

**(5) EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.—**

(A) IN GENERAL.—An employee of the Commission shall be an employee for purposes of chapters 84, 85, 87, and 89 of title 5, United States Code, and service as an employee of the Commission shall be service for purposes of such chapters.

(B) NONAPPLICATION TO MEMBERS.—This paragraph shall not apply to a member of the Commission.

**(6) OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.—**  
The Office of Personnel Management—

(A) may promulgate regulations to apply the provisions referred to under subsection (a) to employees of the Commission; and

(B) shall provide support services relating to—

(i) the initial employment of employees of the Commission; and

(ii) other personnel needs of the Commission.

**(d) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—**

Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement to the agency of that employee, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(e) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(f) STAFF QUALIFICATIONS.—Any person appointed to the staff of or employed by the Commission shall be an individual of integrity and impartiality.

**(g) CONDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT.—**

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may offer employment on a conditional basis to a prospective employee pending the completion of any necessary security clearance background investigation. During the pendency of any such investigation, the Commission shall ensure that such conditional employee is not given and does not have access to or responsibility involving classified or otherwise restricted material.

(2) TERMINATION.—If a person hired on a conditional basis as described in paragraph (1) is denied or otherwise does not qualify for all security clearances necessary for the fulfillment of the responsibilities of that person as an employee of the Commission, the Commission shall immediately terminate the employment of that person with the Commission.

(h) EXPEDITED SECURITY CLEARANCE PROCEDURES.—A candidate for executive director or deputy executive director of the Commission and any potential employee of the Commission shall, to the maximum extent possible, be investigated or otherwise evaluated for and granted, if applicable, any necessary security clearances on an expedited basis.

**SEC. 6. SUPPORT SERVICES.**

During the 180-day period following the date of enactment of this Act, the General Services Administration shall provide administrative support services (including offices and equipment) for the Commission.

**SEC. 7. TERMINATION OF THE COMMISSION.**

The Commission shall terminate 90 days after the date on which the Commission submits its final report under section 3.

**SEC. 8. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.**

(a) INAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) does not apply to the Commission.

(b) PUBLIC ATTENDANCE.—To the maximum extent practicable, each meeting of the Commission shall be open to members of the public.

**SEC. 9. FUNDING OF COMMISSION.**

Notwithstanding section 1346 of title 31, United States Code, or section 611 of the

Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998, of funds made available for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 to the Departments of Justice, State, and any other appropriate agency that are otherwise unobligated, not more than \$3,500,000 shall be available for the interagency funding of activities of the Commission under this Act. Funds made available to the Commission pursuant to this section shall remain available for obligation until December 31, 1999.

**MOTION OFFERED BY MR. LEACH**

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. LEACH moves to strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the provisions of H.R. 3662, as passed by the House.

The motion was agreed to.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

A similar House bill, (H.R. 3662) was laid on the table.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

**COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE OF UNITED STATES AND PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 404) commemorating 100 years of relations between the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines.

The Clerk read as follows:

**H. RES. 404**

Whereas 1998 marks 100 years of special ties between the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines and is also the centennial celebration of Philippine independence from Spain which initiated relations with the United States;

Whereas the people of the Philippines have on many occasions demonstrated their strong commitment to democratic principles and practices, the free exchange of views on matters of public concern, and the development of a strong civil society;

Whereas the Philippines has embraced economic reform and free market principles and, despite current challenging circumstances, its economy has registered significant economic growth in recent years benefiting the lives of the people of the Philippines;

Whereas the large Philippine-American community has immeasurably enriched the fabric of American society and culture;

Whereas Filipino soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with American troops on the battlefields of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam;

Whereas the Philippines is an increasingly important trading partner of the United States as well as the recipient of significant direct American investment;

Whereas the United States relies on the Philippines as a partner and treaty ally in fostering regional stability, enhancing prosperity, and promoting peace and democracy; and

Whereas the 100th anniversary of relations between the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines offers an opportunity for the United States and the Philippines to renew their commitment to international cooperation on issues of mutual interest and concern: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the Philippines on the commemoration of its independence from Spain;

(2) looks forward to a broadening and deepening of friendship and cooperation with the Philippines in the years ahead for the mutual benefit of the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines;

(3) supports the efforts of the Philippines to further strengthen democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the expansion of free market economics both at home and abroad; and

(4) recognizes the close relationship between the nations and the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines and pledges its support to work closely with the Philippines in addressing new challenges as we begin our second century of friendship and cooperation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have introduced this resolution commemorating 100 years of relations between the people of the United States and the people of the Philippines. I am pleased to bring it to the floor today for consideration, and I am pleased to be joined by our distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

Mr. Speaker, it is right and fitting that the House of Representatives make note of the special relationship that our Nation and the Philippines have shared for nearly a century. The beginning of our country's relationship with the Philippines in 1898 also marks the beginning of our great interest in the Pacific and the development of strong, robust historical and cultural ties between the Philippines and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, though the United States and Philippines are literally an ocean apart, the large Philippine-American community, numbering over 2 million, has immeasurably enriched the social and cultural fabric of our Nation and serves as a sturdy bridge of friendship between our two countries.

Until the end of the Cold War, the United States maintained major military facilities in the Philippines which played a significant role in the maintenance of regional peace and stability. Today, the Philippines remains an important partner and ally in guarding the peace and maintaining stability in southeast Asia.

Our Nation is pleased with the flourishing of democracy in the Philippines. It is hoped that the Philippines will serve as an example to others in that region and will encourage progress and the furthering of democratic principles and practices, respect for human rights, and enhancement of the rule of law.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to introduce this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support the measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. I would like to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for introducing House Resolution 404 and moving it without delay through the legislative process. I am an original cosponsor of the resolution along with a number of our colleagues here.

