

access to assistance that are available to victims of crime under U.S. law and the laws of other countries.

H.R. 3360 establishes stringent new standards including training for ships' personnel to preserve evidence of crimes and provide appropriate medical treatment. Specifically, H.R. 3360 requires cruise lines to aid U.S. investigators by training crewmembers in crime scene preservation, by mandating log book entries detailing complaints of crimes, and by making available video tapes and other forms of evidence.

The legislation also provides much-needed support for the victims of crime by requiring cruise lines to provide on board medical professionals who are trained to treat victims of sexual assaults, medications, and access to victims' support services.

In addition, H.R. 3360 ensures that the public can make informed choices before booking a cruise. The bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to compile and maintain statistical data of certain incidents on an internet website. The data would identify each cruise line and each cruise line would be required to provide a link on its internet site to the website maintained by the Secretary.

Finally, H.R. 3360 enhances the safety and security of cruise passengers by requiring cruise lines to upgrade, modernize, and retrofit the safety and security infrastructure on their vessels by installing peep holes in passenger doors, video surveillance cameras, time-sensitive electronic key technology, higher railings, and acoustic hailing devices.

It is estimated that 10.6 million Americans enjoyed a cruise vacation in 2007. Millions more have cruised since and millions more will cruise in the future. We need to ensure the security and safety of passengers and crews on cruise vessels and to provide support for the victims of crime at sea.

With passage of this legislation today, the bill will be cleared for the President's consideration.

Before closing, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) for bringing us to this point. In 2006, Ms. MATSUI's constituent, Laurie Dishman, who was the victim of a crime aboard a cruise ship, reached out to Ms. MATSUI and Congress for help in addressing the significant shortcomings of cruise vessel safety and security. Ms. Dishman had the courage and fortitude to tell her heart-wrenching story to our Committee in a hearing on these issues. Knowing Ms. Dishman's story, Ms. MATSUI drafted this bill and has worked for more than three years to get Congress to this point.

I also thank the gentlemen from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG and Mr. MITCHELL), who have strongly supported this bill on behalf of the daughter of an Arizona constituent. Merrian Carver disappeared from a cruise ship in August 2004, and was never found. What makes Ms. Carver's case even more shocking is not just that a vibrant, young woman was lost, but that her disappearance was not reported by the cruise line to the U.S. Coast Guard or the FBI until well after the voyage ended.

Finally, I thank Chairman JAY ROCKEFELLER, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, for working to overcome Republican objections to the bill, enabling Senate passage of the legislation.

With enactment of this legislation, I am hopeful that the stories of Laurie Dishman and Merrian Carver will become a thing of the past. Although we cannot stop all crimes aboard cruise ships (or anywhere else), we can ensure that Americans will be protected by our system of justice.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Senate amendment to H.R. 3360, the "Cruise Vessel Security and Safety Act of 2010."

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. In closing, I will just urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this very, very important piece of legislation that will have far-reaching effects.

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 Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 3360.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CORRECTING THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3360

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 289) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make a technical correction in the enrollment of H.R. 3360.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 289

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill (H.R. 3360) to amend title 46, United States Code, to establish requirements to ensure the security and safety of passengers and crew on cruise vessels, and for other purposes, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall make the following correction: In section 4(b), strike "Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004" the second place it appears and insert "Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 289.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 289 simply corrects a drafting error in the Senate amendments to H.R. 3360. Specifically, the Senate amendments intended to combine required Coast Guard reports on fisheries enforcement plans and on efforts to prevent the incursion of foreign fishing vessels into U.S. waters.

However, the Senate amendments incorrectly referred to section 804 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 rather than the act of 2006, which is the correct cite for the requirement that the Coast Guard submit biannual reports on the service's progress in detecting and interdicting incursions by foreign fishing vessels into the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

H. Con. Res. 289 merely corrects the legal cite, but does not make any other changes to the Senate amendments to H.R. 3360.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, this is purely technical. We have no objection.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 289.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR A STRONG ALLIANCE WITH THAILAND

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1321) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the political situation in Thailand be solved peacefully and through democratic means, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1321

Whereas Thailand became the first treaty ally of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region with the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, signed at Sia-Yut'hia (Bangkok) March 20, 1833, between the United States and Siam, during the administration of President Andrew Jackson and the reign of King Rama III;

