

University campus. The local firefighters, who initially answered the call, were later assisted by countless others from fire stations throughout the region. These units joined together to defeat the blaze and fight the challenging wind, smoke, and heat conditions. Their efforts prevented further destruction and helped protect innocent lives from being lost.

These firefighters were not alone that day, as public, private, and civic organizations worked as a seamless team preserving and protecting human lives, defending property, and providing food and comfort to all those affected. All of these organizations met their community's call to duty by providing brave and steadfast assistance to our community. They stand as a symbol to all who give of themselves in an effort to better our Nation and uphold the finest traditions of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

□ 1430

In closing, I am proud to recognize and honor the firefighters, police, public servants, civilians, and private businesses who responded to the devastating fire in Richmond on March 26, 2004, and commend them for their dedicated service to the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia and urge passage of House Resolution 612.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 612, which recognizes and honors the firefighters, police, public servants, civilians, and private businesses who responded to the devastating fire in Richmond, Virginia, on March 26, 2004.

On March 26, 2004, a destructive fire swept through Virginia Commonwealth University and the Carver Community of Richmond, Virginia. The size of this blaze quickly grew out of control such that local Richmond firefighters called for assistance from fire stations throughout the region. The quick response and valiant united effort of firefighters, police, public servants, and civilians extinguished the blaze and averted further destruction of property. Additionally, public, private and civic organizations provided shelter, food and comfort to those affected by the fire. This is a further example of the amazing courage and perseverance required on a daily basis by fire and rescue personnel across the country. These citizens don the uniforms of service to protect and provide for our communities and for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution honors the firefighters, police, public servants and private businesses who responded to this emergency with swiftness and courage, working together to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of H. Res. 612, as amended; and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 612, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. 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.

#### HONORING TUSKEGEE AIRMEN AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN CREATING AN INTEGRATED UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 417) honoring the Tuskegee Airmen and their contribution in creating an integrated United States Air Force, the world's foremost Air and Space Supremacy Force.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 417

Whereas the United States is currently combating terrorism around the world and is highly dependent on the global reach and presence provided by the Air Force;

Whereas these operations require the highest skill and devotion to duty from all personnel involved;

Whereas the Tuskegee Airmen proved that such skill and devotion, and not skin color, are the determining factors in aviation;

Whereas the Tuskegee Airmen served honorably in the Second World War struggle against global fascism; and

Whereas the example of the Tuskegee Airmen has encouraged millions of Americans of every race to pursue careers in air and space technology: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That it is the sense of Congress that the United States Air Force should continue to honor and learn from the example provided by the Tuskegee Airmen as it faces the challenges of the 21st century and the war on terror.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 417.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER), the author of this resolution.

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the storied history of our Nation's Armed Forces was written by the great men

and women who served our country with honor and bravery. This past weekend, we celebrated the commemoration of a monument to World War II honoring all military veterans of the war, citizens on the home front, the Nation at large, and the high moral purpose and idealism that motivated our Nation's call to arms. In my home State of Nevada, I had the honor of spending Memorial Day at several events honoring veterans, many of whom served during World War II.

Among the most courageous of all those who served our country was a group of men who defied both fascism abroad and racism at home while establishing a record as one of the most successful fighting units in American history.

The Tuskegee Airmen were a group of dedicated and determined young men who enlisted to become America's first African American airmen. These airmen were trained at Tuskegee Army Airfield in Tuskegee, Alabama, beginning in 1941. Over the course of their service during World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen distinguished themselves over the skies of Europe.

Airmen trained at Tuskegee received two Presidential Unit citations for outstanding tactical air support and aerial combat, and they established the incredible and unprecedented record of flying more than 200 bomber escort missions without the loss of a single bomber to enemy aircraft. The outstanding record of these men was accomplished while fighting two wars, one against military forces overseas and the other against racism both at home and abroad.

Over the course of World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen returned home with some of our Nation's highest military honors, including 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, eight Purple Hearts, and 14 Bronze Stars. In addition, these brave pilots destroyed more than 1,000 German aircraft.

Many Americans became aware of the accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen from the 1995 feature film starring Lawrence Fishburn called "The Tuskegee Airmen." My first personal experience with these fine men came through a former member of my staff, Traci Scott, now serving with the Pentagon in Baghdad, whose father served with the Airmen, Captain Jesse H. Scott. After hearing his story, I wanted to do something special to honor this brave and honored group of soldiers.

