CALLING FOR THE REPATRIATION OF POW/MIAs AND ABDUCTEES FROM THE KOREAN WAR

MARKUP

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H. Res. 376

NOVEMBER 30, 2011

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CALLING FOR THE REPATRIATION OF POW/MIAs AND ABDUCTEES FROM THE KOREAN WAR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:30 a.m., in room 2226 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Donald A. Manzullo (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. MANZULLO. The subcommittee will come to order. After the conclusion of this brief business meeting, we will proceed immediately to today's hearing on the Compact of Free Association with the Republic of Palau. Pursuant to notice, for purposes of a markup, I call for House Resolution 376: Calling for the Repatriation of POW/MIAs and the Abductees from the Korean War.

[H. Res. 376 follows:]

IV

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

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

1 Law set forth in the Geneva Convention relative to
2 the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

○

Mr. MANZULLO. Without objection, the measure is considered read, and open for amendment at any point. Before recognizing myself and other members for statements, I have a bipartisan amendment in the nature of a substitute that makes a few changes to the underlying resolution. These edits and updates, which were sent to your offices yesterday, were carefully negotiated with the author, Mr. Rangel, and his staff.

The clerk will report the amendment.

Mr. GUTFRUCHT. Amendment in the nature of a substitute to H. Res. 376, offered by Mr. Manzullo of Illinois. Strike the preamble and insert——

Mr. MANZULLO. Without objection, the amendment in the nature of a substitute is considered read.

[The amendment offered by Mr. Manzullo follows:]

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE TO H. RES. 376 OFFERED BY MR. MANZULLO OF ILLINOIS

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

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 prolonged for two years 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, including an estimated 5,500 in North Korea;

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 of disagreements over communications facilities;

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 many young South Korean men were forcibly conscripted into the North Korean Army during the Korean War;

Whereas North Korea's abduction of South Korean civilians was carried out under a well-planned scheme to make up the shortage of North Korea's own needed manpower, and to communize South Korea;

Whereas during the Korean War Armistice Commission Conference, the United Nations Command, led by the United States, negotiated strongly to seek that South Korean civilians abducted by North Korea be exchanged for Communist POWs held by the United Nations;

Whereas North Korea persistently delayed in POW/civilian internee negotiations, refusing to acknowledge that they had committed a war crime of civilian abduction, with a result that in the armistice talks Korean War abductees were re-classified "displaced persons" and, consequently, not a single person among them has been able to return home;

Whereas the South Korean families of the civilians abducted by North Korea six decades ago have endured extreme pain and suffering due to the prolonged separation and due to the knowledge that North Korea has neither admitted that the abductions occurred nor accounted for or repatriated these 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

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

1 That the House of Representative—

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

6 (2) takes note of the U.S.-North Korean agree-
7 ment of October 20, 2011, on resuming operations
8 to search for and recover remains of American
9 POW/MIAs and calls upon the United States Gov-
10 ernment to continue to explore the possibility that

there could be American POW/MIAs still alive inside North Korea;

(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.

☒

Mr. MANZULLO. All members are given leave to insert remarks on this measure into the record, should they decide to do so. I now recognize myself to speak on this measure.

On June 25, 1950, the North Koreans initiated the Korean War by unleashing a torrent of death and destruction across the border against America's ally, South Korea, in a brazen effort to reunite the divided peninsula under the oppressive red flag of communism. The legacy of the Korean War reverberates 61 years later, with a nuclear-armed North Korea still menacing peaceful nations and the hundreds of thousands of people it still holds as prisoners of war and abductees.

Approximately 1.8 million members of the U.S. Armed Forces fought in Korea, alongside South Korea and United Nations forces. The sacrifices of the more than 128,600 Americans killed or wounded in that conflict will never be forgotten. Our friends in South Korea suffered equally with us in their darkest hour, with the added misery that the war was fought in their homeland.

For so many families in the U.S and Korea, the war has never ended. The Defense Department reports that more than 8,000 American servicemen as POW/MIAs in the conflict, with 5,500 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines in North Korea. Families all throughout this great country still do not have the closure they deserve after so many years, and it is time that North Korea told the truth about their whereabouts.

In South Korea, it is estimated that as many as 73,000 servicemembers were never reported by North Korea as POWs. Add to this the abduction of approximately 100,000 South Korean civilians, and we can finally have a clear picture of North Korea's brutality.