Mr. Speaker, this is a constructive measure that recognizes the close partnership that we have enjoyed with the Philippines over the past 100 years, and voices support for a continuation of that partnership as we enter the second century of our bilateral relationship. I urge adoption of this measure.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.Res. 404 and congratulate the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, for introducing it today. I am pleased to be one of the bill's original cosponsors.

In the past 100 years, the Philippines at various times has served, and now serves, as a democratic counterpart, ally, trading partner, and friend to the United States. The Philippines is a republic basically patterned after our own democratic system and it continues to reshape and perfect its government in order to better uphold the ideals of democracy.

Since July 4, 1946, named Filipino-American Friendship Day in the Phil-

ippines, the U.S.-Philippines relationship has been largely characterized by cooperation. H.Res. 404 notes these cooperative efforts by citing our united forces in World War II and our efforts to promote peace and stability in the Asian-Pacific region. Though U.S. forces have not had a physical presence in the Philippines since 1991, the U.S. and the Philippines remain united by the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty. This bond may be further strengthened by a newly negotiated Visiting Forces Agreement which is scheduled to go before the Philippines Senate for ratification later this year.

Despite the ongoing financial crisis in Asia, the Philippines has also become an increasingly valuable trading partner for the United States. The Philippines has demonstrated commitment to undertake economic reform, and this Member expects the new President-elect, Joseph Estrada, to continue to nurture this economic growth.

H.Res. 404 is timely legislation as its introduction coincides with the festive preparations now underway in the Philippines in anticipation of its centennial celebration of independence from Spain. It is altogether appropriate for this body to congratulate the Philippines on the centennial of its independence and applaud his accomplishments of the past 100 years. The Philippines has clearly become a positive role model for its Asian neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) on sponsoring this legislation and I urge all Members to support and approve H.Res. 404.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

□ 1700

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

I rise in strong support of this resolution, H. Res. 404, which congratulates the Philippines on the 100th anniversary of its independence from Spain in 1898, supports their efforts to strengthen democracy and human rights, and thanks the Philippines for fighting on the side of the United States in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam.

I have personally met with both the President-elect and the Vice President-elect recently, and I know that they will continue the strong relationship between our two countries.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to my good friends who are speaking on this and who have sponsored this resolution today that there are two additional concrete steps that this body could take to adequately express the high regard we have for the Philippines on this 100th anniversary of their independence.

The first concrete act we could do is pass the bill, H.R. 836, an act introduced by the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on International

Relations, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and myself. It is a bipartisan bill called the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. It has nearly 200 cosponsors at this time.

What the Filipino Veterans Equity Act says is that it is time to restore justice and honor and dignity to the veterans of World War II who fought side by side with us. These were soldiers of the Philippines who were drafted to serve in our Armed Forces by Executive order of President Roosevelt. They defended the American flag in the famous battles of Bataan and Corregidor. Thousands of them died during the Bataan death march, and many who survived were imprisoned under very inhumane conditions. The Filipino soldiers who fought under the American flag foiled plans for a quick takeover of the region and allowed the United States the time that we needed to prepare our forces for victory in the Pacific. But unbelievably after the war was over in 1946, the Congress of the time voted to take away the benefits and recognition that these Filipino veterans were promised. In the infamous Rescissions Acts of 1946, we said, thank you for all your work and help, but no thanks.

It is now 52 years later. Families who live in both the United States and the Philippines have been waiting for the justice, recognition and benefits that they deserve. H. Res. 404 thanks them for their service, but we need H.R. 836, sponsored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), to complete the job.

A second concrete step that we can take is to pass H. Res. 312, which was introduced by the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD). This resolution outlines the compromise to return one of the famous Bells of Balangiga to the people of the Philippines. The two bells were brought to the United States early in the 20th century by American troops who were engaged in hostilities that had erupted between American and Filipino soldiers. These bells are currently on display at Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming.

The Republic of the Philippines has repeatedly requested the return of the bells. H. Res. 312 would return one bell and retain one bell in Wyoming. Two replica bells would be made so that each country would have one replica and one original bell.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Philippine Declaration of Independence, as a measure of friendship, another way to recognize this, in addition to the resolution we have on the floor now, let us share these priceless bells which are national symbols to the Filipinos.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) for his support of our Philippine veterans bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHR-ABACHER), a member of our House Committee on International Relations.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to rise in support of this resolution remembering the Philippines 100 years as a nation.

It was 100 years ago when, during what is known as the Spanish-American War, the Philippines were liberated from their Spanish oppressors. Unfortunately sometimes we like to romanticize our own history and forget what happened a few years immediately after that liberation. Instead of doing what would have been consistent with our own philosophy as a country that believed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States decided instead of freeing the Philippines from foreign oppression, we decided to take control of the Philippines for ourselves, and, in fact, at the turn of the century there was a bloody war that went on in the Philippines that pitted the United States against many of the Filipino people who wanted freedom and independence, justifiably wanted their freedom and independence. In fact, tens of thousands of Filipinos were killed at that time by the superior firepower of American military forces. That is a stain on American history.

However, let us say that there were the best of intentions. The people who were involved in that and the decision-makers felt that this would be a way to lead the Philippines to true democracy. And 50 years later, yes, in 1946, the Philippines were freed. I think it speaks very well of the Filipino people that they have forgotten that blight of what happened at the turn of the century and over the years became perhaps one of America's greatest friends in the Pacific, but also in the world.

