

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, due to the horrific and incredible attack on the World Trade Center, I traveled to my district to offer assistance and comfort to my constituents in this time of great tragedy. Because of my absence from the House on September 13th, I missed rollcall votes numbered 338, 339 and 340. Had I been present, I would have wholeheartedly voted in favor of the resolution condemning the terrorists attacks against the United States and extending Congress' deepest condolences to the victims of these heinous and cowardly actions; I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2882, the measure that expedites payments of benefits for the public safety officers killed or injured; and H.R. 2884, the legislation that extending tax benefits for the September 11th victims. In addition, I would have voted "yea" on the resolution urging people to fly the U.S. flag.

My thoughts these past days and in the coming weeks are with all those in my beloved city whose lives have been affected by the tragedy in lower Manhattan. I join everyone in our city in praying for our many friends who are missing and injured and for their loved ones.

It is an honor everyday to serve in the House of Representatives as a representative of the greatest city in the world. As soon as I learned of the attacks on the Trade Center, I drove to Manhattan to be with my family and offer assistance to my friends and neighbors. My heart is warmed by the response of our city—the rescue workers, the medical response teams, the orderly evacuation of lower Manhattan by the people who work and live there and the thousands who have gone to blood donor centers.

All New Yorkers will forever remember the bravery of the rescue workers who rushed into lower Manhattan as the Trade Center towers burned. It is apparent that many hundreds of these firefighters, cops and medical personnel may be among the thousands now unaccounted for. We in the city witness countless selfless acts by these heroes on a daily basis. Today we are awed by their response to the tragedy and heartbroken by their fate.

The victims at the Pentagon and of the air hijackings are also in our thoughts and prayers.

We are the most diverse city in the world but today we are united as one. We stand squarely with the President, our Governor and Mayor and pledge to bring the perpetrators of these tremendously cruel acts to justice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2001

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to official functions scheduled in the 15th Congressional District of Michigan, I am unable to return to Washington; therefore I respectfully request a leave of absence from business for

Friday, September 14. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 2888, the bill providing emergency supplemental appropriations, Rollcall No. 341.

AMERICAN VETERANS COMMITTEE
(AVC) INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
PLATFORM AND RESOLUTIONS**HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2001

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the American Veterans Committee (AVC). The American Veterans Committee is an outstanding organization of American veterans with ongoing concerns and interest in our foreign policy and international affairs. I submit for the RECORD their International Affairs Platform and Resolutions, as prepared by the American Veterans Committee, International Affairs Commission and adopted by the American Veterans Committee (AVC) National Board at the National Board Meeting, Tuesday, August 26, 1997, with appropriate changes as of August 2001.

AMERICAN VETERANS COMMITTEE (AVC)
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PLATFORM

We, the members of the American Veterans Committee (AVC), believe that in international affairs the objective of the United States of America (US) is the maintenance of peace with justice for all. The world must avoid the holocaust of nuclear war. The restoration of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the fall of the Berlin Wall brought much hope of the avoidance of nuclear war—at least among the major powers—in the foreseeable future. Many international problems remain including the threat of international terrorists, and the US has been active—along with the United Nations—in dealing with hostilities in the Middle East and the Balkan States, Central and Southeast Asia, such African states as Somalia, Rwanda and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), and in Central America and the Caribbean. The work of the US has aided in establishing and restoring elective governments wherever possible.

Within that framework, US foreign policy, like US domestic policy, must seek always to enhance social justice for and the welfare of the individual, in all classes and without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, or age. Our policies should strive for realization of the world envisioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a world in which all might eat and sleep in safety, live under and vote in an elective government, with realistic hope and opportunity of attaining their reasonable aspirations.

I. THE UNITED NATIONS AND WORLD
GOVERNANCE

The United Nations (UN), in spite of the recognized areas which require strengthening, continues to be the best hope for peace in the world. American support of the UN must be an essential part of our foreign policy. The authority of the UN must be strengthened in a process in which selected elements of national sovereignty will be progressively transferred, in a manner that will enhance the fundamental freedoms and the well-being of all the peoples of the world.

