, despite this tragic loss of life, the men who were responsible for this bombing did not succeed in terrorizing America. In the aftermath of the bombing, Oklahomans and Americans did not show signs of fear or terror, they showed signs of love and compassion. I saw Americans respond not as Republicans or Democrats, not as rich or poor, not as black or white, not as man or woman, but I saw this country respond in a difficult time as unified Americans. When I look back on that terrible day 5 years ago, the first thing I remember is not the pain, I remember the compassion.

Today, this House stands together to let you know we will never forget. We will never forget the events that transpired on April 19, 1995, we will never forget the pain we felt, but most importantly we will never forget the overwhelming love that overcame the pain.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the resolution. And, Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 448.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material

on House Concurrent Resolution 277, as amended, House Concurrent Resolution 280, and House Resolution 448, the measures just approved by the House.

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

There was no objection.

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DECLARING "PERSON OF THE CENTURY" FOR 20TH CENTURY TO HAVE BEEN AMERICAN G.I.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 282) declaring the "Person of the Century" for the 20th century to have been the American G.I., as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 282

Whereas the 20th century was a century of conflict between forces of totalitarianism and dictatorship and forces of democracy and freedom;

Whereas American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines (collectively referred to as "G.I.'s") fought, bled, and died in a number of conflicts during the 20th century, including two World Wars, to secure peace and freedom around the world;

Whereas in large measure due to the heroic efforts of the American G.I., more people around the world enjoy the benefits of freedom at the end of the 20th century than at any other time in history;

Whereas the American G.I., in fighting the forces of totalitarianism and dictatorship, had a strong personal sense of right and wrong and did not want to live in a world where wrong prevailed;

Whereas it may truly be said that during the 20th century the American G.I. accomplished great things while doing good things, becoming recognized throughout the world as a representative of freedom and democracy and, fundamentally, as a force for good in the face of evil;

Whereas at the end of the 20th century numerous organizations and publications sought to identify and designate a "Person of the Century" based upon achievements and contributions during that century; and

Whereas in light of the accomplishments of the Armed Forces of the United States during that century both in defeating the forces of tyranny and dictatorship and in embodying a sense of honor, decency, and respect for mankind, it is appropriate that the American G.I. be recognized as the single most significant force affecting the course of the 20th century: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That Congress hereby declares the "Person of the Century" for the 20th century to have been the American G.I.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 282, now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a part of the honor of serving North Carolina's 8th district in the U.S. Congress, I represent Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. I am continually impressed and made proud by their dedication, commitment, and patriotism.

We are just turning the corner on a period in which we ask the American G.I. to do more and more with less and less. As I have gotten to know these brave men and women, one statement continues to ring in my ears, the statement made during a military personnel hearing at the Norfolk Naval Base was, "Sir, whatever you give us, we will get the job done." The spirit of the American G.I., soldier, sailor, airman, and Marine, that "can do spirit," is why we honor today the American G.I. as the Citizen of the Century.

To help make clear why we honor these men and women, let me quote Stephen Ambrose, author of *Citizen Soldiers*. "American soldiers fought hard to win the war, but strove every step of the way to create peace." My friend and colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), said in a hearing held before the Committee on Armed Services that this should be the Year of the Troop. I could not agree more. And it is in that same spirit that I offer this resolution honoring the American G.I. as the Citizen of the Century.

Quoting Stephen Ambrose again, "At the core, the American citizen soldiers knew the difference between right and wrong, and they didn't want to live in a world in which wrong prevailed. So they fought and won. And we, all of us living and yet to be born, must be forever profoundly grateful."

We are grateful but must never forget what has been done for us, the Nation and the world, by the American citizen soldier known affectionately as the American G.I.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. THOMPSON of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I commend my friend, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES), for introducing this resolution and for bringing it to the House floor today. As he stated, the 20th century was a century marred by conflict between forces of totalitarianism and dictatorship and the forces of democracy and freedom. It was a century of tremendous turmoil, bloodshed, destruction, and displacement.