Whereas the United States and Thailand furthered their alliance with the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, (commonly known as the "Manila Pact of 1954") signed at Manila September 8, 1954, and the United States designated Thailand as a major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally in December 2003;

Whereas, through the Treaty of Amity and Economic Relations, signed at Bangkok May 26, 1966, along with a diverse and growing trading relationship, the United States and

Thailand have developed critical economic ties;

Whereas Thailand is a key partner of the United States in Southeast Asia and has supported closer relations between the United States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN);

Whereas Thailand has the longest-serving monarch in the world, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who is loved and respected for his dedication to the people of Thailand;

Whereas Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has issued a 5-point roadmap designed to promote the peaceful resolution of the current political crisis in Thailand;

Whereas approximately 500,000 people of Thai descent live in the United States and foster strong cultural ties between the 2 countries; and

Whereas Thailand remains a steadfast friend with shared values of freedom, democracy, and liberty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) affirms the support of the people and the Government of the United States for a strong and vital alliance with Thailand;

(2) calls for the restoration of peace and stability throughout Thailand;

(3) urges all parties involved in the political crisis in Thailand to renounce the use of violence and to resolve their differences peacefully through dialogue;

(4) supports the goals of the 5-point roadmap of the Government of Thailand for national reconciliation, which seeks to—

(A) uphold, protect, and respect the institution of the constitutional monarchy;

(B) resolve fundamental problems of social justice systematically and with participation by all sectors of society;

(C) ensure that the media can operate freely and constructively;

(D) establish facts about the recent violence through investigation by an independent committee; and

(E) establish mutually acceptable political rules through the solicitation of views from all sides; and

(5) promotes the timely implementation of an agreed plan for national reconciliation in Thailand so that free and fair elections can be held.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, Congressman FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this important resolution, which calls for a peaceful resolution to the political situation in Thailand through democratic means.

As we all know, earlier this year Red Shirt protesters occupied the streets of

Bangkok for 9 weeks. At first, these protests were peaceful. Over time, however, clashes between the Red Shirts and the security forces escalated into urban warfare. By mid-May, 89 people, the vast majority of them civilians, had been killed, and around 1,800 wounded, including a renegade Thai general who joined the antigovernment protests.

Since the outbreak of these protests, the government has made significant strides towards addressing the concerns of the protesters. Earlier this month, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva announced that he plans to hold new elections by the end of 2011.

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His fans called for all parties to join together in upholding the institution of the constitutional monarchy, working towards resolving fundamental problems of social justice, ensuring that the media can operate freely, creating an independent committee to investigate the street protests, and establishing political rules through solicitation of views from all sides.

I believe that the Prime Minister's plan is a positive step towards achieving democratic reconciliation. Earlier this month, the Prime Minister survived a vote of no confidence in the parliament over his handling of the protests, demonstrating that there is support for the PM to lead the country towards reconciliation.

I want to remind my colleagues that Thailand is one of the United States' closest friends and most dependable allies. In 1833 we concluded the first treaty with an Asian nation when we joined with Thailand in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. In 1954, we forged a military alliance. And in 2003, the United States designated Thailand as a major non-NATO ally.

Because of our long history, I believe that we must do everything we can to support reconciliation in Thailand and to convey our sincere hope that Thailand continues to prosper with democracy, stability, and the rule of law. That is why I cosponsored House Resolution 1321, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and moving it towards speedy adoption.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. DJOU), a member of the Armed Forces and Budget Committees and the first Member of Congress to be of half Thai descent.

Mr. DJOU. Thank you to the gentlewoman from Florida. I also want to express my thanks to Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA for bringing this resolution.

Mr. Speaker and Members, it is with some degree of sadness that I rise to speak in support of this resolution. Mr. Speaker and Members, it is my understanding from the House Historian's Office that I am the first Member of

the United States Congress of Thai ancestry.

For myself, Thailand is not just a place. It is not just an ally of the United States. It is some place where my mother was born and raised and most of my mother's side of the family continues to reside. I of course speak in very strong support of this resolution asking for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and dispute going on currently in Thailand.

Mr. Speaker and Members, for us here in this Nation, while we may have very strong and bitter disagreements between Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, we ultimately resolve our differences peacefully at the ballot box—not with a cartridge box. But now what is happening in Bangkok, Thailand, is saddening, disappointing; and it is something that we all, as Americans, must be troubled by. Thailand is an important ally for the United States in Southeast Asia and has been the lynch pin of our strategic interests in Southeast Asia for decades.

