

I am second-generation American. My grandparents literally walked across Europe to come to this country. My mother's side comes from Salonika, Greece. Prior to World War II, prior to the Nazis, there were approximately 80,000 Jews in Salonika. When the Nazis finished with those Jews, there were only 1,000 left. And I am not presumptuous enough to presume to think that my family would have been among those that were chosen to live.

My father's side from the Russia-Poland border after hundreds and hundreds of years of a thriving culture and civilization were obliterated, exterminated in this Holocaust. Nobody remained. Not the towns. Not the people. Not the culture. But here we are 60 years after the Holocaust. Here I am, a Jewish American, elected to serve her community and her country in the United States Congress, standing on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, alive and free, supporting the resolution honoring those that were lost.

This past January I had the privilege of attending the ceremony commemorating the liberation of Auschwitz. I attended it as part of a congressional delegation. As I walked in the freezing cold and the snow the mile from Auschwitz to Birkenau where the ceremony was taking place, we were surrounded by survivors that were in Auschwitz as children. Now in their late 70s and 80s, each one of them was anxious to talk and tell us when they had been there, what it was like, who they had lost, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, entire families obliterated. But there we were. And as we sat there for the few hours for that extraordinary ceremony commemorating that liberation of Auschwitz and the concentration camps, I was struck by the fact that it was truly a miracle that anybody had survived, because there I was sitting with four pairs of socks, boots, a hat, two pairs of gloves, four sweaters, a warm jacket and sitting under a blanket and freezing wondering how these people, how these extraordinary people managed to survive one day. Forget the gas chambers, forget the gruesome medical experiments, forget the random acts of man's inhumanity to man, the incredibility cruelty. Surviving day to day with no clothes, with no blankets, with no food is truly a testament to those people who managed to survive.

The ceremony we are authorizing today honors Holocaust survivors and those lost loved ones. It will also serve as a reminder that we must continue as a civilized people to battle hate and prejudice and violence and demand justice and humanity to all. It does not matter culture, ethnicity, religion, color of our skin. We all deserve to be treated as human beings with dignity. We must not allow this tragedy to ever be repeated again.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of this concurrent resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to note that I do not have any further speakers at this time on this bill, but I would note that due to the weather conditions a lot of people are not here; otherwise, we have many, many Members who support this and would be speaking on this. Even though they could not get here in time, many Members' thoughts in support of this resolution are with us now on the floor.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support of H. Con. Res. 63, to allow the use of the Capitol rotunda for a ceremony to commemorate victims of the Holocaust. Our Nation's Capitol is a symbol of freedom and democracy to so many. This resolution gives us a forum to pay service to the victims of the Holocaust. I pray that such a tragedy should never touch the world again.

A Holocaust memorial is not something to be taken lightly, or to be rushed without its due respect. The Holocaust is a product of authoritarian government and evil intentions, and we must continue to study and remember it, lest it be repeated. Hate, genocide, racial supremacism still occur in parts of the world and I believe that we as Americans can still focus our efforts on stopping them before they grow to an uncontrollable magnitude.

My heart goes out to the victims and survivors of Adolf Hitler's death camps. Every time I reexamine the Holocaust, and pay tribute to what happened, I am still shocked and pained by the organized, methodical killing that went on in Europe.

For the 12 million people that Nazi Germany exterminated, we must remember. For each of the 6 million Jews killed, we must respond. For the Gypsies, the gays, the political dissenters and any of the righteous people who spoke out against what they thought was evil—for this we commemorate and remember the Holocaust. It can never happen again.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 63.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 63.

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

There was no objection.

PERMITTING USE OF CAPITOL ROTUNDA FOR CEREMONY TO AWARD CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO JACKIE ROBINSON

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 79) permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to award a Congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, while I do not intend to object, I would like to give the chairman the opportunity to explain the resolution, and I would also like to acknowledge the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for having introduced this resolution.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. BERKLEY. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the House concurrent resolution, a resolution that permits the use of the rotunda for the ceremony to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Jackie Robinson in recognition of his many contributions to our great Nation.

Jackie Robinson was a great American who helped break the racial barrier in baseball. His family will be here for this ceremony. He is so deserving of this honor. I ask support for this legislation. I would note he played for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman today, not only for this resolution but the others and her time today on three very important resolutions honoring some great Americans.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words and urge passage of this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Nevada?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 79

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the rotunda of the Capitol is authorized to be used on March 2, 2005, for a ceremony to award a Congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation. Physical preparations for the ceremony shall be carried out