But by the end of that century, freedom and democracy flourished in more places than at the century's start. And this was due most of all to the courage and the bravery of millions of American G.I.'s: soldiers, sailors, Marines,

airmen, merchant mariners and coasties, both active and reserve.

It was the American G.I., known at different periods of the century by names such as doughboys, Yanks, Buffalo soldiers, Rough Riders, or the American Expeditionary Force, who carried America's value system abroad and demonstrated unselfish courage aiding those who struggled against tyranny and oppression.

It was the American G.I. who helped defeat fascism, Nazism and Communism.

And it was the American G.I. who undertook the great offensives along the Western Front, who scoured up the beaches of Normandy and across the bloody Solomon Islands into Okinawa. It was the American G.I. who fought in the deserts of North Africa and the jungles of Burma, the Philippines and Indochina.

It was the American G.I.'s who secured air superiority against the Germans and continuously supplied an embattled Britain before finally mastering the sea lanes of the North Atlantic.

The American G.I. secured an uneasy peace on the Korean Peninsula and, for members of my generation, fought in Vietnam.

Reflecting on the last quarter of the 20th century, it is clear that the plight of the people of Grenada, Kuwait, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo would have been considerably different had it not been for the intervention of America and the American G.I.

Indeed, there is probably not a region of the world whose people have not benefited from the presence of the American G.I. during the 20th century.

The role of the American G.I., of course, was not limited to intervening during crises and war. In fact, we cannot forget it was the American G.I. most often called to ensure the peace and who most often delivered and distributed humanitarian aid around the world, whether following a war or internal crisis, or after a natural or man-made disaster.

We also cannot forget the hundreds of thousands of American men and women who served as sentinels of peace and gave their lives defending freedom and Democratic values.

Many of us have personal friends we served with who are buried in cemeteries near and far. Some were childhood friends. Others, men and women that fate and war introduced to us. Each paid another installment of the great debt that will never be erased as long as there is tyranny in the world.

Just like the generations before them, they kept up the payments for all of us. And like their predecessors, they paid in time and effort and in blood.

I do not know any soldier who went to war for personal gain. They did not indulge in parlor room debates about politics or the economies of conflict. They did not engage in finger-pointing or scapegoating.

They reported for duty, and they did so with an intuition about history and a clear understanding about the Hitlers and the Husseins who turn up to remind us all that there are things worth sacrificing for.

General Sherman said, "War is hell and combat is worse." Nobody wants peace more than the veterans and the G.I.'s. Those of us who have been there know that there is a better alternative to war. Bobby Kennedy said that he believed "many Americans share the broad and deep hope of a world without war, a world where the imagination and energy of mankind is dedicated not to destruction but to the building of a spacious future."

Mr. Speaker, that is patriotism in the truest, most unadulterated sense of the word. Let us also hope that the bloodshed and the conflict that came to characterize the 20th century does not characterize the 21st century.

As my colleague said when he began, the course of the 20th century was changed for the better as a result of the unselfish courage and sacrifice of the American G.I. Today, we recognize the contributions of these men and women by passing a resolution declaring the person of the 20th century to have been the American G.I. I urge support of this resolution.

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS), a steely-eyed fighter pilot. But before he begins, I wish to identify myself with the most kind and appropriate and very worthwhile remarks of my airborne friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, as a veteran of two wars, on active duty during Vietnam and as a National Guard pilot called to active duty during the Persian Gulf War, I rise to lend my voice to the chorus of those who urge this body to honor the American G.I. as the person of the 20th century.

The United States, through two hot World Wars and a long Cold War, and numerous wars and conflicts in all the far-flung reaches of this troubled globe, has been called the arsenal of democracy. Mr. Speaker, the American G.I. was the bearer of those arms and our American flag. He was, and still is, the guardian of our and our allies' security and freedom.

It is fitting that we are here to honor the G.I., the "Government Issue" soldier, the average and anonymous American citizen who became a soldier by setting down his tools of trade and picking up the unfamiliar weapons of war. And upon completion of his glorious and historic task, set them down again and to regain his primary status of citizen, to enjoy the rights of freedom he secured for others, secured with his life, his liberty and his sacred honor.