AVC supports the following principles, reforms and programs for a more effective UN:

1. International law governing disputes and conduct of UN member states, and other states, with one another should be improved, clarified, codified, and *obeyed*. The US and all member states should work within the UN for the development of clear, well understood and respected international law. All member states should accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to interpret and implement international law.

2. Debtor states must pay their UN past and current dues and assessments.

3. The effectiveness of the UN must be improved through better financing, including such mechanisms that will bring in appropriate revenue from developed nations of the world.

4. The UN structures for dispute mediation and conflict prevention and resolution must be strengthened.

5. Further international cooperation for peace and sustainable development should be enhanced.

6. Movement should be made toward a genuine career UN civil service.

7. The influence of civil society at the UN should be strengthened.

8. The integrity and independence of the Office of the Secretary General, as expressed in the UN Charter, are crucial to the strength and effectiveness of the UN. The US should oppose any attempt to weaken the powers of this office. AVC commends the leadership of the present Secretary General, Kofi Annan, in making the organization work more effectively . . . and extends its very best wishes to him on his election to a well deserved second five-year team.

II. WORLD VETERANS FEDERATION (WVF)

AVC points with pride to and pledges continuing support for the World Veterans Federation (WVF), a worldwide organization of former combatants whose activities are a remarkable example of the kind of private international cooperation on which lasting world peace and justice can be built. AVC thus is proud to have been one of those veterans organizations that helped establish WVF more than a half century ago, and took part in the recognition of the WVF 50th Anniversary, and looks forward to the 24th General Assembly in South Africa in 2003.

III. THE RIGHTS OF AND RESPECT FOR WOMEN

Since its establishment in 1944, AVC has always had women among its members and leaders. AVC in its Platform is guided by the 1995 Beijing Conference and its "Platform for Action" and the subsequent reaffirmation during the last half decade. In 1995, the UN convened the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. The Conference wrote and adopted the Beijing Declaration and the "Platform for Action," the definitive statement of women's agenda for empowerment world-wide. Since that time, the "Platform for Action" has been the basis for evaluating the international community's progress in meeting the goals set forth in that document. This has been done during the yearly meetings of the UN Committee on the Status of Women since 1995.

A Special session of the UN General Assembly was called in the year 2000, "Beijing + 5," which looked at how far the goals of this Platform have been achieved. That Session reaffirmed the principles and commitments expressed in the "Platform for Action." Furthermore, it set forth a Political Declaration which called upon all nations to take further actions and initiatives to implement the Platform. It also urged a greater role for women in peace processes. Breaking new ground, "Beijing + 5" introduced new focal points of concern for women: HIV/AIDS and racial discrimination. Both of these issues were taken up by the 45th Session of the UN Commission on the status of Women

in 2001. Now in 2001 and looking forward to subsequent years in this decade, AVC reaffirms its support for the rights of and respect for women.

IV. NUCLEAR TESTING AND DISARMAMENT AND THE TREATY BANNING CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Complete elimination of nuclear weapons testing and the establishment of international controls on this most dangerous technology must be the goal of American foreign policy. Our world finds itself in the unique and unenviable position where one generation can make life on Earth unlivable for later generations.

The adoption by the UN of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in September 1996 is a significant advance with all five Permanent Security Council states among the signatories. Complete and total disarmament is the ultimate *Summum bonum*, but this is an objective remote in time; immediate achievement is not feasible. Efforts toward that goal should be made by the US nonetheless and should be encouraged in other nations. Mankind can never reach its true destiny if it must continue to allocate so high a percentage of its resources to forge the weapons of war.

AVC without reservation supports the adoption by the UN of a treaty that bans in the world the use of chemical weapons. AVC believes that the world-wide ban on testing nuclear weapons on the total elimination of the anti-personnel land mines, and the ban on the use of chemical weapons have a major role in ensuring the continuation of civilization of this Earth.

V. UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES

Inevitably differences have arisen and will continue to arise between the US and its allies, but these are differences which can be and must be resolved around the conference table. In its negotiations, the US should seek the rights and privileges of the willing partner.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in a world considerably different from the world of today. AVC supports the reassessment by the NATO nations of their membership. Its continued organization and operation should reflect the changing purpose. AVC is clearly aware of the division with respect to the issue of expansion of NATO, including the costs of remilitarization of any new NATO members to bring them up to a stage of military equality with other NATO nations. Further, AVC is well aware of WVF General Assembly discussion that did not lead to approval of any specific new nations to become a part of NATO. Further, AVC recognizes the importance of the continuing discussion of NATO and Russia with respect to a broader membership, while at the same time being aware of the concern of Russia with respect to broad membership that may also include former Soviet republics. Finally, very careful consideration should be given to expediency of NATO actually becoming a part of the UN.

