

we treat any other company. Instead of passing this legislation to benefit one company, we should be looking at liability reform for all companies under Superfund.

But, I again want to congratulate Mr. THUNE for this holiday present to his State and his concern for new economic development and sustained environmental and public health protections.

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

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1389, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAFFIRMING THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 273) reaffirming the special relationship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 273

Whereas the United States and the Republic of the Philippines have shared a special relationship of mutual benefit for more than 100 years;

Whereas 2001 marks the 50th anniversary of the United States-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, signed at Washington on August 30, 1951 (3 UST 3947);

Whereas since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, the Philippines has been among the most steadfast friends of the United States during a time of grief and turmoil, offering heartfelt sympathy and support;

Whereas after the United States launched its war of self-defense in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo immediately announced her Government's unwavering support for the operation, calling it "the start of a just offensive";

Whereas during United States operations in Afghanistan, the Government of the Philippines has made all of its military installations available to the United States Armed Forces for transit, refueling, resupply, and staging operations;

Whereas this assistance provided by the Philippines has proved highly valuable in the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan, as acknowledged by the Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces in the Pacific;

Whereas the Philippines also faces grave terrorist threats from the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army,

the National Democratic Front, and the radical Abu Sayaff group, as well as an armed secessionist movement, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front;

Whereas the Abu Sayaff group has historical ties to Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network, and has engaged in hundreds of acts of terrorism in the Philippines, including bombings, arson, and kidnappings;

Whereas in May 2001, Abu Sayaff kidnapped United States citizens Martin Burnham, Gracia Burnham, and Guillermo Sobero, along with several Filipinos;

Whereas Abu Sayaff killed Mr. Sobero and continues to detain Martin Burnham and Gracia Burnham; and

Whereas the United States and the Philippines are committed to each other's security pursuant to the Mutual Defense Treaty: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) expresses its deepest gratitude to the Government and people of the Philippines for their sympathy and support since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States;

(2) expresses its sympathy to the current and recent Filipino victims of terrorism and their families;

(3) affirms the commitment of the United States to the Republic of the Philippines pursuant to the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty;

(4) supports the Government of the Philippines in its efforts to prevent and suppress terrorism; and

(5) acknowledges the economic and military needs of the Philippines and pledges to continue to assist in addressing those needs.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, there is an ongoing, joint operation in the Philippines to rescue American citizens. Martin and Gracie Burnham, who have been held hostage by the brutal terrorists who have been trained and supported by Osama bin Laden, are still being held hostage there in the Philippines. Although the operation to rescue them has received little publicity in the American media, this resolution supports that operation.

After the terrorist attack on September 11, Philippine President Arroyo was the first international leader to offer facilities and troops to assist the United States in the campaign against Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network. President Arroyo described the campaign as "the start of a just offensive."

In addition, President Arroyo demonstrated political courage, and it took political courage for her to do this, to invite U.S. soldiers to help Filipino forces conduct a joint operation to free the American hostages that are being held in the Philippines by the Abu Sayyaf terrorists, those Abu Sayyaf terrorists, of course, trained by bin Laden.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the United States-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty. This treaty takes on significance in light of the enhanced partnership between America and the Philippines, our democratic partner in Southeast Asia, and in the international war against terrorism. President Arroyo, whose father was President of the Philippines at the time of the signing of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, understands this new global war because terrorist groups inside the Philippines, trained and supported by bin Laden and other terrorists, have committed hundreds of acts of violence and kidnapping against the Filipinos over these last few years.

This legislation has nothing to do with partisan politics. It does express bipartisan support for the efforts to rescue American citizens being held by the bin Laden-backed Abu Sayyaf terrorist group.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 273, cosponsored by 32 bipartisan Members of the Congress, expresses, number 1, gratitude to President Arroyo and the people of the Philippines for their sympathy and support since the September 11 terrorist attack. Number 2, it affirms the commitment of the United States to the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty. Number 3, it supports the efforts of the Philippine government to prevent and suppress terrorism; and finally, it supports the promise recently made by President Bush to address the economic and military needs of the Philippines in order to defeat the internal terrorism that threatens that country.