Captain Scott was an original member of the Tuskegee Airmen. In fact, he was so eager to join that he lied about his age to get accepted. As he progressed through flight training, Captain Scott learned he was color blind and went on to serve on the ground crew of General Ben Davis. Captain Scott passed away in the year 2000, and he is honored being buried in Arlington Cemetery.

I am proud to offer a resolution in honor of Captain Scott and honoring

the Tuskegee Airmen for their contributions to our Nation and the example they continue to offer us today.

I also had the opportunity to meet with Mr. George Sherman, another former Tuskegee Airman, who now resides in Las Vegas, Nevada. I was privileged to spend the morning with Mr. Sherman and his son as he shared with me firsthand accounts of what it was like to be a Tuskegee Airman. Mr. Sherman's memories and photos provided a small glimpse into the life of these men and how their life was led. Mr. Sherman and his son now travel to various schools sharing the story of the Tuskegee Airmen and are also actively involved in the Young Eagles program encouraging students to become more involved in aviation.

As a Tuskegee Airman, George Sherman gained a lifelong love of aviation, and today he continues to share that love as he passes his knowledge and experience to new generations.

I urge Members to join in recognizing the accomplishments of this unique group of American heroes as our Nation engages in combating terrorism around the world. We rely upon the global reach and the presence provided by our Air Force. Mr. Speaker, the example set by the Tuskegee Airmen encouraged millions of Americans of every race to pursue careers in space and air technology. The Tuskegee Airmen proved that skill and determination, not skin color, are the determining factors in aviation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 417, introduced by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER). This resolution recognizes and honors the Tuskegee Airmen for their contribution in World War II that led to the creation of an integrated United States Air Force.

The Tuskegee Airmen not only faced the dangers of war but they did so in the face of prejudice and discrimination back home. Prior to 1940, African Americans were denied the opportunity to fly military aircraft. However, after pressure from civil rights organizations and others, the Army Air Force began a program to train African Americans as military pilots. The so-called "Tuskegee Experiment" began on July 19, 1941, at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The institute, founded by Booker T. Washington in 1881, provided the primary flight training for the first fighter pilots and became the center of African American aviation during World War II.

The Tuskegee Airmen included not only fighter pilots but also navigators, bombardiers, maintenance and support personnel that provided support for the famed 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group.

I think of one of my constituents, Mr. Milton Crenshaw from Arkansas, who was one of the pilot instructors. In 1939, he took a bus from Little Rock to Tuskegee, a young, African American

man seeking a career in car engineering at the Tuskegee Institute only to be drawn into the excitement of flight. He became one of the few African American pilot instructors in America and taught numerous Tuskegee Airmen of the 99th Fighter Wing how to fly. The 99th Fighter Squadron, led by the late General Ben Davis, was originally sent to North Africa but moved to the European continent and flew over Anzio in 1944. The 99th held the record of 200 combat missions without losing a single bomber to enemy fire.

The men and women who were part of the Tuskegee experience proved that service, duty, and country were not limited by the color of a person's skin, but that all Americans regardless of race could succeed through hard work, dedication, and commitment. While their training occurred under a segregated condition, their focus was on the goal of all pilots regardless of race: avoidance of abrupt and surprising contact with Mother Earth.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to request consideration of H. Con. Res. 417 because this resolution honors a remarkable group of African Americans who played a pivotal role in the military history of our country. They are not the only segregated unit to do so, of course. The 54th Massachusetts during the Civil War, the 9th and 10th Buffalo Calvary, which were honored with the name Buffalo Soldiers by their native American adversaries in the latter part of the 19th century, a group which constructed Fort Sill in my own district and won lasting fame there. And of course more recently, the 761st Tank Battalion whose exploits have been chronicled in a fine volume by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

But today, we are here to honor the Tuskegee Airmen who with their professionalism, their skill, and courage not only made an important contribution to fighting tyranny during the Second World War but also helped to forge the United States Air Force into the world's dominant air and space team.

