

beneficial tax breaks that could have been included in this bill to assist those businesses most likely to be affected by the minimum wage increase.

Mr. President, because the Domenici amendment combines a \$1.00 increase in the minimum wage with tax and regulatory relief to offset the negative impact of increased personnel costs on small businesses and the economy as a whole, I would have voted for the amendment.●

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, for the leader, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of routine morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING VETERANS DAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, as daylight hours shorten and brightly colored leaves fall from the tree branches, we gradually descend into the winter season. The master hand of nature, after painting the hills glorious colors, leaves us with a chilly palette of greyer skies, leafless trees, and a long wait before the spring blossoms emerge from their underground bulbs. Although we may feel the bounce in our step that a crystal clear, crisp-aired fall day can bring, with the sun shining brightly as it makes its low arc across the sky, we are reminded during this time of the year of the cycles of the natural world. We are reminded that all too soon, we will be in the quarter of the year naturally suited for hibernation—a season, despite festive gatherings, associated with the death needed for renewal. During this season we celebrate Veterans Day to honor veterans who, with their death and sacrifice, have renewed and sustained the freedom and promise of our great republic.

Each year at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month we celebrate the end of the fighting in Europe in 1918 that ended the Great War. When I was a boy, we called this day Armistice Day in honor of the Armistice between the Allies and the Central Powers that ended the horrible trench warfare that had torn Europe apart. In 1926, Congress proclaimed that Armistice Day would be celebrated yearly with an annual observance of “thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations.”

After World War II, on June 1, 1954, Congress approved the Veterans Day Act that changed the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day. I am the only Member of Congress who was serving in Congress at that time who is still serving today. Officially, on Veterans Day, we celebrate and recognize the sacrifices of our nation’s soldiers, sailors, and airmen to protect our free-

doms during all of the wars and conflicts involving the United States. That same year, President Eisenhower declared that on Veterans Day, Americans should “solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us consecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so their efforts shall not have been in vain.”

From the beginning of our nation, America’s sons and daughters have been ready to answer a call to duty. In particular, West Virginians have a proud enviable record of service to this country in the perilous times of war and conflict. Of the twenty-five million living veterans, one-hundred-ninety-thousand reside in the great State of West Virginia. More than ten-percent of the people of West Virginia are veterans who have served our nation proudly—that is more than ten of every one-hundred West Virginians. This tradition of dedication to serving is something I am proud of as a West Virginian. Through the turmoil and change of the twentieth century, one thing has remained constant—the dedication and commitment of our veterans to the survival and strength of this nation.

Largely through the might of our Armed Forces, the United States enjoys an unprecedented position of international leadership. Yet, the promise of lifelong health care that this country made to our men and women in uniform has been threatened, not by the aggression of a foreign power, but by inadequate funding. Caring for America’s veterans is an ongoing cost of war. As America’s veterans grow older, they require increased dependence on health care services. But, the Department of Veterans Affairs cannot be expected to provide the necessary care which veterans will need in Fiscal Year 2000, at the Fiscal Year 1999 level for veterans health care services. Veterans should not be expected to wait in longer lines, and travel farther for services. They must be provided quality service. If we fail in this obligation, how can we justify sending more and more young service members into harm’s way? How can we expect our children and grandchildren to volunteer for military service in the future, if we are not prepared to keep promises to veterans today?

This year the budget came dangerously close to failing to provide for health care that veterans need and deserve. The Department of Veterans Affairs warned many veterans that they might not be eligible for veterans medical care services in Fiscal Year 2000. The strong need for quality medical care for veterans, and a sense of duty to these men and women who valiantly served, caused me to work very hard to meet the funding level for veterans’ medical care recommended by the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs—some \$1.7 billion above the Administra-

tion’s budget request. I would like to thank my colleagues who supported my efforts to raise the funding level for veterans medical care to \$19 billion for Fiscal Year 2000. This level of funding will enable the VA to continue to provide quality health care to veterans, and will prevent the kinds of cuts in services that many veterans feared would place their eligibility for care in question.

