

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTORY VETERANS' BENEFITS PROTECTION ACT

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, in times of war and in times of peace we must always show our gratitude for those of us who have worn the uniform of the United States military.

In the closing hours of the 109th Congress, legislation was passed a comprehensive bill, the Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. Included in this good bill was a bad provision to make it easier for lawyers to be involved in the Veterans claims process at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I have introduced the Veterans' Benefits Protection Act to correct this mistake. Bringing lawyers whose primary goal is their own financial gain into the system will only complicate the process and lead to inequities in a system that we count on to care for those who have served. A number of Veterans in my District have raised concerns that benefits may be slowed or diminished in value.

It is no secret that there are backlog problems that need to be fixed at the VA. Serious reforms should be considered. However, bringing more lawyers into the system will not be beneficial to a majority of Veterans who are patiently waiting for claims that are owed to them by the government.

A Veteran should be able to focus on paying for medicine and other daily necessities and never need to devote a portion of benefits that are owed to pay for legal fees. Turning to a lawyer for assistance should be an option of last resort for a Veteran with claims. There are numbers of resources: individuals, Veterans organizations, and Congressional offices that offer services to assist Veterans at no cost.

I urge my colleagues to consider supporting The Veterans' Benefits Protection Act, repealing a process that will likely lead to inequities in payments for those who have served.

RECOGNIZING STAN COTTRELL

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, today I introduced a resolution to recognize efforts taken by a Kentuckian to continue the dialogue between the United States and China.

Later this year Stan Cottrell, a distance runner born in Hart County, Kentucky will be involved in a "Friendship Run" across the Great Wall of China. Mr. Cottrell made his first run through China in 1984. Upon completion he will return to the United States to do a relay

with three men from China across our beautiful country.

Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of this measure recognizing Mr. Cottrell's unique efforts to extend the discourse between the U.S. and China.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JUDY REICH

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Judy Reich for her efforts on behalf of the community.

For years, Judy has been working to educate and enrich the lives of the people of Southern Nevada. In her capacity as Program Director and Community Affairs Director of KVBC, Channel 3, Las Vegas; Judy has been instrumental in the production of programs such as "Action Seniors," "Youth!" and directed Channel 3's Back to School Fair. Judy also established and coordinated Channel 3's Christmas Angel Tree Program and produced a number of Public Service Announcements.

In addition to her work at Channel 3, Judy has been very active in a number of community outreach, and philanthropic programs. Judy has served on the Marketing Committee and the Board of Directors of the Las Vegas Natural History Museum as well as on the Board of Directors of the After School All Starts Program. In addition, the Kids to Kids program and Desert Pines Middle School have all had the benefit of her leadership.

Among her many passions is her work with a number of public health awareness programs. For several of years, Judy has worked with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, where she has served on the Board of Directors, the Government Relations Committee, and as a volunteer lobbyist. Judy has also advocated for public health and awareness through her work with the American Heart Association.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my friend Judy Reich. Her efforts on behalf of the Southern Nevada community have enriched countless lives and should be applauded. I thank her for her dedication and commitment and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

COMFORT WOMEN

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in shock and disappointment at recent news from Japan, where it was reported that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has denied the historical fact that the Japanese Imperial Army forced as many as 200,000 women into sex slavery

during the Second World War, and publicly stated that Japan will not issue an apology, even if a resolution is passed in the United States House of Representatives.

On February 15, a hearing on this issue was held by the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of this House's Committee on Foreign Affairs. This was truly a historic occasion, because it brought three survivors of the Comfort Women horrors to Washington to tell their very real, very personal stories. Not only did that hearing give us an opportunity to reflect on one of the darker episodes of human history, it provided us with a chance to make history by bringing that darkness and forgotten tragedy to light and justice.

Those three women, now advanced in years—Jan Ruff O'Herne, Yong Soo Lee, and Koon Ja Kim—traveled thousands of miles to bring their stories to us, stories which were for many decades kept only in their hearts for reasons best understood only by those who had to endure what these women—and some 200,000 others throughout Asia—had to endure.

Some might ask: Why, more than 60 years after the end of the Second World War, are we discussing the ordeals of the so-called Comfort Women? Shouldn't this be considered a mere footnote to history? Aren't there more important or more pressing issues at hand in the early years of the 21st century?

Those who ask such questions fail to comprehend the lasting relevance of the experience of these women during the war, and of the continuing, obstinate failure, in the face of overwhelming evidence and international scrutiny, of the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge, apologize and accept unequivocal responsibility for their suffering and torture.

The recent news from Tokyo and Prime Minister Abe's inexplicable denial adds greater resonance to our exploration of this topic. One Japanese Diet Member said, with no apparent irony, that the Comfort Women brothels were no different than a buffet lunchroom. Nariaki Nakayama said bluntly: "Some say it is useful to compare the brothels to college cafeterias run by private companies, who recruit their own staff, procure foodstuffs and set prices."

Madam Speaker, without objection, I wish to insert into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an article on this issue that appeared in the New York Times on Thursday, March 1, reporting Prime Minister Abe's remarks.

ABE REJECTS JAPAN'S FILES ON WAR SEX

(By Norimitsu Onishi)

TOKYO, March 1.—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe denied Thursday that Japan's military had forced foreign women into sexual slavery during World War II, contradicting the Japanese government's longtime official position.

Mr. Abe's statement was the clearest so far that the government was preparing to reject a 1993 government statement that acknowledged the military's role in setting up brothels and forcing, either directly or indirectly, women into sexual slavery. That declaration also offered an apology to the women, euphemistically called "comfort women."

"There is no evidence to prove there was coercion, nothing to support it," Mr. Abe

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