Mr. Speaker, we should stand together, yes, tonight, to say that we are going to rescue those Americans held hostage in the Philippines and, number 2, that we stand in solidarity with the people of the Philippines in their struggle of having democratic government threatened from the outside and the inside.

The people of the Philippines now deserve our help. They are stepping forward again to be America's best friends, and we should extend our hand in friendship as well. It is what is right for America and right for the Philippines and right for the cause of freedom and justice.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, let me first congratulate the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), my friend and colleague, for introducing this resolution. I wholeheartedly support closer ties between the United States and the Philippines, and this resolution will make a positive contribution in this regard.

I wish, Mr. Speaker, that I could spend the balance of my time outlining the virtues of this resolution, but circumstances prevent me from doing so.

Mr. Speaker, the House Committee on International Relations has prided itself since the first day of this session on its singularly bipartisan approach to all issues. This did not begin with September 11; it began with the first day we met and continues to this day and will continue in the future. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), my friend and colleague, for his enormous contributions for making the work of our committee bipartisan.

I cannot say the same thing for the Republican leadership which schedules suspension bills, Mr. Speaker. Under the jurisdiction of the Committee on International Relations, 46 bills have been considered, 34 of them under Republican sponsorship, 12 of them under democratic sponsorship. One of these is a bill I would like to say a few words about.

Six weeks ago, the House Committee on International Relations unanimously passed H.R. 3169, the Land Mine Victims Assistance Act. There is no more bipartisan, noble, humanitarian bill to come before this body this year, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) is in full support of this legislation. The vice chairman of our committee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is in full support.

□ 1930

The chairman emeritus on the Republican side, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), is in full support. The gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), my friend and colleague, is in strong support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill came through the Committee on International Relations with a unanimous vote 6 weeks ago. The fine piece of legislation by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) was passed just last week, but it was scheduled by the leadership for today.

For 6 weeks, day after day, we have been pleading with the leadership to put this measure on our suspension calendar. The President of the United States and the administration have no objections to it; far from it, Secretary of State Colin Powell in the State Department dining room had a major event honoring organizations that help land mine victims.

This is one of the most tragic human problems on the face of this planet. From Afghanistan to Cambodia, hundreds of thousands of children and adults lost a leg or two or an arm or both because of land mine tragedies.

Today's New York Times has a major story with horrifying pictures of the Afghan ramifications of this nightmare. One of our own Marines was severely injured just a couple of days ago in Afghanistan as a result of a land mine explosion.

Mr. Speaker, there is a controversial issue with respect to the treaty as they relate to land mines. My legislation specifically excludes that issue. The only thing this legislation deals with is to help victims of land mines: little boys and little girls and men and women whose lives have been destroyed by the millions of land mines across this globe.

There is no justification, moral, legal, or otherwise, to keep this legislation off this floor. When it comes to the floor, it will pass with an overwhelming vote.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here long enough to realize that partisan legislation is often bottled up. This is a non-partisan piece of legislation. Republicans and Democrats on the Committee on International Relations unanimously supported it, as will the full membership of this body.

I am calling on the Republican leadership, after waiting patiently for 6 long weeks, after the most sickening discriminatory treatment of having legislation come before us which was passed by the Committee on International Relations just this past week, to put, without any further delay, the Land Mine Victims Assistance Act forward so that our Republican and Democratic colleagues can vote on it.

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

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), a man who has spent more time championing the cause of human rights than anyone else I have worked with here in the Congress. He is just a man of good heart who I deeply respect, and I am proud to have him as a cosponsor of this bill.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I thank him for his leadership on issues relating to human rights, especially in the Philippines and Afghanistan and so many other places where he has made a difference.

This resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 273, underscores a very important aspect of our relationship to another country, the Philippines. The Philippines and the U.S. have had a long-standing, deep, and very strong relationship; so it was not surprising to me that President Arroyo was first out of the blocks to support the United States in our campaign to defeat al Qaeda. That is what we expect from an ally. We do not always get that from allies, but we got it in a very real way from our good friends in the Philippines.