The Filipino people are good friends and part of the American family and, since 1946, have always had a close relationship to us and during the Cold War stood with us. Unfortunately during the Cold War the Philippines reverted back during the time, and, again, which did not speak well of the United States, we recognized the demise of democracy under the rule of Mr. Marcos. President Marcos they called him, but one is not a President unless one is elected, so I will have to call him dictator Marcos. During that time corruption thrived, and again the United States did not live up to our own ideals, but yet the people of the Philippines know that we are a country of ideals, and, when we could, we stood with those people, Mr. Aquino, of course, who was assassinated by the Marcos gang, and we stood with the people of the Philippines to help reestablish democracy there.

I think, as a former member of the Reagan administration, that is one of the moments that I am the most proud of, where Ronald Reagan helped ease this dictatorship out of power in the Philippines and eased into place a more democratically oriented group of people. And then today, under President Ramos they have had a magnificently democratic country. We have had free-

dom of speech, freedom of the press and a growing economy. Under the past regime, they were so corrupt, they could not even grow. Today the Philippines stands as a jewel in the Pacific in the sense that its people are committed to freedom and democracy as we know it here in the United States. They are our good friends.

Unfortunately, here again at times we end up taking the Philippines for granted. We end up trying to give business advantages for our own businessmen to invest in countries like Vietnam that have had no democratic reform whatsoever, or in China, or in other dictatorial countries, even like Indonesia up until this current situation. Why should we ignore those people who are struggling to improve their lives, who are our best friends in the Philippines, and instead direct our people with grants and loans and subsidies for their investments from the IMF and from the Export-Import Bank; why should we direct them towards dictatorships when we should actually be helping our friends in the Philippines?

I am very proud to stand here today to say, I am a friend of the Philippines, and the people of the Philippines are good friends of democracy and freedom and good friends of the people of the United States.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to associate myself with the compliments and statements made earlier by my good friend from California and certainly his support for the Philippines.

I rise in support of House Resolution 404, which commemorates 100 years of relations between the good people of the Philippines and the United States. I commend the chairman and ranking member of the House Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HAMILTON), for introducing and supporting adoption of this important measure. I am proud to join these gentlemen and our colleagues on the committee as an original cosponsor of the legislation and also my good friend, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

Mr. Speaker, today we honor an old and enduring friendship that has linked the United States and the Philippines for almost a century. Our relationship dates back to 1898 when Commodore George Dewey sank the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, ending three centuries of Spanish colonial rule and laying the foundation for Philippine independence from Spain.

For in the next 100 years, Americans and Filipinos have shared a special

bond forged in war and strengthened in peace.

Mr. Speaker, the Philippines should be commended for being one of the most vibrant democracies in Asia. Since the people power revolt in 1986 that ousted Ferdinand Marcos, three Presidents have been placed in office by free and fair elections in the Philippines. Last month, Vice President Joseph Estrada was the runaway winner of the May 11 Presidential election against nine other candidates. On June 30, Mr. Estrada, an opposition leader, shall take office from President Fidel Ramos, again marking a smooth transition of power as befits a true democracy.

Under President Ramos' leadership, the Philippines has implemented economic reforms while embracing free market principles. The trade liberalization policy has led to an economic renaissance for the Philippines, going from zero growth in 1991 to an increase over 6 percent GNP in recent years. The United States has been and continues to be the largest trading partner and foreign investor in the Philippines. One-third of Philippines' exports come to America. Two-way annual trade between our two countries has exceeded over \$12 billion.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Philippines and the people of the United States have always had close relations. Today almost 2 million Americans are of Filipino descent, while close to 130,000 U.S. citizens presently reside in the Philippines.

People of the Philippines have always been a trusted ally of the United States in times of conflict. During World War II more than 100,000 Filipinos volunteered for the Philippine Commonwealth Army, fighting under American commanders alongside U.S. Armed Forces. Filipino soldiers also sacrificed their blood alongside U.S. troops in the Korean and Vietnam wars. This friendship and alliance continues today with our mutual defense treaty, which commits our nations to each other's defense in case of external attack, while preserving stability in the region.

Mr. Speaker, because of the deep and enduring ties that have traditionally bound the people of the Philippines and the U.S. together, I would strongly urge our colleagues to adopt this resolution before us. All Americans should honor our good friendship with the Philippines on this important commemoration of their independence, support their continued political and economic progress, and work to maintain the special and close relationship between our sister democracies.

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

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK).

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

I rise today in very strong support of House Resolution 404, which celebrates

and commemorates the 100 years of relationship between the Philippines and the United States. I take particular pride in rising today to support this resolution as the Chair of the Asian Pacific Caucus for the House of Representatives. We are joined together as Members of this Congress with strong Asian Pacific constituencies, and we have approximately 20 members in our caucus and about 65 Members of the House that have 5 percent or more Asian Pacific individuals in their constituencies.

The Philippines have had an unusual relationship with the United States. One hundred years ago they freed themselves from Spanish rule and began an association with the United States which was not always friendly or pleasant. I am sure there were many torturous years prior to their development of a strong relationship, but the Philippines has always been a friend and an ally, and never more important was that relationship and dependence upon each other than during World War II, when the United States called upon nearly 100,000 Filipinos to join side by side with the United States to win the war in the Philippines and to conquer the enemy forces in the Philippines.

At that time the Filipinos that joined in to help the American forces in the Philippines were promised that they would be accorded recognition and veterans status. Regrettably, the Congress took away that promise in the Rescissions Act of 1946. And so today one of the gnawing difficulties we have in our constituencies in facing the veterans from the Philippines who now live in the United States is this question of when the United States is going to fulfill its honor and its promise.

□ 1715

I would hope that along with the celebration of our relationship of 100 years that we recognize that we have still some unfulfilled promises that we have made to the Philippine people.