As a nation, we are good about honoring our war dead, with memorial days such as Veterans Day, and with memorials of stone that dot our capital and other towns and cities across the country. We need to be as good to our living veterans. Today, many of our veterans are still affected by the time they spent in service. We can best honor them by continuing to provide a high quality of medical care. We can also honor our veterans by continuing to search for answers to questions of service-related injury, and by providing for those who have experienced such injuries. We must also work to prevent such injuries from recurring. For instance, we must remain committed to pin-pointing the cause of the illness of Gulf War Syndrome. Recent reports issued by the Department of Defense indicate that certain substances our military men and women were directed to take during their service in the Gulf War cannot be ruled out as causes for this syndrome. We must continue to focus our attention on narrowing in on the cause of the symptoms experienced by more than one-hundred thousand Gulf War Veterans.

So, this year on Veterans Day, let us reflect on the men and women who have valiantly served our Nation, both living and dead. Upon reflection, we should realize the need to recommit ourselves to honoring veterans, not only with unfurled flags and patriotic up-tempo marches but also by serving them as they have served our nation. As the leaves fall from the trees, and our veterans age and pass on, we must remember that what has always kept the tree of liberty safe and strong through the frost and chill of many brutal winters is the commitment of our veterans to nourish the roots of freedom.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today to salute the selfless men and women who have sacrificed so much in order to secure and protect the freedoms that we, as Americans, enjoy today. Volunteering one’s body and mind without thought of consequence in order to safeguard the ideologies our country holds dear, is the utmost act of patriotism. Today we recognize the importance of the hardships endured by our Nation’s veterans to preserve peace and freedom.

As a Senator from New Mexico, I take great pride in the fact that New Mexico has among the top ten highest per capita military retiree populations in the Nation and honor the prominent contributions they have made towards the preservation of our great Nation.

During World War II, members of the 200th and 515th Coast Artillery, better known as the New Mexico Brigade, repelled Japanese attacks for 4 months before being overwhelmed by disease and starvation. Following the ensuing capture, the survivors of the battle were subjected to an 85-mile "Death March." These men were then held for more than 40 months in Japanese prisoner of war camps. Of the 1,800 men in the New Mexico Brigade, less than 900 returned home and a third of those who did died within a year of returning to the U.S. The bravery exhibited by the New Mexico Brigade is characteristic of the men and women that comprise our Armed Forces.

As a nation, we have an obligation to provide for those who have risked everything to the benefit of all. I am pleased that this session of Congress has produced legislation which will increase funding for veterans health care by \$1.7 billion to a total of \$19.6 billion for fiscal year 2000. However, we need to remain vigilant in our commitment to provide for those who are charged with the considerable task of defending this country from potential adversaries.

Today I would like to pay tribute to our veterans and I am sure that my colleagues will join me in honoring these valorous men and women for their dedicated service to our great Nation.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, one day a year, on Veteran's Day, America pauses to recognize the sacrifices and the contributions of our veterans. We express our gratitude to all those who have served our nation so well. For all of the veterans being honored today, I salute you for your service and your dedication to our country.

All veterans deserve our gratitude for their service. But it is especially fitting that we take special notice of the nation's World War II and Korean War veterans.

America is losing 1,000 of its World War II and Korean War veterans every day. As they pass, so does our opportunity to pay tribute to them directly.

Tom Brokaw has called the World War II generation the "Greatest Generation." He captured the essence of this generation in his recent book by that name. As he stated:

The World War II generation came of age during the Great Depression and the Second World War and went on to build modern America—men and women whose everyday lives of duty, honor, achievement, and courage gave us the world we have today.

The World War II generation and the size of its veteran population are unique in American history. Sixteen million Americans served in World War II from 1941 to 1945.

That war united all Americans—men and women; blacks and whites; rich and poor; old and young. My oldest brother Joe gave his life, and Jack served with great courage on PT-109 in the Pacific.

As much as we owe the World War II generation, we are still waiting for the

construction of a national memorial in Washington to their service. At last, a site on the Mall has been selected and a design has been chosen for the National World War II Memorial. We owe it to these extraordinary veterans to complete it without delay, so that as many of our World War II veterans as possible can see the nation's enduring monument to their service.

We also honor these veterans by ensuring they receive the hard-earned benefits they so eminently deserve. I remain concerned about the healthcare budget of the Veterans' Administration. Health costs continue to rise and the budget has not kept pace. We have an ongoing responsibility to provide every veteran with adequate health care. This year's VA budget includes a 1.7 billion dollar increase, and we must continue to do all we can so that veterans receive their fair share in each year's budget.

In addition, as the number of older veterans continues to grow, the Veterans Administration must find a way to provide long-term care. The VA published an advisory report on this issue last year, but their recommendations were far from adequate. We need to pursue this issue next year, and develop more specific initiatives.