As Members know, and this was pointed out by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) a moment ago, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Philippines-U.S. Mutual Defense Pact, which has helped to preserve and protect the peace after

the Philippines went through a horrific ordeal, an ordeal that was endured by many of our own U.S. soldiers, the Bataan Death March, for example, during World War II; and the large numbers of threats that followed: the Communist threat, the corruption threats that followed World War II.

I would note parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, that my father, after fighting very terrible battles in New Guinea and many other battles against the Japanese, was part of the force that liberated the Philippines from the Japanese. He always spoke to my brothers and I of the good people of the Philippines. He always spoke of them in glowing and affectionate terms, a feeling that was shared by so many of our GIs when they spent time there fighting alongside the Filipino scouts, who were tenacious fighters in their own right.

As chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, we continue to provide significant health and other benefits to the Filipino veterans, and that again underscores the relationship of our Nation with the Philippine nation.

Finally, just let me note that the Philippines have been somewhat unique in protecting and helping refugees themselves. When other nations were in the process of closing what was known as the Comprehensive Plan of Action, the rescue that was provided internationally to the boat people, there were about 2,000 boat people in the Philippines. Other nations were forcibly repatriating these good people.

President Ramos, when he saw what was happening, what did he do? He said, Not our Nation. We are going to maintain a welcome mat to these people, about 2,000 strong. I think that spoke very well of the good-heartedness of those people in the Philippines.

Finally, the Philippine Government and the nation is also a major platform for the Voice of America and the broadcasting that emanates from that. We are hoping very soon that Radio Free Asia will also have a platform there, as well.

This is a great resolution. Again, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for his leadership. As usual, he is in the forefront of a very good cause.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 3 minutes to my friend and distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I also would like to state my support for our strong relationship with the Philippines.

However, Mr. Speaker, my statement here today is to signal to the leadership that we need to provide additional assistance to land mine victims. I am here today as a cosponsor of the International Disability and Victims Land

Mine Act of 2001. I thank the distinguished gentleman from California for his efforts on behalf of this legislation.

Land mine victims can no longer wait for assistance to regain their lives. Every year, thousands of people are killed or maimed as a result of land mine explosions. Those who survive these disastrous experiences will forever suffer devastating injuries: a farmer who was plowing his field loses his legs and will no longer be able to provide food for his community; a mother who has lost her arms will no longer be able to carry water to her children and her family, and the care-free days of playing with friends are stolen from the child who is a victim of a land mine explosion.

People in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Thailand, Angola, and numerous other countries throughout the world have had their lives destroyed as a result of land mines. Afghanistan is one of the most heavily land-mined countries in the world, and the displaced Afghan people are traveling through unfamiliar lands. The number of land mine injuries are expected to rise, just as our servicemen are experiencing tragedies from land mines.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3169 illustrates to the people of Afghanistan that we will not abandon them following the war. During this holiday season, we must not pass up an opportunity to bestow a priceless gift to land mine victims throughout the world. This bill would show compassion to the innocent people who will suffer long after the war has passed. We must bring this bill to the floor for a vote. We must give a voice to the victims of land mines.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), a man who has provided such leadership to this House since I have been here, the former chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and a man of such strong principle and ethical guidance that he has really meant a lot in my life.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me, and I thank our good sponsor of the measure for his kind words.

I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for expediting consideration of this measure. I commend our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), for crafting this important resolution. He has certainly been a staunch advocate for the Pacific Rim communities and especially for the Philippines and Afghanistan.

I want to commend, too, our ranking minority member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for his support of this measure. This measure reaffirms our special relationship between our Nation and the Republic of the Philippines.

This resolution notes that special relationship of mutual benefit which goes

back for more than 100 years, this year marking the 50th anniversary of the 1951 U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty. Throughout the years and many wars, this treaty has beneficially served both of our nations.

Once again, the relationship showed its great value soon after the terrorists' brutal attack on our Nation on September 11, when our Philippine friends were steadfast in their support, making all of their military installations available to the United States Armed Forces for transit, for refueling, for resupply, and for staging operations.

