

Given the significance of the day, it is perhaps fitting that we are considering the budget conference report. That package includes \$1.35 trillion in tax relief for all American taxpayers. With this tax relief, they can begin to earn for themselves a little sooner, and to plan for their priorities and their needs a little earlier.

In fact, current forecasts—under the assumption that there are no changes in the tax laws—have National Tax Freedom Day in 2011 falling on May 10. But, if the Bush tax relief package were passed, that date would be pulled back to May 5. In Washington terms, where we throw around numbers in the millions, billions, and trillions everyday, five days may not seem like much. But, to the family living paycheck to paycheck or trying to set aside a little bit in personal savings for the future, it means a lot.

It is in their honor, Mr. Speaker, that I am pleased to support efforts to let them keep more of their hard-earned money in their own homes, and to support the \$1.35 trillion in tax relief in our Fiscal Year 2002 budget.

FORT OSAGE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of Fort Osage as a landmark identified and later developed by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark during the voyage of the Corps of Discovery.

In June of 1804, the Corps of Discovery passed a high bluff on the Missouri River—which would later become Fort Osage in Jackson County, Missouri. Only four years later, Clark returned to initiate construction on a Fort and trading-house under the direction of the War Department. Clark noted “The River could be completely defended” and he deemed the “situation elegant.”

Fort Osage (or Fort Clark as it was originally named) played an important role in the exploration and development of the West. Goods were traded with the Osage, Ayaaway and Kansas tribes at this site for years to come. Fort Osage proved to be the single most profitable trading post of its kind in the United States and the territories. We are indebted to the legacy of the Fort and the people who lived, worked and defended the Fort. Their courage had a profound effect on the evolution of our nation.

As part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration, Jackson County Parks and Recreation is proposing an innovative education center. The education center would showcase artifacts and exhibit the significance of the Missouri River. I believe this education center is a wonderful addition to the commemoration and will help visitors understand the significance of Fort Osage. It is the only site along the trail where Clark returned to develop a facility that fulfilled the goals of President Thomas Jefferson’s dream of commerce and development with the west.

The significance of Fort Osage is not limited to Lewis and Clark. Both the Yellowstone Ex-

pedition and the Long Expedition visited the Fort in 1819. The Long Expedition brought the first steamboat, Western Engineer. Only years later, William Becknell arrived at Fort Osage, using the site as mile marker “0” for the Santa Fe trail, again distinguishing the importance of the Fort in relation to commerce in the west.

Due to the area’s historical significance, the Fort Osage Education Center was proposed as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration. The Education Center was recently recognized by the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission as the priority project in Missouri and I am honored to have this historical site in my district. I look forward to the events surrounding the bicentennial commemoration at Fort Osage and in other areas of the 6th District of Missouri. I join the Missouri Bicentennial Commission, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the United States Geological Survey in full support of the proposed Fort Osage Education Center.

RESOLUTION ON KALMYK SETTLEMENT IN AMERICA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution congratulating the Kalmyk people in the United States on the fiftieth anniversary of their settlement in this country. The resolution also encourages continuing scholarly and educational exchanges between the Russian Federation and the United States to encourage better understanding and appreciation of the Kalmyk people and their contributions to the history and culture of both countries.

The Kalmyks were originally an ethnic Mongolian nomadic people who have inhabited the Russian steppes for around 400 years. The present Kalmyk Republic of the Russian Federation is located north of the Caspian sea in southern Russia. During World War II, the Kalmyk people were one of the seven “punished peoples” exiled en masse by Stalin to “special settlements” in Siberia and Central Asia for allegedly collaborating with the Nazis. There were about 170,000 deportees. After World War II, several hundred Kalmyks who managed to escape the Soviet Union were held in Displaced Persons camps in Germany. For several years, they were not allowed to emigrate to the United States because of prejudice against their Mongolian ethnicity.

However, on July 28, 1951, the Attorney General of the United States issued a ruling which cleared the way for the Kalmyk people in the Displaced Persons camps in Germany to enter the United States. In the fifty years since their arrival, the Kalmyk emigres and their descendants have survived and prospered. Moreover, they are the first community of Tibetan Buddhists to settle in the United States. While adapting to much of America’s diverse and modern culture, the Kalmyk have also sought to preserve their own unique traditions. Many continue to practice the Tibetan Buddhist religion.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kalmyk community of the United States has

been able to re-establish contact with the Kalmyk people in the Russian Federation. For the past ten years, a wide exchange has been developed between relatives, students and professionals.

Mr. Speaker, our country is so much richer for the presence of our Kalmyk-American citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me and my colleagues Mr. HOYER, Mr. PITTS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WAMP, and Mr. HASTINGS, in congratulating the Kalmyk-American community on the fiftieth anniversary of their settlement in the United States by cosponsoring and supporting this resolution.

IN HONOR OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC TECHNICAL DIRECTORATE COMMANDOS FAMILY TORRANCE, CA

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to pay tribute to a very extraordinary group of members who are being commemorated for the Presidential Unit Citation. These heroic members of the Strategic Technical Directorate Commandos Family passionately and diligently sacrificed their lives for “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” for the people of Southeast Asia.

During the Vietnam War, the people of Southeast Asia and the fighting soldiers of the United States faced many challenges that jeopardized their lives. But in 1964, the Strategic Technical Directorate (the U.S. joint services command) was created to help the U.S. and Southeastern Asian soldiers to fight for freedom. The Strategic Technical Directorate included the best selected group of officers. The members showed their intelligence, commitment, and bravery in combat. They selflessly risked their own lives in hopeless situations to save others. For example, in 1974, the North Vietnamese Army attacked the city of Phuoc Long. 250 Airborne Rangers came to the rescue, but they faced brutal assaults from the North Vietnamese Army and lost contact with the Strategic Technical Directorate. After a four-day search, the Strategic Technical Directorate found only 50 percent of their surviving members in the city. Another example is during April 1975. The Strategic Technical Directorate’s Special Missions Services went to the city of Phan Rang, where the North Vietnamese were attacking the city. 100 of their additional commandos were captured by the North Vietnamese Army. Then the remaining Strategic Technical Directorate units went to defend Saigon. By the final days of April, the North Vietnamese Army surrounded the capital. The Strategic Technical Directorate did not give up. 500 SMS commandos, the headquarters personnel, and the Liaison Service barged in and fought until capitulation on April 30. These two examples prove how the members of STD risked their lives and put 100 percent of their diligence and commitment in winning the freedom for Southeast Asia.

The members of the Strategic Technical Directorate Commandos Family will not be forgotten, but be remembered and honored, for