large impact on our society for years to come. I am pleased to honor her today for her accomplishments.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE KOREAN WAR—A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE 503D FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION OF THE 2D INFANTRY DIVISION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, June 15, 2000

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the courageous Americans who fought and died in defense of freedom in the Korean War. On June 25th, we will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the start of that conflict—the so-called “Forgotten War”—which claimed more than 35,000 American lives.

On behalf of President Clinton, I will coin, with Veterans Administration Secretary Togo West, a Presidential Mission to Korea to represent the people of the United States during the anniversary commoration ceremonies in Seoul. We will be accompanied on that mission by some of my comrades-in-arms with whom I served during my wartime tour in Korea, members of the 503d Field Artillery Battalion of the 2d Infantry Division.

The battalion landed in Korea in August 1950, arriving in time to participate in hard-fought battles that defeated the North Korean offensives against the United Nations forces on the Pusan Perimeter. When the Chinese entered the war in November with massive ground assaults against UN forces in North Korea, the 503rd and rest of the 2d Infantry Division fought their way out of encirclement by the Chinese near Kunu-ri.

The battles in North Korea exacted a terrible price—the 503d lost almost all of its equipment and nearly half of its men. But in early 1951, overcoming many obstacles, the battalion rebuilt itself into a combat-ready unit, and played a major role in the 2d Infantry Division's stubborn stand against a far stronger force during the May 1951 Chinese offensive, an action that earned the entire division a Presidential Unit Citation.

During the battalion's fifteen months in Korea, members of the 503d received nineteen Silver Stars, four Distinguished Flying Crosses, and seventy-nine Bronze Stars. The battalion suffered 512 casualties, including 150 men who died in Communist prison camps and 79 who remain listed as missing in action.

The 503d, a Black unit, lived up to its motto of “We Can Do It,” serving with heroic valor in the face of relentless attacks by the enemy. In doing so, it shattered the biased and unfair negative stereotypes attached to Black fighting men and women in Korea and earlier wars.

Mr. Speaker, today I pay special tribute to my brave and loyal Brothers who served in the 503d Artillery Battalion, and join with them in saluting all of our comrades-in-arms in Korea, whom we will never forget.

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