Forces and our military have all the resources they need to continue to protect our country in the days to come. During my tenure in Congress, I have had the honor to represent or share representation of Fort Bragg, which is home to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the Joint Special Operations Command—vital components of USSOCOM. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee to ensure that we do our part to meet the needs of our special operators and the officers who are charged with leading them into the battlefield. In fact, I have spearheaded the Special Operations Forces Caucus, along with four of my colleagues, Representatives ROBIN HAYES (NC), JEFF MILLER (FL) and JIM DAVIS (FL) to ensure that the needs of our special operators are met.

Each and every day, our Special Operations Forces, along with our other servicemen and women in all the branches of our military, put themselves in harm's way to fight for our nation's freedoms here at home and abroad. Now is the time that we come together with compassion, cooperation and commitment to remember those that served during Operation Eagle Claw and ensure that they are properly recognized and honored. They are our heroes, and I am pleased to support H. Res. 256, which takes the necessary step to honor not only those who perished on that tragic day, but also those courageous individuals who make up our Special Operations Forces. May God bless all of them and their families.

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, we have no more speakers on our side, and we yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 256, as amended.

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

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read: ''Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in remembrance of the members of the Armed Forces who perished in the April 24, 1980, rescue attempt of the American hostages being held in Iran and commending all special operations forces personnel currently in service.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPROVING THE RENEWAL OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS CONTAINED IN THE BURMESE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2003

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 52) approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 52

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress approves the renewal of the import restrictions contained in section 3(a)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW).

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), my friend. In 2003, Congress passed the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act, which among a number of things imposed an import ban on all products from Burma. Today, the House considers extending this import ban for an additional year.

Madam Speaker, the situation in Burma remains deeply troubling. The actions by the military in Burma continue to demonstrate its inability to promote an equitable way of life for millions of Burmese.

Despite the deplorable conditions in Burma today, the United States remains committed to political and social change in Burma. In fact, the United States is one of the few leaders willing to shine the light on the lack of human rights in Burma. Within the international community, the United States has cosponsored resolutions within the United Nations Commission on Human Rights condemning the human rights situation in Burma. It is tremendously important that we continue to pressure the Burmese Government to become a transparent society, free from human rights abuses that have plagued this Asian nation for so many years.

Pressure must remain in place. Extending trade sanctions puts pressure on the Burmese junta to change its ways. For the pressure to be truly effective, the sanctions must be multilateral and include Burma's main trading partners. Therefore, I encourage the administration to continue to pursue a multilateral response to the atrocities in Burma. This is a critical component for ending the military stranglehold on this society.

I urge all my colleagues to support the resolution that is before us today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the sponsor of the resolution, the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations; and I want to congratulate him for his strong leadership and consistent leadership on human rights issues in this body.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend and distinguished colleague from Maryland for the time, who has been a champion of human rights globally throughout his tenure.

I also want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, my friend, and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for their consistent support of human rights work.

Madam Speaker, in this day and age, nothing is in shorter supply than men and women of moral authority and courage. Burmese democracy leader and Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi is among the giants of our age. She is right there with Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, both of whom were prepared to sacrifice years of their lives so that their people could live in a free and open and democratic society.

Madam Speaker, this past weekend, this great lady and champion of democracy celebrated her 60th birthday; but instead of being surrounded by family and friends on this happy day, Aung San Suu Kyi remained imprisoned in Burma, cut off from her supporters, both her family and the people of Burma.

Last Friday, I attempted to deliver 6,000 birthday cards from Americans from across this Nation to Aung San Suu Kyi to the Burmese embassy in Washington. The gate was locked. No Burmese diplomat was willing to accept the birthday greetings to Burma's greatest citizen; but Madam Speaker, I have been dealing with dictatorial regimes all my life, and I do not expect a warm reception from any of them.

I do want Aung San Suu Kyi to know that the entire Congress of the United States and the American people wish her a very happy birthday and the moral fortitude and physical stamina to continue her struggle for the Burmese people and, indeed, for democracy globally.