Moreover, in World War II, Philippine soldiers and scouts served courageously side by side with our Nation's Armed Forces; and regrettably, we have yet to take note of that service.

Currently, the Philippine Government is facing a serious challenge from the radical Abu Sayef group, as well as an armed secessionist movement, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. The Abu Sayef group has historical ties to Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda network and is engaged in hundreds of acts of terrorism in the Philippines, including bombings, arson, and kidnapping.

Just this past May, Abu Sayef kidnapped U.S. citizens Martin Burnham, Gracie Burnham, and Guillermo Sobero, who was later killed. This terrorist group continues to detain Martin Burnham and Gracie Burnham.

Mr. Speaker, the Philippines faces a serious challenge today from the Communist Party of the Philippines and a challenge to its territorial integrity from the People's Republic of China, which has been claiming the Spratley Islands and other Philippine coastal areas.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to fully support House Concurrent Resolution 273 so we can send a strong signal to those who are threatening our democratic friends in the Philippines through their terrorism and regional hegemony.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding time to me; and I thank him for his always eloquent support for human rights around the world, and in this case tonight, for the victims of land mines. I thank him again for calling on this legislation. This legislation must reach the floor. We support the gentleman in that.

Mr. Speaker, when bipartisanship reigns in this body, we do good things. We can bring the bill of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) to the floor. We have brought the motion of the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) to the floor reaffirming our friendship with the Philippines. I

thank the gentleman for doing that. He and I were the first Congresspeople, in fact, to go to the Philippines to greet the new President when she took over last February, and we gave the greetings of this whole Congress and our support for her. We reaffirm that support in this resolution today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask this body, however, to take one concrete move towards reaffirming that relationship that goes beyond this resolution. This resolution is wonderful, and we will get support for it. But the gentleman from California (Mr. GILMAN) and I, supported by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) and others in this room, have tried to get to the floor of this House the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, a bill which would truly reaffirm our friendship with the Philippines.

More than 50 years ago, which this resolution talks about, 55 years ago Filipino soldiers were drafted into the United States Army by the President, President Roosevelt. They served well. In fact, we were able to hold up the Japanese advance through the efforts of the Philippine Army, under the direction of Douglas MacArthur.

□ 1945

We were able to hold up the Japanese advance, throw off their time table and that helped us win the war in the Pacific. But how does this Congress react to thank the Filipino soldiers? We passed a law in 1946 to withdraw all the benefits that they were entitled to as veterans of the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, they were drafted into the Army. They fought honorably. They died in great numbers. They were with us through the whole war, the Bataan Death March, the Battle of Corregidor, and yet what did we do? We withdrew their benefits.

It is 55 years later. Many of these brave soldiers are in their late 70's and early 80's. They are not going to be with us much longer. The best way we can reaffirm our ties to the Filipinos is to pass the equity act that has been sponsored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN). This would say to the Filipino veterans, you were veterans, you have the honor and dignity that comes with that, so let us truly reaffirm our friendship and pass the Filipino Veterans Equity Act.

I do thank the gentleman for his motion. The Burnhams are being held. We have to get them released. We have to help President Arroyo in her efforts to stamp out terrorism in her nation.

Salamat, my colleague. And I say to our friendship, mabuhay.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), who has worked tirelessly on behalf of two of his constituents who are being held hostage by the terrorists in the Philippines.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr.

ROHRBACHER) for yielding me time, and I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 273, which reaffirms the special relationship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines.

Our two nations share a rich history and a bright future based on the combined commitment to democratic principals and the rule of law. This relationship is cemented by the fact that an estimated 2 million Americans of Philippine ancestry live in the United States, and more than 120,000 American citizens reside in the Philippines. It is as President Bush and President Arroyo said last month, a relationship between two peoples. Not just a relationship between two governments, but a relationship between two peoples.

As we fight the global war on terrorism, the United States is bolstered by the unwaiving commitment of the Republic of the Philippines. They have pledged their support while facing an internal threat from the terrorist group Abu Sayaff, who continue their lawless acts of violence, including the kidnapping of two of my constituents, Martin and Gracia Burnham of Wichita, Kansas, and the murder of a Californian from Corona, Guillermo Sobero.

