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H. CON. RES. 106

Commending the crew of the United States Navy EP-3 Aries II reconnaissance aircraft that on April 1, 2001, while flying in international airspace off the coast of China, was involved in a mid-air collision with a Chinese fighter aircraft for their outstanding performance of duty and exemplary conduct and expressing the sense of Congress concerning continued United States reconnaissance and surveillance flights in the area.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 25, 2001

Mr. SKELTON submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending the crew of the United States Navy EP-3 Aries II reconnaissance aircraft that on April 1, 2001, while flying in international airspace off the coast of China, was involved in a mid-air collision with a Chinese fighter aircraft for their outstanding performance of duty and exemplary conduct and expressing the sense of Congress concerning continued United States reconnaissance and surveillance flights in the area.

Whereas on April 1, 2001, a United States Navy EP-3 Aries II reconnaissance aircraft on a routine reconnaissance and surveillance mission in international airspace off the coast of China was intercepted by two F-8 fighter jet aircraft of the People's Republic of China;

Whereas one of the F-8 fighters flew dangerously close to the EP-3 aircraft and collided with it, resulting in structural damage to the EP-3 aircraft and loss of altitude and control;

Whereas there have been other incidents of Chinese military pilots being overly aggressive in intercepting United States reconnaissance aircraft operating in international airspace;

Whereas the crew of the United States aircraft transmitted a series of “Mayday” distress calls and, despite severe damage to the aircraft, was able to successfully land at the nearest airfield, the Lingshui military airfield on Hainan Island, China;

Whereas the entire EP-3 crew conducted themselves in an exemplary manner, both in safely landing the aircraft notwithstanding the severe structural damage sustained and in following prescribed procedures for minimizing the compromise of sensitive national security information;

Whereas the 24 members of the EP-3 crew were detained against their will for 11 days before being released; and

Whereas after the landing, personnel of the People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Republic of China boarded the EP-3 aircraft, notwithstanding its status under international law as property of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That (a) Congress commends the 24 mem-
3 bers of the crew of the United States Navy EP-3 Aries
4 II reconnaissance aircraft that on April 1, 2001, was

1 struck by a F-8 fighter aircraft of the People's Republic
2 of China in a mid-air collision and in particular—

3 (1) commends the crew for the conduct of their
4 reconnaissance and surveillance mission in inter-
5 national airspace in accordance with international
6 law and prescribed United States Navy flight proce-
7 dures, notwithstanding the dangerous actions of the
8 Chinese aircraft;

9 (2) commends the pilot and other members of
10 the crew responsible for operation of the aircraft for
11 their outstanding performance following the collision
12 with the Chinese aircraft, first in regaining control
13 of the aircraft and then in successfully landing the
14 aircraft;

15 (3) commends the crew for their actions in ad-
16 hering to prescribed procedures for minimizing the
17 compromise of sensitive national security informa-
18 tion; and

19 (4) commends the entire crew for their personal
20 conduct while being detained by the People's Repub-
21 lic of China during the 11-day period following their
22 landing on Hainan Island, China.

23 (b) It is the sense of Congress that—

24 (1) the April 1, 2001, incident described in sub-
25 section (a) should not be the basis for a reduction

1 in, or cessation of, lawful reconnaissance and sur-
2 veillance flights in that area by United States Armed
3 Forces aircraft;

4 (2) the United States Navy EP-3 aircraft now
5 sitting on a military airfield on Hainan Island,
6 China, should be immediately returned to the United
7 States; and

8 (3) continued interception and aggressive tac-
9 tics by Chinese pilots toward lawful United States
10 reconnaissance and surveillance flights may under-
11 mine important relationships between the United
12 States and People's Republic of China.

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