When the call went up, the Nevada ranch hand, the railroad worker, and the miner answered that call. To stop fascism in its evil tracks in Europe and the Pacific, the young man rose from his job in the subways of New York or the fields of California and went to the nearest recruiting station. And he returned to Asia later on to valiantly struggle to return peace to the Korean Peninsula. The jungles and skies of Vietnam rang with the bravery of North Carolina farm boys and the California college students. And in the hot desert sands of the Middle East, the young woman from Ohio toiled mightily for our Nation alongside her fellow soldiers.

Through it all, the sacrifice, dedication, and honor of our soldiers has been a lamp unto the world, the shining beacon of liberty. The American G.I. kept our flame of freedom burning brightly through the grim and dark skies; through blood, sweat and tears; through times of adulation and, sadly, through times of unreasonable contempt. But stand they did.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member on the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for yielding me this time so that I might have this moment to support this concurrent resolution declaring the American G.I. to be the person of the century.

I commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES) for introducing this resolution and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for the work that he has done to further its cause today.

Last December, I joined more than 100 of my House colleagues in urging Time Magazine to select the American G.I. as its Person of the Century. And although the magazine did not select the G.I. for its end-of-the-century cover story, it is more than fitting that the Congress of the United States recognize our Nation's men and women in uniform for their contributions.

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The American G.I. changed the course of world history in helping to defeat fascism and communism. Victorious in World War I, World War II, down through Operation Desert Storm, bravely fighting in Korea, Vietnam, and confronting the struggles of the Cold War, U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines have protected our freedom and given hope to freedom-loving people around the world.

The American G.I. has played an indispensable role protecting freedom and preserving the peace through the course of the 20th century. I have no doubt the American G.I. will continue to make all of us proud in the next hundred years.

On a more personal note, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that my

family has been represented in the first World War, as my father was aboard the U.S.S. *Missouri* in 1918 and our son was in Operation Desert Storm as a member of the First Cavalry Division. So I am pleased to say that our family has, through this century, been a part of the opening and the closing of those victorious moments that made the American G.I. the person of the century, in my opinion.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL), a former Marine.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, these remarks are to some extent for me off the cuff because I did not know this was coming up right before I was supposed to have some floor duty here.

But the point I would like everyone to think about in honoring these young G.I.s of America is they are young. Because we do not fight wars with old people. They are always young. They are young men and young women who serve in the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, Merchant Marines. And they have all been recognized in various times for combat actions that they were involved in, or some were recognized because they showed up. And thank goodness they did not have a combat action during their time in the service.

We all need to think and look around. If we look at some of us now, we are a little older, we are a little wider, our hair is a little grayer, or we have lost some of it. But today there are young men and women doing the same thing that these veterans did starting clear back at the turn of the 19th century to the 20th.

And it was America's commitment, America's commitment of its youth all across the world, that defended freedom and democracy. We were never committed in an imperialistic mode. We were always committed to keep a country free, regain its freedom, retain the right to have a free election in their country.

That is the reason these young men and women should be America's person of the century. They were young. They did not necessarily know what they went to do, and yet they stood tall when called and voluntarily put themselves in harm's way in many cases.

The Nation should recognize this, and I am glad we are doing so and urge the passage of this resolution.

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to commend the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. THOMPSON) for introducing this resolution. It is most appropriate. I support it wholeheartedly. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership in that regard.

We recently had an event here on Capitol Hill for those veterans in my

congressional district who had served in Normandy who were not able to go to Normandy for the anniversary 50 years after it had occurred in 1944. Of that number, I was surprised I had almost 100 in my own district who had served in Normandy. And of the group that attended, about 65 of those who were able to attend, they brought their families. We had over 250 people on the Hill.

When I spoke to these veterans and their families, they were so appreciative of the simple acknowledgment that they had received. The genuine thanks that these veterans conveyed to us reminded me of how important it is to take time out to recognize and honor these heroes from the past. Their sacrifices resulted in the promising future that is now before us.