On July 19, 1941, the Army Air Force began a program in Alabama at the Tuskegee Institute to train African Americans as military pilots. The primary flight training was conducted by the Division of Aeronautics at the institute founded by Booker T. Washington, and the transition to combat aircraft was conducted at nearby Tuskegee Army Airfield.

The first group of pilots completed training 9 months later in March 1942. Among that vanguard group was then-Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a future living legend in the Air Force who went on to become one of its greatest leaders. In the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1999, the

Congress authorized the President to advance Lieutenant General Davis to the grade of General on the retired list of the United States Air Force.

That initial group of Tuskegee pilots was assigned to the famous 99th Fighter Squadron, which was eventually deployed on May 31, 1943, to fly P-40 Warhawks in combat missions in North Africa, Sicily, and throughout Italy. Later Tuskegee graduates were assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group and began overseas combat operations in Italy flying the P-40 and P-39 Airacobra.

Before the war ended, the Tuskegee program had graduated 992 pilots and 450 Tuskegee Airmen had flown over 15,000 combat sorties overseas. Approximately 150 men had been killed over the course of the program, with 66 killed in action. The combat record of these segregated units was superb. They destroyed or damaged 136 enemy aircraft in air-to-air combat and another 273 on the ground. They were highly decorated with over 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses being awarded to African American pilots.

The most impressive achievement of the 332nd Fighter Group was flying over 200 bomber escort missions over Central and Southern Europe without losing a single bomber to enemy aircraft. This unprecedented record was not lost on enemy fighter pilots who often elected to avoid attacking bomber formations when they realized that the fighter escort was the Red Tail fighters of the 332nd.

The challenges confronted by the Tuskegee Airmen were not limited to the wartime skies over Europe. Each of these men proudly met all challenges with skill and determination when racism and bigotry had caused lesser men to harass them and to seek their failure. There are a number of ways for men to display courage in their lives, but seldom are men confronted with as many tests of courage as were the Tuskegee Airmen; and very few men can claim as successful and enduring a legacy as they.

These combat pioneers distinguished themselves throughout their service in war and peace and over time redefined America's understanding of African Americans as warriors and leaders and set the stage for the racially integrated Air Force that achieved so much in the years to follow.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) for introducing this resolution. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to address the House on this issue and recognize the contributions of Tuskegee Airmen to America.

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), formerly from Arkansas.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) for introducing this legislation.

It just happens that yesterday I spent part of the morning with several former, and one is never a former Tuskegee Airman, with several Tuskegee Airmen as we gathered, as we do every Memorial Day, at the Oakwood Cemetery in Chicago, to pay tribute to veterans and especially to our former mayor, Harold Washington. Of course, we got wet in the rain because these guys would never quit until they accomplished what they set out to do.

All African Americans that I know take great pride in Tuskegee Institute, the institution founded by Booker Washington; but they take even greater pride in the exploits of this group of airmen who learned to fly, many of whom had no idea as they were growing up that they would get an opportunity to sail like a bird across the sky.

□ 1445

I have been fortunate to interact with the Dodo Chapter, and one of my most prized possessions is a jacket that they gave me one year that I still have, because every year we also honor African American women who pioneered in aviation. I am also fortunate because every year I have a picnic and parade for kids to go back to school, and the Tuskegee Airmen always fly a formation across the site of our picnic. So I say thanks to them on a very personal basis.

My good friend Roy Chappell was president of the Dodo Chapter for a number of years; Mr. Rufus Hunt is their historian; and, yes, they have created and provide a great legacy; and they teach young African American children how to fly.

I have been able to send a large number of youngsters, and they take them, and they used to use Meigs Field until it was closed, and now they use the airport in Gary, Indiana, and they take these young inner-city children for their first ride in an airplane. So I salute their past exploits, but I also commend them for what they are doing today to continue this great legacy and this great tradition.

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON).

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to support this resolution honoring the Tuskegee Airmen and their valuable contribution to the United States of America.

During the Second World War, the Army Air Force, as it was then known, and now, of course, known as the United States Air Force, played a vital role in achieving allied victory, particularly in Europe. With their superior aviation skills and with courage in the face of danger, the men who flew for the Army Air Force demonstrated the true meaning of honor.

While World War II was being fought to provide human dignity and freedom to millions of people there on the European continent, here at home there were millions of people prevented on a daily basis from exercising full freedom and full equality.