The Filipinos in the United States who are living here as residents or as citizens constitute a very large portion of our population. Persons in the United States of Filipino ancestry number over 2 million currently under the estimates that we have received from the Census Office. In my own constituency, there are about 170,000 persons of Filipino ancestry. We celebrate their presence. I cannot think of any other segment in our society that are harder working, more creative, more energetic and more loyal to the United States than those who count as their ancestry the Philippines. And so I agree with the gentleman from California that we should be at this time thinking of ways that we could strengthen this relationship through trade and other kinds of formulations to build their economy and to indicate to the people of the Philippines that it is more than just a token relationship; that they are friends, stable, reliable, and of great economic importance. It is

important for this country to extend a helping hand in every way that we can. Hawaii is special because we have elected as our Governor a person of Philippine ancestry of whom we are very proud, the Honorable Benjamin Cayetano.

Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to an old and enduring friendship that has linked the United States and the Republic of the Philippines. Friday, June 12, 1998 marks the 100th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines relationship. I am pleased to join my colleagues in strong support of H. Res. 404 which recognizes the special link that Americans and Filipinos have shared.

As we celebrate this important relationship let us not forget the supremely noble Filipino World War II veterans.

The U.S.-Philippines relationship was indisputable when over one hundred thousand Filipinos, of the Philippine Commonwealth Army, fought side by side with the United States during World War II. Under President Roosevelt's Executive Order of July 26, 1941, the Philippine military was called on to join forces with the United States. Without hesitation they fought with bravery, tenacity and honor along side American forces in the battle in the Pacific Theater. Philippine soldiers who served in regular components of the United States Armed Forces were considered members of the United States forces.

Filipino fighters heroic service prevented the enemy from conquering the Pacific and allowed the United States troops, under the command of General Douglas MacArthur to return to the Philippines. The contributions and valor of these Filipino veterans were instrumental in the United States preparations for the final assault on Japan.

Notwithstanding promises made to these Philippine soldiers in 1946, Congress enacted The Rescission Act which stripped members of the Philippine Commonwealth army of being duly recognized as veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

It was not until 1990 that Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1990 permitting Philippine veterans of World War II to apply for naturalization in recognition of their wartime service.

Today, CBO estimates that at least 28,000 veterans of the Commonwealth Army and Philippine Scouts are U.S. citizens. According to information from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), about 15,000 who live in the United States became citizens between 1991 and 1995 under the authority of the Immigration Act of 1990.

H. Res. 836, The Filipino Veterans Equity Act introduced in February reinstates the benefits of the Filipino World War II veterans unjustly denied by our Act of Congress in 1946. I am pleased to be a co-sponsor of House Resolution.

This year the Congress has the opportunity to address this injustice. The House Committee on Veteran's Affairs will hold a hearing on H. Res. 836. The United States has an obligation and the Congress the responsibility to live up to the original promise made to these soldiers. This year, the 100th Anniversary of our relationship, is a perfect time to correct this wrong.

After answering the call without question and serving valiantly in the defense of the United States, Filipino World War II veterans deserve, their long-overdue benefits.

This year, in many communities in the United States and the Philippines, extensive celebration of the Philippine independence and the enduring friendship between our two countries will occur. I believe it is time to honor our friendship by providing full veterans' benefits to these Filipino World War II veterans, who fought and died side by side with us for freedom and democracy.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). The gentleman from Guam (Mr. Underwood) is recognized for 4 minutes.

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the chairman of the committee, for this measure, and I rise in strong support of H. Res. 404.

One hundred years ago, President McKinley, mulling over territories which included Guam as well as the Philippines in the Asia-Pacific region, spoke of the revelation indicating that there was nothing left to do but to take the Philippines and to Christianize them. Obviously, he had forgotten that this had already occurred, and that the process of acquiring the Philippines has become in the beginning of this century one of the great controversies which consumed this country and which actually resulted in a guerilla warfare in which some 4,000 Americans died, 200,000 Filipinos died and over \$200 million were spent.

On June 12, 1898, which is on Friday, our time, General Emilio Aguinaldo first unfurled the Filipino flag amidst the strains of the inspiring Philippine National Anthem, declaring that the Philippines had become independent from Spain. In doing so, they became the first indigenous group in the Asia-Pacific region to break the bonds of European colonialism.

Despite that, they soon found themselves ignored in the process of the Treaty of Paris, considered as war booty and eventually ended up under U.S. sovereignty, thus confounding some of the efforts of many anti-imperialists at the time, including Mark Twain, who remarked, "I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons upon any other land."

Despite these inauspicious beginnings and conflicted beginnings, Filipinos have remained the strongest and closest ally of the United States throughout this entire century. Filipinos fought, fighting under the American flag in World War I, keeping alive their own resistance effort and participating in their own liberation from the Japanese during World War II under both the U.S. flag and the Philippine Commonwealth banner, and under their own flag the Sun and Stars during the Korean and Vietnam wars.

They have been with us shoulder to shoulder like no other nation on earth.

As we mark the 100th anniversary of Philippine-American ties, I urge my colleagues to reflect upon our relationship with the Filipino people and their republic. As we commemorate and celebrate this important milestone, I would like to remind our colleagues that this would be an opportune time for us to act and resolve long-standing issues that have occurred during the past 100 years, including the Filipino Veterans Equity Act which has been so eloquently spoken to by both the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) as well as the return of the Bells of Balangiga. These bells were taken in the course of the guerilla insurrection, a compromise measure has been suggested at the expense of the Philippine government, and we should bring closure to this issue.