In Latin America we must make every effort to erase the image of the US as a prosperous, patronizing, and paternalistic benefactor or intervener in the economic and political development of those nation states. It should be the objective of the US foreign policy to create instead an image of a US that wants to be a good partner as well as a good neighbor—in helping the peoples of Latin America work out their own destiny.

The US should, at every turn, encourage the UN or the Organization of American States (OAS) to be the forum in which to resolve differences and disagreements among or with our Latin American neighbors. We must show by word and deed that we have no desire to impose our own form of government or way of life upon any country of Latin

America. The US nevertheless continues to believe in the effectiveness of a democratic form of government and the opportunity for all people at the very least to enjoy adequate food and shelter, education and health.

VI. THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD

At the beginning of the second millennium, the US must continue to be willing to help the developing nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America to direct their own destinies. The UN forum must be held open to the developing nations. And the services of the UN specialized agencies, for example, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the many NGOs must appropriately be focused on the needs of the developing nations. Thus, every consideration must be given to the problem of AIDS, especially in the developing countries but also in other nation states of the world. Further, especially with respect to the AIDS problem, the US as well as other developed nations must make every effort to provide pharmaceutical supplies to combat the AIDS epidemic at a cost reasonable to be met in the developing nations.

The gap between the social and economic bases of the developed countries and those of the developing countries to widen. The decline in relative socioeconomic position of developing nations, accompanied as it is by a population explosion (now being recently addressed), has led to dangerous tension and the outbreak of violence and disorder in many areas of the world. Africa faces particularly difficult problems. African institutions, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), have confronted these problems and deserve the continuing support of US. There must never be another Rwanda.

Acknowledging that the ability of the US to underwrite services in assistance of all foreign countries is limited, its efforts to aid developing countries should be utilized at points of greatest potential for success. Priority should be given to those countries which can make the most rational and productive use of such aid, humanitarian considerations aside under conditions of famine and natural disasters. In evaluating the effectiveness of US aid, due weight should be given not only to economic and environmental considerations but also to the strengthening of democratic institutions and the consolidation of efforts on a regional basis.

Only when asked and only when it is clear that armed force is necessary to thwart a take-over by powers inimical to the survival of a weak and developing nation should the US furnish military assistance. Even then, it should be with the approval of the UN and support of the regional organizations.

VII. RUSSIA AND CHINA

The end of the Cold War, creating Russia and fourteen other independent nation states, has caused a monumental improvement in the international relations of the US and Russia and the Eastern European states as well. With many problems remaining, all have moved toward democratic governments and market systems no longer identified as communist.

China also does not seem as threatening as it has in the past—as the “free market economy” has penetrated even this nation state. At the same time, quarrels between the US and China—both with respect to independence of Taiwan and “human rights”—are expected to continue. Trade between the US and China is expanding, an indication of a changing market economy in that nation. The US should use its trading relationship to continue to press for relaxation of China’s stern measures against a free press.

VIII. ISRAEL AND THE ARAB STATES

AVC strongly supports the efforts of the US to continue the peace process begun at

Camp David in 1979, continued at Madrid in 1991, further affirmed at Oslo in 1993, reflected further in the Wye Memorandum Agreements of the Prime Minister of Israel and the Head of the Palestinian Authority, the agreements flowing from Camp David in 2000, and now the services of a US representative in 2001. Although no rigid deadline should be set, the ultimate goal of peace with security for Israel should be the fulfillment of the UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967); that Resolution requires that Israel evacuate the territory occupied in that year in return for recognition by Arab countries of Israel’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, political integrity, and peace. Exception must be made for areas absolutely necessary for Israel’s existence as a state.

