

bill that we need to finish as we approach November 11. That will be finalized shortly.

The point is, we are able to proceed in a bipartisan manner, and we are making progress. We must continue to do that to get the needed work done as we try to work out or work through the host of complicated issues which are inevitable when we deal with legislation.

We will continue to work across the aisle to do the necessary work of this body as we move through these final days.

Again, we will not close the Senate until we work through a few remaining items of business, but I say thanks to my colleagues. We are making progress. We have a lot of work to do over the coming days, but we are going to be able to adjourn in a reasonable period of time if we stay focused and stay disciplined as we go forward.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### PLASTIC GUN OR TOY GUN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, yesterday the Cannon House Office Building was temporarily evacuated when a staff member apparently carried a toy plastic gun past a Capitol Police security check point. This incident reminds us of how important it is that we maintain adequate security in our public buildings. Even though I raised this issue last week, I want to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of the Terrorist Firearms Detection Act, a bill introduced last week by Senator KENNEDY. Originally passed in 1988, and sometimes called the "plastic gun" law, this Federal law makes it illegal for any person to manufacture, import, ship, deliver, possess, transfer or receive any firearm that is not detectable by walk-through metal detectors or the type of x-ray machines commonly used at airports.

Since September 11, 2001, Congress has worked hard to improve the security of our borders, airports, Government buildings, and communities. In just over a month, on December 10, the plastic gun law is set to expire. The Terrorist Firearms Detection Act would permanently reauthorize this law. I support this bill because plastic guns, whose production has been endorsed by the National Rifle Association, should only be used by our military and intelligence agencies.

This legislation has the support of major gun safety organizations, including the Brady Campaign to Prevent Violence United with the Million Mom March, Americans for Gun Safety, and the Violence Policy Center. The De-

partment of Justice, while failing to endorse Senator KENNEDY's permanent ban, has indicated its support for extending the current ban.

I urge my colleagues in Congress to act quickly to pass the Terrorist Firearms Detection Act, so that hopefully President Bush can sign it into law.

#### THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY IN 1942

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I would like to share with my colleagues a fascinating article by Dr. James Schlesinger, who served our Nation in a number of prestigious positions, such as Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Energy, and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The article, "Underappreciated Victory," was published in the October 2003, issue of the Naval History magazine, a publication of the Naval Institute Proceedings. The article calls for the recognition of the world-historic significance of the Battle of Midway in 1942 because it was the turning point in our Nation's war in the Pacific, which, in turn, proved critical to our efforts in the European theater of war. Yet the Battle of Midway, which played such a crucial strategic role for both the European and Pacific war, scarcely gets mentioned in the history books. I wish to submit a copy of Dr. Schlesinger's article to be printed in the RECORD. This brilliant article sets the record straight.

I ask unanimous consent the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Naval History Magazine, Oct. 2003]

#### UNDERAPPRECIATED VICTORY

(By James Schlesinger)

As we honor those who turned the tide of World War II with a victory over ostensibly overwhelming force at the Battle of Midway in 1942—61 years ago—too few of us understand the battle's world-historic significance. It is essential, therefore, for us to go forth and proselytize.

I continue to be puzzled over the fact that it comes as something of a revelation to many people that this battle played such a crucial strategic role for the war in Europe. So the question before us is: Why is Midway not recognized as the crucial battle for the West in World War II, just as Stalingrad is recognized as a crucial battle for the Soviet Union? The comparative neglect of Midway is a great historical puzzle and, in a sense, a great injustice.

In relation to what British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and others called Grand Strategy, Midway was far more than a decisive naval victory. It was far more than the turning of the tide in the Pacific war. In a strategic sense, Midway represents one of the great turning points of world history. And in that role, the battle remains underappreciated.

Consider the Grand Strategy of the Allies, which Churchill naturally preferred and President Franklin D. Roosevelt was eager to endorse. It was, quite simply, to deal with Adolf Hitler and with the German threat in Europe first. It has been embraced shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, at the Arcadia Conference. President Roosevelt clearly recognized and acted on the

conviction that the Third Reich was the greater menace. Dramatic as the Japanese advance after Pearl Harbor had been, it was into slightly developed colonial regions—to be sure, those possessing rubber and tin. Yet, at its base, it was far less dangerous than Hitler's continuing advance, crushing and then organizing the industrial nations of Europe, while to that point almost entirely obliterating far more formidable resistance. But it was Japan that had attacked the United States, and it was Japan on which the anger of the American people had focused.

Though Churchill could almost automatically concentrate on Europe, it required considerable courage for President Roosevelt to carry through on the Grand Strategy. Germany's declaration of war on the United States on 8 December 1941 provided a small opening. Yet, had it not been for Midway, President Roosevelt could not have persevered with a Europe-first policy. Public opinion would not have allowed it. Indeed, even after Midway, he paid a substantial political price. In the mid-term election of 1942, the Democrats lost 44 seats in the House of Representatives, barely retaining control, with comparable losses elsewhere. In a subsequent poll of all the Democratic congressional candidates, the principal reason given for the debacle: "frustration" and fury at Roosevelt's Germany-first strategy, which translated into failure to punish the Japanese more aggressively for Pearl Harbor.