Madam Speaker, I can think of no better birthday present for Aung San Suu Kyi than the legislation we are discussing at this moment. The only hope for promoting far-reaching political change is by making Burma's ruling thugs pay an economic price for running the Burmese nation and their economy into the ground. By renewing import sanctions for an additional year, fewer dollars will flow into the Swiss bank accounts of the Burmese thugs who run that country.

The tough approach maintained by our country towards Burma, including import sanctions, is encouraging other nations to reconsider their more shortsighted and lenient views on the Rangoon regime.

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Some members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations for the first time have begun to criticize Burma for its human rights abuses.

Last November, the European Union itself strengthened its Burma policy in response to ongoing human rights violations. In both cases, it was the strong stand of this Congress that has stiffened backbones and increased the prospects that a multilateral sanctions regime against Burma is possible.

Madam Speaker, Congress must act decisively to renew import sanctions against Burma. We must send a strong signal of support for the restoration of democracy and human rights in that impoverished and subdued Nation.

This great woman, Aung San Suu Kyi, before long will occupy her rightful position as the democratically elected leader of the people of Burma, and I look forward to being there in Rangoon as she is sworn in as the leadership of a free and democratic country. I urge all of my colleagues to support the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act in its accession.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) who himself has gained a great reputation in this Congress as being a champion of human freedoms.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) for his leadership on this issue and so many other issues on the Committee on Ways and Means. I also commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, for offering this legislation which would renew the Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 for Burma and the import restrictions that are contained in that important legislation.

As my colleagues know, Burma today remains one of the most repressive military dictatorships in the world, where human rights are routinely and systematically repressed and violated. So it is fitting and necessary that Congress today is moving to renew this important legislation.

The Burmese dictatorship today incarcerates 1,400 political prisoners and continues to harass and repress one of the bravest leaders of our time, Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, who, by the way, turned 60 this past weekend. I, like many other Members in this body, have tried to get into Burma to press for human rights; and my visa, like others, has been turned down, denying Member of Congress the opportunity to even meet with the military junta that continues to repress its citizens.

Madam Speaker, up to 70,000 child soldiers are exploited in Burma, more than any other country in the world. Up to 2 million people have been forced to flee the country as refugees and migrants. Burning of villages continues in eastern Burma, especially in Karen and Karenni states. And Aung San Suu Kyi continues to be persecuted and harassed by this brutal dictatorship.

Sanctions do work, I say to my colleagues. But they often take time. Other countries, I'm happy to say, are beginning to follow the lead of the United States. In a major and important move, the European Union in October 2004 followed the lead of the United States and significantly strengthened its sanctions in Burma, including a ban on investments in enterprises of the ruling regime and a strengthened visa ban. The EU also pledged to join the United States in opposing loans to Burma's regime from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Support at the United Nations is growing as well. Burma was one of the few countries on the resolution's list that passed at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. I was there in Geneva working that resolution as well as resolutions on Cuba, Sudan, and Belaurus, and it was as one of the few that made it through.

After the United States Senate and the House passed resolutions in October 2004 calling on the Security Council to address the situation in Burma, the Parliament of Australia followed suit. Their motion called on the government to support the Burmese National League for Democracy's call for the U.N. Security Council to convene a special session to consider what further measures the U.N. can take to encourage democratic reform and respect for human rights in Burma.

Additionally, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the U.N. Security Council to address the situation in Burma as a matter of urgency. Additionally, 289 members of our friends in the British Parliament tabled a motion calling on the U.N. Security Council to address the situation in Burma.

There has even been unprecedented action within the ASEAN countries. Whereas in the past they refused to even comment on what they deemed to be Burma's internal affairs, many members of that organization are now publicly pressing Burma to step aside as the chair of the association in 2006. The tough approach maintained by the U.S. toward Burma, including import sanctions and a possible boycott of 2006 meetings, is encouraging many Asian countries to rethink whether the Burmese regime should assume that rotating chairmanship. There is widespread belief within the leadership of the ASEAN countries that Burma has failed, and failed miserably, to deliver on its promises to the region.

