

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CONDEMNING BURMESE REGIME'S UNDEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 317) condemning the Burmese regime's undemocratic constitution and scheduled referendum, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 317

Whereas in 1974, then-dictator General Ne Win and his regime redrew the 1947 State Constitution and held a referendum for a military-backed constitution, endorsing a civilian front for military rule, known as the Burmese Socialist Program Party;

Whereas in 1988, the people of Burma came to the streets in a massive popular democracy uprising to call for democracy, human rights, and an end to military rule and a single party system;

Whereas the current military regime violently crushed the mass democracy uprising in 1988, killing more than 3,000 peaceful protesters and taking over power from the previous regime;

Whereas the current military regime, officially known as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), known previously as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), held multi-party elections in 1990;

Whereas despite the threat and pressure by the military regime to vote for the candidates of the military-backed National Unity Party (NUP), the people of Burma voted 82 percent of Parliament seats for the candidates of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party, led by detained leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and allied ethnic political parties;

Whereas the military regime refused to honor the election results and arrested and imprisoned both democracy activists and elected members of parliament;

Whereas the SPDC over a period of 14 years held a National Convention to draft a new constitution in which the process was tightly controlled, repressive and undemocratic;

Whereas the NLD walked out of the convention in 1995 because participants were not allowed to table alternative proposals or voice disagreement with the military regime;

Whereas in 2005, the leaders of the Shan Nationalities League of Democracy (SNLD) were all arrested on false charges and sentenced to more than 90 years in prison each;

Whereas the people of Burma, led by democracy activists and Buddhist monks in August and September 2007, took to the streets in nationwide peaceful protests demanding the military regime participate in a meaningful tri-partite dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the elected political parties from the 1990 elections and representatives of the ethnic nationalities for national

reconciliation and a transition to democracy;

Whereas according to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Burma, Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, leading human rights groups and foreign diplomats based in Burma estimate the death toll from the August and September 2007 peaceful protests is much higher than reported by the regime;

Whereas the military regime brutally crushed the peaceful protests, killing at least 31 people, leaving nearly 100 missing, and arresting 700 additional political prisoners bringing the number of Burma's political prisoners to approximately 1,800;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement, issued by unanimous consent of all members of the Council on October 11, 2007, stated that "the Security Council strongly deploras the use of violence against peaceful demonstrators in Myanmar, emphasizes the importance of the early release of all political prisoners and remaining detainees";

Whereas the United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement also stressed "the need for the Government of Myanmar to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups, in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation with the direct support of the United Nations";

Whereas the United Nations and governments around the world also repeatedly called for the SPDC to hold a political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, her party, the NLD, and representatives of ethnic nationalities to achieve national reconciliation and democratization and reverse the decades-long misrule by the regime which has resulted in a downward spiral of Burma's economic, educational, social, public health and infrastructure sectors;

Whereas the SPDC has ignored the repeated requests of the United Nations and the international community to release all political prisoners, end attacks against civilians, and engage in a meaningful dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, her party, the NLD, and representatives of ethnic nationalities;

Whereas at the same time, the SPDC assigned a commission to draft a constitution on October 18, 2007, with 54 hand-picked participants, in an attempt to ignore past election results, to lock in a process that excludes representatives of ethnic nationalities and the NLD from political participation, and to legitimize continued military rule;

Whereas the latest version of the draft constitution seeks to codify military rule by reserving 25 percent of parliamentary seats for military appointees, permits the head of the military to intervene in national politics, and ensures that key government ministries are held by military officers;

Whereas in October 2007, the SPDC appointed Labor Minister U Aung Kyi as liaison minister to engage with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for possible talks with Senior General Than Shwe, leader of the SPDC, but there has been no true exchange or tangible result from the few talks that were held;

Whereas recently, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed through her party leaders that she is unhappy with the SPDC's unwillingness to establish political dialogue and she even urged the people of Burma to be prepared for the worst;

Whereas on February 9, 2008, the military regime announced that it will hold a constitutional referendum in May 2008 and a general election in 2010;