This coming Friday, the Sun and Stars will once again be unfurled on the same balcony General Aguinaldo first proclaimed Philippine independence some 100 years before. I think for the Filipino community on Guam, and I am proud to say that my congressional district is the closest to the Philippines, for Filipino communities all over the United States and all over the world and for all people who love democracy and independence, June 12, 1998, is a day to celebrate.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also bring attention and enter an article on the Philippine Centennial in the debate at this time.

The text of the article is as follows:

Mr. Speaker, this coming June 12, the Republic of the Philippines, Filipinos, and freedom loving people from all over the world will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the declaration of Philippine independence. On this occasion, I would like to share with my colleagues the thoughts of Dr. Eddie Del Rosario, a Filipino-American who has been a long-time resident of Guam. In his article, Dr. del Rosario includes a poem written by Apolinario Mabini, a turn of the century Filipino nationalist who spent two years as a political exile on Guam.

THOUGHTS ON THE PHILIPPINE CENTENNIAL

(By Eddie del Rosario, MD, MPH)

By any measure, a hundred years is a highly significant milestone in any chronicle of a group of people, especially if it marks a great victory after an epic struggle for freedom. The Filipino people, on June 12, 1898, proclaimed their independence from the heavy yoke of colonialism and slavery imposed on them for 377 years, 2 months, 14 days and some odd hours by monarchic Spain. Unfortunately, it was largely ignored by most nations, especially by the defeated foe (Spain) and the ambivalent ally, the United States of America.

On that day, the Filipinos earned the distinct honor of being the first indigenous people in Asia and Oceania to wrest their freedom and independence by force of arms from their European colonial masters. It must have sent shock waves among the imperialist nations of Europe and more than a tingle of delight and renewed hope among the disenfranchised peoples of Asia and the native islanders of Oceania. I venture to guess

that the exiled Filipinos called "deportados" and their progenies as well as the indigenous people on Guam, Rota, Tinian and Saipan who were likewise subjects of Spain at that time, must have murmured approvingly and must have wondered about their own deliverance.

By all intents and purposes though, it was not a democratic form of government that the leaders of the victorious Filipino revolutionaries proclaimed that day. General Emilio Aguinaldo, 27 years young, was a de facto military dictator. It didn't matter much to the 7 million Filipinos at that time. What mattered most was that they were free from the shackles of the much-hated Spanish despots gathered in military uniforms, priestly cassocks and ostentatious period costumes of the "Ilustrados".

When the Philippine flag was finally displayed and raised for the first time from the balcony of that modest and now historic house in Kawit, Cavite, amid the soul-stirring strains of the new Philippine national anthem, the Filipino people broke in cheers and tears. Free at last! Or should it have been "Free Again!" since the pre-Conquest Filipinos were one of the freest societies in recorded Oriental history. Just like the pre-Conquest Chamorros in their flying proas, the itinerant and industrious Filipinos of yore cavorted freely among their 7,000 islands in their sleek and fast paraws and vintas. Their age of innocence was soon ended by the light-skinned conquerors from the other side of the world carrying swords and crosses and speaking in a strange tongue.

On that June day, the descendants of enslaved and conquered Filipinos who finally overthrew their masters in a rare, united effort, looked up with awe and reverence at their brown-skinned leaders who looked so young, so powerful, so determined and so trustworthy. The average age of the leaders of the Philippine-Spanish War was about 29 years. In the heady atmosphere of such jubilation marking the birth of a new, independent nation, no one even thought that 14 months later, these same citizen-soldiers would be fighting another foreign invader called "Americans". No one, except for a quiet, paraplegic intellectual sitting on his wheelchair by the name of Apolinario Mabini. He somehow knew that the Americans who were supposed to be friends and trusted allies harbored their own design, just like the other European powers, for these beautiful islands. On the last month of that fateful year of 1898, oblivious of the fact that an empowered group of self-determined Asian people overthrew and declared their independence from their powerful conqueror, the Americans pre-empted the Filipinos, the Chamorros, the Cubanos, and the Puerto Ricanos in one fell swoop. In an arrogant display of naked imperialism and the power of international economics, culminating in the Treaty of Paris, millions of indigenous people found themselves vassals of another foreign power once more. How would colonial Americans have left felt if, right after July 4, 1776, the British sold their patrimony to the French for 20 million pounds sterling without their knowledge? Doubtless, there could have been second American Revolution. And that's precisely what happened in the Philippines 7 months and 22 days after the June 12, 1898 declaration of Phil. Independence and exactly 14 days after the First Phil. Constitution was promulgated, a product of the best Filipino minds in Congress Assembled in a stone church in the town of Malolos, province of Bulacan. All that time, Admiral Dewey knew that every act of self-determination that the Filipino freedom fighters did before and after the Treaty of Paris, consummated between Spain and

U.S.A. on December 1898, were exercises in futility. It didn't matter that these brash islanders followed the "same script and recipe" that the Americans used in their earlier quest for independence and creation of a constitutional democracy. U.S. Pres. McKinley was determined to save his "little brown brothers" from paganism, inspite of the fact that most Filipinos had already embraced the Catholic Faith for hundreds of years.

On Feb. 4, 1899, the first skirmish marking the start of the Philippine-American War occurred on a narrow bridge in San Juan, Rizal adjacent to Manila, the home town of Joseph "Erap" Estrada, the newest and the 13th president of the Republic of the Philippines. Once again, true to the words of their national anthem, i.e., "Land dear and holy, Cradle of noble heroes, Ne'er shall invaders trample thy sacred shores," the Filipinos fought gallantly against all odds to repel the American invaders just as they did earlier with the Chinese, the Dutch, the British and the Spaniards. Much later, the Japanese also faced the wrath of the Filipino freedom fighters. Slow to anger, patient as Job, quick to forgive but unrelenting once he begins to fight—such was an apt portrayal of the Filipino by his enemy.

