

Any such thought should be put aside immediately. The safety of the armed forces is one of the primary concerns whenever they are sent into the field. The fact that the troops are volunteers instead of draftees should make no difference.

It apparently makes a difference to some people. The idea that Vietnam was bad because draftees were used, while Bosnia is of little concern because the armed forces are all-volunteer, has appeared in forums including broadcast talk shows and the Public Pulse. Jack Germond, a liberal syndicated columnist, mentioned the volunteer status of the troops on "The McLaughlin Group."

Indeed, President Clinton, in his televised speech asking for support for the Bosnia mission, said that "my most difficult duty is to put the men and women who volunteered to serve our nation in harm's way when our interest and values demand it."

Why was it necessary to remind his audience that these were volunteers? Does Clinton, who avoided the draft, see volunteers as something different? Certainly it doesn't come as news to the public that the armed forces consist of career and professional soldiers as opposed to draftees. That has been true for more than 20 years.

When Americans lay wreaths on Memorial Day, they don't ask whether each fallen soldier was a volunteer or a draftee. Their deaths are equally profound. Mothers, fathers, wives and siblings of volunteers grieve no less. Their children suffer an equal loss.

Clinton is sending American troops into a harsh and dangerous land. Booby traps and land mines litter the countryside. The potential for terrorism is high. Roads and airports are in ruins. Water supplies are undependable. The terrain is rugged, with deep mountain valleys and dense forests. Winter brings bone-chilling cold and almost impenetrable fog.

Many Serbs who live in Bosnia have vowed to fight until the lawful government of their country is brought down. The Muslims who control that government have brought in shadowy fighters from Iran, Afghanistan and Libya, among other places. The government has agreed to ask those fighters to leave. But will they leave?

The question is whether Americans should be sent into this impossible situation. Even those who volunteered to serve.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUERTO RICAN FLAG

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the design of the Puerto Rican flag, a symbol which represents the enormous contribution the citizens of the island have made to our Nation. The flag's anniversary will be honored by the Centennial Anniversary Committee of the Puerto Rican Flag at City Hall Park in Perth Amboy on December 17, 1995.

The flag was completed in New York City at Chimney Corner Hall in Manhattan on December 22, 1895. The flag of Puerto Rico has a rich history. Dr. Julio J. Henna led a group of 59 Puerto Ricans who organized the Puerto Rican section of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. As part of their activities, a flag was created to rally support for independence from Spain.

The Puerto Rican flag was designed by inverting the colors of the single starred flag of its neighbor in the Caribbean, Cuba. The first known incarnation of the symbol was made by Manuela "Mima" Besosa, the Puerto Rican Betsy Ross. The motion to adopt the flag was approved unanimously by the Puerto Rican revolutionaries.

For 100 years, the Puerto Rican flag has symbolized a proud people. It has served as a symbol of Puerto Rico's cultural tradition and heritage. Puerto Ricans are proud of their many contributions to the United States and they are proud of the unique identity their flag represents. Puerto Rico has been referred to as the "Shining Star of the Caribbean." Her citizens residing in Perth Amboy are shining stars in their community.

It is an honor to recognize the banner of a group of constituents I am proud to represent. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the 100th anniversary of the creation of Puerto Rican flag.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote Nos. 834, 835, 836, 837, 845, 847, and 848, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present I would have voted "aye." I ask unanimous consent that my statement appear in the permanent RECORD immediately following the above rollcall votes.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. STEPHEN H. CONGER, SR.

HON. DAVID FUNDERBURK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. FUNDERBURK, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Mr. Stephen H. Conger, Sr., one of the Nation's leaders in the hardwood lumber industry. As such, he has been a leader in helping provide wood products jobs in North Carolina and up and down the southeast coast.

He is to be commended for his tireless work in helping build Coastal Lumber Co. into the second largest producer of hardwood lumber in the United States and one of the largest independent wood products companies.

Mr. Conger's career with Coastal Lumber Company began in Lake City, SC, in 1949 after he earned a B.S. degree in forestry from the University of Georgia in Athens.

He is currently vice chairman of Coastal Lumber Co. a diverse wood products manufacturer headquartered in Weldon, NC, and he is an active member of the board of directors and advisory board of Coastal Lumber Co.

His career includes active leadership roles in hardwood lumber and relative associations. He is president of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association; past director of the National Hardwood Lumber Association and of the Forest Resources Group of the American Forest and Paper Association. He was a past president of the Southern Cypress Manufacturer's

Association, and past executive committee member of the AFPA International Trade Council, and he is a member of: the National Dimension Manufacturers Association; the American Plywood Association; the Southern Forest Products Association; the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association; the North Carolina and Virginia Forestry Associations; the Society of American Foresters; and the Holland Society.

Mr. Conger has also been active in civic, community and political affairs. Born in Asheville, NC, he is married to Marian Lansdell Meiere and has four children; Susan De Camp, Stephen Halsey, Robert Cody Lansdell, and Marian Lansdell Meiere. He served for 4 years as treasurer of the North Carolina Private School Association; is a member of various clubs; and was a delegate to two Republican National Conventions. Additionally, he has been a Halifax County finance chairman of Helms for Senate and 2d District chairman for Reagan-Bush, 1984.

Mr. Conger is an American success story. His hard work and persistence made him a leader in his field. As such, we all owe him a word of thanks and a debt of gratitude.

STEPHEN AND OTTIE ADAMS: SERVICE TO THE NATION

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 18, 1995

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Senior Chief Aviation Machinist Mate Stephen Lee Adams upon his retirement from the U.S. Naval Reserve and to honor his mother, Mrs. Oattie Adams, for her dedication and great service to this country. Both Mrs. Adams and her son Stephen are longtime residents of Fremont, CA, in California's 13th Congressional District.

Mrs. Adams is a widow and the mother of 10 children. Her eldest son, Larry, enlisted in the Marines and served in Vietnam in 1962. Her son Stephen, enlisted in the Navy, served 3 tours in Vietnam and, more recently, served in the Gulf war. Her son Phillip, enlisted in the Marines and served in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969. Her son Ricky enlisted in the Navy and received a medical discharge. Her son Kim enlisted in the Army and is a first sergeant (E8) with the 1st Armored Division in Germany, who is preparing to go to Bosnia within the next 3 weeks.

Mrs. Adams has devoted her life to this country and its veterans. In early 1966, her nephew Mike Bledsoe was wounded in combat in Vietnam and was sent to Oak Knoll Naval Hospital to recuperate. When she and her husband, Charles, a World War II Marine Corps veteran, visited Mike, they saw how depressing it was in the hospital wards—the patients had a few board games, playing cards and not much else. The Adamses were determined to fix things. They began by calling on the local business community and asking them to donate items. They also began to devote all of their weekends to the wounded veterans. They visited the wards each weekend to pass out the items such as candy and games that local businesses had donated, and stayed to talk with the patients. Mr. Adams also had a