Nonetheless, despite the inclinations of the public, President Roosevelt recognized that the larger threat lay elsewhere, and he was prepared to pay the domestic political price for that larger national objective, defined by his Grand Strategy.

Consider the overall military situation in spring 1942. Japan was on a roll. The Philippines had fallen, including the final outposts of Bataan and Corregidor. The Japanese had swept through the Malay Peninsula from French Indochina, and on 15 February the supposedly "impregnable fortress" of Singapore had fallen to numerically inferior Japanese forces. The Dutch East Indies had been captured. Japanese forces were advancing into Burma and threatening India. Even Australia appeared to be a target. U.S. naval forces significantly weakened by the attack at Pearl Harbor, appeared vastly inferior to the armada that Japan was gathering to advance eastward in the Pacific toward Midway—then possibly to the Hawaiian Islands or even to the U.S. West Coast. Additional Japanese victories would have made it politically impossible for President Roosevelt to continue to pursue the Grand Strategy of Europe-first.

Then came Midway. Through an extraordinary combination of the skill and courage of our pilots, splendid intelligence, prudent risk-taking by our commanders that paid off, and sheer good luck, the apparently inferior U.S. forces were victorious. This victory occurred despite inferior aircraft, ineffective torpedoes, the substantial absence of backup surface ships, and our overall numerical inferiority. The rest is well known. Four Japanese carriers had been sunk, confirming the dictum of Otto von Bismarck: "the Lord God has special providence for fools, drunkards, and the United States of America." The Japanese offensive had been blunted. The Japanese fleet turned back toward the home islands, their opportunity for victory lost forever. President Roosevelt could then execute his Grand Strategy, with all that was to imply regarding the condition of postwar Europe.

After Midway, the United States could, to the chagrin of General Douglas MacArthur, turn its primary attention back to the European theater. After the stunning surrender of Tobruk, which appeared to jeopardize both

Cairo and the Suez Canal, President Roosevelt thus could accommodate the somewhat distraught Churchill's request for 300 of the new Sherman tanks to bolster the defenses in Northeast Africa, ultimately leading to the victory at El Alamein. The Battle of the Atlantic gradually turned with the steady improvement in antisubmarine warfare, thereby helping to ease the shipping shortage. By the fall, Operation Torch, the landings in North Africa, initiated offensive operations that ultimately led to the destruction of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps. The invasion of Sicily soon followed, succeeded by the invasion of Italy and eventually the landings in Normandy.

Had these events not taken place or been much delayed, it is possible the Soviet Union would not have survived. But if it had, and succeeded in its march westward, the face of postwar Europe would have been vastly different. Soviet forces would have deployed farther to the west. Germany likely would have been occupied in its entirety. The West's foothold in Europe would have shrunk, perhaps dramatically. The ability of France and Italy to survive communist pressures, precarious as it was in 1947, would have been much reduced. In brief, it was Midway, a battle in the distant Pacific, that shaped the face of postwar Europe.

Despite its crucial historic role, Midway gets scarcely more attention in our history books than the War of 1812 naval battles on Lake Champlain or Lake Erie—let alone the scant attention Europeans have paid to it. Let us reflect on a few other notable battles that turned the tide of history.

In 480, B.C., Athens had fallen to the Persian army, but Athens had in a sense survived in the form of its 200 naval vessels that Athens, prodded by Themistocles, an early apostle of naval construction, had created. On 28 September in the straits of Salamis, before the very eyes of the Emperor Xerxes, the combined Greek naval force delivered a devastating blow, sinking some 200 Persian ships, with the loss of only 40 of their own. Xerxes, as Herodotus describes, had wanted to rule Europe as well as Asia. Fearing an attack on its bridges over the Hellespont, the Persian army largely withdrew. Greek (and European) civilization had been preserved. Indeed, begging pardon for a lapse from political correctness, Europe had been saved from Oriental Despotism. It was a naval battle that decided the fate of a civilization, a turning point in history.

Each year, the English-speaking world celebrates Trafalgar. Yet, it is not clear that even in the absence of victory England would not have survived. Midway, at a minimum, was the most decisive naval victory since Trafalgar, and perhaps the most strategically decisive victory since Salamis.

What of the crucial battles here in the United States? The Revolutionary War Battle of Yorktown is, of course, celebrated appropriately. Yet, after the Battle of the Capes, Yorktown was but the frosting on the cake, an almost inevitable triumph. The Battle of Saratoga, by contrast, is seen rightly as the turning point of the Revolution.

One is no doubt obliged to speak also of the Civil War Battle of Gettysburg. Yet, while Gettysburg may have been the high-water mark of the Confederacy, the outcome of the war was never much in doubt. Just recall the remarks of that military logistician, Rhett Butler, at the beginning of *Gone With the Wind*, when he rebukes some Southern hot-heads by pointing to the overwhelming industrial domination of the North.

