

8,000. Unfortunately, AID must reduce its staff at a faster pace and institutes a layoff, or reduction in force, of 200 people to meet its personnel targets. Rather than lay off all 200 employees, AID would like to offer up to 100 employees severance payments, up to \$25,000 each, that they would have been able to receive if laid off. It gives AID the flexibility to find volunteers rather than lay off all 200 people.

□ 1515

This bill has the support of our Subcommittee on Civil Service chairman, the gentleman from Florida, Mr. MICA and his counterpart in the other body, Mr. STEVENS of Alaska. I urge adoption by the House.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill. As has been explained by the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], this bill represents an effort to help the Agency for International Development to minimize the reductions in force required by budgetary constraints.

I must say that I regret the budgetary constraints which require the reductions in force. I have had occasion, of course, to see the good work that AID has done in many countries around the world. I can tell you that it is well worth the money and the effort that we put into it. But we have to be realists and we understand the budgetary problems and constraints. This simply helps AID minimize these reductions. It is something that we understand needs to be done. It has bipartisan support. Therefore, I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I joined with the chairman of the Government Reform Committee's Civil Service Subcommittee, Chairman MICA, to support H.R. 3870, a bill written at the request of the administration to allow AID to offer up to 100 employees, who voluntarily resign, severance payments up to a cap of \$25,000. As you know, in the Foreign Service employees are entitled 1 month severance per year of service. Civil Service employees are entitled to 1 week severance per year of service.

Over the past few years, AID's personnel reduced in size from approximately 11,000 to 8,000 employees, mainly using hiring freezes that cause AID to lose approximately 120 employees per year. While the Appropriations Committee provided AID with an operating expense appropriation level they were assured would prevent layoffs, further cuts in the President's own fiscal year 1997 budget request caused AID to accelerate personnel reductions. AID is currently in the process of laying off 200 employees by conducting a formal reduction in force [RIF] of 97 Foreign Service and 103 Civil Service employees.

Rather than lay off all 200 employees, AID would like to offer up to 100 employees who voluntarily resign, and are not already eligible to retire, the opportunity to receive the severance payment they would have received if they had been laid off, up to a cap of \$25,000. In this way, AID hopes to have 100 volunteers

take the place of at least half of those people scheduled to be laid off. CBO has stated that this bill would cause the Government to collect an additional \$1 million in mandatory receipts due to payments to Government retirement accounts required under the bill—thereby making it a net positive debt reduction measure for the purposes of the "pay-go" rules. In an advisory note, CBO also estimated the bill would cost \$3 million in discretionary spending, all within the already appropriated level of the AID operating expense account.

This bill is supported by the administration, the American Foreign Service Association, Mr. HAMILTON, Chairman MICA, and his counterpart, the chairman of the Government Affairs Committee, the senior Senator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS. Other versions of this language have been attached to appropriations bills. We now expect that this free standing measure may be enacted as early as possible to allow AID to make the best of a bad situation.

We all support AID becoming a smaller, more efficient operation. This bill will help AID achieve that goal, using volunteers instead of draftees. I commend the bill to the House and urge its adoption.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALVERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3870, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3870.

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 191) to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 191

Whereas the Commonwealth of the Philippines was strategically located and thus vital to the defense of the United States during World War II;

Whereas the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were called into the United States Armed Forces during

World War II by Executive order and were put under the command of General Douglas MacArthur;

Whereas the participation of the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor and in other smaller skirmishes delayed and disrupted the initial Japanese effort to conquer the Western Pacific;

Whereas that delay and disruption allowed the United States the vital time to prepare the forces which were needed to drive the Japanese from the Western Pacific and to defeat Japan;

Whereas after the recovery of the Philippine Islands from Japan, the United States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as a base from which to launch the final efforts to defeat Japan;

Whereas every American deserves to know the important contribution that the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines made to the outcome of World War II; and

Whereas the Filipino World War II veterans deserve recognition and honor for their important contribution to the outcome of World War II: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That the Congress recognizes and honors the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals and their important contribution to the outcome of World War II.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. ENGEL] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER].