House Resolution 376 recognizes the plight of American and South Korean prisoners of war and civilian abductees still alive in North Korea. It calls on both the U.S. and South Korean Governments to thoroughly investigate any sightings of POWs and civilian abductees. The resolution also calls on North Korea to admit the kidnapping of over 100,000 people during the war, and to repatriate remaining POWs and civilian abductees as required by the Geneva Convention.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute makes several changes to the base text of H. Res. 376. This amendment was drafted in coordination with the bill's sponsor, Representative Rangel of New York, and makes a number of changes, too many to explain in the time I have for these remarks.

Key items include: Recognition of the thousands of South Korean men forcibly conscripted into the North Korean Army; the abduction of South Korean civilians by North Korea in its attempts to communize the South; the hardship endured by South Korean families of the abducted civilians; North Korea's refusal to acknowledge, account for, or repatriate abductees; and strong U.S. efforts to negotiate release of these civilians during the Korean War Armistice Commission Conference of 1953.

There is no excuse for North Korea to refuse family reunions for the more than 100,000 South Koreans forcibly abducted 61 years ago. We owe it to our South Korean friends and the nearly 1.5 mil-

lion Americans of Korean descent to never give up the fight for their release.

Personally, I will never forget the day when former South Korean Ambassador Lee Tae-Sik made a special visit to the 16th Congressional District in Illinois to personally thank American veterans of the Korean War for defending his country and protecting his people. As I stood watching the Ambassador deliver his remarks, and the emotional response of our veterans, I could not be but overcome with great respect and gratitude for the friendship our two nations share.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Manzullo follows:]

One Hundred Twelfth Congress

Congress of the United States

Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific

November 30, 2011

Markup of H. Res. 376

Chairman Donald A. Manzullo
Opening Statement

On June 25, 1950, North Korea initiated the Korean War by unleashing a torrent of death and destruction across the border against America's ally South Korea in a brazen effort to reunite the divided peninsula under the oppressive red flag of Communism. The legacy of the Korean War reverberates 61 years later with a nuclear-armed North Korea still menacing peaceful nations and the hundreds of thousands of people it still hold as prisoners of war and abductees.

Approximately 1.8 million members of the U.S. Armed Forces fought in Korea alongside South Korean and United Nations forces. The sacrifices of the more than 128,600 Americans killed or wounded in that conflict will never be forgotten. Our friends in South Korea suffered equally with us in their darkest hour with the added misery that the war was fought on their homeland.

For so many families in the U.S. and Korea, the War has never ended. The Defense Department reports more than 8,000 American servicemen as POW/MIAs in the conflict, with 5,500 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in North Korea. Families all throughout this great country still do not have the closure they deserve after so many years, and it is time North Korea told the truth about their whereabouts.

In South Korea, it is estimated that as many as 73,000 service members were never reported by North Korea as POWs. Add to this the abduction of approximately

100,000 South Korean civilians, and we can finally have a clear picture of North Korea's brutality.

House Resolution 376 recognizes the plight of American and South Korean prisoners of war and civilian abductees still alive in North Korea. It calls on both the U.S. and South Korean governments to thoroughly investigate any sightings of POWs and civilian abductees. The resolution also calls on North Korea to admit the kidnapping of over 100,000 people during the war, and to repatriate remaining POWs and civilian abductees as required by the Geneva Convention.

The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute makes several changes to the base text of H. Res. 376. This amendment was drafted in coordination with the bill's sponsor, Representative Rangel of New York, and makes a number of changes, too many to explain in the time I have for these remarks. Key items include: Recognition of the thousands of South Korean men forcibly conscripted into the North Korean Army; the abduction of South Korean civilians by North Korea in its attempts to communize the South; the hardship endured by South Korean families of the abducted civilians; North Korea's refusal to acknowledge, account for or repatriate abductees; and strong U.S. efforts to negotiate release of these civilians during the Korean War Armistice Commission Conference of 1953.

There is no excuse for North Korea to refuse family reunions for the more than 100,000 South Koreans forcefully abducted 61 years ago. We owe it to our South Korean friends and the nearly 1.5 million Americans of Korean descent to never give up the fight for their release.

Personally, I will never forget the day when former South Ambassador Lee Tae-Sik of Korea made a special visit to the 16th Congressional District in Illinois to personally thank America veterans of the Korean War for defending his country and protecting his people. As I stood watching the Ambassador deliver his remarks and the emotional response of our veterans, I could not be but overcome with great respect and gratitude for the friendship our two nations share.

I now recognize the Ranking Member.

Mr. MANZULLO. I now recognize the ranking member, Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this hearing. I appreciate very much your leadership and your efforts in bringing this important resolution before the subcommittee for markup. Mr. Chairman, House Resolution 376 was authored, introduced, and sponsored by a true American hero, my good friend, the Honorable Charles Rangel from New York. I am very proud to be an original co-sponsor of this resolution.