The Tuskegee Airmen were the first to break that cycle in the military and to emerge as highly qualified pilots in the United States. They proved that race does not matter, they proved that where you come from does not matter, and it does not matter whether anyone else thinks you are capable. The only thing that matters is that you devote yourself to your talents and let history take it from there, and that is just what happened. As a matter of fact, the Tuskegee Airmen, in escorting bombers on to the European continent, never lost a bomber that they were escorting; and they were sought after by the bomber pilots because of their tremendous record and tremendous skill.

The Tuskegee Airmen led the way in opening doors for people from all races and all walks of life to follow their dreams of aviation and military service. Of course, I am very pleased that it was our own Missourian, Harry S. Truman, who integrated the Armed Forces in 1948 after this very positive effort by the Tuskegee Airmen during the Second World War.

As highly skilled pilots, the Tuskegee Airmen made great contributions to the fields of military air as well as space technology. The Nation owes these men a debt of gratitude for having the courage to stand up for something in which they believed and for forcing the rest of the Nation to look past its prejudices and truly appreciate the skills and loyalty with which they served our Nation. I am honored to stand here today and support this important resolution.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, on two occasions I had the honor of being with Tuskegee Airmen. The first was a dinner where I was the Speaker at an event at then Richards Gebaur Air Force Base south of Kansas City, where Tuskegee Airmen from all across the country were honored; and another time at Ramstein Air Force Base, where a leader of that group was honored at a luncheon. So it is with great pride that I am here to speak in favor of this resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer a personal observation that was actually provoked by the gentleman from Missouri.

My father was a member of the United States Army Air Force. He joined in 1940. He grew up in a time and in a place where segregation was a very common thing, and not only common in the culture, but legal, recognized by law, enforced by law, and he thought joining the United States Army Air Corps was a way out and a way up for him, and it certainly was, given his background and given his station in life.

But it did more than that. Over the course of his lifetime, it transformed his views, it widened his horizons. He often talked about the United States Air Force or the Army Air Corps and later the Air Force to me as I grew up. I actually grew up when he was still a member of that. And he reflected on the tremendous lesson it had taught him about humanity, about the wonderful diversity of America and about the equality of all men in combat and all men under the law.

He often cited, frankly, the Tuskegee Airmen as people who had begun the transformation of the South, had begun the transformation of race in this country and had contributed mightily.

So it is a particular honor again to recognize these people, who were not only so brave in defending their country and so skilled in combat that they were recognized by their enemy but who taught us Americans a far greater lesson than we could expect any group of men to do, who reminded us again of the unfulfilled ideals of our country and moved us toward the ultimate realization of those ideals.

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to support this resolution that recognizes not only the contributions of the Tuskegee Airmen to World War II but also how they helped transform America.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H. Con. Res. 417, the Tuskegee Airmen Recognition Resolution. Books and movies both document the historic achievements of the Tuskegee Airmen. Today, I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution confirming the renown of these World War II heroes. Despite racial segregation and discrimination, the Tuskegee Airmen lived up to the words of General MacArthur, years before he spoke them: "Yours is the profession of arms, the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no substitute for victory . . . the very obsession of your public service must be duty, honor, country."

The Tuskegee Airmen were dedicated young men who became America's first African-American airmen, defying the many people who thought they lacked the intelligence, skill, courage, and patriotism to fly. Training for the first aviation class began in July 1941 and ended 9 months later in May 1942 with the successful graduation of five of the 13 original cadets. From 1942 until 1946, the Tuskegee Experiment produced nearly 1,000 pilots, with 450 serving overseas in the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group. The 332nd flew 1,578 missions which involved nearly 16,000 sorties and accumulated 111 kills (plus one destroyer sunk using a plane's machine gun).

The feats of the Tuskegee Airmen weren't limited to its aviators. For every mission flown, there were scores of men and women who performed ground-support duty as aircraft and engine mechanics, armament specialists, radio repairmen, parachute riggers, control tower operators, military policemen, and administrative clerks. Their achievements represented a true team effort. The unit was highly decorated, earning 150 Distinguished Flying

Crosses, 744 Air Medals, 8 Purple Hearts and 14 Bronze Stars. But their most important achievement was never losing a single bomber to enemy aircraft—the only escort unit to earn that record.