Another challenge we face is to deal with the increasing concern that today's generation is estranged from the military. Only 6 percent of people under the age of 65 have ever served in the armed forces. Compare that with the fact that half of men over 50 have had at least two years of military service. In the years ahead, when we no longer have the Greatest Generation—The World War II Generation—as our model, we will have to do much more to guarantee that our society keeps our armed forces strong and able to meet any threat to our country.

David Broder, the senior Washington Post journalist and a veteran himself, recently expressed his concern about the growing civilian-military gap. He stated:

The fact that no one younger than their mid-forties has even faced the possibility of being called-up for military service is one of the most significant generational divides in this country.

Clearly, this is cause for concern. The nation must work harder to preserve and strengthen the duties of citizenship that our veterans symbolize for all of us.

The military has traditionally been an effective way for America's youth to serve the nation. It is troubling that today almost two thirds of the nation's youth say they would not join the armed forces. Twenty years ago, only 40 percent said that. Since the Persian Gulf War, the interest among 16 to 21 year olds in enlisting has dropped from 34 percent to 26 percent. Last year the Army asked young adults:

If you want to do something beneficial for your country, are you more likely to do it in the military or in a civilian job?

Two to one who responded said:

In a civilian job.

Prosperity and complacency may explain such answers, but they do not justify them. Because of our nation's veterans, America is the greatest in the world, free from any major challenge from any other nation. The skillful work and dedication of our veterans have enabled our children and grandchildren to enjoy unparalleled national security and economic prosperity.

It is imperative in our democracy that citizens remain proud of the military and continue to respect and appreciate the sacrifices of those who serve.

As President Kennedy said in his Inaugural Address:

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

Million of Americans were inspired by these words, and our obligation is to continue that inspiration into the next century, so that a new generation will continue to ask not what their country can do for them, but what they can do for their country.

The reduction in the population of veterans is being felt in Congress as well. The proportion of members of the House and Senate who have served in the military has dropped from more than 75 percent in 1971 to less than 34 percent today.

Without the World War II and Korean generations, we will have to pay special attention to ensure that our society does not forget about our Vietnam, Gulf and Cold War veterans, or view their contributions with any less significance.

The veterans of these more recent wars did not come home to the fanfare that accompanied the Allied victory in World War II. But their sacrifices and contributions to our nation's defense and to the protection of our democracy are immeasurable. As a nation, it is imperative that we continue to recognize the service of these veterans and pay tribute to their sacrifices.

To help ensure that our nation remembers all of its veterans, I supported a Resolution this year that expresses the Sense of the Congress that the third Monday in April be designated as "In Memory Day." That Day will recognize the Vietnam Veterans who have died as a result of illnesses and conditions associated with service in the Vietnam War.

We must honor the missing too. Today, over 80,000 American servicemen remain unaccounted for from all our nation's wars, including approximately 10,000 from the Vietnam and Korean Wars.

We must never forget our missing veterans. And we must never give up the effort to bring them home.

On behalf of the nation's disabled veterans, I strongly support the Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation to establish a national memorial to honor all disabled veterans. Recently, Miss America 1999, Heather

French of Kentucky, testified before the Senate on behalf of this memorial. During her Miss America pageant, she chose veterans as her cause, and she is emphasizing veterans issues throughout her reign. It is commitments and gestures of goodwill like hers that will keep America proud of its armed forces and the sacrifices of its veterans.

The cornerstone of our military pre-eminence rests on many factors, but the most critical is its people. Without men and women willing to volunteer for military duty, we will not be able to respond to crises around the globe that threaten our vital interests. We need cutting-edge weapon systems. But we also need dedicated service members to operate these systems.

As we do more to take care of the veterans of today, we must never lose sight of our obligation to take care of the veterans of tomorrow. This year Congress passed the broadest and most sweeping improvements in military pay and benefits in over twenty years. The new law calls for a well-deserved 4.8% pay raise for military personnel—the single largest pay raise for servicemen and women since 1982. It also expands authority to offer additional pay and other incentives to critical military specialties, and it improves retirement benefits for those who are serving now.

The military now faces one of the most difficult recruiting and retention challenges in many years. A major reason for the current problem is the strong U.S. economy. But the demands of far-flung military operations in recent years have also taken their toll on our troops. Today's military is a smaller force, and yet it is also a more active force, and we have been slow to recognize the problems that are building.