All in all, and I point to these abovementioned instances, the strong stand of the United States, and I commend President Bush and former President Clinton because both have been united in their belief that Burma needs to be sanctioned and isolated in a way that hopefully leads to reform and change. Moreover, our resolution to promote freedom and democracy in Burma has stiffened the backbones of many countries around the world.

Today the EU, the U.N., and ASEAN countries are moving in the right direction to take a strong stand against Burma's dictatorship.

And to Aung San Suu Kyi: Your courage and goodness and persistence are beyond extraordinary. Our prayers are with you.

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

Madam Speaker, as the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) has pointed out, June 19 marked the 60th birthday of Aung San Suu Kyi, who has dedicated her life to bringing about democracy in Burma and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991.

Her party, the National League of Democracy, won a landslide victory in the country's 1990 elections; but the results were not recognized by the ruling Burmese military junta. Unfortunately, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, who has spent 10 out of the last 16 years in confinement, could not celebrate her birthday with her friends and supporters. Instead, she remains under house arrest.

The plight of Aung San Suu Kyi is a sign of how little things have changed in Burma. According to the U.S. State Department's March 2005 report to Congress on conditions in Burma and U.S. policy toward Burma, ''prospects for meaningful political change and reform in Burma have continued to decline.''

The Government of Burma continues to harass and arrest people for taking part in peaceful political activities; more than 1,200 people remain in jail for their political beliefs. The State Peace and Development Council, the controlling military junta, has continued to severely abuse its citizens' human rights. Freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and association remain greatly restricted. In ethnic minorities areas, the Burmese Government has engaged in persecution, torture, extrajudicial executions, demolition of places of worship, rape, and forced labor.

Security forces regularly monitor the movements and communications of residents, search homes without warrants, and relocate people forcefully without compensation or legal recourse.

In light of Burma's continued dismal record in respecting human rights and suppressing democracy, I urge my colleagues to extend the ban on imports on Burmese products for another year. The utter disregard of the Government of Burma for the rights of its citizens cannot be ignored.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS).

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of this resolution. Burma is ruled by a ruthless military regime. I visited the Thai-Burma border a few years ago, and I met with victims of the horrific repression that is occurring there, the IDPs, former political prisoners, democracy activists, women who have been raped, landmine victims, orphans, and widows. The SPDC uses rape has a weapon of terror. They engage in ethnic cleansing, wiping out whole villages and towns, killing women, men, and children. They

seek to eliminate the ethnic minorities in the tribal areas such as Karen and Karenni.

Many believe that we need to reverse our course on sanctions in order to help the Burmese people. They are wrong. The Burmese economy is so rotted under this corrupt regime that trade does not help the people. It is like pouring money into a pocket with a hole in it. The road to change in Burma is not trade, it is political reform.

The SPDC must release Aung San Suu Kyi, the duly elected leader. ASEAN must take a clear stand against the Burmese leadership and deny it from leadership and chairing ASEAN. And the U.S. must do a better job of organizing support at the U.N. Security Council for a comprehensive resolution calling for national transition and reconciliation. Sanctions are absolutely necessary. I urge passage of this resolution.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) on this bill, and also comment about the long history of human rights protection of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). I rise in strong support of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act and urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this bill.

There has been a brutal campaign of village burnings, destruction of rice supplies, killings by Burmese military, this outlaw regime, and it has resulted in displacement of between 500,000 and 1 million innocent citizens living in eastern Burma. Hundreds of thousands of these internal refugees we call internally displaced persons, IDPs, are persecuted for their commitment to democracy and their belief in human rights. These IDP victims are being systematically hunted down by the evil tyrants of this military regime in Burma. Secretary Rice has rightly called Burma one of the six outposts of tyranny in our world. These tactics used by the junta in Burma add up to ethnic cleansing.

Many Americans are not aware of what is occurring in Burma, but this act is a step in the direction that will show all peoples in the world that Americans care about freedom and democracy, no matter where it is and where it hopes to be in the world.