The impact of the Tuskegee Airmen was felt well beyond the skies of Europe and North Africa. Their actions spearheaded and influenced social changes back home, and resulted in the integration of our Armed Forces. In 1948, President Harry Truman enacted Executive Order Number 9981 which directed equality of treatment and opportunity in all of the United States Armed Services. This order not only led to the end of racial segregation in the military; it was also a long step towards racial integration in the United States.

I proudly salute the Tuskegee Airmen and ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this important resolution and to send a word of thanks to Mr. PORTER of Nevada as well as to the Members of the House Committee on Armed Services for having passed it. At a time when we must deal with a human rights crisis potentially perpetrated by our own military, it is admirable that we now highlight a positive example of respect for human rights and civil rights in our Armed Forces.

In conjunction with the "Wings Over Houston Air Show" (WOHA) that took place in Houston during this past fall school semester, five members of the famed Tuskegee Airmen visited middle and high school students at M.O. Campbell Educational Center in Houston's Aldine Independent School District. Lt. Col. Lee Archer, Lt. Col. Charles McGee, Dr. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr., Lt. Col. Herbert "Gene" Carter and George Watson, Sr. visited with Leadership Officer Training Corps (LOTG) and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) students to talk about their roles as pilots and ground support personnel during World War II and how their presence in the armed forces helped to break down racial barriers for those who came after them. I am proud to also acknowledge my father-in-law Philip Lee, a committed and dedicated Tuskegee Airman, his service contributed to the finest servicing their country well in time of war.

One of the things that stood out was a question that Lt. Col. Charles McGee posed before leaving the students:

Think about this, you are going to be responsible for what happens in this country for the next 15 or so years . . . What will you contribute to it?

I highlighted this question because it is very applicable to the current situation that we face in Abu Ghraib. We must be accountable for the way we treat our brothers as well as our foreign neighbors. The human rights element of the civil rights struggle for African Americans can be used to guide our actions today in Iraq and every day. Because of the fortitude and commitment shown by the Tuskegee Airmen, our Armed Forces have the talent and skill that allow us to sleep at night knowing that we are in the most capable hands.

A program began on July 19, 1941 in Alabama to train black Americans as military pilots. Flight training was conducted by the Division of Aeronautics of Tuskegee Institute, the famed school of learning founded by Booker T. Washington in 1881. Once a cadet completed primary training at Tuskegee's Moton

Field, he was sent to nearby Tuskegee Army Air Field for completion of flight training and for transition to combat type aircraft. The first classes of Tuskegee airmen were trained to be fighter pilots for the famous 99th Fighter Squadron, slated for combat duty in North Africa. Additional pilots were assigned to the 332d Fighter Group which flew combat along with the 99th Squadron from bases in Italy.

In Sept. 1943, a twin-engine training program was begun at Tuskegee to provide bomber pilots. However, World War II ended before these men were able to get into combat. By the end of the war, 992 men had graduated from pilot training at Tuskegee. 450 of these men were sent overseas for combat assignment. Approximately 150 lost their lives while in training or on combat flights. More men were trained at Tuskegee for aircrew and ground crew duties—flight engineers, gunners, mechanics, and armorers.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward in the international fight against terrorism, the spirit and tenacity of the Tuskegee Airmen must inspire us to fight terror together as a team. The team must be comprised of all of our international neighbors. I support this resolution and am honored to share these words.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of this resolution honoring the Tuskegee Airmen. It is only fitting after coming off a Memorial Day weekend where we celebrated and remembered those who served our country in World War II that we pay tribute to the contributions the Tuskegee Airmen made to the Allied victory. They did more than just help win the war. The Tuskegee Airmen had a major impact on the U.S. armed services, in general, and our air force in particular.

The men of Tuskegee overcame prejudice, racism and bigotry in order to serve their country. In many quarters, they were not wanted. Tuskegee trainees were expelled from the flight-training program for the slightest reasons, but they would not be denied the opportunity to do their duty for their country. They were determined to overcome tremendous obstacles because they had to exceed standards established for regular recruits. From them, more was expected, and to the benefit of our country, more was given. The Tuskegee pilots who survived a rigorous training program were an elite and highly motivated group.

