

Every marine knows the translation of the Marine Corps motto "Always Faithful." Roughly one out of every three marines who landed at Iwo Jima was a casualty, either killed or wounded. Twenty thousand Japanese were killed, and over 6,000 American personnel lost their lives in the face of some of the fiercest defenses ever encountered by an attacking force.

The marines were faithful to their fellow marines, to their commanding officers, and to the American ideals which are symbolized so well by the image of the flag raising over Suribachi.

The flag symbolizes the idea of democracy and freedom, and we still enjoy that democracy and freedom. Freedom from oppression, freedom to choose, and freedom to speak your beliefs. But the price of those freedoms has always been dear. Three of the men pictured in the famous photograph and in the bronze statue by Felix de Weldon died on Iwo Jima. The uncommon valor which was so common on the beaches and rocks of Iwo Jima must always be remembered.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation for the work of the Marine Corps Historical Center here in Washington, Dan Crawford, a historian at the Center, has been very helpful in getting us the facts about this important battle. In addition, this pamphlet written by Col. Joseph Alexander, USMC (Ret.) entitled "Closing In: Marines in the Seizure of Iwo Jima," was the source of much of the information which we used tonight. It is available from the Marine Corps Historical foundation in Quantico, VA. The toll-free telephone number is 1-800-336-0291, Extension 60.

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IN HONOR OF THOSE SERVICEMEN WHO FOUGHT AND WON THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I certainly thank the Speaker, and I thank the former speaker in the well, the gentleman from Mississippi [SONNY MONTGOMERY]. He is certainly one of the strongest supporters of our veterans in this Nation, and I take my hat off to him.

Mr. Speaker, having had the privilege of serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, I'm especially pleased to participate in this special order tonight to honor those courageous servicemen who fought and won the epic battle of Iwo Jima during World War Two. The men faced death against great odds and many, in fact, lost their lives on this island halfway around the world. The significance of their efforts is timeless and worthy of continued attention. In fact, if not for the efforts of these selfless patriots, we almost certainly would not be the leader of the free

world, a position we have retained ever since their victory. In that respect, Mr. Speaker, each and every citizen in this country, of all ages, owe an extreme debt of gratitude to these defenders of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, words cannot possibly do justice to the horrific events and extraordinary feats of valor that comprised this bloodiest of battles in Marine Corps history. However, in an attempt to demonstrate the burdens under which these brave soldiers performed, it is necessary to review what was at stake as they approached the beaches of Iwo Jima that February morning in 1945. When we begin to acknowledge the extent of their sacrifice, it will become clear that this battle was not only momentous and a turning point then, but has implications even today.

Strategically, this 8-square mile hunk of rock (known as the island of Iwo Jima) was as crucial to ending the war with Japan as attacks on their mainland. The reason being, even our superior B-29 bombers couldn't effectively raid the Japanese mainland, because accompanying fighter planes couldn't make the long trip from United States bases on the Mariana Islands to the mainland. Without these fighter escorts, the bombers were subject to Japanese attacks, because radar gave the Japanese 2-hour advance notice of the bombers' arrival. As a result, Mr. Speaker, Iwo Jima, which lay exactly between the Mariana Islands and Japan, became a necessity, if we were to break the Japanese will and end the war.

The troops going in that day clearly understood the significance, as it was the largest Marine force ever deployed for one mission, and these patriotic souls were prepared to sacrifice their lives to attain this island. It was a battle of will on will, Mr. Speaker, a strict frontal assault on a position defended to the maximum extent, yet they refused to yield.

In the end, one third of all marines killed in World War Two died on this uninhabited Pacific island. However, they died of single task and single mind, seizing this island in the spirit of democracy and liberty over imperialism and oppression. I'd like to share a quote of Maj. Gen. Graves B. Erskine, who commanded the 3d Marine Division in this battle. It sums up the commitment of these men to overcoming such unparalleled burdens.

Victory was never in doubt. Its cost was. What was in doubt (in all our minds) was whether there would be any of us left . . . at the end, or whether the last Marine would die knocking out the last Japanese gun and gunner.

