

H.RES.376 -- Calling for the repatriation of POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War. (Introduced in House - IH)

HRES 376 IH

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H. RES. 376

Calling for the repatriation of POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 27, 2011

Mr. RANGEL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling for the repatriation of POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War.

Whereas 61 years have passed since communist North Korea invaded the Republic of Korea, thereby initiating the Korean War on June 25, 1950;

Whereas during the Korean War, nearly 1.8 million members of the United States Armed Forces served in theater along with the forces of the Republic of Korea and 20 other Allied nations under the United Nations Command to defend freedom and democracy in the Korean Peninsula;

Whereas 58 years have passed after the signing of the ceasefire agreement at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953, and the peninsula still technically remains in a state of war;

Whereas talks for a peace treaty began on July 10, 1951, but were postponed due to disagreement between the United Nations and North Korea regarding the repatriation of prisoners of war (POWs);

Whereas the repatriation of Korean War POWs did not begin until September 4, 1953, at Freedom Village, Panmunjom;

Whereas the majority of surviving United Nations POWs were repatriated or turned over to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in accordance with Section 3 of the Armistice Agreement, but the United Nations Command noted a significant discrepancy between the Command's estimate of POWs and the number given by North Korea;

Whereas the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office of the Department of Defense (DPMO) lists more than 8,000 members of the United States Armed Forces as POWs or missing in action who are unaccounted for from the Korean War;

Whereas many South Korean POWs were never reported as POWs during the negotiations, and it is estimated as many as 73,000 South Korean POWs were not repatriated;

Whereas the Joint Field Activities conducted by the United States between 1996 and 2005 yielded over 220 sets of remains that are still being processed for identification at Joint Prisoners of War, Missing in Action Accounting Command in Hawaii;

Whereas the United States recovery operations in North Korea were suspended on May 25, 2005, because the teams were prohibited from using communications equipment;

Whereas North Korea has consistently refused to discuss the POW issue, and the exact number of South Korean POWs who were detained in North Korea after the war is unknown, as is the number of those still alive in North Korea;

Whereas approximately 100,000 South Korean civilians (political leaders, public employees, lawyers, journalists, scholars, farmers, etc.) were forcibly abducted by the North Korean Army during the Korean War, but North Korea has neither admitted the abductions occurred nor accounted for or repatriated the civilians;

Whereas former South Korean POWs and abductees who escaped from North Korea have provided valuable and credible information on sightings of American and South Korean POWs in concentration camps;

Whereas tens of thousands of friends and families of the POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War, including the National Alliance of POW/MIA Families, POW/MIA Freedom Fighters, the Coalition of Families of Korean & Cold War POW/MIAs, the International Korean War Memorial Foundation POW Affairs Committee, Rolling Thunder, Inc., the Korean War Abductees Family Union, the Korea National Red Cross, World Veterans Federation, and the National Assembly of Republic of Korea, have called for full accounting of the POW/MIAs and abductees by North Korea; and

Whereas July 27, 2011, is the National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, which is a day of remembrance and recognition of Korean War veterans and those persons who never returned home from the Korean War: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) recognizes there are American and South Korean prisoners of war and civilian abductees from the Korean War who are still alive in North Korea and who want to be repatriated;

- (2) calls upon the United States Government to resume search and recovery operations in North Korea for remains of American POWs;
- (3) recommends that the United States and South Korean Governments jointly investigate reports of sightings of American POW/MIAs;
- (4) encourages North Korea to repatriate any American and South Korean POWs to their home countries to reunite with their families under the International Humanitarian Law set forth in the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of Prisoners of War;
- (5) calls upon North Korea to admit to the abduction of more than 100,000 South Korean civilians and reveal the status of the abductees; and
- (6) calls upon North Korea to agree to the family reunions and immediate repatriation of the abductees under the International Humanitarian Law set forth in the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.