The Tuskegee Airmen were organized in 1941 when plans were approved to establish a segregated air unit, the 99th Pursuit Squadron, and base it near Tuskegee, Alabama. They provided close air support and bomber escort missions and saw action in Italy, the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the bombing of Berlin.

In World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen compiled a record of shooting down 111 enemy aircraft and destroyed another 150 aircraft on the ground. They destroyed transport railroads, sank a Germany destroyer and 40 other boats and barges. Some 450 pilots flew combat missions. They flew 200 bomber escort missions against some of the most heavily defended targets in Hitler's Germany and never lost a bomber to the German Luftwaffe.

They played a vital role in defending our country against the Axis powers and just as importantly played a major part in breaking down racial barriers in the military and American society as a whole. They served in the most technically advanced and sophisticated

branch of America's fighting forces, the Army Air Corps. When they earned their wings they engaged in one of the advanced air forces in the world, the Luftwaffe. And in doing so, they and we emerged victorious.

Being privileged to represent a good part of the City of Detroit, I am proud to say Detroit hosts the National Museum of the Tuskegee Airmen. Among the Tuskegee alumni was our own former Mayor of Detroit, Coleman Young. It was in Detroit that the Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated was founded. This organization exists to motivate and inspire young Americans to pursue careers in aviation, aerospace, the military and to become active participants in civic affairs. We in Detroit have a close affinity with the Tuskegee Airmen, and I thank the leadership for allowing this resolution to be scheduled for today.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the Tuskegee Airmen, African-American pioneers for their courageous service to our country and lasting legacy of valor and military excellence. I strongly support H. Con. Res. 417 in honoring the Tuskegee Airmen and their contribution in creating an integrated United States Air Force, the world's foremost Air and Space Supremacy Force.

The service that the Tuskegee Airmen performed during World War II for our country was extraordinary. In a time of racial turmoil they dedicated their lives and served this country to their fullest capability. They simultaneously defied the odds and limitations set both abroad and at home. These men overcame what were seemingly insurmountable obstacles at the time and are regarded as American military pioneers.

The Tuskegee Airmen epitomize the American dream. History shows that blacks had been trying to gain entrance into the Army Air Corps since World War I. By the end of World War II the Tuskegee Airmen had received 95 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals and Clusters, a Legion of Merit, completed 1,578 missions and 15,553 sorties, and graduated 993 pilots. They had gone from being barred from the Air Corps to being regarded as one of the most successful units in American history. The Tuskegee Airmen were called upon by our country and willingly accepted the challenge. They proved that skill and dedication were the determining factors of success, not race or skin color.

The Tuskegee Airmen continue to serve as role models for members of the armed forces throughout the world. Many of their combat records are unmatched today and their sacrifices must never be forgotten. These courageous men embody the spirit of America and are an integral part of our nation's history. It is only appropriate that servicemen of such valor be acknowledged.

Ms. MAJETTE. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here on the heels of Memorial Day, a time for honoring those who have fought and died to preserve our freedom, I rise to add my voice to the growing chorus of those singing the praises of the Tuskegee Airmen.

When the brave men and women of our armed services swear their enlistment oath, they pledge to defend the Constitution against enemies both foreign and domestic. And although the Tuskegee Airmen won many a battle in the skies over North Africa and Europe, it is their triumph over oppression at home that counts as their greatest victory.

From their inception at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in the summer of 1941, to their first

combat in North Africa in 1943, to President Truman's desegregation order in 1948, the Tuskegee Airmen battled racism and hatred at every turn.

They represented their country when we needed them most, and, despite all hardships, they did so with class, professionalism, and excellence, earning distinction among the Army Air Corps' most decorated pilots.

The Tuskegee Airmen served with pride and honor, and returned home to find that the freedoms they had fought so hard to preserve were not extended to them. Instead of being welcomed as the heroes they were, they faced intense segregation in the very land many of them gave their lives to protect. Still, they held their heads high and continued to struggle for justice and equality, this time not in a far-off nation, but from their homes in rural Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, we are all beneficiaries of the work of these brave men both at home and abroad, and I am privileged to count several of them among my constituents.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 417.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. COLE. 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.

#### RECOGNIZING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALLIED LANDING AT NORMANDY DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II.