It's hard to imagine the adversity each and every man storming this island was faced with. However, Mr. Speaker, this battle not only represented the costliest in terms of casualties that the Marine Corps ever experienced in its almost 200-year history but it also produced the most Congres-

sional Medals of Honor in the war. Confronting death against great odds, these men responded above and beyond the call of duty. Pitting their will against that of the Japanese, Mr. Speaker, made it no contest in the eyes of these honorable Americans. After all, they had the will of free people throughout the world on their side.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share with you the extraordinary feats of one such Congressional Medal of Honor winner from my home State of New York, Pfc. Douglas Thomas Jacobson of Rochester, NY. As a member of the 4th Marine Division on February 26, 1945, Jacobson waged a battle to penetrate the Japanese cross-island defense. Private Jacobson, just 19 years of age, singlehandedly destroyed 16 enemy positions allowing his unit to gain the strong ground and breach the defense of the enemy. Mr. Speaker, the spirit and valor of this man went undaunted in the face of an established and fortified enemy. All of us could only hope we could respond as selflessly and honorably as Douglas Jacobson. Appropriately, he was honored again this past week at the 50th anniversary of the onset of the battle by President Clinton.

The actions of people like Pfc. Douglas Jacobson was of immediate significance. Seizing the island of Iwo Jima allowed fighters to escort the bombers on their missions over Japan, but of equal importance, it provided a secure airfield for emergency landings when returning from these air raids. According to the Navy Office of Information, by wars end, 2,400 bombers with 27,000 crewmen made emergency landings on Iwo Jima airfields.

However, Mr. Speaker, the significance goes beyond even that, if you can imagine. This was a fight that took place half way around the world yet reeked of American spirit and democratic consequences. It marked the beginning of our realization that this Nation must carry the torch for freedom against imperialist domination and tyranny. Mr. Speaker, this victory and the victory in World War Two geared us for our fight against Communist oppression which made its face known shortly thereafter. Now, communism has been dealt a major blow yet it lingers on in places like Cuba and China where people are subject to repugnant human rights violations and denial of basic dignity. Even more nations are ruled by harsh dictators without respect for individual freedoms, and who are content to jeopardize the very existence of their people in order to sustain their elitist inner circle.

The lessons of Iwo Jima and events in World War Two, prove that we need to maintain preparedness in order to overcome such imperialism. Furthermore, it is an insult to freedom fighters such as those who lost their lives in Iwo Jima when we constantly yield privileges such as equal trade status to empires like China, an empire that

speaks of taking over the independent province of Taiwan and continues to enslave the people of Tibet. Mr. Speaker, it remains imperative that we maintain our military presence and preparedness to instill confidence in our many democratic allies, while providing a beacon for those who suffer under the oppression occurring everyday. We simply cannot ignore these threats from the outside world. Mr. Speaker, I quote then Vice-President Richard Nixon upon the dedication of the Iwo Jima memorial in 1954:

This statue symbolizes the hopes and dreams of America and the real purposes of our foreign policy. We realize that to retain freedom for ourselves, we must be concerned when people in other parts of the world may lose theirs.

Mr. Speaker, this rings true today as it did then. May we never forget the sacrifices of these men on behalf of this maxim. Indeed, there is no greater representation, here or in the world, of the advance of democracy over imperialism, than the statue in Arlington Cemetery which depicts victorious ambassadors of freedom raising the American flag over this outpost of imperialism. Mr. Speaker, may we continue to learn from their sacrifice and contain those bent on denying freedom and destroying democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. MURTHA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MURTHA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

NEVER FORGET THE SACRIFICES OF THE MEN WHO FOUGHT ON IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I first would like to pay honor to the gentleman, my colleague, SONNY MONTGOMERY. Probably no one in recent history has done more for the veterans of this country than SONNY and I want to commend him for bringing about this special order tonight.

Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago I had the honor of being a young sailor and participating in the battle of Iwo Jima. Our role was from a small escort air carrier delivering napalm bombs and rockets to the island and supporting our troops. Fifty years ago today plus four was the day we raised the flag on Mount Suribachi. One of the men that participated in that was an Indian from my state of Arizona by the name of Ira Hayes, a Marine.

Mr. Speaker, I think that too often we take these things too lightly, and I just hope that we do not forget this. May we never forget the sacrifices of all those people that participated, that paid with their lives. May that flag always wave over this country. Mr.

Speaker, we pray this will never happen again.