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

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this resolution provides long-delayed recognition to persons considered to be members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army veterans and members of the Special Philippine Scouts—by reason of service with the allied Armed Forces during World War II.

On July 26, 1941, President Roosevelt issued a military order, pursuant to the Philippines Independence Act of 1934, calling members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army into the service of the United States forces of the Far East, under the command of Lt. Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

For almost 4 years, over 100,000 Filipinos, of the Philippine Commonwealth Army fought alongside the allies to reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japan. Unfortunately, Congress rewarded this service by enacting the Reversion Act of 1946. This measure denied the members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army the honor of being recognized as veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

A second group, the Special Philippine Scouts called "New scouts" who enlisted in the United States Armed Forces after October 6, 1945, primarily to perform occupation duty in the Pacific, have also never received official recognition.

It is time to correct this injustice and to provide the official recognition

long overdue for members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and the Special Philippine Scouts that they valiantly earned for their service to the United States and the allied cause during World War II.

This Member strongly urges his colleagues to vote for this resolution to correct this grave injustice and provides recognition to members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and the members of the Special Philippine Scouts.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this. The Philippines and the United States have a long history of friendship and cooperation. Just recently President Clinton praised the contribution of Filipino veterans, and he did it so recently. He did so during his trip in 1994, when he visited the Philippines.

The role of the Filipino veterans is very, very important in the victory over Japan in World War II. It is very appropriate, I believe, for Congress to recognize and honor the service provided by these veterans.

As the resolution notes, Filipino veterans were important players in the effort to defeat Japan in World War II. The Philippine Islands played a critical role as a strategic base for launching the final effort to defeat Japan.

This resolution seeks to convey the appreciation of the Congress for these contributions. I believe it is very fitting that we do so.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER].

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska for moving this legislation very quickly through the subcommittee, and I wish the chairman, Mr. GILMAN, was here. He has worked long and hard to make sure that this resolution gets to the floor. Our colleagues over in the Senate, Senators INOUE and AKAKA, will move this legislation very rapidly through their body, and I thank them profusely for that.

Mr. Speaker, today is an historic day in this Chamber. We are taking the first step in the long overdue recognition of a group of brave soldiers who played a significant role in the outcome of World War II; that is, the Filipino veterans.

Too few Americans are familiar with this chapter in our Nation's history. During World War II, the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were drafted to serve in our armed forces by an Executive order of the President of the United States. Under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, they fought side-by-side with forces from the United States mainland against our common enemy. Filipino soldiers defended the American flag in the now famous battles of

Bataan and Corridor. Thousands of Filipino prisoners of war died during the 65-mile Bataan death march. Those who survived were imprisoned under inhumane conditions, where they suffered casualties at the rate of up to 200 prisoners each day. They endured 4 long years of enemy occupation. Those soldiers fortunate to escape capture, together with Filipino civilians, fought against the occupation forces. Their guerrilla attacks foiled the plans of the Japanese for a quick takeover of the region and allowed the United States the time needed to prepare forces to defeat Japan. After the liberation of the Philippine Islands, the United States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as a base from which to launch the final efforts to win the war.

With their vital participation so evident, one would assume the United States would be grateful to their Filipino comrades. So it is hard to believe that soon after the war ended, the 79th Congress voted in a way that only can be considered to be blatant discrimination, taking away the recognition and benefits that the Filipino World War II veterans were promised, the recognition and benefits so richly deserved.

The Washington Post wrote in 1947 that "While the Philippine Islands were still under United States sovereignty, the President issued an order making the Filipino Army a part of the American Army. This made the Filipino soldiers who constituted that army a part of our fighting forces as much as were soldiers drafted from the States, and they remained in this status until the eve of the Philippine independence. Last year, however, Congress passed the First Rescission Act denying to Filipino veterans most of the benefits that go automatically to other veterans who were exposed to similar risks and hardships. "We cannot help thinking," wrote the Post, "that if Congress reviews the situation with full realization these men were members of our own army and subject to its orders, it will see that a great injustice has been done."