It is my desire and hope for my colleagues cosponsoring this bill that these sanctions called for in this joint resolution will continue to grab the attention of the Burmese junta and pressure them to release Aung San Suu Kyi and allow their country to enjoy the freedoms and rights of a true democracy so that all people may have the right, as President Jefferson said, to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD an article that appeared in the International Herald Tribune this past Sunday, written by Seth Mydans. The article is on Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi who we have heard so much about during this debate, really a true heroine in our time.

[From the International Herald Tribune, June 19, 2005]

TEST OF WILLS: THE BURMESE CAPTIVE WHO WILL NOT BUDGE

(By Seth Mydans)

BANGKOK.—Seventeen years ago, as the people of Myanmar filled the streets in mass protests against their military dictatorship, a striking, self-possessed woman rose to address a rally at the great golden Shwedagon Pagoda. At the time, nobody realized the price she would pay for her outspokenness.

The woman, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was visiting from her home in England to tend to her sick mother when pro-democracy protests swelled throughout the country in August 1988 despite a brutal response by the military that took thousands of lives.

In the months that followed she emerged, through a combination of charisma and pedigree, to lead what has so far been a futile opposition to the country's military leaders.

On Sunday, Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi will mark her 60th birthday under house arrest, where she has spent most of the intervening years, in an increasingly dilapidated house, more cut off than ever from contacts outside her weed-filled compound.

Her birthday has become an occasion for new international protests against a military junta that holds the country in its grip, jailing its opponents while ruining the country's economy and waging war against its ethnic minorities.

From one of the region's most refined and richly endowed nations, Myanmar has become its most desperate and reviled.

As the daughter of the country's founding hero, U Aung San, she held a nearly mystical appeal for people desperate to regain their freedoms and self-respect. With her dignity, self-sacrifice and perseverance, she has created a legend of her own.

She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 and has joined the company of Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama of Tibet as international icons of a struggle for freedom. But in a contest between brute force and principle, between repression and the clearly expressed will of the people of Myanmar, it is the men with the guns who have managed so far to prevail, and the country's moral symbol who is their prisoner.

Calls for the release of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi have come from around the world in recent days, including statements from Washington and from Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

In Norway, the chairman of the Nobel Committee, Ole D. Mjoes, issued a rare statement about a past laureate, saying; ''We ask that she be set free immediately. We look forward to the day that democracy again rules her country.''

But the generals have released her twice already, most recently in May 2002, only to be shaken and shamed at her continuing, overwhelming popularity: huge crowds that gathered wherever she appeared.

One year after her last release, her convoy was attacked by an organized mob in what some analysts believe was an attempt to kill her, and she was returned to house arrest after a period of harsh treatment in prison.

''She has become the only leader that the Burmese people have acknowledged since the death of her father in 1947,'' said Josef Silverstein, an expert on Myanmar at Rutgers University. ''I would add that she has in every way possible emulated what her father stood for, which was for the right of the people to govern themselves and to have a free and democratic country.''

Shortly after her address at the Shwedagon Pagoda, she explicitly assumed her father's mantle, saying she would dedicate her life to the people of her country as he had done.

She made that clear in 1999 when she chose not to visit her husband, Michael Aris, in England, when he was dying of cancer, because she feared that the government would bar her from re-entering Myanmar. The Myanmar authorities had refused to allow him to visit her.

The United States, the European Union and other nations have responded to repression in Myanmar with economic penalties that have done little to affect its leadership. Myanmar's giant neighbors, China and India, with several other Asian nations, offer it an economic lifeline.

But opposition from the West is putting pressure on the junta now as it prepares to take over the rotating leadership of the regional 10-member political and economic grouping, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, next year.

The United States and some other nations have hinted strongly in recent weeks that they will boycott an annual meeting to which they are invited if it is held in Myanmar. Its regional neighbors, facing potential embarrassment, are beginning to press the junta to skip its turn as regional leader if it does not release Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi and improve its record on human rights.