IX. WORLD TRADE

Unlimited global economic growth through global free trade in a global free market is an American goal. Whatever the means to reach this goal—the goal must provide for all people to have at the very least enough to eat and a decent place in which to live. The creation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), presumably, were so constructed that enough to eat and a place to live would be a result of new monetary and financial direction. In reviewing the historic and almost legendary Bretton Woods’ Conference and succeeding meetings on global financial structure, AVC reflects on the one hand what the World Bank and the IMF have accomplished and at the same time what these two structures have failed to attain. The brave new world of global financial institutions, translational corporations, and free trade, while having benefited some of the people, needs to pay considerably more attention to the substantial reduction of the ever widening distance between the rich and the poor.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have the support of those who point out that new jobs are created and the world is moving in the direction of both programs; at the same time, those who oppose both focus on the loss of jobs in the US, the erosion of labor and environmental standards. AVC favors continued probing public discussion of WTO and NAFTA.

X. GLOBALISM, REGIONS, AND SUB-REGIONS

As the world is and has been organized, AVC has already confirmed its support for the UN and the realization of the direction of world trade. At the same time, we note such other organization as (1) nations brought together in the Helsinki Accord, 1975; (2) the European Union, (3) the OAU, that is, the Organization of African Unity; (4) the nations in Southern Asia brought together in a pact more than a score of years ago; and (5) the OAS, that is, the Organization of American States.

With respect to subregions, AVC notes the Stability Pact of Southeastern Balkan nations—Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, and of late Yugoslav Serbia, as well as Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania—that have seen civil and other strife during the last decade. Further, at the 23rd General Assembly of the WVF, the Conference approved the establishment of the Standing Committee on Women of Asia and the Pacific (SCOW-Asia/Pacific) and other Standing Committees for other world regions.

Again with respect to the OAU, AVC notes the reassuring meeting of the OAU Ministers of State 8-10 July 2000 and the subsequent meeting of OAU Heads of State 10-12 July 2000 . . . and the agreements with respect to economic, political, education, and health problems and issues in the nations that met in Lome, Togo, West Africa.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS RESOLUTIONS
I. THE UNITED NATIONS—SUPPORT WITH REFORM

Recognizing that the American Veterans Committee (AVC) has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations (UN) since its inception in 1945 and has taken a very active role in the World Veterans Federation (WVF), a role that has enabled AVC to serve in the capacity of a non-governmental organization (NGO) at the UN;

Recognizing further and commending the UN for the establishment of the War Crimes Tribunal, now embracing Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and noting that in carrying out the objectives of the UN position Slobodan Milosevic has been brought before the War Crimes Tribunal for crimes against humanity;

Recognizing nevertheless that time has brought the need for reform of a number of the systems and activities of the UN and those of some of its member states; and observing further that some member states and even our own nation, the US, have failed to meet their financial obligations as dues-paying members in the UN;

Resolved by AVC:

1. THAT debtor states should pay their UN dues in full to fulfill their treaty obligations; that stringent consequences for continued non-payment must be instituted;

2. THAT the effectiveness of the UN must be improved through better financing. Careful consideration must be given to such proposals as the following: (a) a treaty among member states to establish partial self-financing of UN peace-keeping and other programs through a worldwide tax on airline tickets and the value of ocean freight; (b) a surcharge on international postage items; (c) rent for the exclusive use of satellite positions; (d) national legislation within member states to ease the way to voluntary individual contributions to UN programs through tax-deductibility of contributions; and (e) sale of UN bonds to private individuals and of extra premium postage stamps;

3. THAT the UN structures for dispute mediation and conflict prevention and resolution be strengthened through the establishment of a UN Peace Observation Corps of 100-200 highly-trained professional observers and mediators to assist the Security Council and Secretary General—backed by a competent research and analysis unit—to track potential crisis situations and, further, to identify the most successful approaches to conflict prevention and resolution from past crises;

4. THAT UN peacekeeping capability be improved through such means as (a) predesignation of peace-keeping units in their own forces by member states with provision for joint training of such designated units to be financed either through voluntary contributions or regular peace-keeping expenditures; (b) a task force established by the Security Council to study the practical detail of a small UN Readiness Force, to be placed at the disposal of the Security Council—10,000 troops composed of volunteers contributed by member states in small units (companies or battalions) . . . and with the purpose of intervention in the early stages of the possible conflict before it expands to widespread fighting and, when not engaged in peace-keeping operations to train peace-keeping personnel of interested member states; (c) a second task force established by the Security Council to investigate practical steps to revive the Military Staff Committee (foreseen in the UN Charter) with responsibility for enforcement, peace-keeping operation, and disarmament;