I can remember my three older brothers served in the Second World War, and I remember as a child how we used to have a little banner in the window with the three stars indicating that they served. There were some families that had gold stars, which indicated that they had lost someone in the war who had totally sacrificed. We recognize that the people in this resolution played an important role in victory.

Now, I want to mention that in 1941 to 1945, over 16 million American women and men joined forces to combat the Axis powers. Of the 16 million, there were two segments of the population that had never before been properly integrated into a war effort and had played significant roles, African Americans and women.

While both groups played a crucial role in the defense of our country since the Revolutionary War, their efforts during World War II were especially important. For example, the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women Army Corps demonstrated their fortitude in battle and forever dispelled any notions of the capabilities of African Americans and women in battle.

I enjoyed Brokaw's book "The Greatest Generation," and I think this resolution confirms and underlines that and says that we in Congress do recognize those people, the American G.I., whose sacrifices produced an extended period of peace and warrants our eternal praise.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that, once again, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES) for bringing this measure forward. I would like to thank all the Members who spoke and those who would have spoken had they been able to today.

But, most important, I would like to thank everyone who sacrificed and served in our U.S. military over the last century and those who are serving today. I ask for an "aye" vote on this resolution.

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership and for his cooperation and for being a part of this memorable resolution.

Let me pause for just a moment, if I may, to particularly thank the moms and the dads, the husbands, the wives, the children who lost loved ones fighting the wars of this and other centuries.

I lost an uncle flying the Hump in Burma, Charles A. Cannon, Jr. I never will forget that my grandfather never forgot. When the door bell rang or the phone rang, he always hoped it was some word that they had found his son.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to bring to the floor a resolution that declares the American G.I. the person of the 20th century. As we reached the end of 1999, people throughout the world had reason to celebrate. Mankind had progressed into a new year, a new century, and a new millennium. Such occasions provide an opportunity to reflect upon our past so that we may remember the people, places, and events that have shaped our culture and our future.

Over the past 100 years, we have enjoyed advancements in almost every facet of our daily lives. In our Nation in particular, the end of the 20th century served occasion to celebrate an era marked by American accomplishment. We, as a Nation, tackled and overcame challenges deemed insurmountable by our forebearers. Most notably, the American commitment to liberty, justice, and freedom has served as a model for democracy for peoples around the globe.

Our achievement has not come without its price, however. As former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell has expressed, the 20th century can be called many things, but it was most certainly a century of war. Throughout this period, the forces of tyranny and dictatorship rose time and again to wage war on an unsuspecting world. How easy it is to forget those dark moments of our past. But we must not. We can never take for granted the freedom we, as Americans, enjoy. Our liberty is not free and always comes with a price. It has been secured through the years of American sacrifice and American bloodshed.

That is why I put before the Congress a resolution to recognize the American G.I. as the most influential figure of the 20th century. I offer this legislation not to glorify war and the atrocities that accompany it. To do so would be an insult to every American who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our Nation.

Instead, I wish to commemorate the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and coasties, collectively referred to as the American G.I., who left their families and their homes to fight on foreign soil for a nobler cause. I offer my resolution to celebrate generations of Americans who refused to live in a world

where wrong prevails. Without their sacrifice, the history of the 20th century would have taken a very different course.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent the soldiers and airmen stationed at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. I visit these installations regularly and over the last 18 months have enjoyed getting to know the young men and women who proudly serve our Nation. Their patriotism and sense of duty reflects the same spirit of generations who served before them. These young men and women would in a moment's notice defend our Nation from her foes. In honoring these courageous Americans who fought for this Nation during the 20th century, we also honor all those who serve today.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 282, which recognizes the American G.I. as the Person of the Century.

This resolution recognizes the defining role that American soldiers have played in charting a safe course for our nation and for democracy around the world. Unlike a certain magazine which recognizes the discrete accomplishments of individuals in its annual "Man of the Year" issue, the contributions of American soldiers cannot be so easily defined. The Americans who have served their country in the last 100 years as soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are many, and the sum of their combined contributions defy a simple summary. Nor should the heroism of this group be reduced to a brief summary, for this would only serve to minimize the depth of American sacrifice over the last century.

