

Taliban and other terrorist forces in the lawless southern portion of the country. Since 2002, the Canadian people have lost 16 soldiers and one diplomat in this struggle. Last month on the same day that the Canadian Parliament voted to extend its mission in Afghanistan, Canada suffered its first-ever female combat death. We honor the ultimate sacrifice that Captain Nichola Goddard made in service to her country and salute the brave efforts of all the men and women in uniform, Canadian and American, who fight shoulder to shoulder in Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, I urge all NATO members to follow Canada's example and commit troops to even the most violent areas of Afghanistan.

I strongly support our resolution and ask all of my colleagues to do so as well.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, but I do want to thank Chairman BURTON for sponsoring this very important resolution. We often forget just how important our friend is to the north. Canada is a reliable ally, a good friend in thick and thin; so, again, I want to thank Chairman BURTON for sponsoring this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 408, as amended.

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. LANTOS. Madam 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 question will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 408.

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF GUYANA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 792) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and ex-

tending best wishes to Guyana for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 792

Whereas Guyana gained independence from the United Kingdom on May 26, 1966;

Whereas since Guyana became an independent country, the interests of Guyana and the United States have been closely aligned;

Whereas Guyana is a supporter and ally of the United States in the Global War on Terror, and joins the United States in promoting political and economic freedoms, combating poverty, crime, disease, and drugs, and promoting security, stability, and prosperity;

Whereas the bonds of association and friendship between the peoples of the two countries have been strengthened by the large number of Guyanese who have migrated to the United States, where they make significant contributions to both the United States and Guyana; and

Whereas Guyana is an integral member of the Caribbean region and a constructive partner of the United States in fulfilling the agenda of the Western Hemisphere: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the 40th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and extends best wishes to Guyana for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 792. The resolution, offered by my good friend from New York, Mr. MEEKS, congratulates the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for reaching its 40th anniversary as an independent nation.

H. Res. 792 is a timely and appropriate measure to let our friends in Guyana know that we support them as they pursue a strong and sustainable democracy. The resolution recognizes the 40th anniversary of Guyana's independence and extends best wishes to that nation for peace and further progress, development, and prosperity.

Guyana has been a real friend, Madam Speaker, to the U.S. and an ally in the fight against terror. The friendship between our two nations has been strengthened by large numbers of folks who have migrated to the United States. Here the Guyanese diaspora makes significant contributions to both the U.S. and Guyana. Guyana Americans are law-abiding people who contribute to American society as good citizens while respecting the values of our society.

Guyana joins the United States in promoting political and economic freedoms; combating poverty, crime, disease, and drugs; and promoting security, regional stability, and prosperity.

The government of Guyana is, as we speak, placing emphasis on every sector of society to ensure improved effi-

ciency, competitiveness, and sustainable development. These policies will therefore focus on strategies for development which expand and promote employment opportunities, increase foreign exchange earnings and private investment into the nation.

Guyana is an integral member of the Caribbean region and constructive partner of the United States in fulfilling the agenda of the Western Hemisphere, that is, promoting peace, security, democracy, and development throughout the hemisphere.

I urge all of our Members to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1545

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

Madam Speaker, let me first thank the sponsor of this resolution, my good friend and colleague on the International Relations Committee, Congressman MEEKS. He is a strong advocate, both for the Caribbean Basin and for people of African ancestry. I commend his dedication to these matters.

Madam Speaker, the short but significant history of Guyana illustrates the benefits that accrue to a nation that respects human rights and the rule of law, rejects the empty promises of Marxism-Leninism, and works closely with other democratic nations.

For the first 25 years after independence, successive Guyanese governments attempted to institute a socialist economy and closely coordinated their foreign policies with the so-called Non-Aligned Movement. The political rights of average Guyanese were systematically denied.

And the jungles of Guyana served as the home of the infamous Jonestown cult that took the life of our colleague, Congressman Leo Ryan, my friend and distinguished predecessor.

Spurred by frustration with increasing political repression and poor economic performance, hundreds of thousands of Guyanese sought freedom by immigrating to our shores and to Canada. In the last decade, Guyana has begun to turn itself around. The country has held several free and fair elections, it has generally respected human rights, and it has adopted market-friendly economic policies.

Guyana is becoming one of our trusted allies and is cooperating with us against narcotics trafficking and in the global war on terror.

Madam Speaker, as a result of Guyana's reorientation toward the principles that we hold dear, Guyana was one of only nine threshold countries under the Millennium Challenge Account when the first Millennium Challenge Account beneficiaries were chosen in 2004.

The designation as a threshold country recognizes Guyana's commitment to promoting democratic freedoms, investing in its people, providing economic opportunities for its citizenry.