That was 50 years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Even President Truman, who signed the Rescission Act, said it did not release the United States from its obligation to provide for the heroic Filipino veterans who sacrificed so much during the war. He believed it was a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of Filipino veterans. So do I, and so do my colleagues who join me in cosponsoring this resolution today.

It has taken Congress 50 years to act, but finally we are going to correct this situation. The Senate earlier this month passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 64 and honored the Filipino World War II veterans. Today, the House of Representatives will join the Senate in this important statement.

I want to thank all the Filipino veterans and all their sons and daughters who have called and written to educate

Members of this Congress. This momentous vote would not have occurred without their efforts and persistence.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a Member of this body. We are acting in a manner to correct the wrongs inflicted on these brave veterans. This is a first step. In the next Congress I will reintroduce the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which follows the recognition we bestow today with benefits the Filipino veterans were promised.

Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents are veterans affected by this resolution. Not a day goes by when they do not pray for a restoration of their honor and dignity. I urge my colleagues to correct a monumental injustice by recognizing and honoring the brave Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideas and their important service and contribution to our victory in World War II.

Again I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. ENGEL], the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman, and the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the ranking member, for allowing us to vote on this today.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD].

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to commend the Members of the other body for processing this resolution, particularly Senators INOUE and AKAKA, and also congratulate and thank the gentleman from New York, Mr. GILMAN, and the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. BEREUTER, for moving this legislation to the floor in a timely manner.

I represent Guam, which is the closest American jurisdiction to the Philippines, and we on Guam are fully aware of the situation confronted by the Filipino veterans, having endured the Japanese occupation ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 191, a concurrent resolution to recognize and honor the Filipino World War II veterans. Although mainly symbolic and long overdue, this resolution is a step toward this body's full recognition of the loyalty and sacrifices of the over 30,000 Filipino soldiers who fought and died alongside our soldiers in World War II.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur, referring to the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, claimed that "no army has ever done so much with so little." Many of us take this as words of commendation meant for American forces defending the Philippines. However, we must not overlook the fact that a substantial portion of this defense force was composed of Filipino volunteers.

Although they fought and died alongside American comrades, these veterans were never afforded equal status. Prior to mass discharges and disbanding of their unit in 1949, these veterans were paid only a third of what regular

service members received at the time. Underpaid, having been denied benefits and lacking proper recognition, General MacArthur's words truly depict the plight of the remaining Filipino veterans today as they did half a century ago.

I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 191 and consider this resolution as a commitment toward future legislation to fully recognizing the contributions and recognize status of Filipino World War II veterans.

To the many fine residents of Guam are members of the Philippine Scouts: I salute you. Your service should not be forgotten and will not be forgotten.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to not only recognize the leadership of the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. ENGEL], but to recognize that a lead cosponsor was the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER], whose remarks you heard, and thank the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] for his very salient remarks.

Additionally, I wanted to mention that the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP], and the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY], original cosponsors, along with the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], the gentleman from California [Mr. DORNAN], the gentleman from California [Mr. CAMPBELL], the gentleman from California [Mr. BILBRAY], the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. FLANAGAN], the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT], the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI], the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE], the gentlewoman from Hawaii [Mrs. MINK], the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. EVANS], the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER], and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. GUTIERREZ].

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution to provide long-delayed recognition to persons considered to be members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army veterans and members of the Special Philippine Scouts—by reason of service with the Allied Armed Forces during World War II.

We must correct the grave injustice that has befallen this brave group of veterans, since their valiant service, on behalf of the United States, during the Second World War.