Americans fought in two world wars for the basic principles of self-determination, democracy, and liberty. In both wars, Americans fought abroad to preserve values that transcended national interest, creating a foundation for a peaceful Europe and Asia that would have been unthinkable in the early years of the century. The rejection of totalitarianism evident in the defeat of the Third Reich continued to define the contributions of the American GI throughout the century. Bloody conflicts in Korea and Vietnam tested American resolution, but the GI unflinchingly carried forward the flag in support of liberty and democracy. The stalwart resolves of the American GI checked Soviet aggression in Western Europe and contributed directly to the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

And the fight continues even today. While the official Cold War may be faded into history, Americans stationed on the front lines in South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, or any of a myriad of other countries continue to play an important role as guarantors of peace and stability.

Fifty years ago, the second half of the Twentieth Century was dubbed "America's Century," because of the formative role the United States has played in reshaping the world in our image at the conclusion of World War Two. I join my colleagues today in recognizing that we owe the American Century to the steady, faithful efforts of the American GI, the Person of the Century.

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I am in support of this resolution. Throughout this sad and bloody century, it was the GI—the American citizen soldier—who left hearth and home, put

his or her personal plans on hold, and traveled to every corner of the world to save the concept of democracy and preserve the value of freedom. Despots and dictators throughout this century were halted in their tracks and driven back to their lairs because Americans were not, as they thought, too soft and decadent to resist their battle-hardened armies.

The warlords of Imperial Germany were the first to learn that the American fighting man was not a pushover. American soldiers at Chateau Thierry and United States Marines at Bellau Wood brought the German's last chance offensive in 1918 to a halt. Later, the Doughboys would be sent into the most difficult terrain in Northern France—the Argonne Forest—to drive the Germans out of positions that had stymied the Allies for over four years. Meanwhile the United States Navy was helping to sweep the seas clear of U-boats and the American Air Service was dueling in the skies with the students of the Red Baron.

The Nazis of Germany, the Fascists of Italy, and the militarists of Japan were the next to try to, in Churchill's words, "plunge the world into a new Dark Age." And again, it was the New World, with all its power and might, stepping forth to the rescue and liberation of the Old. Hitler had nothing but contempt for American fighting prowess. From Kassarine Pass, through Salerno and Anzio, to the maelstrom of Normandy, all the way to final victory in the heart of Europe—the GI shattered the same Wehrmacht that had marched through the Arc de Triomphe and past the Acropolis. In the air, Americans devastated the Luftwaffe that had terrorized Warsaw and destroyed Rotterdam, and then laid waste to the Nazi industrial complex.

The Japanese believed that their troops, culturally imbued with the spirit of Bushido, would easily outfight the soft Americans. They did not expect that Americans would fight in places such as Guadalcanal, Tarawa, New Guinea, or Iwo Jima—where uncommon valor was a common virtue.

The GI managed to do this at the end of supply lines stretching thousands of miles. They could only do this because their colleagues in the Navy kept those sea-lanes safe against submarines, surface raiders and aircraft. The merchant mariners who manned those supply and transport ships were the unsung heroes of that mission—suffering great travails as they got their vital cargoes through. Very few stories of the Second World War are as compelling as the ordeal of Convoy PQ-17, which suffered terrible losses on its way to Murmansk.

As a result of these sacrifices, most Americans believed that tyranny was decisively defeated, that the second half of the century would be free of the perils that marked the first. Instead, the GI was forced to wage a long twilight struggle against another form of totalitarianism—Soviet Communism—and stand on guard for nearly another 50 years.

American troops were forced to remain in Europe, to hold back the Iron Curtain from sweeping the entire continent into darkness. Millions of American families grew to recognize places such as the Fulda Gap and Rhein-Main air base. The Sixth Fleet patrolled the Mediterranean to a degree not dreamed of by their ancestors that had stormed the shores of Tripoli.