In the past year alone, our servicemen and women conducted combat operations in Kosovo and Iraq. They are serving as peacekeepers in Bosnia, and as humanitarian support personnel in Central America. All of these demands are in addition to the day-to-day operations and exercises at home and overseas in which the military participates throughout the year.

Massachusetts is a major part of all these operations. This past year, Guard and Reserve units from Massachusetts were deployed in support of Operation Northern Watch in Iraq, Hurricane Mitch relief in Central America, and in Kosovo.

I especially commend all those who served during Operation Allied Force in Kosovo. This was the first war that America fought and won without a single casualty. Yet its victors came home to no parade marking V-K day, and no celebration of heroes. Yet their bravery and skill saved thousands of innocent lives, and they deserve our highest praise.

The success of their operations was an impressive tribute to the capability and dedication of our service men and women. Veterans, in particular, should

be proud, because it is their legacy and example that have helped create the world's finest armed forces.

I am very disappointed that a provision to improve and expand GI Bill benefits was not included in this year's Defense bill. The GI Bill has been a very successful and important program for the military and the nation. Over 2.3 million World War II veterans took advantage of the GI Bill upon returning from the war. It has been called the greatest investment in higher education that any society has ever made, and a brilliant and enduring commitment to the future.

In order for the GI Bill to continue its valuable work, it must evolve as our military forces evolve. Access to higher education is an increasingly important benefit for servicemen and women in today's all-volunteer, professional military.

Improvements are needed in the GI Bill to enhance the program's value and benefit to our troops, and to improve the bill's effectiveness as a recruiting tool—and these improvements need to be enacted into law as soon as possible.

Today's armed forces contain well-educated professionals who have chosen to serve their country in the military. We must treat them as the skilled professionals they are—or we will lose them.

Finally, when we think about our veterans, it is easy to recall the Eisenhowers, the Pattons, the MacArthurs, and the Powells. But we must never forget the countless silent heroes—the fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters who served when their country called.

Stephen Ambrose, in his book "Citizen Soldier," talks about the "can-do" attitude of these quiet heroes that sets the American military apart. He describes the Normandy landing, where the American Sherman tanks were outgunned, and tells how skilled the Americans were in salvaging damaged tanks, patching them up, and sending them back into action.

Ambrose writes:

Indeed no army in the world had such a capability. Within two days of being put out of action by German shells, about half the damaged Shermans had been put back on the line. Kids who had been working at gas stations and body shops two years earlier had brought their mechanical skills to Normandy. Nearly all the work was done as if the crews were back in the States, rebuilding damaged cars and trucks.

These were not professional soldiers, but average Americans. They left their families and friends behind to fight because their nation called. It is the dedication and ingenuity of these silent heroes that has made America great, and that made their Greatest Generation.

All of us in the Kennedy family have enormous respect for our veterans and their service to the nation. Today, on the eve of Veteran's Day, I recall once again the words of President Kennedy. He visited the U.S. Naval Academy in August 1963, and spoke at a ceremony

honoring the new class of midshipmen. This is what he said about his service in the Navy:

I can imagine a no more rewarding career. And any man who may be asked what he did to make his life worth while, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction: "I served in the United States Navy."

My brother was a Navy man, but I'm sure that veterans of all the other services feel the same way. I know I am both grateful and proud of my fellow veterans, and I honor, respect, and thank them for their service.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, on November 11, 1918, an armistice was signed to end the "War to end all wars." The country rejoiced. Then, as the jubilation subsided, the reality of what had occurred slowly entered the consciousness of the nation and shouts of joy turned to tears of grief and thanksgiving. For many who had gone to fight would never return to their homes. And those who did come home would forever be scarred by the sights, sounds, and atrocities of war.

How could we, as a nation, show our gratitude to those who had given so much? The answer, insufficient though it was, was to set aside a day to honor all those who had served—heroes and patriots—and to give thanks for their sacrifices for freedom.

Tomorrow is the day we have set aside. Tomorrow is the day we should take special care to remember our veterans.

Throughout our nation's history there have been men and women willing to wear the uniform of the United States of America—willing to give their lives for freedom. Some people have asked "why?" The answer is, in the words of President Reagan, spoken at the 40th anniversary of D-Day: "It is because you all knew that some things are worth dying for. One's country is worth dying for, and democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man. All of you loved liberty. All of you were willing to fight tyranny, and you knew the people of your countries were behind you."

