The Navajo radiomen served from 1942 to 1945, and often the code talkers were in the forefront of battles of the Pacific. The Japanese never broke the Navajo code or captured a Navajo Code Talker. The code talkers are credited with saving thousands of American lives.

The Navajo Code Talker’s work remained classified until 1968 because the Pentagon was unsure whether the Navajo Language might be needed again.

The Navajo Code talkers played an important role in winning the war in the Pacific. They deserve our thanks and support.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H. Con. Res. 174 today to authorize the use of the rotunda to honor and celebrate the heroic work of the Navajo Code Talkers. I thank my colleague from New Mexico, Mr. Tom Udall, for sponsoring this resolution.

During World War II, about 400 Navajo tribe members served as code talkers for the United States Marines. They transmitted messages by telephone and radio in their native language—a code that the Japanese never broke. Navajo is an unwritten language of extreme complexity and one estimate indicated that fewer than 30 non-Navajos could understand the language at the outbreak of World War II. Navajos demonstrated that they could encode, transmit and decode a three-line message in English in just 20 seconds. Machines of the time required 30 minutes to do the same job.

This resolution does great justice by recognizing the contributions of these great people to our nation’s collective security and history.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, in May 1942 twenty-nine Navajos entered boot camp and later went to Camp Pendleton to develop a code that used the Navajo language as its basis. They worked at finding new words or meanings for military terms, which had no actual Navajo translation as well as an alphabetical way of spelling other words. So began the career of the Navajo Code Talkers who were the secret weapon of the Marine Corps against Japan. Their unbreakable code would play a vital part in the United States ability to win World War II.

The man credited for the idea of a code based on Navajo language goes to Philip Johnston, an engineer in Los Angeles. His father had been a Protestant missionary; therefore, as a child he moved to a Navajo reservation where he grew up and learned the culture and the language. Knowing that the Navajo language had been orally handed down through the centuries was Johnston’s main argument for this code. He argued that it was a system that would not have to be changed on a regular basis, and because it had never been written down it could not result in falling into the hands of the enemy.

Ironically, Navajos were subjected to alienation in their own homeland and discouraged from speaking their language yet they still came willingly forward and used their language to defend their country and help develop the most successful military code of the time.

The code was such a success that the Department of Defense kept the Code secret for 23 years after World War II. It was finally declassified in 1968. The Code Talkers had been sworn to secrecy, an oath they kept and honored. Imagine these unsung heroes returned home with no special recognition for what they had accomplished and sadly over the years some have died never receiving the honor and accolades that they so deserved.

The time has come for us to recognize the Navajo Code Talkers with a Congressional Gold Medal—the most distinguished honor a civilian can receive. It is for this reason I support House Concurrent Resolution 174, authorizing use of the rotunda to present Congressional Gold Medals to the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers. This honor has been a long time in coming.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Ney) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 174.

The question was taken.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 174.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Whitfield) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 170.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

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The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.