In Asia, the Cold War grew hot in Korea, where the term "Frozen Chosen" entered the

lexicon. Even now, GI's remain on alert to keep the North Korean Peoples Army on their side of the DMZ. Further south, Americans fought, bled, and died in Vietnam—America's longest war—and our most divisive since our Civil War. At last, all recognize that the GI's service there was honorable.

Even now, after the global threat of Communism has collapsed, it is the GI who is called upon when freedom is seriously threatened. From Kuwait to Kosovo, it is only when the American fighting man arrives, that the world knows that aggression will be resisted.

There have been many great people this century who have symbolized the struggle for freedom in the twentieth century—Churchill, Roosevelt, Reagan—but it is the millions of people behind them, the American GI's, who actually delivered on that promise. I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H. Con. Res. 282, to declare that the "Person of the Century" is truly the American GI. He enabled us to be debating in this chamber today.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 282—Declaring the "Person of the Century" for the 20th century to have been the American G.I.

As a co-sponsor of this resolution, I strongly believe that the United States House of Representatives must officially be on record as supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, there is not enough time on this floor today for us to pay full tribute to the importance the American G.I. played in the history of this century. Our democracy, freedom, and liberty owe themselves to the sacrifices of the American G.I.

From World War I to the Persian Gulf, the American G.I. has always stood proud and tall. Ordinary men and women from across every walk of life, when asked, answered the call to duty.

When we think of the darkest moments of the 20th century, it was always the American G.I. that stepped into the breach to defend freedom. It was the G.I. that huddled low while crossing the beach at Normandy. It was the G.I. that bravely fought in the cold at Cho-San. It was the G.I. that did their duty, with honor, at Da'Nang. It was the G.I. that was the lightning in Desert Storm. And, it was the G.I. that has always stood guard between freedom and tyranny. It is for these very reasons that the American G.I. should be recognized as the person of the century.

Defending the Constitution of the United States on foreign soil is the greatest duty the nation can ask of its citizens. The American G.I. answered the call to duty and performed it to the highest standard. What Winston Churchill said of his soldiers rings true for ours, "Never have so few given so much for so many".

Mr. Speaker, as we speak today we must never forget our duty to our veterans. Our veterans were there when the nation called; now we must be there when they need our help. There can be no compromise when it comes to veterans' health care. I am proud of the actions we have taken so far and to the fact that we will not let our veterans down.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am supporting H. Con. Res. 282, a bill to declare the American G.I. as "The Person of the Century for the 20th Century." I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this timely, appropriate measure.

As the year 1999 drew to a close, it became fashionable among pundits and academicians to

nominate a person of the century, for the outgoing 20th century. Many such people were selected, including Time magazine's choice of Albert Einstein. Writing for the New York Times, columnist Charles Krauthammer presented an eloquent defense of his nominee, Winston Churchill, without whom, he argued, Britain would have eventually sought a separate peace with Nazi Germany, drastically altering history. Many other distinguished journalists and pundits offered their own choices for this honorable position.

H. Con. Res. 282 takes a different approach to this nomination. Instead of presenting an individual for the award, it makes a collective nomination in declaring the American G.I. to be the best choice for person of the 20th century. Mr. Speaker, I can think of no better choice for this honor.

In the past century, no group of people have given more of themselves in the cause of defending freedom and liberty than the American people. Twice this century the American citizen-soldier left his family and occupation to take up arms in defending freedom on the continent of Europe.

The arrival of the first members of the American expeditionary force served as a vital morale boost to their exhausted British and French counterparts on the western front in 1917. Later, more than 2 million American soldiers arrived in France to check the last desperate offensive of the Kaiser's army and eventually broke the back of imperial Germany's war effort. Without the contributions of the American G.I. the western allies surely would have fallen to the German offensive of 1918 and the U-boat campaign against the British shipping lifeline.