5. THAT the Security Council become more responsive to the concerns of the General Assembly through arranging for regular presen-

tation of the Assembly to the Council and discussion by the latter of the views of the General Assembly, as reflected in the Assembly Resolutions, with the President of the Assembly given ex-officio membership on the Council, and through continued study of the representative qualities of the UNSC membership;

6. THAT the rule of law among nations be strengthened through (a) a movement toward universal acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by introducing a procedure where the Security Council would decide, in cases where continuing bilateral disputes threaten world security, to require the UN member states involved (including Security Council members) either to present themselves to conciliation proceedings or to take the dispute to the ICJ; (b) General Assembly authorization of the Secretary General, under Article 96 of the Charter, to turn to the ICJ for advisory opinions; and (c) provision that individuals or groups who consider that their rights have not been respected may petition the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights for reaction and then, if the issue is not resolved, to petition the General Assembly for a hearing;

7. THAT further international cooperation for peace and substantial development be enhanced through the establishment of a UN Economic Security Council to take the place of ECOSOC, its functions being to balance the interests of citizens, nations, and corporations in an increasingly globalized economy and, in particular, to improve coordination on economic and social programs within the UN system;

8. THAT movement be made toward a genuine career UN civil service, with training of UN staff on all levels to include the recognition of diversity of cultures. And, further, with the elimination of political appointments, level-by-level over a period of years, with all positions in the UN Secretariat except those of the Secretary General and his immediate staff being held only by those who have passed the UN entry examination or met other well-established professional criteria including maintenance of a high-level of performance;

9. THAT the influence of civil society at the UN be strengthened through measures such as a biennial Citizens' Assembly at the UN representing all non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Citizens' Assembly would develop concepts and proposals for transmittal to and discussion by the General Assembly with widest possible participation of NGOs at all UN conferences. AVC, it might be noted, has always made its contribution to the UN operation by serving as an NGO.

10. THAT isolationism within the US be fought in all its forms, as the US with about five percent of the world's population needs the UN to serve as a necessary and vital bridge to the rest of the world; and

11. THAT funding of the UN Trusteeship Council should end inasmuch as there are no longer any Trust Territories, thereby eliminating a stark example of bureaucratic waste within the UN itself and setting a precedent for other comparable action as warranted.

II. US RATIFICATION OF UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS

Supporting since the adoption by the UN nearly a half-century ago of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" the philosophy and concept of human rights for all people all over the globe;

Supporting further the UN Human Rights Covenants on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights—as well as the UN Human Rights Covenants on Civil and Political Rights;

Noting that more than 175 nations of the world have ratified the UN Human Rights Covenants;

Noting further that the US became a signatory to the UN Human Rights Covenants during the administration of President Jimmy Carter;

AVC respectfully urges the President of the United States to take all immediate and reasonable steps to move the US not only as a signatory but also as a nation ratifying both UN Human Rights Covenants (a) Economic, Social, and Cultural as well as (b) Civil and Political Rights.

III. US RATIFICATION OF RELEVANT CONVENTIONS PROTOCOLS AND TREATIES ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Recognizing the importance of the UN Conventions on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international conventions and treaties which promote the human rights of women and their desire for full equality with men in all pursuits of life;

AVC calls for the US Senate (a) to endorse the CEDAW which would make the US a signatory to the CEDAW and (b) to support other international conventions and treaties promoting the rights and interests of women;

AVC affirms the proposition spelled out in *The Platform For Action* that human rights are universal and equally applicable to women; the inherent and indivisible rights of women must be affirmed by the international community, and support the Mission Statement from Beijing that "equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development, and peace." [N.B. The previous statement flows from the UN 4th International Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China, September 1995.]