But no tribute to our relationship would be complete without a word of thanks to those in the Philippine military who continue today to risk their lives in an effort to gain the safe release of Martin and Gracia. This ongoing conflict has cost the lives of many brave Filipino soldiers. I would especially like to express my thanks and my deepest sympathy to their families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution which reaffirms our special relationship with our friends from the Philippines.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD), my good friend and distinguished colleague.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me the time, and I want to stand in support of his effort to get H.R. 3169 legislation to the floor on land mine victims' legislation, which I fully support.

Today I stand in strong support of H. Con. Res. 273 introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), which reaffirms the special relationship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines. For more than a century we have had a very strong and stable relationship with the Philippines. Along with my home island of Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were ceded to the United States following the Spanish American War in 1898. We all share a common history of Spanish and U.S. control. Guam and the Philippines had have an even closer bond, as we are only 1,600 miles apart, making Guam the nearest U.S. destination to the Philippines.

Thousands of Filipinos have made Guam their home, and we have a long historical relationship which even pre-dates colonial control.

As a former territory, the Filipinos fought under the U.S. flag in World War II and participated in their own liberation from the Japanese imperial forces during World War II under both the U.S. flag and the Philippine commonwealth banner and we need to resolve the issues that still bother us in terms of giving full credit and recognition to the Philippine veterans. But even following their independence from the United States in 1946, Filipinos have fought alongside U.S. soldiers in both the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. They have been shoulder to shoulder with our forces and have long been a strategic ally in the Southeast Asia region.

Last month, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo made a trip to Washington to reaffirm the Philippines' strong alliance with President Bush. Following the September 11 attack on our Nation, the Philippines has proven again to be amongst our most steadfast allies in the war against terrorism. Along with our nation, Filipinos mourn victims of the terrorist attacks which claimed the lives of many Filipino citizens who worked in the World Trade Center.

Even before President Arroyo announced her 14 pillars of policy in action against terrorism on September 26, 2001, the Philippine Government has granted overflights of U.S. aircraft, refueling tankers, combat and cargo planes in the Philippines. President Arroyo has made the strong and unwaivering loyalty of her country very clear, and likewise the Philippine Government has made all of its military installations available for transit, refueling, and restocking and staging operations to our U.S. forces.

Also as a host nation of the former U.S. bases, the Philippines remains one of our most valuable allies in Asia and the Pacific. During my trip earlier to the Philippines in May, I had the opportunity to visit some of these bases and to meet with President Arroyo to discuss strengthening of U.S. and Philippine relations including environmental cleanup issues. I am pleased to note that my provision was put in the House foreign relations authorization, which encourages a bilateral framework for an independent nongovernmental study on the effects of contamination on those bases.

This proposal for the bilateral cleanup was also included by Senator DANIEL INOUE in the other body in their own defense appropriations bill. I believe that both the U.S. and the Philippines stand to gain by working collaboratively on this important issue.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty. President Bush has affirmed

the administration's commitment to U.S.-Philippine relations with a significant military and economic aid package. This includes support for Filipino troops battling against Islamic uprisings in the southern region of the country by the Abu Sayaff group which has ties to the al Qaeda organization.

The President's decision affirms our commitment and acknowledges our obligations under the mutual defense treaty to assist the economic and military needs of the Philippines. As Americans and as Members of Congress, we owe a debt of service to the Republic of the Philippines. I think we have to take stock of the very special relationship we have with the Philippines, and I believe it is truly fitting that we stand here today shoulder to shoulder to affirm U.S. support for the Philippines by passing H.Con.Res 273.

As cosponsor of this legislation, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) again. I join in the support of my colleagues and urge final passage.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) has 8 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), my good friend and colleague, who has been very active in California with the Philippine community and very active in the Committee on International Relations as a force for freedom in the world.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), for introducing this very important piece of legislation of which I am a cosponsor. And I would like to make the observation that this relationship that the United States has with the Philippines is based on a shared history and a shared commitment to democratic principals.