Whereas on February 12, 2008, the SPDC extended for another year the house arrest of U Tin Oo, Deputy Chairman of the NLD; and

Whereas early reports concerning the referendum voting indicate that Burmese voters were instructed how to vote under supervision of officials, sometimes under threat of physical violence and without an opportunity to read the ballot they were forced to cast: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) denounces the one-sided, undemocratic, and illegitimate actions of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) that seek to legitimize military rule through a flawed referendum process to adopt a new, undemocratic constitution;

(2) strongly urges that Burma's military regime begin a meaningful tri-partite dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1990 election-winning parties and representatives of ethnic nationalities toward national reconciliation, democracy, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and internationally recognized human rights for all Burmese citizens;

(3) demands the immediate and unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, detained Buddhist monks, and all other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience;

(4) denounces the SPDC for its failure to comply with the United Nations' recommendations and engage in a meaningful time-bound tri-partite dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1990 election winning parties and representatives of ethnic nationalities;

(5) calls for the SPDC to comply fully and immediately with the recommendations made by the United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement issued on October 11, 2007;

(6) urges the President to call for the United Nations Security Council to condemn the undemocratic referendum process and the SPDC's flawed constitution which will be the outcome of the referendum;

(7) urges the President to call for the United Nations Security Council to pass a binding resolution, which will instruct the regime to fully comply with the recommendations made by United Nations Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari and the United Nations Security Council Presidential Statement, and strengthen the mandate of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to engage in a meaningful and time-bound dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1990 election winning parties and ethnic nationality representatives towards an inclusive democratic national reconciliation;

(8) urges the President to push for a comprehensive arms embargo against the Burmese military regime at the United Nations Security Council so that weapons produced by foreign countries, including Ukraine, China, and Russia, that currently sell weapons to Burma's military regime, can no longer be used by Burma's military regime against civilians; and

(9) urges the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to involve itself more deeply in reaching out to the Burmese democracy movement and to work with the United Nations Security Council and the Secretary-General to promote meaningful political dialogue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my colleague Mr. RUSH Holt for offering this important measure and for his tireless leadership in promoting human rights and democracy in Burma.

For more than a decade, the military regime in Burma has ignored the democratic aspirations of the Burmese people. As we saw in its bloody repression of last September's "Saffron Revolution," the regime continues to trample on human rights. And it is squandering Burma's vast natural resources through spending on the regime and its weapons, while leaving the overwhelming majority of Burma's people in poverty.

Now the regime plans a May 10 referendum to institutionalize these policies through a sham constitution. The referendum attempts to give democratic legitimacy to a process that was designed by the Burmese military, implemented by the Burmese military, and benefits only the Burmese military. As such, it is anything but democratic.

Today, as Burma recovers from a devastating storm that left thousands dead and missing, with many more homeless, our sympathies are with the Burmese people. But it is not natural disasters but rather the yoke of the Burmese military that has left Burma's people impoverished and calling for greater political participation for more than 20 years.

It is especially appropriate that we stand with the Burmese people today as they face not only the devastation of the cyclone but also the continued devastation caused by this regime. Accordingly, I call on my colleagues to join me in condemning the Burmese junta's sham referendum and constitution.

By passing H. Con. Res. 317 today, we call on the administration, the United Nations, and the international community to support a legitimate, inclusive dialogue between the regime and opposition forces. Only such an inclusive tripartite negotiation can put Burma back on the path to peace and prosperity, where it rightfully belongs.

Please join me in support of H. Con. Res. 317 and offering support for restoration of real democracy in Burma.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, which points out that the smoke screen of a sham constitution and a bogus referendum is not a path leading to free Burma.

It seems a particularly callous decision for the Burmese junta to go forward with its planned referendum on May 10, just 1 week after a tropical cyclone devastated the people of that nation. The generals, by ignoring the almost 4,000 dead and 100,000 homeless, are concerned only about their narrow political agenda.