At the same time, there has been an eruption of internal turmoil among the ruling generals, though like most things in Myanmar its details and its causes are unclear.

In October, Prime Minister Khin Nyunt, who was the head of military intelligence and one of the country's most powerful leaders, was fired and placed under house arrest. His trial on expected corruption charges has either begun or is about to begin, according to conflicting reports.

Over the years, as repression has continued in Myanmar, some of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi's allies abroad have complained about what they call her stubbornness and intransigence. But it is the military leaders who have several times switched track, ignoring her and vilifying her, opening and closing dialogues, freeing and rearresting her.

She has also been criticized for demanding that the government recognize the results of a parliamentary election in 1990 that was won overwhelmingly by her party, the National League for Democracy.

The remarkably open parliamentary election was a characteristic misjudgment by the junta, which had apparently expected to win. When Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi's party won more than 80 percent of the seats, the generals refused to recognize the results and clung to power.

Many who won seats were arrested. Bit by bit over the years the junta has whittled away at their party. Today its leaders are aging—Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi is the youngest—and its youth wing has atrophied

More and more, the democratic opposition to military rule in Myanmar is personified by one isolated and determined woman. ''Her stubbornness is her strength,'' Mr. Silverstein said. ''This woman will not bend and will not break.''

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, In recognition of the Burmese State Peace and Development

Council's (SPDC) failure to comply with the conditions described in H.R. 2330, ''Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003,'' I commend my colleague and the ranking Member of the Committee on International Relations, Rep. TOM LANTOS for his strong stand on restoring democracy in Burma and holding the military Junta accountable.

Seventeen years ago the people of Myanmar rose up in mass protest against the SPDC, which had established power through a military coup. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the country's founding hero, U Aung San, was arrested as a result of her pro-democracy stance during these protests. Following in her father's footsteps, she devotes her life to the people of Burma and freedom. As a leader of the National League for Democracy, NLD, she was seen as a threat to the SPDC power basis and unjustly imprisoned.

In 1990 Parliamentary elections were held, in which an eighty percent majority voted in support the NLD. In 1991, Mrs. Kyi was awarded the Nobel peace prize in recognition for her instrumental role in Burma's struggle for freedom.

Since the SPDC has taken power, it has continued to dismiss and neglect any meaningful dialogue with the United Nations in addressing their continuing persecution of opposition members. The SPDC continually fails to address their past and present human rights violations and fails to cooperate with U.S. efforts to stop the exporting of heroin and methamphetamines; while providing safety and harbor for persons involved with narcotics trafficking.

The SPDC supports the integration of the military into all facets of the economy, thus destroying all notions of a free economy; while using currency generated from the Burmese people to purchase and sponsor an institution of terror and repression.

The SPDC has done everything in its power to repress democracy and the will of the people of Burma.

It is clear further sanctions must be taken in order for this struggle to come to an end. Despite sanctions taken by the U.S. the European Union and many other nations, economic relief is still available for the SPDC. China, India and many other ASEAN countries still trade with Burma providing them with the necessary lifeline to maintain their reign of oppression.

If economic penalties are to be effective, multi-lateral support is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support with President Bush, Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations, Ole D. Mjoes of the Nobel Committee and my fellow Congressional colleagues in calling for an end of state sponsored tyranny in Burma. Justice can only be served when the release of all political prisoners, freedom of speech and the press, freedom of association and the peaceful exercise of religion become constitutional rights.

The fact that Bufria will be the rotating chair of the Association of South East Asian Nations, ASEAN is troubling. I believe President Bush and Secretary Rice should engage our allies Singapore, Thailand, India as well as China to focus on using their ties with the government of Burma to promote democracy in Burma and freedom for the Burmese people.

An agreement between the SPDC and NLD must be made so that the transfer of power to a civilian government, that is accountable to the Burmese people through democratic elections under the rule of law, can be made. For those reasons H.R. 2330 must be renewed. We cannot waiver on our policy until democracy and freedom are restored to the people or Burma.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 52 and of the people of Burma. The people of Burma toil every day under the cruel and heavy yoke of military dictatorship. The military rulers of Burma stifle dissent, persecute minorities, and thwart every attempt at democracy.