The political and economic importance of the Philippines to this Nation cannot be overstated, and I think it is true that the United States, the people here, owe a great debt to the people of the Philippines for their assistance during the Second World War. And I think as this resolution points out, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the mutual defense treaty which outlined a military alliance between these two countries; and this alliance has proved to be for us instrumental in deterring aggression in Asia.

Security in Asia is as key to us today as it was 50 years ago when this treaty was signed. And I am particularly concerned, as I know are the other Members of this bodies, with the actions of Abu Sayaff, with the terrorist group

now operating in the Philippines. This group has been linked to Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda networks. The group has trained in the terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, those same camps that we recently flushed out. And the group has been engaged in bombing, in arson, in kidnapping, including the kidnapping of American citizens.

Once again, I would like to applaud the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER). He represents, as do I, a significant Filipino American community in California; and he is very committed to strengthening the U.S.-Philippine ties. And this resolution sends a strong message of support for the Philippine Government in its effort to prevent and suppress terrorism and pledges U.S. support for that effort.

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

Mr. Speaker, I again want to commend my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), and reaffirm my strong support for his legislation.

The Philippines are great friends of ours. Their struggle against terrorism is our struggle. Their future in Asia guarantees that stability and prosperity; but most importantly, democracy will prevail in an important Asian country. And I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support the legislation.

Before yielding back my time, I would like to put a face on land mine victims. This young man is Wazir Hammond. He was injured by a land mine in Afghanistan just a few years ago. He is now 9 years old. And every 6 months he requires a prosthesis refitting. He is representative of the tens and tens of thousands of children and adults who are desperately hoping that we will be able to participate in a global effort to give our fellow human beings who have lost a leg or an arm or two legs or two arms an opportunity to put their lives back together again.

I call on the Republican leadership of the United States House of Representatives to schedule for debate and vote the Land Mine Victims Assistance Act, passed unanimously by the House Committee on International Relations and enjoying the support of all Republicans and all Democrats on that committee; and when the legislation comes before this body, I am sure of every single Member of this House.

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

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and I understand his frustration. I have had legislation that I wanted to bring to the floor that was very valuable, that I know that as a backer of his legislation which I backed in committee, I understand the value of that legislation and I have gone on record suggesting that

it should be brought to the floor. So I understand his frustration.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman from California yield to me?

Mr. ROHRBACHER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, it is the pain and suffering of innocent people all across the globe which is at stake, and I appreciate the support of my friend.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. I think it is the sensitivity to that pain and suffering that causes frustration at a time when one is trying to help.

□ 2000

We have to remember when looking at this legislation, this is legislation that will be seen not only in the United States, of course, but will be certainly noted in the Philippines and noted throughout Asia. What we are saying tonight is that we recognize that the Filipino people are our best friends and that the people of the Philippines stood with us in the past and we will stand with them in the future.

The Philippines did stand with us, and we must never forget that time when just over 60 years ago, the Japanese militarists decided to make their move in trying to capture a huge hunk of the world and dominate it under its own terrorist grip, and at that time, when the Nazis on one side of the world and the Japanese militarists on the other side of the world threatened any democracy and threatened the people of the world, in Asia it was the people of the Philippines who, more than anyone else, stood with us and bore the brunt of that fight and of the despotism and of the brutality of Japanese occupation.

We must remember, that the fight in the Philippines, the Bataan Death March that we talk about, there were not just Americans in that fight, but there were Filipinos standing beside each and every American, and we must never forget that, and as a member of my family who is a survivor of the Bataan Death March has told me, that as these prisoners were walked, as they were shackled and walked on this death march for day after day without food and water in the sweltering heat, with Japanese guards there with their bayonets and with their samurai swords and the Filipino people would come out of their homes and throw food and water at these prisoners, knowing that the Japanese guards would shoot them if they saw them doing this. Ordinary Filipino citizens risking their lives for our people, as well as their own soldiers.

