

As many of my colleagues are aware, for 63 years the most extensive collection of files documenting the horrors of the Holocaust were extensively closed to survivors, heirs, researchers and family members seeking to find out the true fate of their loved ones or to document the horrific atrocities committed by the Nazis.

The Bad Arolsen archives, with its 50 million documents chronicling the fate of over 17 million victims of the Holocaust, is a vital resource for the remaining Holocaust survivors and their families who are struggling to bring closure to this painful chapter of history.

Many Holocaust survivors have died without knowing the details of a family member's deportation, incarceration, or death. The opening of the Bad Arolsen archives will now enable survivors as well as second and third generation survivors to gain access to vital information about their family history.

There are many individuals and organizations that deserve credit for their efforts in fully opening Bad Arolsen. In Congress there was a strong bipartisan effort to raise awareness about the world's largest Holocaust archive that was for all intents and purposes closed. To that, I would like to thank my colleague from south Florida, Congressman ALCEE HASTINGS, for his tireless work on this issue, as well as the many sponsors of this resolution, many of whom were also involved in efforts to reach out to the parliaments of the member states of the International Commission of the ITS to ensure the timely ratification of the amendments to the Bonn Accords.

Now that this vital archive has been made public, information unjustly denied to survivors and their families for the past 63 years can be brought to light. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. MANZULLO. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, at this time, we have no further speakers on the subject, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 854, as amended.

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

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read: "Expressing gratitude to all of the member states of the International Commission of the International Tracing Service on ratifying the May 2006 Agreement to amend the 1955 Bonn Accords granting access to vast Holocaust and other World War II related archives located in Bad Arolsen, Germany."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMEMORATING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 290) commemorating the 175th anniversary of the special relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of Thailand, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 290

Whereas the United States will celebrate the 175th anniversary of its relationship with the Kingdom of Thailand since the signing of the original Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1833 during President Andrew Jackson's administration and the reign of King Rama III;

Whereas the Kingdom of Thailand was the United States' first treaty ally in the Asia-Pacific region and remains a steadfast friend with the Thai and American people sharing the values of freedom, democracy, and liberty;

Whereas Thailand was designated as a major non-NATO ally in December 2003, which improved the security of both nations, particularly through joint counterterrorism efforts;

Whereas for more than a quarter century Thailand has been the host country of Cobra Gold, the United States Pacific Command's annual multinational military training exercise designed to ensure regional peace and promote regional security cooperation;

Whereas the United States and Thailand launched joint relief operations in the wake of the tragic 2004 tsunami from Utapao, Thailand, thus strengthening the overall capacity of the forces involved in providing relief and setting the model for effective humanitarian operations throughout the entire region affected by the deadly tsunami;

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 Congress passed H. Con. Res. 409 in 2006 commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Ascension to the Throne of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand;

Whereas on December 5, 2007, the people of Thailand celebrated the 80th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the world's longest serving monarch, who is loved and respected by Thai for his lifelong dedication to the social and economic development of the Thai people;

Whereas on December 23, 2007, the Royal Thai Government held nationwide parliamentary elections that should help pave the way for a successful return of stable democracy to Thailand;

Whereas approximately 500,000 Americans of Thai descent are living in the United States and share in the mutual pursuit of the American Dream;

Whereas Thailand is America's 20th largest trading partner with bilateral trade totaling \$30,600,000,000 per year; and

Whereas the bonds of friendship and mutual respect between the United States and Thailand are strong: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) commemorates the 175th anniversary of United States and Thailand relations;

(2) offers its sincere congratulations to the Kingdom of Thailand and the Thai people for their democratic, free, and fair election;

(3) commemorates the 80th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand and offers its sincere congratulations and best wishes for the continued prosperity of the Kingdom of Thailand; and

(4) looks forward to continued, enduring ties of friendship between the Thai and American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CROWLEY. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, as the lead Democratic sponsor of this legislation, I want to thank my friend and distinguished colleague from Illinois, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, Mr. Don Manzullo, for introducing this resolution before us today.

In 1833, 2 years before the publication of Alexis de Tocqueville's "Democracy in America" and 3 years before the Battle of the Alamo, the United States and Kingdom of Thailand signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, making the Kingdom of Thailand the United States' first treaty ally in the Asia-Pacific region.

Now, 175 years later, Thailand remains our oldest Asia-Pacific ally.

During this time, the relationship between our two countries has strengthened as it has changed with the times, and the friendship between our two peoples has grown deep and enduring.

Our military partnership, which began when King Mongkut offered combat elephants to President Lincoln during the Civil War, is now one of the closest in Asia.

Thai soldiers fought alongside U.S. military personnel in World War I, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Today, Thailand is one of only a handful of our major non-NATO allies and is a crucial partner in our efforts to combat international terrorism. Thailand is also the host country of Cobra Gold, U.S. Pacific Command's annual multinational military training exercise.

Our economic relationship is similarly robust, with bilateral trade topping \$30 billion annually.

On the political front, traditionally Thailand has been an anchor of stability and democracy in the volatile region of Southeast Asia. While it has been tested repeatedly by its own political upheavals, the Thai people have consistently responded by renewing their dedication to democracy.