The democratically elected and legal leader of Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi, remains imprisoned. Contact between Suu Kyi and the outside is virtually non-existent. Despite growing calls for her release, there is no sign that she will be released from her prison any time soon. Many hundreds of other Burmese men and women remain in appallingly horrible prisons, not because of any truly criminal act, but because of their efforts to bring freedom to Burma.

Burma has more than 600,000 internally displaced people. Furthermore, over 100,000 people are living in refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. Thousands more are in hiding in China and India. Where Burma was once a country of peaceful coexistence, it has, under this brutal regime, become a place of strife and discord.

The military junta in Burma continues to persecute minority groups. The Burmese military continues to burn villages, destroy crops, and eliminate opponents no matter how peaceful or non-threatening. The destruction of medical supplies and first aid stations continues apace. These acts are not random acts of a few rogue military units far from any authority. These acts are orchestrated at the highest levels by cruel generals sitting in government offices in Rangoon.

Now more than ever, the democratic forces at work in Burma need the continued support of the United States of America. H.J. Res. 52, which I am proud to co-sponsor, will continue the sanctions imposed by the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act.

When the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act was passed, few other countries paid more than scant attention to the tragedy unfolding in Burma. More interested in regional comity or economic gain, many of the same countries we call allies were content to turn a blind eye to Burma's abuses and despicable cruelty.

Since 2003, the veil has been lifted somewhat. Calls for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners and the establishment of democracy have gone out from previously silent quarters. Once mute ASEAN nations, particularly Singapore, the Philippines, and Malaysia, have gradually increased pressure on Burma to change.

Support for this bill will make it clear to Burmese despots that their military dictatorship, which maintains power through force and terror, is unacceptable. Support for continued sanctions will demonstrate to the world that the United States is serious about bringing change to Burma. It is my hope that our efforts embodied in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act sanctions will encourage more countries, organizations, and individuals to work for freedom, democracy, and a prosperous Burma.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on H.J. Res. 52.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of this bill, I support extending sanctions on Burma for a third year within the framework enacted into law under the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

I generally don't believe in unilateral trade sanctions. By preventing trade with Burma, we isolate Burmese citizens from the world and deny them the economic opportunity and better working conditions that trade can create. As a result, sanctions often have the unintended consequence of ultimately harming the people we are seeking to help. In fact, the State Department, for the second time, notes that one effect of the Burma import restrictions has been to cause the closure of more than 100 garment factories and the loss of tens of thousands of Burmese textile jobs. I don't see how those people are better off today than they were a year or two ago.

At the same time, the actions of the ruling junta in Burma continue to be unacceptable. One of the requirements of the law passed in 2003 is for the administration to issue a report on whether the sanctions have been effective in improving conditions in Burma and in furthering U.S. objectives. The State Department, in its second report, observes that Burma's already poor human rights record has worsened over the past year. Moreover, the junta's exclusion of pro-democracy groups from the National Convention assembled to draft a new constitution suggests that Burma is not on the road to true democratic reform. Given the current situation, I believe action by the United States is warranted and sanctions are appropriate if they are limited, targeted, and effective.

At the same time, the State Department also acknowledges that some opposition politicians in Burma question whether U.S. sanctions have any chance of success and whether they are worth the pain caused to Burmese workers. I share this skepticism. No other country has implemented the same set of economic sanctions as the United States. If we are to successfully influence the government of Burma, sanctions must be truly multilateral and international like those used to bring an end to apartheid rule in South Africa. While I support the extension of the sanctions for another year, this effort to build multilateral pressure is key to my continued support for sanctions against Burma.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support of House Joint Resolution 52, supporting the renewal of the import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003. As an original cosponsor of this Resolution, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of this resolution. Today we must send a strong message to the ruthless military dictators in Rangoon that their repressive rule over what Secretary Rice deemed an ''outpost of tyranny,'' is antithetical to the fundamental American values of freedom, liberty, and democracy.

