

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 169

To designate February 3, 1998, as “Four Chaplains Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 27, 1998

Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. D’AMATO, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. BOND, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. HUTCHINSON, and Mr. DASCHLE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

To designate February 3, 1998, as “Four Chaplains Day”.

Whereas February 3, 1998, is the 55th anniversary of the sinking of the United States Army transport Dorchester, an event that resulted in the loss of nearly 700 lives in 1943 and for which witnesses have recounted in the Congressional Record the heroism of 4 chaplains of different faiths, Lieutenant George L. Fox, Methodist; Lieutenant Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lieutenant John P. Washington, Catholic; and Lieutenant Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed;

Whereas witnesses have verified that during the approximate 18 minutes the ship was sinking after being torpedoed off the coast of Greenland, the 4 chaplains went from soldier to soldier calming fears and handing out life jackets and

guiding men to safety and when there were no more life jackets, they removed their own life jackets and gave them to others to save their lives and were last seen arm-in-arm in prayer on the hull of the ship;

Whereas many of the 230 men who survived owed their lives to these 4 chaplains, and witnesses among them recounted the unique ecumenical spirit and love for their fellow man these 4 demonstrated that were later illustrated in a popular postage stamp issued by the United States in 1948 with the title “Interfaith in Action”;

Whereas Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 90 in 1957 to honor these 4 chaplains and the men who died with them, and President Truman and President Eisenhower issued similar proclamations calling for national recognition and participation in memorial services throughout the land that have been observed annually by the American Legion on the first Sunday in February;

Whereas Congress undertook to create a special medal for valor given to the memory of the 4 chaplains in 1960 and never to be repeated; and

Whereas memorials to the chaplains’ heroic sacrifice abound in many places throughout the country including the Heroes Window in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) requests the President of the United States
3 to issue a proclamation designating February 3,
4 1998, as “Four Chaplains Day”; and

5 (2) invites the people of the United States, of
6 all religions and creeds and in all communities, to

- 1 observe this date with appropriate ceremonies, cele-
- 2 brations, and commemorations.