The Philippine-American War turned out to be "the most shameful episode in American history, worse than Vietnam and the Indian massacres", quoting noted Filipino columnist and writer, Hilarion Henares, Jr. Based on American official records, Henares noted that where the usual ratio between dead and wounded as 1 is to 5 in the Boer War, American Civil War, Spanish-American War and the World Wars, in the Philippine campaign, it was the exact reverse: for every one Filipino wounded in battle, five were killed. In some instances, "in Northern Luzon, 1,014 Ilocanos were killed and only 95 wounded, a ratio of 10 killed for everyone wounded." "Gen. Bell proclaimed: 'All able men will be killed!'" "Gen. Smith ordered the Massacre of Samar \* \* \* and further ordered that all persons—men, women, and children down to 10 years of age—were to be executed." The Americans paid a high price in this bloody and protracted war. Henares wrote that the Americans had six times more casualties fighting the Filipinos than they had fighting the Spaniards; it took them 42 months to defeat the Filipinos versus 6 months to defeat the Spaniards; almost a year longer than it took them to beat the Japanese in World War II. At the height of the carnage, Pres. McKinley denounced the zona system which was instituted to kill all members of a neighborhood for crimes committed by a few. He said, "It was extermination. The only peace it could beget was that of the grave."

Apolinario Mabini, the "Brains of the Phil. Revolution" and the "Sublime Paralytic" who never even wielded a machete nor fired a gun, much like Dr. Jose Rizal whose writings and martyrdom in December 1896 sparked the Philippine Revolution, was considered, ironically, by Gen. Arthur MacArthur (the father of the "American Caesar", Gen. Douglas MacArthur) as the most dangerous Filipino alive. Nationalist to the core and extremely brilliant, his blistering disclosures and writings critical of the new American rulers made life miserable and derailed the pacification campaign of the Yankee warloads. Guamanian nationalists would have loved to engage Mabini in great conversations about the "American Conquistadors" and their misguided philosophy of "Manifest Destiny". On Jan. 15, 1901, Gen. MacArthur threw his hands up and exiled Mabini to Guam to silence him. He followed the footsteps of the Spanish despots who, for 300 years, exiled thousands of men and women to the Marianas because of crimes

committed, real or imagined, against the State and the Church. Among them was Melchora Aquino (Tandang Sora), the "Mother of the Katipunan." Mabini's voice was effectively silenced but no one can break his unconquerable spirit. During his two years of exile in "Fort Asan," he started to master the English language to better parry the thrusts of his new adversaries. Such was the steely resolve of this frail but courageous patriot. His voice may be silenced but not his mighty pen and his sharp mind.

Apolinario Mabini, together with 52 other political exiles and "Irreconcilables" who refused to pledge allegiance to the American flag, made good use of their time to ingratiate themselves with the native populace whom they felt close kinship with. A veritable Who's Who among the Phil. intelligentsia and revolutionaries, they included such luminaries as Generals Pio del Pilar, Mariano Llanera, Artemio Ricarte, and Maximino Hizon; prominent lawyers such as Leon Flores (father of the late Archbishop Felixberto Flores of the Archdiocese of Agana), Pancracio Palting (father of the late Guam Senator Paul Palting), Pablo Ocampo and Julian Gerona; seasoned patriots such as Maximo Lorenzo Tolentino was stayed and lived in Santa Rita, and many others.

For the longest time until his death on May 13, 1964 at the ripe age of 88, Maximo Tolentino was the only living, direct link on Guam between the tempestuous past and the idyllic present. He was a living witness of the Philippine Revolution. He consorted with the great and the near-great of that epoch. Tolentino married a Chamorrita, Tomas Crisostomo Lizama from Julale, Agana and sired a son (who died at the tender age of three) and two daughters, Mrs. Maria T. Ignacio and Mrs. Carmen T. Cruz, both of Santa Rita. As of this writing, the reconciled patriot Tolentino's descendants include ten grandchildren, one of whom is Emilesia T. Anderson who provided valuable information to this writer, and thirty great-grandchildren.

According to Monsignor Oscar L. Calvo, a local clergy and historian, the "Irreconcilables" were suave and debonair ("caballeros") as they were described on Guam). Hardly a weekend passed where there wasn't party to which they were invited. They invariably charmed their way into the hearts of their hosts. They were also allowed to hold parties of their own to reciprocate for the local hospitality. Monsignor Palomo and the U.S. Navy officials often engaged Mabini in long conversations as they promenade in their horse and carriage. Local people and government officials sought their legal assistance and advice which were freely given. There was no record of any attempt by these "dangerous exiles" to foment civil disobedience nor rebellion among the native inhabitants. Tony Palomo, a local writer and historian, wrote in the May 7, 1961 issue of the Territorial Sun that according to Maximo Tolentino, Gen. Artemio Ricarte who chose to go to Japan instead after the "Irreconcilables" were sent back to the Philippines, wrote to him to induce him to get the Filipinos in Guam to start an uprising against the Americans. Tolentino wrote back asking Ricarte not to write to him anymore about these things, citing that the Filipinos have adopted Guam as their new home and that they are happy and contented with their families.

After most of the exiles finally decided to swear allegiance to the American flag, they were allowed to sail back to their motherland on Sept. 21, 1902. On the eve of their departure, Marine Sgt. James Holland Underwood gave them a big farewell party. A day after they left, a powerful earthquake shook Guam and demolished the church in Hagatna

as well as most of the stone houses on the island.