House Resolution 376 calls for the repatriation of POWs, MIAs, and abductees from the Korean War. I know this legislation is near and dear to Congressman Rangel's heart, as was the resolution he introduced last year to recognize the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. Last year's resolution, which was passed by Congress and signed by the President, should have borne Charlie Rangel's name in it. To me, it always will be.

Mr. Chairman, some 30,000 soldiers lost their lives in the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. In a Black unit led mostly by White officers, Acting Sergeant Charles Rangel was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his heroic service in the Korean War, having led his comrades from behind enemy lines in circumstances few of us have ever known.

I commend the Honorable Charles Rangel for his valor, for his sacrifice and courage. I also want to thank the Korean-American community here in the metropolitan DC area, Los Angeles and New York, and especially Mr. Dongsuk Kim, the founder and former president of the Korean-American Voters' Council, for their grassroots efforts in support of this resolution.

The resolution is very important to the Korean-American community because some have relatives that are POWs currently in North Korea, and some of their relatives are still alive and want to be repatriated. At the very least, these Korean-Americans just want to find out the status of their relatives that were taken as POWs during the Korean War.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent that this article in the New York Times dated November 28 of this year, entitled "Calling Out Names of 83,000 Lost South Koreans," be made part of the record.

Again, I want to say that on behalf of our Korean-American community, for all those who served and sacrificed so much during the Korean War, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Faleomavaega follows:]

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE FALEOMAVAEGA
RANKING MEMBER

BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGARDING
H.RES. 376

November 30, 2011

Mr. Chairman:

H. Res. 376 was authored, introduced and sponsored by a true American hero – my good friend, the Honorable Charles Rangel – and I am proud to be an original cosponsor. H. Res. 376 calls for the repatriation of POW/MIAS and abductees from the Korean War, and I know this legislation is near and dear to Congressman Rangel's heart, as was the Resolution he introduced last year to recognize the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. Last year's Resolution, which was passed by Congress and signed by the President, should have born Charlie Rangel's name, and to me it always will.

In a black unit led mostly by white officers, acting Sergeant Charles Rangel was awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star for his heroic service in the Korean War, having led his comrades from behind enemy lines in circumstances few of us have ever known. I commend the Honorable Charles Rangel for his valor, sacrifice and courage.

I also thank the Korean American community in Los Angeles and New York, and especially Mr. Dongsuk Kim, founder and former President of the Korean American Voters' Council, for their grassroots efforts in support of this Resolution. The Resolution is very important to the Korean American community because some have relatives that are POWs in North Korea, and some of their relatives are still alive and want to be repatriated. In the very least, these Korean Americans just want to find out the status of their relatives that were taken as POWs during the war.

On behalf of our Korean Americans and for all those who served and sacrificed, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this Resolution.

Mr. MANZULLO. Without objection, the article will be admitted. Are there any other members who would like to strike the last word and speak? Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. I would like to. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for scheduling this markup. I really want to thank our colleague Charlie Rangel, who sort of has the quintessentially American sense of humor, and documented his role in that conflict in his book, "And I Haven't Had a Bad Day Since."

I think, for those who fought in this war, for that generation of Americans and South Koreans who bled in that war, they take some umbrage with the idea that some refer to this as a "forgotten war." They haven't forgotten that war. And I think, by moving this legislation forward, we are signalling that this committee hasn't forgotten that war.

I have chaired the Interparliamentary Exchange with South Korea for some years, and I know the impact that that conflict had on South Korea. I think, as much as anything, this resolution demonstrates the shared commitment and the sacrifice that serves as the foundation of the U.S.-Korea alliance.

A lot has changed in the last six decades since the war. Certainly with the United States' support, South Korea has transformed into a modern leading economy. Yet north of the 38th parallel in North Korea—and I have been in North Korea—they still live literally in darkness.

It has been more than 60 years now, and our Department of Defense still lists more than 8,000 American servicemen as POWs or missing in action from the Korean War. The number of South Koreans is estimated to be many multiples of that. And of course, as mentioned, you had 100,000 South Koreans forcibly conscripted into the North Korean army.

For our veterans, and for their families, it is well past time for a full accounting, which this resolution calls for. So I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MANZULLO. Do any other members seek recognition to speak on it? Mr. Duncan.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you. I just want to echo Chairman Royce's comments there, that my wife just participated in an honor flight, coming up to Washington. And I was sitting here, thinking about it being the month when we celebrate and recognize Veterans' Day, and honor the memory of those who have fought and those who are currently serving. And I think about the number of Korean War veterans that I run across, just in daily contact around the District.

