the law for the award of the Medal of Honor. The three cases involve extraordinary valor in combat and represent well the high standard for bravery that is the hallmark of our Nation's most cherished decoration, the Medal of Honor.

Corporal Andrew J. Smith, 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, saved the regimental colors from capture on November 30, 1864, during the Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina, when an assault left one-half of the regiment's officers and a third of the enlisted men killed or wounded.

Technician Fifth grade, James K. Okubo, Medical Detachment 422nd Regimental Combat Team, rescued several badly wounded members of his unit while under heavy enemy fire on October 28, 29, and November 4, 1944, near Binh Long, France.

Captain Ed. W. Freeman, 229 Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, repeatedly flew into one of the hottest and most embattled landing zones of the Vietnam War to provide essential supplies and evacuate wounded on November 14, 1965, at landing zone X-ray during the battle of the LaDrang Valley, Republic of Vietnam.

The legislation would provide the appropriate honors posthumously to three valiant Americans of very different backgrounds, engaged in three very different battles. No matter how different the men, no matter how different the tactical or technological aspects of the conflicts in which they found themselves, they each reflected the best character of the American soldier.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to note that this legislation would, if adopted by the House, permit Mr. Okubo's family to receive his medal along with other families of slain soldiers who have never received the proper recognition they rightly deserve. However, I now have the opportunity to correct this injustice. Mr. Okubo's case has recently been reviewed, as the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) indicated, by the Department of the Army under a special board, and Mr. Okubo was recommended at that time for the Medal of Honor. However, the award was downgraded with the explanation that since he was a medic, Technician Okubo was not eligible for any award higher than the Silver Star.

Sad to say, Mr. Okubo passed away in 1967 without ever receiving the proper recognition he rightly deserves. However, we now have the opportunity to correct this injustice. Mr. Okubo's case has recently been reviewed, as the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) indicated, by the Department of the Army under a special board, and Mr. Okubo was recommended at that time for the Medal of Honor. However, the award was downgraded with the explanation that since he was a medic, Technician Okubo was not eligible for any award higher than the Silver Star.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2722, which is before the House today authorizing the Medal of Honor for James K. Okubo, Ed. W. Freeman, and Andrew J. Smith for the heroic actions as outlined by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

These three individuals are highly deserving of this award for their conspicuous bravery under fire in the defense of our great nation.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation is the culmination of an exhauster effort to recognize James K. Okubo for his valor during World War II. Mr. Okubo, a Japanese-American, originally from Washington State, like hundreds of others was sent to an internment camp receiving his draft at the outset of World War II. Despite being subjected to this shameful treatment, he never wavered in his patriotism and dedication to this country.

James Okubo entered the Army and was assigned as a medic in the legendary 422nd Regimental Combat Team. In October of 1944, Technician Okubo and his unit were tasked with the rescue of the "Lost Battalion" from Texas. The "Lost Battalion" was surrounded by German forces and threatened with annihilation.

During a 2 day period of heavy machine gun fire, mortar and artillery fire, Technician Okubo provided first-aid to 25 fellow soldiers wounded in the battle. On two occasions he crawled within yards of enemy lines to evacuate wounded comrades. Later during the battle he ran 75 yards through withering machine gun fire directed at him and evacuated a seriously wounded crewman from a burning tank.

For his heroism displayed during these intense combat situations, Technician Okubo was recommended for the Medal of Honor. I think it is important to note that, Mr. Speaker, he was recommended at that time for the Medal of Honor. However, the award was downgraded with the explanation that since he was a medic, Technician Okubo was not eligible for any award higher than the Silver Star.

Sad to say, Mr. Okubo passed away in 1967 without ever receiving the proper recognition he rightly deserves. However, we now have the opportunity to correct this injustice. Mr. Okubo's case has recently been reviewed, as the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) indicated, by the Department of the Army under a special board, and Mr. Okubo was recommended at that time for the Medal of Honor. However, the award was downgraded with the explanation that since he was a medic, Technician Okubo was not eligible for any award higher than the Silver Star.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

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. PEASE, is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado? There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HEFLEY. 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 Colorado? There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 9, I was unable to vote due to a family emergency, and on Rollcall Vote 251, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted aye. On Rollcall Vote Number 252, had I been present, I would have voted yea. I make the same requests on Rollcall Vote Number 253, I would have voted aye. I make the same requests on Rollcall Vote Number 254, I would have voted no.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to: Mr. BECTERRA (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of business in the district.