Twenty-five years later, the American G.I. led the first western counteroffensive against Nazi Germany and took on imperial Japan almost single-handedly. Beginning in North Africa, American soldiers rolled back the German war machine, through Algeria, Sicily, the Italian peninsula and later from Normandy to Paris to Germany itself. In the Pacific, American Marines launched a two-pronged island-hopping campaign from springboards in Hawaii and Australia, supported by our Nation's Air Force, against Imperial Japanese forces, culminating in the bitter hard fought conquest of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Backed by an industrial base with overwhelming production capacity, the American G.I. liberated Europe from the grip of Nazi totalitarianism and the Pacific from Imperial Japanese tyranny.

The American G.I. spent the second half of the 20th century defending freedom from Communist aggression, in Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and in the Far East. While many during the cold war questioned American defense of nations with little or no democratic government in practice, history has vindicated the cold war American G.I. through today's examples of South Korea, Taiwan and most Latin American countries, where democracy is both alive and well.

Mr. Speaker, the world would indeed be a much different place today, were it not for the contributions of the millions of courageous American citizen-soldiers, who, when called upon by their country, selflessly put aside their personal interests and stepped forward to defend freedom and democracy. While we have not done it alone, the American contribution has almost always meant the difference in ultimate victory for the United States and her allies.

Accordingly, I strongly support this as befitting legislation, and strongly urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I cannot support H. Con. Res. 282. I take a back seat to no one in my support, appreciation, and admiration for the individuals who served our Nation in the military over the course of the 20th century. I would support a resolution which recognized their contributions, although I would far prefer a more tangible showing of appreciation, such as fulfilling the promises of health care made to those who served.

I cannot support this resolution, however, for several reasons.

First, it seems to me that the House has enough business on its plate fulfilling its responsibilities under Article I of the Constitution and need not enter into an interesting but purely theoretical debate fostered by a magazine topic.

Secondly, if we were to offer an opinion on the "Person of the Century," it should actually be a person, not a class or category of persons. Words have meaning, and as we alter or stretch those meanings, we may well encourage inaccuracy or stretching of the truth. We have had enough of that recently.

I also believe that we should not diminish the importance of the individual human being. The contributions to world history by American service men and women were accomplished by individuals. A man or woman is brave; an organization or class of persons is not. We should not diminish the importance of what a brave individual can do by redefining "person" to mean an entire category of persons.

The key question to ask in assessing "Person of the Century" is how would things have been different without him or her. I have my personal view on who that should be, but my views are better argued in a magazine article rather than on the floor of the House of Representatives.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 282, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. HAYES. 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.

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HONORING MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES WHO SERVED NATION DURING VIETNAM ERA AND FAMILIES OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES OR REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR OR WERE INJURED DURING THAT ERA

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 228) honoring the members of the

Armed Forces and Federal civilian employees who served the Nation during the Vietnam era and the families of those individuals who lost their lives or remain unaccounted for or were injured during that era in Southeast Asia or elsewhere in the world in defense of United States national security interests.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 228

Whereas the United States Armed Forces conducted military operations in Southeast Asia during the period (known as the "Vietnam era") from February 28, 1961, to May 7, 1975:

Whereas during the Vietnam era more than 3,403,000 American military personnel served in the Republic of Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia in support of United States military operations in Vietnam, while millions more provided for the Nation's defense in other parts of the world;

Whereas during the Vietnam era untold numbers of civilian personnel of the United States Government also served in support of United States operations in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the world;

Whereas May 7, 2000, marks the 25th anniversary of the closing of the period known as the Vietnam era; and

Whereas that date would be an appropriate occasion to recognize and express appreciation for the individuals who served the Nation in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the world during the Vietnam era: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) honors the service and sacrifice of the members of the Armed Forces and Federal civilian employees who during the Vietnam era served the Nation in the Republic of Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia or otherwise served in support of United States operations in Vietnam and in support of United States national security interests throughout the world;

(2) recognizes and honors the sacrifice of the families of those individuals referred to in paragraph (1) who lost their lives or remain unaccounted for or were injured during that era, in Southeast Asia or elsewhere in the world, in defense of United States national security interests; and

(3) encourages the American people, through appropriate ceremonies and activities, to recognize the service and sacrifice of those individuals.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL) and the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 228.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 228 to recognize and honor members of the Armed Forces and civilian employees