We can never forget that type of heartfelt commitment, and that is at the basis of the relationship between the United States and the Philippines. It is a commitment to those values of decency and human understanding and freedom and liberty and justice that

unites us, and the Philippines have gone through many travails since those days.

Let me add that one of those travails was the liberation which also took many Filipino lives and the Filipinos were fighting with us. My father fought in the Philippines to help liberate that country, and he always, as I say, spoke very highly of the people of the Philippines. It is very fitting today that I am authoring this legislation, to honor him and to honor all of these veterans, both the Filipinos and the American veterans, not only just the ones who fought in the Death March, but the ones who liberated the Philippines, for the great job that they did for our country and the cause of freedom.

Nothing we could do would honor them more than the bill we pass today. Yes, we can recognize the Filipino veterans and should give them their benefits. I, too, have a piece of legislation that was not permitted to come to the floor yet, giving the Bataan Death March survivors the right to sue those Japanese corporations that used them as slave labor. So there is frustration in this process, and it takes a little pressure to try to get good bills to the floor. I am happy that the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) is trying to provide that pressure.

Tonight, let us again remember that today this piece of legislation, in and of itself, is very important. It is very significant because we are reaffirming our solidarity with the people of the Philippines. We are reaffirming this defense treaty at a time when now there are Japanese being replaced by Chinese soldiers who would threaten the peace of Asia, and we have an ongoing battle, not only in the Philippines but elsewhere, a battle raging against terrorism that we are all a part of this battle and that the Philippines have stepped forward so courageously to join us in that effort.

I would call on my colleagues to join me and thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for his principled support of this legislation, and I would ask all of my colleagues to follow the leadership of our President, President Bush, who has restated our commitment as a people as this resolution will do for the Congress.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in supporting H. Con. Res. 273, legislation reaffirming the special relationship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines. The United States and the Republic of the Philippines have shared a special relationship of mutual benefit for more than 100 years. At a time when both our nations are facing unprecedented security threats from terrorism, we must strengthen those bonds and work together to meet these new challenges.

This resolution expresses the deepest gratitude to the Government and people of the Philippines for their sympathy and support since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. It also conveys our

sympathy to the families of Filipino victims of terrorism. H. Con. Res. 273 also affirms the commitment of the United States to the Republic of the Philippines pursuant to the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty, signed on August 30 1951. It is important that we reaffirm our support for that agreement as we work to root out terrorism around the globe, including the operations in the Philippines. This will require our continued recognition of the economic and military needs of the Philippines, and a continued commitment to assist in addressing those needs.

Since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, the Philippines has been among the most steadfast friends of the United States during a time of grief and turmoil, offering heartfelt sympathy and support. When the United States launched its war of self-defense in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo immediately announced her Government's unwavering support for the operation, calling it "the start of a just offensive." The Government of the Philippines has made all of its military installations available to the United States Armed Forces for transit, refueling, resupply, and staging operations. This assistance provided by the Philippines has proved highly valuable in the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan as acknowledged by the Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces in the Pacific.

Time and again, the Filipino people have stood with us against enemies of freedom. Not only were they critical allies in World War II, but they provided nearly 400,000 brave and patriotic men for the U.S. military campaign. Filipino Scouts were called into active duty of the United States military, and they defended democracy with honor and courage. They answered the call of duty, fighting side by side with U.S. troops in our hour of need. Many Filipino citizens have since joined the ranks of our military, and served with honor. As we recognize the contributions of the Filipino government today, we must also recall the critical contributions that its people have made to our nation throughout its history. And one way we can do that is by providing Filipino veterans of World War II the benefits available to the U.S. veterans of that conflict. Last year, we made the first major stride in that direction, by providing Filipino veterans who fought with the U.S. disability benefits and access to health care. But we have a long way to go to ensure full benefit equity for these veterans. Time is running out.