And I just want to pause and say thank you to those men and women who served so valiantly in a war that, a lot of times, is forgotten when we focus on the current War on Terror, and are remembering those of the greatest generation, World War II veterans, that are passing away at a very rapid rate.

And I just want to pause and say, we do remember the Korean War veterans. This is a very timely resolution. And I just want to echo Mr. Royce's comments, as well, and simply say thanks.

I yield back.

Mr. MANZULLO. Do any other members seek recognition?

[No response.]

Mr. MANZULLO. Hearing none, and there being no further amendments, the question is on agreeing to the bipartisan amendment in the nature of a substitute.

All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. MANZULLO. Those opposed, say no.

[No response.]

Mr. MANZULLO. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it and the amendment of the nature of a substitute is agreed to. The question now occurs on adopting the resolution as amended.

All those in favor, say aye.

[Chorus of ayes.]

Mr. MANZULLO. Those opposed, say no.

[No response.]

Mr. MANZULLO. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it, and the amended resolution is agreed to. Without objection, H. Res. 376 as amended is reported favorably to the full Committee on Foreign Affairs, and staff are directed to make any technical and conforming changes.

That concludes our business. Without objection, the subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:44 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

SUBCOMMITTEE MARKUP NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific
Donald A. Manzullo (R-IL), Chairman

November 28, 2011

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, to be held in **Room 2226 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live, via the WEBCAST link on the Committee website at http://www.hcfa.house.gov):**

DATE: Wednesday, November 30, 2011

TIME: 11:30 a.m.

MARKUP OF: H. Res. 376: Calling for the repatriation of POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War.

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE MARKUP

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Asia and the Pacific* MARKUP

Day *Wednesday* **Date** *November 30* **Room** *2226 Rayburn*

Starting Time *11:30 a.m.* **Ending Time** *11:41 a.m.*

Recesses [*0*] (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Donald Manzullo

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [ ]

Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

BILLS FOR MARKUP: *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*

H. Res. 376 - Calling for the repatriation of POW/MIAs and abductees from the Korean War.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donald Manzullo, Eni Faleomavaega, Ed Royce, Steve Chabot, Jeff Duncan, Brad Sherman

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

1. Chairman Manzullo - Opening statement, markup summary
2. Ranking Member Faleomavaega - Opening Statement, New York Times article

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*

The Chair called up the resolution for consideration by the Subcommittee. An amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Chairman Manzullo was agreed to by voice vote. H. Res. 376, as amended, was agreed to by voice vote, and was ordered favorably reported to the full Committee by unanimous consent.

RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting
N/A - Voice Vote				

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *11:41 a.m.*

Subcommittee Staff Director

The New York Times

November 28, 2011

Calling Out Names of 83,000 Lost South Koreans

By CHOE SANG-HUN

SEOUL — On a sidewalk in central Seoul recently, Lee Mi-il and several other older South Koreans took turns at a microphone, calling out what seemed like an endless list of names. They began in the morning and continued through the night, one faceless name after another — 83,000 in all — ringing out and melting into the cacophony of the capital city's busiest district.

A few young pedestrians paused at this unusual demonstration. But most paid little attention.

The scene could have stood as a metaphor for Ms. Lee's struggle of more than a decade.

Since 2000, she has campaigned to generate more interest in the fate of tens of thousands of South Koreans believed to have been forcibly taken to North Korea during the Korean War six decades ago. She has been demanding that the government negotiate for the return of those who might still be alive and the remains of those who are not. The government has never made that issue a priority in the times it has sat down with North Korea, treating her campaign as a distraction from what it considers a more important task: persuading the North to abandon its nuclear weapons.

But Ms. Lee, 62, is not giving up, and recently she has scored some victories against what she calls "a gigantic darkness and forgetfulness."

"We shout our fathers' names because our society no longer remembers them," she said during an interview in her office, where one wall is covered with the black-and-white photos of people thought to have been abducted during the war, including her own father. "We hope that they will hear us and know that they are remembered."

During the 1950-53 war, North Korea took away tens of thousands of South Korean civilians, mainly civil servants, educators, writers, judges, Christian pastors and businesspeople. Nearly all were men. Some appear in South Korean textbooks for their roles in building the young Korean state as it emerged from Japanese colonial rule. According to family accounts and the government, the North Koreans often seemed to have a clear idea of which individuals they wanted to move to the North, apparently to bolster their own professional ranks for reconstruction after the war or, in other cases, to neutralize enemies, such as members of anti-Communist, right-wing groups.