The country has had 18 coup attempts since World War II, and Thailand's December elections only recently ended the latest coup government, which had come to power in 2006.

We all hope and believe that Thailand can move beyond the differences which led to the coup and return to its position as a democratic leader in Southeast Asia.

Key to resilience of the Thai political system is the strength and pride of the Thai people.

No one epitomizes the spirit of Thai people more than their beloved king, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

On December 5, 2006, the king turned 80 years old. We in Congress join the Thai people in celebrating this landmark birthday and wishing the king a continued long life.

This resolution commemorates the 175th anniversary of the special relationship between the United States and Thailand and congratulates Thailand on maintaining its commitment to democracy by holding national elections and returning to a civilian-led government.

I strongly support this resolution and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

And with that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today to recognize the 175th anniversary of the strong and enduring relationship between the people of the United States and the people of Thailand. The United States has no older ally in the Asia-Pacific region than the Kingdom of Thailand.

It was in the early days of our Republic, during the administration of Andrew Jackson, that the Treaty of Amity and Commerce was signed with King Rama III. Thailand has been a staunch friend of the United States ever since.

Remarkably, during the dark days of our Civil War, the King of Thailand offered to send President Lincoln a herd of elephants to help lead the Union to victory. While Lincoln did not take up the offer, the gesture was greatly appreciated.

More recently, Thailand provided support for our military forces during the Vietnam War. It has also served for more than a quarter century as the host for our Pacific Command's annual multinational military training exercise known as "Cobra Gold."

Our two nations have worked closely together on humanitarian issues as well. Thailand was of great assistance as the host nation for many of the refugees who came out of Indochina after the war there. More recently, Thailand has provided a safe haven for Burmese and North Korean refugees. Thailand also came together with the United States in launching joint relief operations following the tragic tsunami which caused its devastation in 2004.

Thailand is America's 20th largest trading partner. A half million Americans are of Thai descent, including the remarkable Tiger Woods. These are indeed the ties that bind.

It is my strong hope that the Government of Thailand will build on last

year's successful parliamentary elections by ensuring that all parties in Thailand are brought into the political process.

Thailand's rebirth of diplomacy is something which all Americans welcome. I therefore urge my colleagues to support this resolution which recognizes our oldest and one of our most loyal Asian allies.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, at this time I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MANZULLO. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. I thank the gentleman, Madam Speaker. I rise also to support this resolution commemorating the 175th anniversary of the special relationship that we have with the Kingdom of Thailand. I am an original cosponsor of this resolution, but I think this resolution rightly points out the improving security relationship between our two countries.

What I would like to share with my colleagues here today is the growing cooperation in law enforcement that we are having with Thailand.

Madam Speaker, last week, Viktor Bout, the most notorious of international arms dealers, was brought into custody by Thai authorities. A criminal complaint was unsealed in New York detailing Viktor Bout's efforts to sell mass amounts of weapons to the FARC, a foreign terrorist organization that operates in Colombia.

He was arrested in the final stages of arranging a sale of millions of dollars of high-powered weapons, including 100 advanced shoulder-fired missiles capable of taking out airliners. With the cooperation of Thai authorities, the "Merchant of Death," as Viktor Bout is known, is out of the game. He is being retired from the role he has played in the killings and maimings around the world. And this is good news to anyone who cares about checking strife in Africa, anyone who cares about stopping those who armed child soldiers, anyone who cares about checking support for transnational terrorists.

Because while many were attempting to stop conflicts across Africa, this is the individual who was pouring fuel on the fire. In U.N. report after U.N. report, Viktor Bout was cited as the chief sanctions buster, supplying arms to anyone who could pay. And I saw this up close when I chaired the Africa subcommittee and when I traveled across the continent. It is a bloody trail from Liberia and then across sub-Saharan Africa that he left.

Bout simultaneously, by the way, also managed to arm the Taliban while he was arming the Northern Alliance. As I said, he has had dealings with the FARC in Colombia, and he has been connected with Hezbollah. He is an international menace who needs to face justice, and we look forward to his expeditious extradition to the United

States. And thank you to the Thai authorities, because they are the ones who took him into custody.

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

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 290, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE 187TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1024) recognizing the 187th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating Greek and American democracy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1024

Whereas the ancient Greeks developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the Founding Fathers of the United States drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming our representative democracy;

Whereas Greek Commander in Chief Petros Mavromichalis, a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821 that "it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you";

Whereas Greece played a major role in the World War II struggle to protect freedom and democracy through such bravery as was shown in the historic Battle of Crete, which provided the Axis land war with its first major setback, setting off a chain of events that significantly affected the outcome of World War II;

Whereas the price for Greece in holding onto our common values in their region was high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War II;

Whereas throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of a few countries that allied with the United States in every major international conflict;

Whereas President George W. Bush, in recognizing Greek Independence Day, said, "Greece and America have been firm allies in the great struggles for liberty. Americans will always remember Greek heroism and Greek sacrifice for the sake of freedom . . . [and] as the 21st Century dawns, Greece and America once again stand united; this time in the fight against terrorism. The United States deeply appreciates the role Greece is playing in the war against terror. . . . America and Greece are strong allies, and we're strategic partners.";