The Clerk read as follows:

S.J. RES. 28

Whereas June 6, 2004, marks the 60th anniversary of D-Day, the first day of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II by American, British, and Canadian troops;

Whereas the D-Day landing, known as Operation Overlord, was the most extensive amphibious operation ever to occur, involving on the first day of the operation 5,000 naval vessels, more than 11,000 sorties by Allied aircraft, and 153,000 members of the Allied Expeditionary Force;

Whereas the bravery and sacrifices of the Allied troops at 5 separate Normandy beaches and numerous paratrooper and glider landing zones began what Allied Supreme Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower called a "Crusade in Europe" to end Nazi tyranny and restore freedom and human dignity to millions of people;

Whereas that great assault by sea and air marked the beginning of the end of Hitler's ambition for world domination;

Whereas American troops suffered over 6,500 casualties on D-Day; and

Whereas the people of the United States should honor the valor and sacrifices of their fellow countrymen, both living and dead, who fought that day for liberty and the cause of freedom in Europe: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—*

(1) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy during World War II; and

(2) requests the President to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and programs to honor the sacrifices of their fellow countrymen to liberate Europe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S.J. Res. 28.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago this month, on June 6, 1944, Allied airborne and seaborne forces invaded Normandy, France, at the start of Operation Overlord. On that first day, more than 150,000 Allied military personnel came ashore and over 6,500 American troops became casualties.

Leading the overall Allied effort in what he would describe as a "Crusade in Europe" was a Kansas native, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Among the first wave of soldiers on June 6 to storm ashore into the devastating fires of the German defenses were soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division, a proud Army unit with long-standing ties to Fort Riley, Kansas, which I am privileged to represent.

By the end of the "Crusade in Europe," the 1st Division, also known as the Big Red One, had suffered more than 21,000 casualties among the nearly 44,000 men who had served in its ranks. Sixteen of its soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor. The division's motto exemplified its service: "No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great. Duty first."

Mr. Speaker, this resolution properly honors the valor and sacrifices of our fellow countrymen who 60 years ago answered the call to duty and fought to restore freedom and human dignity to millions of people.

This resolution should also remind us, Mr. Speaker, that today many tens of thousands of American military men and women are fighting a global war on terrorism. In the process, they are

again answering the same call to duty as the men of D-Day. While the places and enemies have changed, the objective has not. They fight today to protect America and to restore freedom and human dignity to millions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. It truly is a recognition and celebration of the brave deeds by bold men who earned a rightful place in American history over 60 years ago in the landing zones, beaches and battlefields of Normandy. But as we celebrate their achievements, let us not forget that bold brave men and women continue to serve this Nation admirably around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for a "yes" vote as a fitting honor for today's heroes.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Senate Joint Resolution 28, introduced by Senator BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL, and commend my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, for introducing an identical bill in the House, H.J. Res. 93.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes the 60th anniversary of one of the most important and critical military operations of World War II, the Allied landing at Normandy on June 6, 1944.

This past Saturday, we honored World War II veterans with the official dedication of the first National Memorial that honors all those who served in the Second World War. This memorial is a tribute to the band of brothers who fought to restore freedom and liberty for all across the world.

The turning point in the fight to liberate Europe from the Nazis during World War II was the successful Allied invasion of France on June 6, 1944. While officially named Operation Overlord, "D-Day" will forever be known as the day the Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy that fateful morning.

As the Supreme Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower led the largest, most aggressive air, land and sea campaign ever undertaken during World War II. On that day, the forces of liberty stared down the evils of fascism. Five thousand naval vessels, including 3,000 landing crafts, carried 153,000 Allied forces across the channel to hit the beaches of Normandy.

While Gold, Juno Sword and Utah were taken by our allies and American forces with relatively minor opposition, for American forces that fought on the sands at Omaha, D-Day will forever live in their minds and hearts.

The landing at Omaha truly captured the bravery, determination and fortitude of the American soldier. Many of them never reached the shores of Omaha, heavily fortified and defended by the Germans. Nearly 2,500 were killed or wounded in the attack.

As the sun set on June 6, 1944, over 6,000 soldiers gave their lives that extraordinary day. Their sacrifices and those of all who fought that day allowed over 100,000 men and 10,000 vehicles to come ashore that evening, the