One of my top priorities since coming to Congress has been to provide Filipino veterans the benefits they are due for their sacrifice, and I will continue that fight until the job is done. This resolution, which enjoys the overwhelming, bipartisan support of the House, urges continued U.S. assistance for the economic and military needs of the Philippines. I fully endorse that. But I believe that we would be sending a very mixed message if we were to provide that assistance while continuing to ignore the real health care needs of Filipino veterans who served with U.S. forces. History has shown that we pay a heavy price when we enlist the support of allies when we need them, but ignore their needs and challenges in the aftermath. I call

on my colleagues to pass this resolution and to expedite passage of legislation authorizing full veterans' benefit equity for Filipino veterans of World War II.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H. Con. Res. 273.

Each of these bills sends a strong message. H. Con. Res. 273 appropriately thanks the Philippines our strong ally, for their unwavering support in the current war on international terrorism.

And H.R. 3169, the International Disability and Victims of Landmines, Civil Strife and Warfare Act of 2001 sends a message to Muslims around the world that the United States cares about the people of Afghanistan and want to help in rebuilding their lives.

Landmines have killed more people than nuclear, chemical and biological weapons combined. Today, innocent civilians are threatened by up to 80 million landmines buried in over 80 countries. More than 100,000 Americans have been killed or maimed by these inhumane weapons. The majority of landmine survivors are civilians, often women and children.

In Afghanistan, there are 4–8 million landmines buried throughout the country. Sadly, last Sunday, three U.S. Marines learned about the danger of landmines first hand. They were all wounded when one of them stepped on a mine.

Last September, I, along with 50 of my colleagues, sent a letter to Chairman Regula urging him to restore the \$5 million in funding for the landmine victim assistance partnership between the landmine Survivors network and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I was happy to learn that \$12 million has been restored and this program will now be able to reach the 26,000 casualties that will happen in just this year alone.

Innocent civilians are threatened by landmines each day. While our Government has worked to help those victims, much more needs to be done.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, H. Con. Res. 273, reaffirming the important relationship that the United States and the Philippines have shared for more than a century.

The Filipino people have been our friends for many years, and in today's war against terrorism they are one of our most steadfast allies. The Filipino government immediately voices its support for our efforts in Afghanistan and, more importantly, has allowed our armed forces to use its military installations for transit, refueling, resupply, and staging operations that are vital to our success.

Further more, the Filipino people are keenly aware of the destructive nature of terrorism and the necessity of routing this evil from our world. For years, they have lived with the danger of terrorist threats from many groups, including the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, and the National Democratic Front. But, no threat is as great as that which they face from the radical Abu Sayaff group, which has ties to Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network.

Abu Sayaff has engaged in bombings, arson, kidnapping, and hundreds of other acts of terrorism with increasing frequency. Earlier this year, in fact, they kidnapped three Amer-

ican citizens along with several Filipinos. They murdered one of those Americans, and the other two remain in captivity to this day. Our Filipino friends have stood by us since the attacks of September 11th, and we should stand by them as they face this same threat.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a friend of the Filipino-American community and I encourage my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 273.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2001

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the notice requirements of House Resolution 314, I announce that the following measures will be considered under suspension of the rules on Wednesday, December 19, 2001: H.J. Res. 75; H.R. 2739; H.R. 3275; S. 1714; H.R. 2657; H.R. 2199; S. 1762; S. 1793; H. Con. Res. 279; H.R. 3507; and H.R. 1432.

HONORING RICK MORGAN

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a constituent of mine, Mr. Rick Morgan. I have the pleasure of knowing Rick personally, and I am proud to recognize him because tonight Rick will be carrying the Olympic torch and lighting the cauldron in Charleston, West Virginia.

In service to our country, Rick Morgan has sacrificed much. While attempting to save the life of a Marine during the Vietnam War, he was caught in a land mine explosion that took his left hand and left leg. After the war, Rick returned to his hometown of Charleston, West Virginia, and has worked for the brokerage firm of Salomon Smith Barney for the past 32 years, very successfully. Today, he is the senior vice president of sales.

Rick is an avid swimmer. He bikes, he sails and he skis. His very active life is proof that Rick has the ability to overcome any challenge and any obstacle with which he is faced.

Rick is a steadfast rock of our community. He goes out of his way to help others, serves as an inspiration to his fellow West Virginians. His determined