IV. THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION/US AND THE WORLD FEDERALIST ASSOCIATION

Recognizing for decades that the World Federalist Association (WFA) in the US and World Federalism elsewhere in the world have appropriately emphasized the global nature of the Earth and our life thereon;

Recognizing further that the work of the UN Association (UNA)/US in its support of the UN itself has similarly reflected an understanding of the global nature of the world;

Observing that both of these organizations have emphasized the great need of peoples to work together for a better world while their governments work together in the UN for peace and security;

Having members of AVC also in positions of leadership and membership in the WFA and likewise in positions of leadership in the UNA/US;

Believing today that the WFA position is still sound and that its national and regional meetings are productive, having produced recent leadership in advancing the international criminal court, the Hague Appeal for Peace, a UN readiness force, and adequate UN funding . . . likewise noting the effectiveness and value of the results achieved by the national and regional assemblies of the UNA/US;

AVC finds that both the work of the UNA/US and the World Federalist Association have goals and programs that lead to a stronger and more productive relationship of the peoples in the nations of the world; and, therefore, AVC supports both of these organizations.

V. US SUPPORT FOR THE REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN

Noting with satisfaction the release of the important study of the "Impact Of Armed Conflict On Children" (Graca Machel Study);

Reaffirming AVC's traditional support for strict adherence to international humanitarian laws and human rights standards in situations of armed conflict;

Reaffirming further our support for the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child;

Pleased that the WVF is a part of the Coalition Against the Use of Child Soldiers;

AVC also supports the Coalition Against the Use of Child Soldiers and the findings of the Report 'Impact Of Armed Conflict On Children.' AVC also (a) urges upon the international community to offer special care and protection of refugee and internally placed children and (b) further urges international support for the findings of the Report, including calling upon governments to prevent the recruitment and demobilization of children under the age of 18.

VI. BAN ON "ANTI-PERSONNEL" MINES

Noting that the US used the phrase "global humanitarian tragedy caused by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel mines"

Reviewing the long-standing position of AVC in support of the total ban of land mines, or anti-personnel mines;

Noting at the same time that generals of the US Armed Forces established that land mines hurt the US more than they helped our Armed Forces;

Continuing to observe that around the world children and women and other civilians have sustained injuries and even death from land mines;

AVC continues respectfully to urge the President of the United States to adopt a strong position with the goal of eliminating land mines, or anti-personnel mines, from our global life.

VII. WORLD VETERANS FEDERATION—A HALF CENTURY OF AVC SUPPORT

Reviewing with gratification the more than half century history of the WVF and the founding membership of AVC in WVF in 1950 as well as the continuing AVC membership now in 2001;

Reviewing also the long and consistent programs and work of WVF in behalf of veterans as well as those who have suffered on account of war—the WVF program always including support of the UN;

Recalling the guidance of WVF by the CREDO created by the late UN Undersecretary General Ralph J. Bunche . . . the Credo having the celebrated phrase "None can speak more eloquently for peace than those who have fought in war";

Noting that WVF has consistently brought veterans from all over the world to its General Assemblies, Council meetings, and such special meetings as the the 1990 Conference on the Mediterranean held in Malta, and observing that WVF has celebrated its 23rd General Assembly (Paris 2000);

Taking pride in the fifty-year leadership of WVF Presidents and Secretaries General;

The American Veterans Committee continues to support without reservation the World Veterans Federation and looks forward to continuing membership and contribution to WVF programs.

VIII. THE SOUTHEAST BALKIN STATES

Having goals of peace, security, and development in the Balkans and well aware that what was once Yugoslavia is now Yugoslavia/Serbia (including Montenegro), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia and further recognizing that this European sub-region also includes such nations states as Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Turkey;

Noting with appreciation that the World Veterans Federation (WVF) brought together its member organizations (International Conference, Luxembourg, 5-7 May 1996) to arrive at "principles to be followed and measures to be taken" for attainment of those goals . . . and that the Luxembourg International Conference carefully took into ac-

count the position adopted in Dayton (Ohio/USA) with respect to Bosnia-Herzegovina;

Aware that peoples of different ethnic, religious, and historical background do have differences, sometimes substantial almost insurmountable differences;

Noting further that the Stability Pact includes a "Coordinator," a citizen of a nation not among those of the Eastern Balkans;

Supporting the Stability Pact and the elections of a democratic state and urging the peoples to support the results of the elections wherever in the Balkan States;

Also supporting the position that individuals accused of "war crimes or crimes against humanity" must be brought before the appropriate court;