Mabini was unshaken nonetheless in his resolve not to reconcile with America. In spite of the ministrations of his brother Prudencio and regular check-ups by an American doctor to ease the distress brought about by his disabilities, he pined for his beloved country as he wrote his "opus magnum," the political masterpiece entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Philippine Republic." Agonizing over his frailty and mortality and fearing that he might die without a country, Mabini finally gave in. He wrote a beautiful and plaintive poem entitled "Adios, Asan" which he handed to Maximo Tolentino before he sailed back to the Philippines with Juan Villanilo, a Spaniard who fought on the side of the Filipinos. On Feb. 26, 1903, moments after he alighted from the U.S.S. Thomas on Philippine soil, he took the oath of allegiance to the Stars and Stripes. Refusing offers of money and a high government position from U.S. officials, he deigned to live quietly in his nipa hut along the Pasig River in Manila. Barely three months later, he died, a victim of the cholera epidemic of 1903. Thousands of friends and foes alike bade him farewell as a twelve-horse carriage carried his mortal remains along the streets of Manila.

His words ring true almost a century later to remind us that a nation's freedom comes at a great cost.

"... Let us fight while a grain of strength is left us; let us acquit ourselves like men, even though the lot of the present generation is conflict and sacrifice. It matters not whether we die in the midst or at the end of our most painful day's work the generations to come praying over our tombs, will shed for us tears of love and gratitude, and not of bitter reproach."

I like to think that Mabini spent a lot of happy and peaceful moments on Guam. Even now, as one visits his memorial on the quiet and timeless sands of Asan, in between the sound of the breaking waves, I whisper to this great patriot that he did not die in vain; that the American regime, for the most part, showered great benevolence to his beloved people; that the cruelty of the Spanish rulers was not enough to kill the humanity of the Filipino race because their Faith in God sustained them; that the Americans opened up the hearts and minds of a subdued people through the wonders of universal education, that the Americans, through the military genius of Gen. Douglas MacArthur whose father caused him undue torment, more than compensated for their past sins by dying by the thousands alongside their true brown brothers in the defense and eventual liberation of his beloved Philippines from the cruel and avaricious Japanese; that the fruits and blessings of a true democracy are enjoyed everyday by everyone which allows each individual to be independent, productive and integrated with society as a whole; that the Filipinos are well on their way to accomplish greater things, aided and abetted by a government of the people, by the people and for the people, a form of government wished by him for his country and ultimately handed freely by the Americans whom he suspected as just another cruel taskmaster, that on the beautiful island of Guam where he was exiled, there are now tens of thousands of inhabitants of Filipino lineage engaged in nation-building, aware of their proud heritage, thankful to their noble heroes for restoring their dignity as Freeman, ever-conscious of what Dr. Jose Rizal wrote in affirming the inalienability of rights: "God gave each individual reason and a will of his or her own to distinguish the just from the unjust; all were born without shackles and free, and nobody has a right to subjugate the will and spirit of another," and ever-vigilant in guarding the principle that All Men are Created Equal.

If Mabini were alive today, he would exhort us with one of the timeless gems he wrote a hundred years ago in his True Decalogue. "Contribute to the progress of humanity by developing your own talents, working, studying, honing your abilities, never leaving the path of righteousness and truth. By doing so, you will be honored and being honored, you will glorify God."

#### ADIOS ASAN

(By Don Apolinario Mabini)

(English translation from Spanish original)

Adios, Asani Adios, Agana!

We bid thee adieu, We, the unfortunate victims of the love for a sacred ideal;

We vow thee our loyalty for thy humanitarian hospitality.

Adios, Asian! Our favorite village, on whose sands our pains have been sprinkled, and our tears spread;

Your name I shall Never forget.

Adios, Agana! Soon I shall leave thee;

May heaven shower Happiness on thee;

Adios, my brothers, sisters, of my soul

Adios! Farewell! Adios!

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that Guam's own role in the Philippine independence movement was significant in that ironically a number of Philippine insurrectionists were put in exile on Guam at the turn of this century and many ties have resulted from that. I urge again this body to pass the resolution and more importantly to address the issues of Philippine veterans equity.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for providing me this opportunity to just add a couple of points to the statement that I made earlier about the Philippines. Of course I support the gentleman's position that we should return those bells. It is an insult to the people of the Philippines. There is no reason for a country that is so close to us now that we should not bend over backwards to be sensitive to their pride in those parts of their culture. But let us note when we talk about the Philippines that that is one of the lesser problems and challenges they face. They are working hard to develop their economy, they are working hard and struggling hard to make sure that they maintain a democracy, but one of the greatest threats to the Philippines now comes from mainland China.

The Chinese, the Communist Chinese, are in a territorial dispute with the Philippines, and we in the United States who support democracy, we in the United States who believe in a more peaceful world and a peaceful solution to the problems in the Pacific should stand very closely to the Philippines at this time and let the Communist Chinese know that we will not tolerate the use of military force the Chinese seem bent on doing in their intentions to grab the Spratley Islands.

Already we have been told that a permanent Chinese presence has been established in the last few years in the Spratley Islands. This is outrageous. We have found after just it seems like



a few brief moments of not paying attention that the Communist Chinese have come into the Spratley Islands with their warships and established a presence in the Spratley Islands. This is an act of intimidation, it is an act of a bully, and our best friend in the Pacific, the Philippines, is being bullied by the Communist Chinese. We need to stand by the Philippines by giving them the means that they need at the very least to protect their own interests to their own territory.

To deter this type of aggression from China and belligerence from China, we need to move forward to ensure that as we have surplus ships and airplanes that we are taking out of service from the Cold War, we should be providing these to the Philippines, at no cost or at very low cost, because it does not cost us anything, we are just going to store them out in the middle of the desert, let us give these weapons that are surplus weapons, Cold War weapons, to the Philippines and let them defend themselves so that they can make sure that they deter any aggression in the future. This is what friendship is all about.