Our nation depends on our armed forces. We depend on highly motivated and highly skilled men and women who are willing to go into harm's way at any time to defend American interests. And, when our troops leave the service, we should not forget them.

Although the nation may only officially recognize the sacrifices of veterans every November on Veterans Day or every May on Memorial Day, I know, personally, that in the hearts of the individual Americans, our veterans are remembered everyday. They are the husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of us all. Almost one-third of the nation's population—approximately 70 million persons—are veterans, dependents of veterans, or survivors of deceased veterans. I and my family honor and remember my brother Jess who died in World War II and

my brother-in-law Neil Brown, who died in Vietnam.

In the decades before the all-volunteer army and sophisticated high-tech weaponry, our military was made up of ordinary people. School teachers, ministers, machinists, truck drivers, bankers, and nurses, enlisted not just in the military, but in a noble enterprise. The story of America is the story of ordinary people doing extraordinary things and demonstrating uncommon endurance and valor.

Today, our armed forces are comprised of dedicated soldiers and sailors who have chosen to make the military a career or to contribute their skills for a time in an all-volunteer, professional fighting force. But, the fact that our nation's Army and Navy have become more reliant on technology does not negate the risks of warfare. Nor does it compensate for family separations, holidays spent thousands of miles from home, or meals eaten out of carton.

For Veterans' Day in 1954, President Eisenhower called upon us to "solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain."

On this Veterans Day, I echo the words of President Eisenhower. I salute all our veterans. I know that as long as there are Americans willing to stand up and fight for our values, we will remain a free and just nation.

A while ago, I was moved to write a song about those who have sacrificed so much for our country. It is entitled, "Morning Breaks at Arlington." It is an expression of the emotion and pride I feel whenever I think about the courage and dedication of our service men and women. Let me conclude with the lyrics:

Morning breaks on Arlington,
Warmed by rays of golden sun,
And all who pause in homage there
Feel a soft hush in the air.
Those who love their liberty
Bow the head and bend the knee,
And from their hearts they breathe a silent
prayer.
"Thank God for those who rest in honor
there."

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I salute the veterans of this nation. On this Veterans Day, I want to pay tribute to the brave American soldiers who fought long and hard battles so that we may all have our freedom today. Veterans Day is about honoring and remembering these men and women who served our Nation, and it is for their families.

I am very fortunate to represent a state where military service is held in such high esteem. And well it should be. I can't tell you how proud I am of all West Virginia veterans. Whether they served in wartime or peace, all made great sacrifices. Indeed, West

Virginia has one of the highest percentages of veterans of any state.

As I have often said, it was knowing and understanding West Virginians' deep patriotism and loyalty to their state and their country that first led me to seek a seat on the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, where I am now the Ranking Member. I am proud to serve veterans there.

The very fabric of our nation is wound through our veterans. Iwo Jima and Hamburger Hill, defeating Nazism and turning back Communism, punishing the brutality of Hitler, Saddam Hussein, and Milosevic. Our nation is truly a beacon to the world for freedom and for opportunity because our men and women in uniform held that beacon aloft. And many of those men and women in uniforms were West Virginians.

It is not enough to take a day to commemorate these veterans, however. We owe them more than that. It is our responsibility to refuse to turn our backs on veterans who need health care, education benefits, and compensation for injuries incurred in service. It would be truly disgraceful for these veterans, who have served our country so well and so valiantly, to feel that they have been forgotten except for this one day per year. That is why I take my work with and for veterans so very seriously.

I have fought very hard this year for veterans not only in West Virginia, but across the Nation. A critical need for veterans is long-term care. Our veteran population is aging rapidly and it is our responsibility to care for them. We owe them good long-term care now. I am dedicated to this need, and have been working hard to achieve this provision for all veterans.

And there are other battles to be fought as well. Although veterans who enroll with VA for their health care receive a very generous standard benefits package, there is no provision for comprehensive emergency care. This is a serious gap in coverage for veterans, which is unacceptable. Large and unexpected emergency medical care bills can present a significant financial burden to veterans.

Abraham Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg of dedication to "unfinished work . . . thus far so nobly advanced." Indeed, it is true that we have work to complete. In order to truly commemorate our veterans, I hope my Senate colleagues will join me in my continuing battles for veterans.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, great words of tribute and reverent appreciation are put on paper every year in anticipation of the arrival of November 11th. With a solemn heart I struggle to meet the challenge of delivering those words in a way that is both humble and befitting of America's heros. I offer these words in honor and in memory of every American who has answered the call to arms; for every American who has freely stepped forward under our Star Spangled Banner; and for every

American who died in the name of freedom. These men and women are among America's greatest heros.