We in Congress offer our heartfelt condolences to those in Burma who lost family and friends in this tragic natural disaster. We urge the junta to immediately lift its irrational restrictions on international humanitarian organizations operating inside Burma. Only then can they provide the emergency relief necessary for the suffering people of this country.

The generals in Rangoon, however, have cynically determined that time is on their side. They are convinced that, while the world's attention turns away from the bloody events of last fall to other crises in other parts of the world, they can carry on business as usual oppressing their people. That business includes implementing plans for the May 10 referendum on their undemocratic constitution. This constitution ignores the will of the people of Burma as expressed in the streets of Rangoon and other cities last fall. This one-sided constitution seeks to legitimize military dictatorship rule. The current junta seized power by crushing a mass democracy uprising over two decades ago. We and the people of Burma will commemorate the 20th anniversary of that uprising on August 8, the very date the Beijing Olympics begins. On that date, advocates of a free Burma will hold activities around the world to remind the Burmese generals and their Beijing allies that the torch of Miss Liberty shines brighter than any Olympic torch.

The generals have turned to a sham constitutional provision in an effort to ignore the international call for a genuine dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and members of the opposition and minority groups. The goal of that dialogue is to achieve "inclusive national reconciliation." This call for dialogue was contained in the statement released by the U.N. Security Council President on October 11, 2007, with the unanimous consent of all members of the council.

Instead of heeding the urgings of the international community, however, these generals have brazenly continued their roundup of those involved in the Saffron Revolution last fall, including Buddhist monks, and they have put them in jail. They have also refused to release Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

The Burmese junta treated the U.N. special envoy to Burma with disdain during his last visit. They refused him access to the top leadership and flatly rejected his offer of independent monitoring of the referendum vote. The U.N. envoy himself has admitted the visit did not yield any tangible results.

The junta's attitude of brazen indifference following its bloody suppres-

sion of the Saffron Revolution cannot stand unchallenged by the world community.

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This Congress must raise strong objection to the junta's cynical plan to try to maintain rule through a sham constitution.

I urge that my colleagues stand for a free Burma by voicing vigorous support of this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman from New Jersey, Representative RUSH HOLT.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady.

Today all of our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Burma. The deaths and destruction caused by the cyclone Nargis which hit Burma over the weekend are still being discovered. Recent reports indicate that maybe 10,000 were killed and hundreds of thousands left without shelter and clean water. Yet despite this horrific natural disaster, the Burmese junta has announced it will go ahead with the scheduled sham constitutional referendum this Saturday.

Today, we are considering our resolution to condemn the Burmese regime's undemocratic constitution and the scheduled sham referendum to legitimize that constitution. As the sponsor of H. Con. Res. 317, I want to thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN, who are both lead sponsors of the resolution, for their support in helping to move this.

We sometimes ask, and our constituents sometimes ask, whether governments are relevant to our daily lives, to their daily lives. Well, certainly here we see a negative example of what a difference a government can make. The ruling junta did not warn the people, so I understand, of the oncoming cyclone. They have done little to provide humanitarian assistance.

I strongly encourage our State Department to heed the calls of the international community and provide whatever emergency humanitarian assistance the Government of Burma will accept. I do recall visiting Burma several decades ago following an earthquake that devastated Pagan, and the willful unwillingness of the military dictatorship then to accept international help.

I have long been interested in Burma and the future of the Burmese people. I first traveled there some decades ago, and I was struck by the amazing damage and destruction that a despotic antidemocratic government can inflict on an economy, on a country and on the people.

Under military rule since 1962, Burma was once called the "rice bowl of Asia" because of its rich resources, its fertile land and its productive people. But with the ruling junta, its promise and its potential have steadily declined. This promising country's resources have been channeled into supporting the military, and it is now one

of the most impoverished countries in the world.

Prior to this week's scheduled sham constitutional referendum, the junta has allowed an election once before. In 1990 the National League For Democracy, the NLD, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won an election landslide. Yet despite the NLD winning four out of every five parliamentary seats, the regime locked up the NLD winners, and to this day Aung San Suu Kyi remains under arrest. For her bravery, courage and her fight for true democracy in her home country, she has been awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Yet 18 years later, this Nobel laureate remains locked away.