When Ms. Lee's father, a factory owner in Seoul, was taken away, she was 18 months old and ailing. A spinal injury left her with a warped back.

When she speaks, her voice is little more than a raspy whisper. But a smile seldom leaves the face of this woman, only 135 centimeters tall, or 4 feet 5 inches.

"During air raids, mother said I screamed endlessly in the underground shelter," she said. "That ruined my vocal cords."

When the U.S. military signed a truce with North Korea in 1953, prisoners of war were exchanged, but civilian abductees were excluded. Their fate and their women's sorrow lived on in a once popular song:

Hands trussed with a steel wire, my love looked back as he was dragged away, barefoot and limping,

Even if it takes 10, or 100 years, please return home alive.

But under Cold War-era dictatorship in the South, the women were barred from staging street protests. They were kept under surveillance out of fear that North Korea might send back their relatives as spies. Often their sons were taken in for interrogation by counterintelligence agents looking for any evidence of treason.

As the years passed, many older people abandoned hope of ever striking a deal with the North, and younger generations have been eager to move on. Many families gave up on their relatives as dead or feared that activism on their behalf might only endanger them in the North.

Ms. Lee, who is divorced with no children, was running a nursery in Seoul in 2000 when she determined to break that long silence.

That year, President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and Kim Jong-il, the North Korean leader, held the first intra-Korean summit meeting. When their governments later arranged reunions of families separated by the war, abductees were once again excluded. In the subsequent years, South Korea provided billions of dollars in aid, hoping that would encourage more humanitarian gestures by the North. But Pyongyang has not released any information about the missing South Koreans or allowed communication with their relatives, insisting that any intellectuals from the South who ended up in the North did so voluntarily. It calls Ms. Lee's campaign "a grave political provocation."

"They never admit kidnapping because that would be admitting a crime," Ms. Lee said. "They just hope we'll all be dead soon and this will all be forgotten."

In 2000, she shut down her nursery and established the Korean War Abductees' Family Union, bringing together 700 families.

In 2002, her group found a 1952 government document listing 83,000 South Koreans as kidnapped, a preliminary wartime compilation that officials had previously denied existed. It was gathering dust, uncataloged, in a government library.

On its Web site, her group posts videotaped interviews with the aging wives and mothers whose firsthand accounts of the war would otherwise be lost with their deaths.

Last year, after seven years of lobbying by her group, lawmakers passed a bill mandating the first government investigation of wartime kidnappings. In August, the government panel confirmed 55 men as kidnapped. More such rulings are expected during its four-year inquiry. To Ms. Lee, the official recognition was a first step toward establishing a "systematic war crime" by North Korea.

According to South Korean government estimates, Communist troops and militias killed between 59,000 and 122,800 South Korean civilians during the war.

South Korean troops and police officers carried out similar massacres of their own people suspected as leftists, according to recent government investigations. It remains unclear how many people were killed in mass executions in North Korea. However, during their short-lived advance into the North, U.S. and South Korean troops discovered mass graves of civilians, including women and children, apparently killed in haste by retreating Communists.

Also unclear is what happened to those South Koreans taken to the North.

Kim Yong-il, who was abducted and then escaped North Korea during the war, said that 600 of the 3,000 South Koreans he was forced to join in a "death march" did not make it to Pyongyang, falling victim to hunger, disease and aerial bombings.

"Young people must know that the prosperity they enjoy today is built upon the sacrifices of these forgotten people," Ms. Lee said. "Forgetting is ingratitude, the worst sin."

This year, a few cabinet ministers began wearing blue lapel pins in the shape of the forget-me-not Ms. Lee's group is distributing as part of its awareness campaign.

She has also taken her campaign to the United States, where some Korean families emigrated to escape political surveillance and poverty at home. They are appealing for a U.S. congressional resolution for the return of their relatives from North Korea.

"Although we are grateful to the Americans for defending our nation during the war, we are disappointed with their failure to free those kidnapped people during the armistice talks," Ms. Lee said. "Many of the families are now American citizens. So it's an American issue."

When her group staged a name-reciting rally in April, Ms. Lee's mother, Kim Bok-nam, 89, was the first to take the microphone. With a trembling voice, she started with the name of her own husband, Lee Seong-hwan, who, if he were still alive, would be 91.

Ms. Kim never remarried. Two of her three daughters emigrated to the United States, but she and Ms. Lee remain in the old family house.

"Mother believes that if father returned, he would come to this house," Ms. Lee said.

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