On July 26, 1941, President Roosevelt issued a military order, pursuant to the Philippines Independence Act of 1934, calling members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army into the service of the United States Forces of the Far East, under the command of Lt. Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

For almost 4 years, over 100,000 Filipinos, of the Philippine Commonwealth Army fought alongside the Allies to reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japan. Regrettably, in return, Congress enacted the Rescission Act of 1946.

This measure denied the members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army the honor of being recognized as veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

A second group, the Special Philippine Scouts called New Scouts who enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces after October 6, 1945, primarily to perform occupation duty in the Pacific, have also never received official recognition.

I believe it is time to correct this injustice and to provide the official recognition long overdue for members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and the Special Philippine Scouts that they valiantly earned for their service to the United States and the Allied cause during World War II.

These members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and the Special Philippine Scouts served just as courageously and made the same sacrifices as their American counterparts during the Pacific war. Their contribution helped disrupt the initial Japanese offensive timetable in 1942, at a point when the Japanese were expanding almost unchecked throughout the Western Pacific.

This delay in the Japanese plans bought valuable time for scattered Allied Forces to regroup, reorganize, and prepare for checking the Japanese in the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway.

It also earned those who were unfortunate enough to be captured the wrath of their Japanese captors. As a result, these Filipino prisoners joined their American counterparts in the Bataan Death March, along with suffering inhumane treatment which redefined the limits of human depravity.

During the next 2 years, Filipino Scout units, operating from rural bases, tied down precious Japanese resources and manpower through guerrilla warfare tactics.

In 1944, Filipino forces provided valuable assistance in the liberation of the Philippine Islands which in turn became an important base for taking the war to the Japanese homeland. Without the assistance of Filipino units and guerrilla forces, the liberation of the Philippine Islands would have taken much longer and been far costlier than it actually was.

In a letter to Congress dated May 16, 1946, President Harry S. Truman wrote:

The Philippine Army veterans are nationals of the United States and will continue in that status after July 4, 1946. They fought under the American flag and under the direction of our military leaders. They fought with gallantry and courage under the most difficult conditions during the recent conflict. They were commissioned by us, their official organization, the Army of its Philippine Commonwealth was taken into the Armed Forces of the United States on July 26, 1941. That order has never been revoked and amended. I consider it a moral obligation of the United States to look after the welfare of the Filipino veterans.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution that corrects this grave injustice and provides recognition to members of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and the members of the Special Philippine Scouts, which they fully deserve.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my support to the recognition of the Philippine Commonwealth Army veterans who stood beside the United States servicemen during the Second World War. The efforts of these members of the Philippine Army were essen-

tial in operations that helped free the nation of the Philippines from Japanese aggression and resulted in the defeat of Japan's expansion efforts. Nearly 100,000 Filipino soldiers endured more than 4 years of battle that left over 1 million Philippine civilians, soldiers, and guerrilla fighters dead.

In 1946, Congress passed a Rescission Act that declared that the service provided by these brave people did not qualify them for veteran's benefits. These veterans were called to duty under the command of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and they were U.S. soldiers. The Philippine Scouts, who served after October 6, 1945, were also United States soldiers. House Concurrent Resolution 191 restores the recognition these brave soldiers deserve.

This recognition is long overdue. We long ago promised these veterans the benefits they earned and we turned our backs on them. After ignoring the injustice of this country's bias so long, I am pleased that we can now provide a first step toward correcting this longstanding oversight. These veterans deserve the same rights and benefits as members of the U.S. services. It is only right that we fulfill our promises and recognize these deserving servicemen.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 191.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 191.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1530

SUPPORTING A RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS IN KOSOVA

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 155) concerning human and political rights and in support of a resolution of the crisis in Kosova, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 155

Whereas the Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, adopted in 1946 and the amended Yugoslav Constitution adopted in 1974, described the status of Kosova as one of the 8 constituent territorial units of the Yugoslav Federation;

Whereas the political rights of the Albanian majority in Kosova were curtailed when