What I have seen on the streets of Bangkok and what my family has witnessed firsthand over the last few months is incredibly disappointing. Last month, Mr. Speaker, my family, when I talked to my cousins, it was with both joy and sadness to see what had transpired in our immediate family. It is with incredible honor and distinction that I was able to take the oath of office as a Member of the United States Congress. But my first cousins, who were born and raised in Thailand, unfortunately witnessed firsthand what was happening on the streets of Bangkok and saw firsthand the violence that was going on in the city center.

I think it is a reminder to all of us as Americans the uniqueness, the importance, the vitality and the incredible, incredible good fortune we have to call ourselves Americans.

But it is also what is happening in Bangkok that should remind us that we as a Nation should lead by example and remind all of the peoples of the world of what we can have and what we have here in this Nation, and it doesn't have to always end in violence.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I strongly urge passage of this resolution and hope, on behalf of my family, that these differences that are going on right now in Thailand are resolved peacefully.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to start out by thanking the gentleman from Hawaii for those insightful words and for his personal commitment and family honor in making sure that we can have a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

And I also rise in support of this resolution which honors our Nation's long-standing alliance with the Government and the people of Thailand. It

also calls for a settlement of the political situation in that country through peaceful and democratic means.

The scenes on television screens around the world last month of Bangkok burning were unnerving to all who wish the Thai people well. A 2-month political crisis, which killed 88 people and injured more than 1,800, reduced landmarked buildings in the Thai capital to ashes. The fact that Thailand's King, the longest-serving monarch in the world, has been hospitalized for the past several months only added to the sense of urgency over the fragile political situation.

So this resolution provides an opportunity to extend best wishes for a speedy recovery to His Majesty who celebrated the 60th anniversary of his coronation this past May 5.

Thailand is the first Southeast Asian nation to have a formal diplomatic agreement with us in the United States. A treaty of amity and commerce was signed with the administration of President Andrew Jackson in 1833. The offer of a herd of domesticated elephants by the present Thai King's great grandfather, while politely declined by President Lincoln as unsuitable for the American climate, has long been cited as an example of the warm and enduring bonds between the American and Thai people.

When the congressional leaders gathered in Statuary Hall last week to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, the flag of Thailand proudly flew with those of other allied nations behind the Speaker's podium. Thailand sent a regiment of 1,294 men to that conflict, of which 129, 10 percent, perished on the Korean peninsula. Further cooperation with the United States during the Vietnam and Iraq wars in east Timor and during a series of refugee crises in Southeast Asia has further cemented bilateral ties.

Cobra-Gold, the largest multinational military exercise in the world, has brought the United States and the Royal Thai Armed Forces annually together for the past 29 years to enhance regional peace and stability. The growing trade between our two countries has made Thailand America's 25th largest goods trading partner according to the statistics provided by the U.S. Trade Representative.

So it is clearly in America's interest for the recent violence to come to an end so that this militarily dependable and economically vibrant ally can move forward toward national reconciliation. Hopefully, the proposed national reconciliation will lead to a permanent healing of Thai society so that the Thai people do not escape from the tiger into the crocodile, as the Thai saying goes, moving from one crisis to another.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, calling for an end to violence through peaceful and democratic means and for a rededication to our vital alliance is something our Members should strongly support, as do I.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, as the senior Republican on the Asia Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and as the co-chair of the Friends of Thailand Caucus, I rise in favor of H. Res. 1321, which expresses support for resolving the political situation in Thailand through non-violent, democratic means. The relationship between the United States and Thailand goes back over 175 years to when the U.S. signed its first agreement with an Asian nation as part of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Siam. Thailand is one of America's closest friends and dependable ally. In fact, the King of Thailand generously offered President Abraham Lincoln a supply of elephants to help Union forces win the Civil War. Thailand has also contributed troops and supplies for U.S. military engagements in Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq for which we are forever grateful. After several decades of mostly military dictatorships, by the early 1990s, Thailand established democratic rule, furthering bolstering its status as a partner of the United States. As a result, in 2003, the U.S. designated Thailand as a major non-NATO ally. Thailand has also grown to be a significant trading partner of the United States. In fact, exports from Illinois to Thailand were one of the few bright spots during this recession—increasing 8.1 percent between 2008 and 2009. Thailand is one of the top 25 export markets for Illinois products. I was pleased and honored when the Ambassador from Thailand came to visit northern Illinois last April to learn more about what America has to offer.

