

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRESSIONAL TRIBUTE FOR THE ARMY'S BIRTHDAY 1998

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 15, 1998

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, before there was a United States of America, there was an American Army, born on June 14, 1775. On the town square of Cambridge, Massachusetts, a small group of American colonists came to form an army, under the authority of the Continental Congress. Today, we look back over those 223 years and see clearly that the forming of the colonial Army was the prelude to the birth of our nation.

The Army's Birthday marks over two centuries of selfless service to the United States of America by more than 42 million Americans, who have raised their right hands to take an oath, both in times of crisis and in peace. Since that distant day, the nation, like our Army, has evolved, but the liberty it stands for remains constant, as does the Army's constant vigil to protect that liberty.

We look back to those early days, during the genesis of the ideas that would give birth to the United States of America. A nation—this nation—was preparing for its violent birth—a ripping apart of the bonds between the colony on the American continent and the mother country across the ocean. It all started with words. Patriots spoke publicly with bold rhetoric and other pamphleteers made the case for independence with the printed word, beckoning fellow citizens to resist oppression and insist on their inalienable rights. But in the end, independence was won on the field of battle, largely through the heroic deeds, sacrifices, and sustained determination of its newly created army.

From that victory on the battlefield, a nation emerged offering the boldest experiment of government in the history of mankind. Freedom sprung from its roots. As it was during its birth, America today is a haven for freedom-seeking people everywhere. Other nations perceive our country as a place where freedom flourishes within its own borders and where the citizens care about the freedom of other peoples. For over two centuries, our nation has stood up against despots, totalitarians, and tyrants wherever they erupted. We are people who have taken seriously our mandate to be a shining beacon of freedom and a torchbearer for democracy for the entire world. Every step of the way, America's Army has been there to help those in need and carry the mantle of freedom's call.

We have witnessed the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. These developments offer unparalleled opportunities for democracy to spread and flourish, but freedom is still endangered or absent in many parts of the world. To help satisfy that quest for freedom and stability, our Army is there.

The traditional purpose of our Army has always been to fight and win our nation's wars—to gain decisive victory on the battlefield and to prevail anywhere in the world, whenever or wherever the country needed us to fight. Today, however, our Army is called upon to perform in more demanding roles in more complicated scenarios involving America's interests. Victory in today's complex world means more than destroying an opponent's army. In the ever-changing world we live in, victory means helping keep the peace in Bosnia and in Macedonia. It means working with close allies on the Korean Peninsula to deter a heavily armed state to the north. Victory means restoring democracy in Haiti and saving lives by producing and delivering clean water to refugees in Africa. Victory means protecting our borders from drugs. The men and women of the United States Army have demonstrated time and again that they are trained and ready to respond anywhere in the world when called upon. Today's Army is a full-spectrum force. The people of the United States can be confident that our Army today can project power internationally, to deter potential adversaries and protect vital interests. On the home front, our Army stands ready to support civilian authorities in domestic emergencies. Whatever the need, our Army is there.

The nation should be proud of the achievements of our soldiers, men and women, who play a critical role in our nation's efforts to help shape the international security environment. This past year, for the first time, the Army had soldiers deployed in 100 countries. On any given day during the year, 30,000 soldiers are deployed to more than 70 countries on joint and combined operations and exercises.

Proud of the past role played throughout the history of our nation, America's Army remains vigilant to the dangers of today while simultaneously preparing for future challenges. The Army is harnessing the tremendous potential of technology to achieve information dominance. This dominance will allow the Army to do things never before possible on the battlefield and in other military operations around the globe. America's Army is actively leading the way into the 21st Century. That position of leadership will ensure that the United States maintains the world's best Army, today and into the future.

In the midst of these missions and prospects, the Army rightfully maintains a focus on our nation's most valuable resource—our people. In America's Army, we see clear examples of American ideals. We see drug free Americans living in law-abiding communities. We see men and women of different ethnic groups and religions working together in pursuit of common goals. We see the Total Army Team—active, National Guard and Reserve soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, and families—working together for the benefit of the nation. On this, the Army's 223rd birthday, we honor their dedication and selfless service to the Army and the nation.

Soldiers willingly pay a heavy price. To be a soldier is to bear seemingly insufferable burdens—the physical burdens of hard and demanding work, the emotional burdens of separation from family and friends, and the lonely burdens of leadership. Indeed, to be a soldier, is to be changed in ways that can never be undone. To be a soldier is to believe in something other than what one can achieve as an individual. On this day—the Army's Birthday—we pause to remember what it means to believe in something greater than ourselves. To be a soldier means to believe that what we do for our country and for people we may never know truly matters.

America's Army, stands ready today as it has for the past 223 years. Whenever the call comes, wherever the danger, and whatever the mission, the Army will be ready.

COMMEMORATING THE LANDING OF THE PALATINE IMMIGRANTS

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 15, 1998

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my friends and colleagues in Saugerties, New York, in commemorating the landing of the Palatine immigrants in Ulster County in October 1710. The Saugerties Historical Society will be dedicating a monument marking this event on Saturday, June 13th to celebrate the immigrant roots of our great nation and to admire the hard work and perseverance of these hard-working people who struggled to get to America.

The Palatine settlers in the Hudson Valley created some of the very first settlements of European peoples in America and their first winter was characterized by harsh weather—but they persevered, building a church and a schoolhouse, and settling into the Hudson Valley which reminded them so much of the Rhine river valley.

The monument which will be dedicated on Saturday will be placed on the grounds of Saint Paul's Lutheran Church, where the remains of the Reverend Joshua Kocherthal are interred. Reverend Kocherthal was the leader of the Palatines and the person who was to lead them to their promised land in America. It is not surprising that the ideals that they brought to America would later that century be embodied in our own Constitution—that people of different nationalities and creeds and beliefs could come together to make this country the great nation that it is. Mr. Speaker, and my fellow members, please join me in celebrating this great immigration to America and the dedication ceremony which will be held this Saturday.

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