Those are among the reasons that this House today is considering, and should pass, this resolution to condemn the Burmese regime's undemocratic constitution and the sham referendum to legitimize it.

The Burmese people are determined to enjoy the same rights and freedoms that so many across the world, take for granted. The heroic efforts of the opposition leader and Peace Prize winner and others have given hope to victims of terrible oppression, and they deserve our support. This resolution sends a strong signal to the people of Burma that we stand with them in their struggle for democracy. The resolution denounces the one-sided totalitarian and illegal act by the junta to try to legitimize military rule through their unilaterally drafted constitution.

The monks who were detained following the September Saffron Revolution and all other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience should be released. The resolution urges President Bush to call on the world community not to accept or recognize the junta's constitution.

When several of us Members of Congress held a meeting here of the Human Rights Caucus on the Saffron Revolution to hear testimony from the monks who stood up in a nonviolent way to one of the most despotic regimes in the world, the monks told a gripping and heart-rending tale. They called on Congress to approve this resolution as soon as possible, and today the House answers that call.

Earlier this year, for a joint session of Congress, I invited a young man, Richard Chio, a refugee from Burma and a resident of my congressional district, to sit as my guest here in the gallery of this House. He sat and watched the State of the Union address, having resettled only months before in the United States with the help of Lutheran Social Services of New Jersey. He told me that this day in Washington "was like living in a dream." It was the most amazing day in his life to see that a government like ours could exist, because he knew nothing like that in Burma.

Richard's story and the countless others remind us of why now, more than ever, especially following the devastation of this cyclone in Burma, the

people of the United States need to stand with the people of Burma and oppose the junta.

This referendum later this week would be a sham, a fake, pretend; it would be bogus, fraudulent, spurious, phony. Use whatever word you want. But it would not be democratic. It would not be to the benefit of the people of Burma who want a true democracy.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their support and the many cosponsors of this resolution. I also want to thank Eric Richardson with Mr. BERMAN and Dennis Halpin with the ranking member for their assistance in preparing this resolution. I also want to thank the U.S. Campaign for Burma and Jen Quigley for the excellent work they do every day and have done year in and year out to promote democracy in Burma.

I urge passage of this resolution.

Ms. WATSON. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it should be well noted that China continues to support this military dictatorship in Burma. And as we approach the Chinese Olympics this year, we should remember that China does not burn the torch for liberty and freedom throughout the world, but they continue to support dictatorships like those in North Korea, Darfur and Burma.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, as the representative in Congress of Fort Wayne, Indiana—home to an estimated 3,000 to 3,500 people from Burma, the greatest population of Burmese in the United States—I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 317.

Over the last year, Indiana's Third Congressional District has seen a marked increase in the number of refugees from Burma, although Burmese have lived in northeast Indiana for some time. To help them immerse as quickly as possible into our community, my office has been working with Federal and State agencies, as well as local resettlement organizations. Over the years, I've had an opportunity to learn about this Southeast Asian country and its diverse, proud, and resilient people.

More than anything, the refugees tell me about the brutal oppression they endured under the military junta in Burma, known as the State Peace and Development Council. Many of these refugees still have loved ones living in destitute, overseas refugee camps, or relatives who have been unable to escape Burma, and they worry greatly about their plight.

They also tell me about Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel laureate and democratically elected leader of Burma, who has been under house arrest for years, barred from assuming the Prime Ministerial post to which she was rightly elected. Her consistent advocacy of nonviolent resistance against the military junta is inspiring, and it was for her strong leadership that the Nobel Committee awarded her its Peace Prize. The United States must unequivocally support Aung San Suu Kyi as the legitimate leader of Burma.

Despite international recognition of its gross human rights violations, Burma's regime continues to use violence and murder to terrorize its own people, most recently during last Sep-

tember's demonstrations. I have spoken in opposition to Burma's military junta for a number of years, and today I am once again condemning it for forcing a referendum that seeks to lend false credibility to an undemocratic constitution. As a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 317, I am deeply concerned by what the regime will do to retain its tight grip on power.