Believing with respect to the totality of the Balkan States that "recognition by every State in the region of all the other States in the region and renunciation of all forms of nationalism leading to the notion of 'greater State,' ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and intolerance toward minorities";

Continuing to respect the final act of Helsinki, which emphasizes the security and cooperation in Europe;

The American Veterans Committee continues to adopt the position that mediation and discussion, together with (a) peace-keeping, economic, and infrastructural support from NATO and the UN, including in both instances the US, and (b) vital governing provisions of Bosnia-Herzegovina and other Balkan States will lead to a state of multi-ethnic, multi-culture, and multi-denomination with full respect for the rights of all the people concerned.

IX. ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Applauding in the early days of AVC the establishment of the nation of Israel;

Supporting the leadership of President Jimmy Carter in bringing together Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and Egypt's leader Anwar Sadat;

Noting with satisfaction the further movement toward conciliation, reconciliation, and peace formulated by Palestinian Authority and the present and immediate past Prime Ministers of Israel;

Urging the leaders of Israel and Palestine today to continue using mediation in arriving at agreements, including an agreement with respect to East Jerusalem;

AVC continues to support the right of Israel to peace and economic and sociocultural development and the use of the instruments of discussion and mediation in the consideration of all elements and aspects of difference and conflict between Israel and its neighboring peoples and nations—whether they be Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, or any other nation state, AVC in supporting the above stated development in Israel in no way implies that it does not support similar development of Palestine as well as all other nations as they too seek peace and improvement of the quality of life for their peoples.

X. CUBA

Observing that Fidel Castro has been in power in Cuba for more than forty years and that all efforts to remove him and change his regime have been and continue to be futile;

Recalling that the US has resumed relations with Germany, Japan, and Vietnam after devastating wars and relations with Russia subsequent to the Cold War;

Believing that the Helms-Burton Act has not been and will not be effective in achieving its stated goal(s), and judging further that this Act of Congress has only created conflict between us and our close allies;

AVC believes that the US appropriate to the present times should establish diplomatic relations, permit commercial relations, continue to provide humanitarian aid,

and end the application of sanctions that adversely affect Cuba and our allies.

HONORING RICHARD "AL" SEAGLER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Richard "Al" Seagler for his service to our great nation in World War II. Anticipating that he would get drafted, Al courageously enlisted with the Navy. It is my pleasure to pay tribute to Mr. Seagler for the sacrifices he made in preserving the freedom of our nation.

Mr. Seagler experienced many sleepless nights as Japanese forces made countless attacks on his construction battalion that was located on the island of Guadalcanal. The campaign at Guadalcanal cost America a great number of lives before the United States decidedly took the island and changed the course of the Pacific Theater in World War II forever. Mr. Seagler played a vital role in America's course of action by directing a construction battalion whose job included providing a workable infrastructure for American troops and maintaining open supply lines in Guadalcanal.

These important construction battalions were known as "Seabees," but their name and recognition have since disappeared from our national memory. Mr. Seagler sweated his days away in order to sustain the American operations in the region. In addition, Al accomplished many great feats in the construction battalion while dodging the enemy's bullets, living in a disease-infested jungle, and laying down to sleep to the sound of the Japanese fighter planes bombing the Guadalcanal coast.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Seagler showed great courage and heroism as a soldier in World War II. Therefore, it is my privilege to acknowledge his honor and pride for our great Nation. Al is still an active citizen in Montrose, Colorado where he has served as a role model for both young and old. I commend Mr. Seagler for his distinguished service to the state of Colorado and our great Nation.

STATEMENT ON HOWARD AND RIETA PARK CIRCUMNAVIGATING THE GLOBE

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 14, 2001

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Howard and Rieta Park, a couple from my hometown of Stonington, CT, who, on June 10, 2001, concluded a 31,000-mile sailing journey around the world.

Traveling on their 53-foot Sparkman and Stevens yawl, named COMET, the Park's odyssey took them across the Caribbean, through the Panama Canal to the Galapagos Islands, across the Pacific to the French Marquesas, the Cooke Islands, Tonga, Fiji, New Zealand, and New Caledonia.

They trekked to the Great Barrier Reef along the Australian coast, across the Indian