

only way to reach a just and lasting peace in the region. But peace will never be achieved with senseless terrorism or soaring speeches or military might. Only through direct, honest, and earnest negotiations will the dream of peace be realized.

That is why I believe that both sides must put aside their preconditions and come to the table immediately.

As former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert recently wrote, peace will only be achieved “with the courage to take decisions that will change a reality which is increasingly creating a substantive threat on the State of Israel’s stature, on the international support it receives, and on its future as a Jewish democratic state.”

Yet, I’m concerned this resolution—instead of rising to Olmert’s noble challenge—is yet another missed opportunity for the U.S. to advance peace in the region.

Just last December this House passed unanimously a substantially similar resolution opposing the unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood. What are we accomplishing by restating our opposition?

Mr. Speaker, I worry that we have become too engrossed in the rhetorical debate of peace and are neglecting to fully pursue it. We could easily fill this Chamber with the words spoken over the years debating this conflict, but the room filled with actions taken to end it would sadly be much, much smaller.

This is a pivotal moment—a moment that demands bold, courageous leadership from Prime Minister Netanyahu, from President Abbas, and from President Obama. It is a moment that requires everyone—Israeli and Palestinian, friend and foe—to come together and resolve this crisis once and for all.

Congress can and should play a constructive role in this debate. But I’m concerned that repeatedly criticizing the Palestinians—and only the Palestinians—risks pushing Israelis and Palestinians further apart rather than bringing them closer together. Unfortunately, both Israelis and Palestinians are engaged in activities that are undermining peace efforts, and we must not ignore this mutual responsibility for the conflict.

And I’m also concerned that this resolution further isolates the United States and Israel and undermines our credibility as a serious broker for peace. There is no denying that both Israel and the United States are growing increasingly isolated in the international community. As President Obama said, “the international community is tired of an endless process that never procures an outcome.” This resolution does nothing to change that.

Rather than spending our time reiterating the already established position against a unilateral declaration of statehood, we should be focusing on concrete measures that advance peace.

We should be looking for ways to help Israel adapt to the new realities of the Arab Spring rather than simply reinforcing the status quo.

And we should be encouraging both the Palestinians and Israelis to negotiate rather than just criticizing the Palestinians for not doing so.

At this critical juncture, with so much uncertainty and unrest throughout the Middle East, the U.S. needs to engage in constructive dialogue with all parties and help them bring this tragic conflict to an end. The U.S. cannot make peace in the region, only the parties can. But the U.S. has always been an indispensable agent in brokering peace.

That is why it is imperative that we reclaim that constructive role and foster a negotiated settlement that ensures the security of Israel, recognizes the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, and promotes U.S. national security interests.

IN SUPPORT OF HOLDING THE 2016
DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION IN
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 7, 2011

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to propose that the 2016 Democratic Convention be held in Northern New Jersey. With easy access to a wide variety of transportation options, many local tourist attractions, and a proven record of successfully hosting large-scale events, Northern New Jersey is an ideal location and I urge my Democratic colleagues to join me in support of our bid to host the 2016 Convention.

Northern New Jersey has everything that a large-scale, high-profile event requires in order to go off without a hitch. Multiple airports provide access for visitors arriving from all across the country, while those traveling along the Eastern Seaboard have the option of taking Amtrak or one of several bus lines—all of which are particularly convenient to visitors from Washington, DC. Whether hosted in my district at the New Meadowlands Stadium in East Rutherford, at the Prudential Center in Newark, or both: our convention facilities are brand new, state-of-the-art, and well-equipped to host large events. Northern New Jersey boasts many hotels and tourist attractions for visitors, as well as proximity to other exciting locations; convention-goers would be just across the river from New York City and just up the Jersey shore from Atlantic City. Even as our national economy struggles to bounce back, tourism in Northern New Jersey has continued to flourish over the past few years, due in no small part to the infrastructure and facilities that our region has to offer visitors from across the Nation.

Most recently, the city of Newark hosted the 2011 NCAA East Regional Championship at the Prudential Center. Visitors, players, and league administrators alike were impressed and pleased with their newly chosen host city, with top NCAA officials noting that they are definitely on board with a future hosting bid. Looking toward the future, Super Bowl XLVII will be held at the New Meadowlands Stadium in 2014, and over 100,000 visitors from across the country are expected to travel to Northern New Jersey for this historic game. Both of these important events of national importance were brought to Northern New Jersey because of everything we have to offer, and I am confident that delegates and Convention participants alike would be pleased with the choice to hold our party’s most important meeting here as well. A highly diverse region, Northern New Jersey is emblematic of the many cultures, ideas, and priorities that make up our great Nation, and I believe this is a fitting backdrop for the selection of our party’s nominee for the 2016 Presidential race.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to consider Northern New Jersey as the site for

the 2016 Democratic Convention. I know that we would host a memorable and well-executed Convention and I urge the Democratic Party to explore this option for 2016.

INTRODUCTION ON RESOLUTION
TO GRANT THE CONGRESSIONAL
GOLD MEDAL TO THE
MONTFORD POINT MARINES

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 7, 2011

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with many of my colleagues to introduce a resolution to grant the Montford Point Marines a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that can be bestowed for an outstanding deed or act of service to the security, prosperity, and national interest of the United States.

On June 25, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 establishing the Fair Employment Practices Commission and opening the doors for the very first African Americans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps.

These African Americans, from all states, were not sent to the traditional boot camps of Parris Island, South Carolina, and San Diego, California. Instead, African American Marines were segregated—experiencing basic training at Camp Montford Point near the New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Approximately 20,000 African American Marines received basic training at Montford Point between 1942 and 1949.

On August 26, 1942, Howard P. Perry of Charlotte, North Carolina, was the first Black private to set foot on Montford Point.

During April 1943 the first African American Marine Drill Instructors took over as the senior Drill Instructors of the eight platoons then in training: the 16th Platoon (Edgar R. Huff), 17th (Thomas Brokaw), 18th (Charles E. Allen), 19th (Gilbert H. Johnson), 20th (Arnold R. Bostic), 21st (Mortimer A. Cox), 22nd (Edgar R. Davis, Jr.), and 23rd (George A. Jackson).

The initial intent was to discharge these African American Marines after the War, returning them to civilian life. Attitudes changed as the war progressed. Once given the chance to prove themselves, it became impossible to deny the fact that African American Marines were just as capable as all other Marines regardless of race, color, creed or National origin.

Black Marines of the 8th Ammunition Company and the 36th Depot Company landed on the island of Iwo Jima on D-day, February 19, 1945. The largest number of Black Marines to serve in combat during World War II took part in the seizure of Okinawa in the Ryuku Islands with some 2,000 Black Marines seeing action during the campaign. Overall 19,168 Blacks served in the Marine Corps in World War II.

On November 10, 1945, Frederick C. Branch was the first African American Marine to be commissioned as a second lieutenant, at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Virginia.

In July of 1948 President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981 ending segregation in the military. In September of 1949, Montford Marine Camp was deactivated—ending seven years of segregation.