However, ever since 2006, the political situation inside Thailand has been a state of turmoil. We have all been pained to see the media images of violence and burned-out buildings. Obviously, only the Thai people can resolve their own internal conflicts. I hope that this resolution can play a constructive role in helping to encourage all sides to resolve their differences peacefully. I trust that the 5-point national reconciliation plan proposed by the Prime Minister of Thailand and highlighted by this resolution is fully implemented.

This resolution is important to reaffirm our support for democracy, non-violence, and the people of Thailand. I urge the government of Thailand to follow through on its commitments as outlined in their 5-point plan. I also urge all parties in Thailand to join in this effort and settle their differences peacefully. Therefore, I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Res. 1321.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1321, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the political situation in Thailand be solved peacefully and through democratic means. I thank my colleague, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this important resolution.

Beginning in mid-March 2010, anti-government protestors occupied parts of Bangkok for nine weeks. Initially peaceful, the demonstrations and the response from the security forces became increasingly aggressive, eventually spiraling into urban warfare. Most of the protestors, known as the "red shirts," are loyal to former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra who was ousted in a military coup in 2006. On May 3, 2010, the Thai Prime Minister, Abhisit Vejjajiva, offered talks and proposed a "reconciliation plan" including an election on November 14, 2010 in an effort to end the polit-

ical crisis that immobilized Bangkok and killed 88 people and wounded hundreds. Although the violence has subsided, the political divisions remain stark and the threat of more confrontation lingers. Continuous progress has been made on the Thai Government's reconciliation plan. A public forum was convened on June 17, 2010 as a brainstorming session on how to move the process forward. According to the Prime Minister, the views gathered during this public forum reflect visions for both the Thai people and society and were in line with those of the government. Two committees will be set up by the end of June. The first committee will focus on strategies and priorities for reform to be proposed to the government and the second will work on nation reform assembly which will serve as a channel for all sectors of society to put forward their views and proposals with help from academic works.

Thailand has been a long-time military ally and a significant trade and economic partner. Our close relationship and longstanding friendship with Thailand dates back to 1883 when the two countries signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. Despite differences on Burma policy and human rights issues, shared economic and security interests have long provided the basis for U.S.-Thai cooperation. Thailand contributed troops and support for U.S. military operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq and was designated as a major non-NATO ally in December 2003. Thailand's airfields and ports play a particularly important role in U.S. global military strategy, including having served as the primary hub of the relief effort following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

As a major recipient of foreign direct investment, and with exports of goods accounting for over 70 percent of its GDP in 2007, Thailand's economy depends heavily on its trading partners. Economic relations with the United States are central to Thailand's outward-looking economic strategy. According to the U.S. Commerce Department, U.S. trade with Thailand in 2008 consisted of \$9.1 billion in exports and \$23.5 billion in imports. The State Department reports that although Japan is Thailand's biggest trading partner, the United States is currently Thailand's largest export market.

With more than 200,000 people tracing their ancestry to Thailand, our two nations share extensive social and cultural links.

We recognize that enormous challenges remain ahead. Thailand has a past of turbulence and turmoil—the country has experienced 18 coups in the past 77 years. I am hopeful that their continued progress can lead to an ever more fruitful economic and political relationship between the United States and Thailand, contributing to the well being and prosperity of both our nations.

The United States is hopeful that Thailand's political problems will be solved peacefully and through democratic means. The United States supports the national reconciliation plan proposed by the Prime Minister which encompasses upholding the monarchy, instituting political reform, and eradicating injustice.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1321, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CONGRATULATING 17 AFRICAN NATIONS ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1405) congratulating the people of the 17 African nations that in 2010 are marking the 50th year of their national independence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1405