Today, as the House considers this concurrent resolution, I also join my colleagues in being mindful of the terrible devastation caused by a cyclone that ripped through Burma over the weekend. I offer my condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones in this staggering disaster, and I earnestly hope that the regime in Burma will accept international assistance to help Burma's people recover from this tragedy.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 317: Condemning Burma's Undemocratic Constitutional Referendum, introduced by my colleague Congressman HOLT, which I am proud to cosponsor. I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for bringing this important legislation to the floor today, as well as his ongoing leadership on this issue.

Last year, we witnessed the biggest protests in Burma since the popular uprising in 1988. Initially triggered by a sharp and unexpected increase in fuel, last September's protests, known as the Saffron Revolution, became a statement against the government attacks on Buddhist monks attending a peaceful protest in early September. Following the government's failure to apologize for these appalling actions, Burma's spiritual and nonviolent monks began protesting in large numbers. Burma's monks are highly revered, and have historically played a prominent role in political protests within the country. They form the social foundation of their nation, and it is extremely significant that tens of thousands of monks participated in the recent demonstrations.

The events of last September illustrated the Burmese military regime's ongoing repression of basic human rights. The military has, for many years, ignored the democratic aspirations of the Burmese people, perhaps best seen in the ongoing restrictions on prominent pro-democracy leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party won a landslide electoral victory in 1990 but has never been allowed to govern. In addition, the regime is squandering Burma's natural resources, with proceeds going to the military and its weapons, instead of to the people of Burma, the overwhelming majority of whom live in poverty.

Military-run enterprises continue to control key sectors of the Burmese economy, which, in general, is plagued by corruption, severe mismanagement, and a flourishing black market. Burma is the world's largest exporter of teak, as well as a principal source of jade, pearls, rubies, and sapphires. These resources, combined with extremely fertile soil and offshore oil and gas deposits, are spent in ways that only benefit the military elite while the vast bulk of the Burmese people are increasingly destitute.

Mr. Speaker, this repressive government is now planning a May 10th referendum, which will have the effect of institutionalizing these policies through a sham constitution. The military regime in Burma is attempting to give

democratic legitimacy to a process, controlled from start to finish by the Burmese military, which is anything but democratic. A true democracy benefits the people; this referendum will only benefit the Burmese military.

The legislation that we are considering today, H. Con. Res. 317, calls on the Administration, the United Nations, and the international community to support legitimate, inclusive dialogue between the regime and opposition forces. It denounces the regime's one-sided, undemocratic attempt to legalize military rule with the constitution and its related referendum, and insists that Burma's military regime begin a meaningful tri-partite dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi, winners of the 1990 election, and ethnic nationality representatives toward full restoration of democracy and internationally recognized human rights for all Burmese citizens. Further, it urges the President to call for the U.N. Security Council not to recognize the constitution and to pass a resolution instructing the Burmese regime to enter into meaningful dialogue, and to push for a comprehensive U.N. Security Council arms embargo against the Burmese military regime.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is an unambiguous call for truly inclusive, tripartite dialogue. Burma possesses one of the most ancient, rich, and ethnically and religiously diverse cultures on earth. Like the indomitable Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader democratically elected to lead the nation in 1990 but who instead has been imprisoned for 12 of the last 18 years, the people of Burma are resilient and draw strength from their convictions and the diversity of their nation. Only through such international negotiation can we hope to put Burma back on the path to peace and prosperity. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important and timely legislation.