They why, if Midway had such world-historic strategic significance, has it received so much less attention than it deserves? A recent documentary supposedly detailing the Pacific War, produced by Steven Spielberg

and Stephen Ambrose, moves smoothly from Pearl Harbor to island hopping in the western Pacific, with scarcely a mention of Midway. How could such a momentous victory come to be overshadowed? There are, I believe, three prominent reasons.

First, the Europeans are quite naturally even more Eurocentric than we are. For them, the crucial battle for the European theater had to begin the European theater itself and not some remote spot in the Pacific. There is still little sense in Europe of what a vast enterprise the war in the Pacific was. El Alamein continues to be celebrated in the United Kingdom. Similarly, the Battle of the Bulge is celebrated annually here. But the outcomes of both those battles were almost foreordained by the balance of forces.

Moreover, the most prominent, indeed almost the canonical, history of World War II was written by Winston Churchill himself. And where would Churchill look? Not to some purely American engagement in the distant Pacific. Midway is mentioned only in Churchill's six-volume history, with no indication of how it shaped the outcome in Europe.

Second, Midway always has lain in the shadow of D-Day, which occurred 2 years later, but which has an anniversary that coincides with Midway in the calendar year. D-day, which was truly touch-and-go, deserves all the attention it has received. But it should not come at the detriment of Midway itself. For without Midway, there would have been no D-Day on 6 June 1944, with all that that implies about the condition of postwar Europe.

Third, it is also in a sense the fault of the U.S. Navy itself. The Navy (take no offense) is both too shy in blowing its own horn and too complacent. Naming a carrier after a battle, for example, is considered so high an honor that nothing more needs to be said.

Midway may be the victim of intraservice politics or more exactly, intertribal fights. If one glorifies what was so dramatically a carrier victory, it might be interpreted to the detriment of the surface Navy and/or the submarine force. So tact required a relatively discreet silence. Thus, regarding the crucial significance of Midway in world history, more than the submarine force has been the "Silent Service."

Our British allies perennially have demonstrated a masterly touch in displaying, not to say marketing, their armed forces and their accomplishments. Go to London. See the centrality of Trafalgar Square in the city. Observe that obelisk for Admiral Horatio Nelson towering over the Square. It all provides a setting and reinforcement for the annual celebration of the naval battle itself. By contrast, Farragut Square in Washington is a very dim competitor. And where, pray tell, is Midway? It is, of course, the Midway, a part of Chicago, named after the 1893 World's Fair—or a nearby airport, a transition point halfway across the United States.

Now hear this! It is time to go forth and proselytize and underscore the world-historic role of Midway. The battle and its veterans deserve no less.

#### THE VETERANS BENEFITS ENHANCEMENTS ACT OF 2003

Mr. SPECTER. I have sought recognition today to explain briefly the provisions of S. 1132, the proposed Veterans Benefits Enhancements Act of 2003. This legislation, which was approved by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs on September 30, 2003, incorporates provisions drawn from 13 different bills that were considered by the

Committee on Veterans' Affairs over the course of the first session. S. 1132, as so amended, is a lengthy bill—almost 50 pages—and so I will not endeavor in this statement to explain in detail each and every provision of the bill. Rather, I will discuss the highlights in this statement, and refer my colleagues to the committee report that accompanied approval of the bill for a more extended explanation of the bill.

The starting point for S. 1132, as reported, was S. 1132, the proposed "Veterans' Survivors Benefits Enhancements Act of 2003," which I introduced on May 22, 2003. That bill, as its title indicates, focused on the needs of the surviving families of veterans who were gravely injured or killed in war. It contained provisions to increase widows' and orphans' educational assistance benefits, and to increase dependency and indemnity compensation (so-called "DIC") benefits—benefits provided to the widows and surviving children of service members whose deaths are service related—in cases where the widow has at home at least one dependent child. The bill, as introduced, would have also extended eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery to all surviving spouses of veterans, including a group now denied eligibility—service members' widows who are remarried at the time of their deaths. And finally, S. 1132, as introduced, would have extended benefits now provided to spina bifida-afflicted children of Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange to the children of veterans who served in another area where Agent Orange was widely used in 1967–1969, the Korean demilitarized zone, and who are afflicted with the same birth defect.

I am pleased that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs approved all but one of these provisions; one provision—the proposed increase in DIC benefits for widows with dependent children—was, unfortunately, too costly to proceed with at this time. I am pleased, as well that at mark up, the committee's members approved the addition of a number of other measures which were drawn from other bills that had been referred to the committee for consideration. Among those provisions are the following:

Provisions derived from bills introduced by Senators MURRAY (S. 517), CRAIG (S. 1239), and GRAHAM of Florida (S. 1281) to improve medical care and compensation benefits afforded to former prisoners of war;

Provisions derived from administration-requested legislation (S. 1213) to increase benefits afforded to Filipinos who fought alongside U.S. troops in World War II;

Provisions derived from administration-requested legislation (S. 1133) to improve the VA's educational assistance, life insurance, and State cemetery grant programs; and

Provisions derived from a bill introduced by Committee Ranking Member,