As we are now patting ourselves on the back and patting the Philippines on the back for being a democratic country, let us make sure we remember they are in need of somebody standing beside them in this confrontation with China.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this is an important and a timely resolution recognizing the importance of the Philippines and their relations with our Nation. It is supported by the administration and has significant bipartisan backing. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues in the House to fully adopt this measure.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support for enactment of House Resolution 404, regarding relations between the people of the United States and those of the Philippines.

It is significant that we enact the resolution to salute and congratulate the Philippines on the 100th anniversary of its independence from Spain and its achievement of the establishment of its democracy.

It is also noteworthy that the resolution also thanks the Philippines for aiding the U.S. in World War II, the Korean War and in Vietnam. It underscores the need for Congress to enact the Filipino Veterans Equity Act to extend full veterans benefits to Filipino soldiers who fought along side U.S. soldiers in World War II.

Mr. Speaker, approximately 200,000 Filipino soldiers were under the command of General Douglas MacArthur during the early months of World War II. During that period, our armed forces in the Philippines were isolated from food, medical and ammunition supplies. Filipino soldiers displayed exemplary loyalty and courage in the defense of their nation and fought in every major battle, including Bataan and Corregidor.

Beyond the outstanding conduct of the regular Army forces, after the islands fell to Japan,

thousands of courageous Filipinos took up arms to continue the fight through guerilla warfare against enormous odds. Not only did they undermine the occupation forces, but they provided valuable intelligence to U.S. forces in the Southwest Pacific, rescued downed American pilots and diverted powerful enemy forces from deployment elsewhere.

An estimated 60,000 to 80,000 surviving Filipino veterans, however, have been denied the full range and extent of veterans benefits available to American veterans with whom they fought side by side. This is an intolerable situation and we must resolve to remedy this tragic and insensitive dilemma.

I urge my colleagues to review the provisions of H.R. 836, the Philippines Veterans Equity Act, and support the effort to bring the bill to the House floor for debate and enactment.

Mr. BERMAN. I rise in support of H. Res. 404 regarding American-Philippines relations, regarding Taiwan's positive role in the Asian financial crisis and affirming American support for peace and stability on the Taiwan Strait and security for Taiwan's democracy.

There is no more apt time than the centennial of American-Philippine relations to salute the enduring friendship between our two countries. It is a friendship which has flourished despite its tragic beginnings in a conflict first with the Spanish and subsequently with Filipino independence fighters. But we learned from that struggle and subsequently worked diligently to grant independence as quickly as possible. American teachers spread throughout the archipelago bringing the benefits of modern education to the majority of the country. In World War II, Filipino troops fought bravely side-by-side with American forces and Filipino guerrilla fighters were indispensable in the liberation of the Philippines from Japanese occupation. The Philippines continued, even after independence, to be America's most important ally in Asia, again contributing troops to the Korean Conflict and to the Vietnam War. We owe a debt of gratitude, if not more, to our Philippine friends. We all rejoiced when the Filipino "people power revolution" overthrew the Marcos dictatorship. The Multilateral Aid Initiative for the Philippines that the American Congress launched following the fall of Marcos was an effort not only to demonstrate our support for Filipino democracy but also to show our lasting commitment to an enduring close relationship with the Philippines. This continues to be the basis for our policy and it is instructive that during the current Asian financial crisis it is the democratic country of the Philippines which has so far escaped the worst effects of the crisis.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution of which I am an original cosponsor.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 404 which commemorates the 100 years of relations between the people of the Philippines and the people of the United States.

As an original co-sponsor of this resolution and a Member who represents one of the largest Filipino communities in the Nation, I am keenly aware of the many contributions that Filipinos have made to this country and of the immense importance of continued good relations with the nation of the Philippines.

As President Clinton once said, the Philippines is our oldest friend in Asia.

This bill recognizes the great sacrifices that the Filipinos made in the struggle against Jap-

anese imperialism in World War II where they fought alongside American soldiers, as they did again in Korea and Vietnam.

In addition to our historic ties, today our nations are also united by our strong economic ties. The Philippines is the twenty-first largest trading partner of the United States and absorbs a large amount of U.S. exports.

As the years pass, I am confident that our bilateral relations will only grow stronger—the bonds between our nations go beyond the diplomatic relations we have with most nations; these are bonds between people fostered by our historic relationship and maintained out of mutual respect and admiration for one another.

Mr. GILMAN. 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 New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 404.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING POSITIVE ROLE OF TAIWAN IN ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 270) acknowledging the positive role of Taiwan in the current Asian financial crisis and affirming the support of the American people for peace and stability on the Taiwan Strait and security for Taiwan's democracy, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. Con. Res. 270

Whereas the President of the United States has announced he intends to travel to Beijing in June 1998 to discuss the common interests of the United States and the People's Republic of China;

Whereas the American people desire strong relations with the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait;

Whereas it is the policy of the United States Government to take all necessary action to ensure peace and stability on the Taiwan Strait, while continuing mutually beneficial trade relations with Taiwan's vibrant economy;

Whereas the American people have repeatedly welcomed and supported democracy for the people of Taiwan;

Whereas Taiwan set an example for democratization in the region having successfully held free and fair elections at the local and national level and encouraging the development of democratic institutions;

Whereas the American people seek to promote economic stability and growth amidst the current financial turmoil in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas Taiwan's economy has weathered the current Asian financial crisis better than others in the region;

Whereas Taiwan has proposed to use various means to help stabilize the economies of many of its neighbors, including possibilities for action by the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum of which it is a member;