I would like to read a quote by a captain, a Marine, on the island at that time, to his parents. He said, "Only those who fought on Iwo will ever know how tremendous a job was done. It is now sacred ground to us because certainly many of us came so close to eternity that we will never be worldly again." Capt. William Ryan wrote this to his parents in March 1945 from Iwo Jima.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. ROBERTS].

Mr. ROBERTS. I rise to associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues and fellow Marines as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Iwo Jima. I want to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Arizona and give special thanks to Gen. SONNY MONTGOMERY. A finer friend of the military and our veterans our Nation has never seen.

My father, Wes Roberts, who was a Marine Corps major, who lied about his age at 42 to join the Corps and at age 43 was on Iwo Jima, took part in the 36-day assault on this very key island. Fifteen years later, Lieutenant PAT ROBERTS, yours truly, went back to Iwo Jima with Lieutenant General Worsham and a contingent of survivors and veterans, and we toured the island. We not only toured Mount Suribachi and the caves and the end of the island, but also the Japanese cemetery to pay homage to those brave veterans as well.

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And we were standing on top of Mount Suribachi. I will never forget this. All of the veterans of the people who were there at that particular time during the assault looked down at where we had cliffs and then Mount Suribachi and then knee-deep ashes on the beach. And the gentleman turned to me, tears streaming down his face and he said, it is a wonder that anybody ever really made it. It is a wonder anybody was really alive.

We toured the island, and we toured those caves where still the dead Japanese are there. And it was an amazing feat in terms of a military victory. Somehow, by persevering, somehow, by uncommon valor and at great cost both to Americans and Japanese, we saved lives and the end result by bringing this war to its proper conclusion.

I would like to say, as a former Marine, Semper fi, Dad, Semper fi, Marine Corps. Semper fi, America. God bless the United States Marine Corps.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. JACOBS].

Mr. JACOBS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

There is an old saying, abandon all hope, ye who enter here. And Bill Mauldin, in World War II, had a cartoon where one GI said to the other, in combat, I feel like a fugitive from the

law of averages. And such an attitude is necessary when you face enemy fire. You must forget about the good life. You must forget about everything. You must consider yourself already dead.

The philosopher tells us, civilization progresses because young men die for their country and old men plant trees under which they will never sit. And Henry V, he exhorts his troops at St. Crispin's battle, in peace nothing so becomes a man as stillness and humility. But in war, imitate the action of a tiger. Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, exchange for fair nature hard-favored rage.

To die for one's country is love than which there can be no greater.

Mr. Speaker, on February 16, 1945, the Americans initiated a pre-invasion naval bombardment lasting three days. Task Force 58, the most powerful carrier force ever assembled, struck the Japanese mainland to prevent enemy support. The Iwo Jima operation, codenamed Detachment, included 1,800 carrier-based and 7th Air Force planes; a quarter-million seamen on nearly 800 ships; and 75,000 GI's of the "V Amphibious Corps." The main assault units included the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions, and various other forces of army and navy construction battalions.

On Monday, February 19, 1945 at 9:00 a.m., the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions landed on the southeastern shore of Iwo Jima. Within 20 minutes, the marines were 250 yards inland. At that point, the Japanese opened up with all they had.

Three days later, on February 23, (50 years ago today) a 40 man patrol of the 5th Division's 2nd battalion, 28 Marines, cleared the 550 foot summit, of Mt. Suribachi. That morning, photographer Joe Rosenthal took the famous photograph of the raising of the American Flag overlooking the island. Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal, a witness to the flag raising, commented that: "the raising of that flag means a Marine Corps for another 500 years."

By the time it was over in mid-summer, 22 Marines and five Navy men earned the Congressional Medal of Honor. This was the greatest number of Medal of Honor recipients for any single engagement of World War II. Half of the awards issued were posthumous, and Iwo Jima represented more than one-fourth of all Medals of Honor awarded Marines during the entire war.

Total American casualties were 28,686. The Japanese sacrificed 23,300 lives and 1,083 of them ultimately surrendered.

By the end of the war, 2,251 B-29's landed at Iwo Jima. Of that number, more than 800 made emergency landings. Without Iwo Jima, many of the 9,000 American crew men would most likely have been lost.

ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LARGENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. EVANS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in joining my fellow colleagues and Marines in honoring the