Whereas in the year 2010, 17 African nations will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their independence from France, Italy, or Great Britain, including Cameroon (January 1, 1960), Togolese Republic (April 27, 1960), Republic of Mali (June 20, 1960), Republic of Senegal (June 20, 1960), Republic of Madagascar (June 26, 1960), Democratic Republic of the Congo (June 30, 1960), Somalia (July 1, 1960), Republic of Benin (August 1, 1960), Republic of Niger (August 3, 1960), Burkina Faso (August 5, 1960), Republic of Cote d'Ivoire (August 7, 1960), Republic of Chad (August 11, 1960), Central African Republic (August 13, 1960), Republic of the Congo (August 15, 1960), Gabonese Republic (August 17, 1960), Federal Republic of Nigeria (October 1, 1960), and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (November 28, 1960);

Whereas contemporary United States ties with Sub-Saharan Africa today far transcend the humanitarian interests that have frequently underpinned United States engagement with the continent;

Whereas there is a growing understanding among foreign policy experts that economic development, natural resource management, human security, and global stability are inextricably linked;

Whereas cooperation between the United States Armed Forces and Africa is growing, with United States and African forces routinely conducting joint exercises;

Whereas African governments are steadily taking a larger role in the provision of security and peacekeeping on the continent, due in part to United States security assistance and training;

Whereas Africa's growing importance is reflected in the intensifying efforts of China, Russia, India, Iran, and other countries to gain access to African resources and advance their ties to the continent; and

Whereas a more comprehensive, multi-faceted regional policy is essential for the United States to operate effectively in this increasingly competitive environment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people of the 17 African nations that in 2010 are marking the 50th year of their national independence;

(2) honors the lives of the ten of thousands of patriots, including innocent civilians, who died, were imprisoned, or otherwise dedicated their lives, often at great personal sacrifice, to achieving African political independence;

(3) commends the socioeconomic and political progress being made by these nations, while acknowledging the associated challenges that many still face;

(4) recognizes Africa's significant strategic, political, economic, and humanitarian importance to the United States; and

(5) renews the commitment of the United States to help the people of sub-Saharan Africa to foster democratic rule, advance civic freedom and participation, and promote market-based economic growth, and to alleviate the burden of poverty and disease that so many in the region continue to face.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to have 5 legislative days 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. RUSH for introducing this resolution that recognizes the 50th anniversary of independence for 17 African countries.

In the scramble for Africa between 1880 and the First World War, European countries extended their political and economic rule over the vast territory and resources of Africa. The colonizing powers saw this as an opportunity to continue commerce between Europe and Africa following the end of the slave trade.

At the Berlin Conference of 1884, the European powers carved up Africa among themselves to suit their demand for gold, diamonds, minerals, and spices. The age of European imperialism ravaged the human and natural resources of the African continent.

In 1941, President Roosevelt introduced the principle of the Economy of Imperial Colonies to Prime Minister Winston Churchill and started the debate over British and eventually all European imperialism. In 1957, sub-Saharan Africa's post-colonial era began with the independence of Ghana. Over the following several decades, all other African countries won their independence and joined the international community of sovereign nations.

Now, this resolution congratulates the people of the 17 African nations

who celebrate their 50th year of national independence in 2010. The American people have benefited greatly from our relations with African nations during the past 50 years.

African countries remain among our strongest allies in the world. We enjoy strong economic and political ties with many African countries, and we are the beneficiaries of strong cultural and social ties to Africa's people.

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Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1405, congratulating the people of 17 African nations on 50 years of independence and recognizing the importance of Africa to the United States.

Fifty years ago, 17 African nations threw off the yoke of colonialism and established themselves as independent nations. Unfortunately, the past half century has been anything but peaceful or joyful for all too many of these states.

Only two of the 17 nations we celebrate today—Mali and Benin—are considered to be free. One, Somalia, is virtually a collapsed state, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a brutal civil war that continues in the east has claimed millions of lives and has spawned some of the worst human rights atrocities known to man. Yet there have been some successes, Mr. Speaker.

African economies are growing at rates reminiscent of the great Asian tigers. Citizens are becoming increasingly aware of their rights and are demanding a greater stake in their economic and political futures, demanding accountability and driving the "Big Men of Africa" from office. Still, in Africa, independence has proven to be a necessary but insufficient condition for freedom.

At a battlefield in Gettysburg, the great Abraham Lincoln honored the fallen by stating, "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth."

So, Mr. Speaker, on this 50th anniversary of independence for no less than 17 African nations, we stand in solidarity with the people who won their independence but who continue in their struggle for freedom.

I urge my colleagues to support this timely and important resolution.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois, BOBBY L. RUSH.