

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING THE PEACE CORPS ON THEIR 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Peace Corps on its 40th anniversary, and commend the agency and its volunteers on the invaluable contribution they have made in promoting America's interests and values around the world since its founding in 1961.

Forty years ago, President Kennedy challenged Americans to "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." His inspiring words launched the Peace Corps, which President Kennedy officially established by Executive Order on March 1, 1961. The response to the President's call for this bold experiment was swift and enthusiastic, with the first volunteers accepting the challenge and leaving for their overseas assignments less than six months later.

Each successive generation has answered President Kennedy's call, expanding the Peace Corps' ranks and extending its reach every year. This year, more than 7,000 Peace Corps volunteers live and work alongside people in 76 countries. Over the course of the last four decades, a total of 162,000 volunteers in 134 countries have participated in this bold experiment. President Kennedy would be proud—and so should we.

The Peace Corps has met with such extraordinary success because its mission resonates with Americans and with the millions of people across the globe whom it has served. By immersing themselves in local cultures and working side-by-side with everyday people in the countries they serve, Peace Corps volunteers have made a positive impact in a very personal way. They work with teachers and parents to improve access to education. They work with community groups and local governments to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. They work with entrepreneurs to develop better business practices; with farmers to develop better farming methods; with communities to protect their local environment. And they are harnessing the information revolution to train students in computer use and to establish local Internet resource centers around the globe.

The Peace Corps' work has made a critical contribution to America's national security. Born in the crucible of the Cold War as a means of preventing the false promise of Communism from taking hold in the developing world, it has adapted its mission for our global age to embrace all people struggling to survive and take advantage of the new opportunities of our times. Such work is critical to

strengthen new democracies, encourage free markets, and promote human rights—all pillars of American foreign policy. Through the Peace Corps, people of foreign nations learn that America is a force for peace, justice and prosperity in the world.

The Peace Corps has also come to symbolize for millions across the globe the boundless hope, practical ingenuity, and noble vision our Nation embodies. As such, it represents one of the most enduring legacies of President Kennedy, and one of the shining stars in the constellation of initiatives that constitute America's foreign policy.

The Peace Corps is celebrating its milestone anniversary throughout the year with events that commemorate the agency's forty-year history and that raise awareness of its good work. I ask my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to join me in celebrating the Peace Corps' success and wishing it success well into the future.

TRIBUTE TO SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT GEORGE C. FINCH, JR.

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, on February 28, 2001 Senior Master Sergeant George C. Finch, Jr. will retire as the Assistant Superintendent for the 174th Logistics Support Flight, New York Air National Guard in Syracuse, New York after 10 years at the position and 35 years of dedicated service in the United States Armed Forces.

A native of Central New York, Sergeant Finch's long and distinguished career in the United States Armed Forces began after graduating from Whitesboro High School when he entered the United States Air Force in June of 1966 as an Administrative Specialist. Since then, Sergeant Finch has honorably served in United States military operations around the world including Operation Desert Shield in Saudi Arabia, where Sergeant Finch acted as the Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of Plans, Scheduling and Documentation. After his return from Saudi Arabia, Sergeant Finch was reassigned as the Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of Plans, Scheduling, and Documentation, of the 174th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and subsequently the 174th Logistics Support Flight. Since then, Sergeant Finch has served in Operation Provide Comfort in Turkey and Operation Northern Watch, also in Turkey, before finally being deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in March of 2000.

Sergeant Finch's military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Air Force Achievement Medal. His military unit awards

include the Joint Meritorious Service Award with one oak leaf cluster and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device and five oak leaf clusters. He also holds the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with six oak leaf clusters, the National Defense Service Medal with one bronze service star, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three campaign stars, and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. Other service awards include the Air Force Overseas Service Long Tour Ribbon, the Air Force Longevity Service Award with seven oak leaf clusters, the Armed Forces Service Medal with Silver hourglass device, Mobilization "M" device and numeral four. His Foreign Service awards include the Kuwait Liberation Medal from Saudi Arabia and the Kuwait Liberation Medal from Kuwait.

On behalf of the 26th Congressional District, it is my honor to congratulate Sergeant Finch on his well deserved retirement and to thank him for 35 years of service to our Nation. We wish him and his family the very best.

INTRODUCTION OF ROCKY FLATS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2001

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am today reintroducing a bill to designate Rocky Flats as a National Wildlife Refuge once that former nuclear-weapons site in Colorado is cleaned up and closed.

This bill, the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act of 2001, is essentially identical to one I introduced last year on which action was not completed before the end of the 106th Congress.

It will convert Rocky Flats into a National Wildlife Refuge, but only AFTER the site has been cleaned up and closed and a final Onsite Record of Decision has been submitted by EPA under the Superfund rules. And it includes specific provisions to make sure that the bill will not result in a less thorough clean-up.

The bill has been developed through a process of collaboration with Senator WAYNE ALLARD, who is introducing corresponding legislation in the Senate, and is cosponsored by Representatives DEGETTE, TANCREDO, SCHAFER, and HEFLEY.

In shaping this legislation, Senator ALLARD and I have worked closely with local communities, State and Federal agencies, and interested members of the public. We received a great deal of very helpful input, including many detailed reactions to and comments on related legislation that I introduced in 1999 and discussion drafts that Senator ALLARD and I circulated earlier last year.

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