Our great nation has flourished and enjoys unprecedented prosperity to this day because of our veterans' willingness to give themselves in service to the nation. For many this willingness meant sacrificing their lives so others might live free.

There are those among us who question whether or not our younger generations will prove, when the nation beckons, to be just as committed to the preservation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as those we honor every November 11 proved to be.

I wonder how many Americans had those same doubts before the outbreak of WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, or Desert Storm? I wonder how many who did go had dreamed that they would ever be called into the horror that is found on the battlefield?

Surely there were doubters. Surely there was apprehension and fear. But, they answered freedom's call. Our national story and the story of the American people is one of amazing courage in difficult times, and a proud tradition of triumph in the face of our enemies here and abroad. America has always been ready to act. The footprints left and the blood spilled by our soldiers, airmen, marines, sailors, and coast guardsmen around the world remain as a testament to the indomitable American spirit, our collective faith in the power of freedom, and to the promise of a great future.

Over and over again, history has proven those who doubted America's resolve to be dead wrong. I am confident that our nation's future remains bright if we continue to exhibit the same steadfastness as our forefather's—never forsaking the gift of freedom that so many have given us.

Inspiration can be found in many ways. Just the other day I was looking over Medal of Honor citations of some of Alabama's greatest heros. Taken together they represent a relatively small group of Alabamians but provide one of the greatest inspirations of hope for America I can find.

Reading those citations made me think about how many people might have doubted their commitment back then? How many people came in contact with those heros never realizing they would one day prove themselves worthy to wear the Medal of Honor? I choose to be excited by those thoughts because America might well be called upon again to defend the world against tyranny and evil, and I have no doubt that our men and women in uniform would again stand with the same steadfast resolve exhibited by those we honor today. I take great solace in knowing that the patriotism and heroism of Americans has been a constant for hundreds of years and will continue to be in the future.

America's veterans have made ours a great country. Hardly a person in America is not associated in some way

with a veteran. I hope you will thank them today for having answered the call to serve, and for setting the footprints for our future. They have indeed shown us the way into the 21st century.

Mr. L. CHAFEE. Mr. President, one of my constituents, Mrs. Virginia Doris of Warwick, Rhode Island, recently sent my late father a poem she had written as a tribute to the veterans of World War II. I understand that he agreed to insert her poem in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in time for Veterans Day. I was honored when Mrs. Doris asked me to carry out that task in his place.

Before I do so, I would like to take a brief moment to alert my colleagues to Mrs. Doris's own contribution to the war effort.

During World War II, 23,000 Oerlikon-Gazda 20mm anti-aircraft guns were manufactured in my home state of Rhode Island. Originally produced in Switzerland, these guns were critical to the Allied campaign—nearly every ship in the fleet carried them by the end of the war.

And Virginia Doris was right in the thick of this arms production effort, working long hours in the drafting room of the Oerlikon-Gazda command center, located in downtown Providence. In a 1990 interview with the Providence-Journal, Mrs. Doris described her years at the center "as this marvelous period in my life." Equipped with what she refers to as her "turbo persona," Mrs. Doris was a valued and trusted member of the Oerlikon-Gazda team.

I ask unanimous consent, Mrs. Doris's poem, "Ode to Comrades-In-Arms: World War II," be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ODE TO COMRADES-IN-ARMS
WORLD WAR II

O, Heavenly Father, gaze upon the tombs
Of Patriots, foster their eternal plumes
Nourished in they omnipoint song of hallow,
Shed gentle tears to moist their marrow.
Enfolded in thine unchanging flame
Behold the farflung earthly frame,
Its pulsing marbles sculptured strong,
With ebbing currents and silvery thong,
Each graven with the threaded embrace
Is beaming out of seven-hued grace!
The mystic temple wakes the slumbering
forms,
Takes the sacred dust they mercy warms,
And sounds the bugle near and clear white
stone,
Close by these mounds which hold thy own.
We implore, O' Savior, here let sleeping lie,
'Till Heaven's luminous shadows prepare to
die,
And join the manhood's folded-flock at
night,
Psalms for bravery shall not pass in flight,
As raging battles, and girded loins, last time
To bond, lips to stir, a soldier's final clime!
O, Heavenly Father, mark their burden of
decay,
The lives so young, war's lingering ebon
fray,
Delivers them a shrouded throne, and solemn
biers,

Can we not dream that those we loved are
here?