On May 30, 2003, Congress passed the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act in response to the junta's merciless crackdown on democratic reformers. The National League for Democracy's popular elected leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, was placed under house arrest and many of her colleagues were murdered. This important bill banned imports from Burma, mainly affecting the textile and garment industries, until the junta made major

progress to end human rights violations. According to the bill, until the military regime ceases its systemic campaign of repression, aggression, and state-sponsored terror against its own people, meaningful sanctions will persist.

Two years later, the junta's extremely poor human rights record has not improved, instead it worsened. Aung San Suu Kyi recently spent her 60th birthday detained under house-arrest in her dilapidated home. Citizens in Burma still do not have the right to criticize their government. Security forces continue to murder political opponents with impunity. Disappearances persist, and security forces rape, torture, beat, and otherwise abuse prisoners and detainees. Hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in eastern Burma have been uprooted from their homes and forced to live in relocation sites under horrendous humanitarian conditions.

As the United States is developing its future 21st Century relationship with Southeast Asia, the regime in Burma is stuck in an early 20th Century destabilizing military style of governance. International pressure is mounting on Burma for reform. Burma's neighbors, including Malaysia, are calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi. If Burma wants to participate in the international community, and be recognized as the rotating chairman of ASEAN, it must undergo sweeping democratic reforms. The United States ought to continue advocating a policy of zero tolerance by renewing its ban on imports from Burma until such reforms are made. Congress must seize this opportunity to demonstrate its resolve to uphold the highest standards of human rights by supporting House Joint Resolution 52.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 52 and the renewal of sanctions on Burma. It is high time that the Burmese junta release Aung San Suu Kyi, the key to political transition in Burma, and allow the restoration of democracy in Burma. I will continue to support stronger efforts by the United States, the United Nations, and others to ensure that the continued abuse of human rights in Burma becomes neither accepted nor forgotten. Sanctions are necessary pressure, but insufficient. In particular, I believe that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) should deny Burma the rotating chair, as having Burma in a leadership position would be an embarrassment to all ASEAN members.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 52.

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. SHAW. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.J. Res. 52.

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

There was no objection.

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RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 160) recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day, and expressing the sense of Congress that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 160

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the Southwestern States, for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War;

Whereas on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as Juneteenth Independence Day, as the anniversary of their emancipation;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest continue the tradition of Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas for more than 135 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas although Juneteenth Independence Day is beginning to be recognized as a national, and even global, event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten; and

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves remains an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) Congress recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the Nation;

(2) Congress supports the continued celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation;

(3) the President is urged to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe Juneteenth Independence Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs; and

(4) it is the sense of Congress that—

(A) history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future; and

(B) the celebration of the end of slavery is an important and enriching part of the history and heritage of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Government Reform, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 160 that recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day.

This resolution, offered by my distinguished colleague the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), is a meaningful reminder of the monumental day that marks the end of slavery in the United States. Originally an African-American celebration, Juneteenth is certainly now a day for all Americans to observe the end of slavery in the United States which was, with little question, the most dreadful period in our Nation's history.

Mr. Speaker, as the Civil War raged in late 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which would become effective on January 1, 1863. The proclamation declared all slaves in the Southern Confederate States free from New Year's Day 1863 forward.

Juneteenth is a celebration of June 19, 1865, on which date news of the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached Texas, which was the last secessionist State to emancipate its slaves, nearly 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. The delay was a result of there being nearly no Union presence in south Texas to implement President Lincoln's decree. Not until Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, on the gulf coast and read the proclamation from the docks on the original Juneteenth day did the slaves learn they were freed. The news quickly spread throughout Texas, and celebrations and unimaginable jubilation followed.

After the war ended, Congress ratified the 13th amendment to the Constitution in December 1865 which outlawed all nonpunitive slavery and involuntary servitude in any part of the