Mr. POE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Con. Res. 317, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

DITH PRAN

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1109) honoring the memory of Dith Pran by remembering his life's work and continuing to acknowl-

edge and remember the victims of genocides that have taken place around the globe, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1109

Whereas Dith Pran was born on September 23, 1942, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, a provincial town near the ancient temples at Angkor Wat;

Whereas Mr. Dith, a photojournalist and human rights advocate, became the face of the atrocities in Cambodia carried out by the Khmer Rouge;

Whereas Mr. Dith learned French and English in school and became a translator of Khmer for the United States Armed Forces and visiting film crews while he worked as a receptionist at a hotel near Angkor Wat prior to the escalation of the Vietnam War;

Whereas, during much of the early 1970s, Mr. Dith was a guide, interpreter, and friend of Sydney H. Schanberg of the New York Times;

Whereas the friendship and partnership between Mr. Dith and Mr. Schanberg became the basis for the 1984 film, "The Killing Fields", which showed the brutality perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge from 1975 to 1979 under Pol Pot;

Whereas nearly 2,000,000 Cambodians died from 1975 to 1979 at the hands of the Khmer Rouge;

Whereas Mr. Dith saved Mr. Schanberg and other Western journalists from being executed by persuading Khmer Rouge soldiers that they were journalists sympathetic to the Khmer Rouge cause;

Whereas Mr. Dith's wife and children were able to leave Cambodia for the United States through Mr. Schanberg's connections, but Mr. Dith was unable to obtain a passport or visa to leave the country;

Whereas, for four years, Mr. Dith disguised himself as a peasant, worked in rice fields, and endured regular beatings and harsh labor while living on a diet of a tablespoon of rice a day because the Khmer Rouge would often kill anyone who appeared educated or even wore glasses;

Whereas, in November 1978, Mr. Dith returned to his home of Siem Reap, and discovered that 50 members of his family had been killed;

Whereas Mr. Dith fled 60 miles to the border of Thailand and arrived, on October 3, 1979, where Mr. Schanberg flew to greet him;

Whereas Mr. Dith had an emotional reunion with his wife, Ser Moeun Dith, and their four children when he arrived in San Francisco;

Whereas Mr. Dith moved to New York, New York, and was hired in 1980 as a photographer for The New York Times;

Whereas Mr. Dith was a tireless activist speaking out about the Cambodian genocide and once stating, "I'm a one person crusade";

Whereas soon after the release of the film "The Killing Fields", Mr. Dith became a United States citizen and a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

Whereas, in 1994, Mr. Dith worked to help pass the Cambodian Genocide Justice Act of 1994, sponsored by former Senator Charles Robb of Virginia, which established an Office of Cambodian Genocide Investigations at the Department of State;

Whereas, on March 30, 2008, Mr. Dith, a resident of Woodbridge, New Jersey, passed away at the age of 65; and

Whereas the Dith Pran Holocaust Awareness Project was established to create aware-

ness about the Cambodian genocide: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors the life and legacy of Mr. Dith for his commitment to raising awareness about the atrocities that took place under the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia;

(2) recognizes his courage and his endless pursuit for justice for the victims of the Cambodian genocide and all peoples around the world who have been victims of genocide; and

(3) honors the memory of Mr. Dith by remembering his life's work and continuing to acknowledge and remember the victims of genocides that have taken place around the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. SIRES, for offering this important legislation in memory of a great American, Dith Pran. Through the film "The Killing Fields," Dith Pran is for many Americans the face of the Cambodian genocide. That movie documented Dith Pran's personal struggle, his friendship and cooperation with New York Times reporter Sydney Schanberg, and the larger horror of the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia.

Much as "The Killing Fields" reminded Americans of the Cambodian genocide, Mr. Dith's life work as a photojournalist and U.N. goodwill ambassador raised awareness around the world of the atrocities that took place for those in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge.

This resolution commemorates the work of Dith Pran's life, including his work as a photojournalist for the New York Times, his bravery in surviving the Cambodian genocide and escaping to Thailand in 1979; his advocacy for the Cambodian refugees and victims of genocide around the world after he became a U.S. citizen and a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations in 1994; and his work with former Senator Charles Robb to help pass the Cambodian Genocide Justice Act establishing an Office of Cambodian Genocide Investigations at the State Department.

Mr. Dith's work laid the foundation for ongoing justice and reconciliation tribunals within Cambodia that continue to this day.