Beckon them all in memory, as the vine
Whose tangled stems have long untwined
The crystal pillars, and clasp around
The sunken urns, the forlorn sounds;
With mournful message to our brothers, re-
sign,
Tried and true, and close the broken line.

OLE MISS HOSTING FIRING LINE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, Senator COCHRAN and I are pleased to announce that the University of Mississippi, which we fondly refer to as Ole Miss, will be hosting the final broadcast of the Emmy-winning PBS program "Firing Line." Senator COCHRAN and I want to join the University of Mississippi in congratulating all those affiliated with "Firing Line," including its host, Mr. William F. Buckley, Jr., and its producer, Mr. Warren Steibel, for their outstanding accomplishments during 34 years of telecasts. Since 1966, Mr. Buckley and Mr. Steibel have given the American public an opportunity to make informed decisions on the important topics of the day by bringing all angles of an issue to the surface through their lively debates. No public affairs program in history has run longer with the same host.

Firing Line has brought a wide range of topics to the forefront since joining the PBS family on May 26, 1971, including "Separation of Church and State," "Is Socialism Dead," "Health Risks in a Nuclear Environment," and its final topic, "The Government Should Not Impose a Tax on Electronic Commerce." These and other topics have been debated by Presidents George Bush, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and Richard Nixon; and prominent figures such as Margaret Thatcher, Muhammad Ali, Henry Kissinger, and Bob Dole.

Mr. President, the past decade has brought many references to the end of the millennium. It is a tribute to programs of its kind that "Firing Line" leaves the airways at this historic time. The guests, topics, and fervor with which the issues have been approached throughout the years on the program define the culture of the day. All attitudes and opinions have been expressed and analyzed, reflecting our society's nature to embrace conflict and discourse in the name of answers and truth. William F. Buckley and Warren Steibel created an educational art form that did as much teaching as any other television program in memory.

This final telecast also marks the fourth time that the University of Mississippi has hosted the "Firing Line" program. This relationship began with "Firing Line's" first visit to Oxford in 1989, and continued with its return in 1992, 1997, and now in 1999. Firing Line and Ole Miss have blended well over the years because of their commitment to furthering knowledge and challenging individuals to constantly expand their thinking. The University of

Mississippi's growing impact across the world in the realms of politics, economics, social issues, technology and leadership make it a fitting backdrop for the closure of "Firing Line's" award-winning run.

TATANKA HOTSHOT CREW

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure today to recognize the members of the Tatanka Hotshot Crew of the Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota. This fall marks the end of the first fire season that this crew has been operational, and I am delighted to say that it has proven to be an outstanding success.

Each year serious wildfires threaten national forests across the United States, burning thousands of acres of woodlands and endangering private property. Our first line of defense against these fires is the United States Forest Service, whose firefighters risk their lives in arduous, often isolated conditions to bring wildfires under control.

The best of these teams are known as Hotshot crews—elite firefighters who are sent to the worst fires, to do the most difficult, dangerous work necessary to protect our forests and the homes of nearby residents. All around the country, these teams have been recognized for their skill and bravery.

Last year, we created the first of these elite teams ever to be based in the Black Hills National Forest. It is called the Tatanka Hotshots, after the Lakota word for the bison that used to roam the Great Plains by the tens of thousands. The nearly two dozen members of this team, virtually all of whom are Native American, come from diverse backgrounds. Some came from South Dakota towns like Custer and Aberdeen. Some joined the Tatanka crew from other hotshot teams or elite smokejumping units. Others are veterans of the Gulf War. Still others are young individuals working their way through college. I am proud to say that after a year of intense training and working together, the Tatanka team quickly has become one of the most highly-regarded firefighting teams in the nation.

In addition to work in the Black Hills, the Tatanka crew spent 71 days away on wildland fire assignments, accumulating 1,550 hours of work in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and California. It conducted seven large firing/burnout operations, built miles of fireline, constructed helispots and medivac sites, and conducted large tree falling operations in steep, hazardous terrain. Other noteworthy accomplishments included backpacking 6,500 pounds of sandbags up Mount Rushmore to prepare for the July 4th fireworks display, tending the commemorative crosses at the 1994 South Canyon fire fatality sites in Colorado, and working in conjunction with the Tahoe Hotshots to rescue a pack horse which had fallen off a mountain trail in California.