

Rascon witnessed Sergeant Ray Compton being hit by gunfire. As Rascon moved toward him, another grenade dropped. Instead of seeking cover, Rascon dove on top of the wounded sergeant and again absorbed the blow. This time the explosion smashed through Rascon's helmet and ripped into his scalp. Compton's life was spared.

When the firefight ended, Rascon refused aid for himself until the other wounded were evacuated. So bloodied by the conflict was Rascon that when soldiers placed him on the evacuation helicopter, a chaplain saw his condition and gave him last rites. But Alfred Rascon survived. He was so severely wounded that it was necessary to medically discharge him from the Army.

The soldiers who witnessed Rascon's deeds that day recommended him in writing for the Medal of Honor. Years later, these soldiers were shocked to discover that he had not received it. It appears their recommendations did not go up the chain of command beyond the platoon leader who did not personally witness the events. Rascon was instead awarded the Silver Star. Rascon's Silver Star citation details only a portion of his heroic actions on March 16, 1966.

Perhaps the best description of Alfred Rascon's actions came 30 years later from fellow platoon member Larry Gibson:

I was a 19-year-old gunner with a recon section. We were under intense and accurate enemy fire that had pinned down the point squad, making it almost impossible to move without being killed. Unhesitatingly, Doc [as Rascon was called] went forward to aid the wounded and dying. I was one of the wounded. Doc took the brunt of several enemy grenades, shielding the wounded with his body.

In these few words, I cannot fully describe the events of that day. The acts of unselfish heroism Doc performed while saving the many wounded, though severely wounded himself, speak for themselves. This country needs genuine heroes. Doc Rascon is one of those.

Rascon was once asked why he acted with such courage on the battle field even though he was an immigrant and not yet a citizen. Rascon replied, "I was always an American in my heart."

Mr. President, these actions speak for themselves. I first met Mr. Rascon in 1995. He came to see me as the Inspector General of the Selective Service System, where he continues to serve his nation today. In the course of our conversation I learned of his amazing story, and as the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee at that time, I realized I had to act.

I contacted a number of officials at the Department of Defense and learned that his case could not even be examined because the law said time to consider those awards had expired. So, in the 1996 Defense Authorization Bill, we changed the law. Four years have passed since then; however, the Secretary of the Army and the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff now agree and have recommended that Alfred Rascon

be awarded the Medal of Honor, the Nation's highest award for valor. You have heard this story. The legislation authorizes the President to award the Medal of Honor to Alfred Rascon. If ever there was a case to recognize heroism and bravery far above and beyond the call of duty, this is it.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS—H.R. 1664

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon the Committee on Appropriations met and reported, en bloc, the Fiscal Year 2000 Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, the Fiscal Year 2000 302(b) allocations for the committee, and H.R. 1664, by a recorded vote of 24-3. At that full committee markup, the committee also adopted an explanatory statement of the committee's recommendations in relation to H.R. 1664. That explanatory statement, which was adopted in lieu of a committee report, was filed with the Senate by Mr. STEVENS (for himself and Mr. BYRD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. BAYH, Mr. DEWINE, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. HATCH). Subsequent to that markup, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be added as cosponsors: Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. KOHL, Mr. HELMS, and Mr. BREAUX.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. I further ask unanimous consent that the explanatory statement of the committee be printed at the appropriate place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS ON H.R. 1664, A BILL MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

Mr. Stevens (for himself and Mr. Byrd, Mr. Domenici, Mr. Bingaman, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Specter, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Hollings, Mr. Shelby, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Bayh, Mr. DeWine, Mrs. Hutchison, Ms. Landrieu, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Daschle, Mr. Dorgan, and Mr. Hatch)

The Committee on Appropriations, to which was referred "H.R. 1664, making emergency supplemental appropriations for military operations, refugee relief, and humanitarian assistance relating to the conflict in Kosovo, and for military operations in Southwest Asia for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes" reported the same to the Senate with various

amendments and an amendment to the title and presents herewith information relative to the changes recommended.

In order to expedite completion of congressional action relative to the emergency appropriations contained in H.R. 1664, as passed by the House of Representatives, as well as the emergency appropriations contained in H.R. 1141, the Fiscal Year 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation Act, funding for both measures was included in H.R. 1141. The conference agreement on that measure was passed by the House of Representatives on May 18, 1999, by the Senate on May 20, 1999, and the bill was signed by the President on May 21, 1999.

In accordance with an agreement with the bipartisan House and Senate leadership, two provisions which were contained in the Senate version of H.R. 1141 were deleted, without prejudice, from the conference agreement thereon. Pursuant to that agreement, these two provisions, the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program and the Emergency Oil and Gas Guaranteed Loan Program, are to be considered expeditiously by the Senate in a freestanding emergency appropriation bill.

Since the conference agreement on H.R. 1141 included the necessary funding for Kosovo operations, the committee recommends that the text of H.R. 1664 as passed by the House be amended to remove House language, and that language relating to the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program and the Emergency Oil and Gas Guaranteed Loan Program, with offsets, be added. In light of the emergency nature of the funding contained in the bill for these two critical programs, the committee hopes that no amendments will be offered to the measure and that it can be sent directly to the House. The Speaker of the House has agreed to permit a motion to go to conference within one week of receiving this bill after Senate passage, to allow normal appropriation conferees to be appointed, and to permit the resulting conference report to be brought up before the House. The committee urges that this matter be expedited by the Senate in order to hopefully complete action prior to the Memorial Day Recess on this critical emergency facing the steel and oil and gas industries and the tens of thousands of steel and oil and gas workers who have recently lost their jobs as the result of the massive influx of cheap and illegally-dumped imported steel and oil and gas over the past year.

EMERGENCY STEEL LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM

The Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Program, as reported by the committee, provides a two-year, GATT-legal, one billion dollar guaranteed loan program to back loans provided by private financial institutions to qualified U.S. steel producers. The minimum loan to be guaranteed for a single company at any one time would be \$25,000,000 (subject to a waiver), and the maximum would be \$250,000,000. A board is established to administer this program consisting of the Secretaries of Commerce (who would serve as chairman), Treasury, and Labor. This board would have the authority to determine the specific requirements in awarding these loan guarantees, including the percentage of the guarantee, appropriate collateral, as well as loan amounts and interest rates thereon. Repayment of the loans guaranteed under this program would be required within six years.

The committee makes these recommendations in response to the critical situation facing the U.S. steel industry. As a result of global financial chaos, in 1998, a record level of more than 41 million tons of both cheap and illegally-dumped imported steel flooded the U.S. market. This represents an increase of 83 percent over the 23-million ton average