

National Defense Medal and a Purple Heart. Brandon Sturdy died a hero fighting to preserve freedom. He was a brave patriot whose presence will be missed. I am proud of the model of service he provided to Iowans and I again offer my condolences to his family.

MAJ. WILLIAM E. BURCHETT

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave man who served in the Indiana Air National Guard unit stationed in Terre Haute, IN. Major William E. Burchett, 35 years old, died during a training mission when the F-16 he was flying collided with another F-16 fighter jet, just west of Indiana on Monday, May 17, 2004.

Bill graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1991. A native of Michigan, Bill moved to Terre Haute in 2000 after leaving active duty and being reassigned to the 181st Fighter Wing. He was a seasoned fighter pilot with over 2,300 flight hours in various military aircraft, which he flew while bravely serving our Nation on numerous occasions, including missions in Kosovo, Bosnia, Yugoslavia and Saudi Arabia. His love of flying also spilled over into his civilian career. When Bill wasn't training in his Air Force flight suit, he was working in his FedEx pilot uniform flying around the packages and supplies that help keep our Nation's economy moving forward.

Bill was a man of great faith as well as a hardworking and brave airman. He leaves behind his wife, Deborah who is expecting their third child in a few weeks and his two sons, ages six and two years old. May Bill's children grow up knowing that their father gave his life to help defend our great Nation and ensure that children in other countries, like Kosovo and Iraq, will some day know the freedom they enjoy.

Today, I join Bill's family, his friends, and the entire Indiana community in mourning his death. While we struggle to bear our sorrow over his death, we can also take pride in the example he set, bravely training and fighting to make the world a safer place. It is his courage and strength of character that people will remember when they think of Bill, a memory that will burn brightly during these continuing days of grief.

When looking back on the life of his late parishioner, Bill's minister, Mark Grayless told the Terre Haute Tribune Star that he "was a fantastic family man. He was a really neat guy and great with his kids." Bill was known for his wonderful sense of humor, his unfailing patience and the incredible love he shared with his wife and small children. According to his friends, Bill's passion for flying may not soon be forgotten for his oldest son was quoted as having proudly pronounced that he, too, wanted to be a pilot, just like his dad.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of William E. Burchett in the official

record of the U.S. Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy and peace. When I think about the unfortunate pain that comes with the loss of our heroes, I hope that families such as Bill's can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Bill.

MONUMENT IN TRIBUTE TO "THE GREATEST GENERATION"

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the dedication of the long overdue World War II Memorial is a moment in time that we will always remember.

I am so pleased that many Vermont veterans from the WWII will be on hand for this solemn, and triumphant, occasion.

No monument—even one so grandly placed as this gleaming tribute in stone is, between the Washington and Lincoln Monuments—can fully capture the full enormity of the service and sacrifice of the 16 million soldiers, sailors, airmen and others who served in uniform during those 5 years of war and struggle. Yet with its marble expanse, majestic pillars, and carefully chiseled engravings, this memorial will forever stand as a symbol of the Nation's appreciation for those who served and for those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

World War II was truly an epic struggle. It was a struggle that would determine the very direction of humanity, whether militarism and Nazism would supplant freedom and democracy. Every American soldier understood the purpose and the stakes of that war. They unwaveringly answered the call to duty, they won the war, they returned home, and then the greatest generation soldiered on further to also win the peace.

We in Vermont often pride ourselves on our healthy skepticism of centralized government. Yet we are early and arduous in rallying to the Nation's defense in disproportionate numbers to our relatively small population, from the Civil War onward. In World War II nearly 50,000 men from the State of Vermont fought the axis powers. More than 1,200 Vermonters lost their lives in the war. At home and overseas, Vermont women also made great contributions to the war effort, and 1,400 of them served with our armed forces.

Today a new generation of veterans is being minted. I have had the honor of meeting many of the young men and women who are serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. These soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines tell me time and time again that they look over their shoulders to take pride and courage in the examples set by our World War II veterans, as well as our veterans from more recent wars.

On behalf of all Vermonters, as an American citizen, and as a member of one of several grateful generations, I welcome our proud veterans to Washington on the occasion of the dedication of the World War II Memorial. We thank you for all that you have done, and our Nation will forever honor your sacrifices.

We cannot thank you enough, but we can, and we will, always remember.

MEMORIAL DAY 2004 AND WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on this Memorial Day, I encourage my fellow New Mexicans to take a few moments to remember those Americans who have given their lives in the name of freedom. The freedom we enjoy today remains only because of their courage and unselfish sacrifice.

American men and women, throughout our Nation's history, have fought and died because they believed in their country and believed in preserving its immeasurable blessings. Many gave their lives for her in a far away land, and failed to make it back to the country or family they loved.

With this upcoming remembrance, I am reminded of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Holmes gave us some of the best thoughts, and his speech and writings, as a whole, will always be among the best of their kind.

On May 30, 1884, Holmes delivered a Memorial Day address before John Sedgwick Post No. 4, Grand Army of the Republic. The address reflected on the Civil War and during his address he focused on a question posed to him by a young man, about why people still kept up Memorial Day. In his wonderful style he gave attention why Memorial Day is what it is.

He said, "Not the answer that you and I should give to each other—not the expression of those feelings that, so long as you live, will make this day sacred to memories of love and grief and heroic youth—but an answer which should command the assent of those who do not share our memories, and in which we of the North and our brethren of the South could join in perfect accord. . . . but Memorial Day may and ought to have a meaning also for those who do not share our memories."

One month ago on April 29, 2004, the National World War II Memorial opened for public view. The memorial is the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during the WWII. The formal dedication will take place this Memorial Day weekend as a service and tribute to members of the World War II generation, and to share their memories. The memorial honors all military veterans of the war, the citizens of the time that stayed on the home front, and the America's moral purpose that ultimately warranted our nation's involvement.

The memorial was authorized by Congress in 1993, and this year's Memorial Day celebration on the National

Mall will culminate a long effort to honor America's World War II generation. I take a quick moment to thank my friend former Majority Leader Bob Dole, a wounded and decorated WWII veteran who served in this body, for chairing the World War II Memorial Commission and for giving countless hours to this wonderful work.

It has been nearly 59 years since the end of World War II. However, I think it is safe to say that from 1939 to 1945, when every major power in the world was involved in a worldwide conflict—those times, like the Civil War, were some of our nation's toughest. We live in a remarkably different world today, but Memorial Day has kept many memories. At this moment in America's history, our men and women in uniform are engaged in conflict in both Iraq and Afghanistan. They serve with the same courage and commitment shown by Americans of generations past, and they deserve our thoughts and prayers.

From the Bataan Peninsula to beaches of Normandy, from the Ia Drang Valley to Inchon, from Iwo Jima and Okinawa to the North Apennine Mountains of Italy, from Afghanistan to Iraq, and many other conflicts too numerous to mention, American men and women have fought and died because of their love of country.

I am proud that we have kept up Memorial Day. This one, in particular, brings significant meaning and a special time to remember and reflect. I pay a special tribute today to those who have fallen during the two conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, including those from my home state of New Mexico: CPT Tamara Archuleta of Los Lunas; Marine CPL Aaron Austin of Lovington; SrA Jason Cunningham of Carlsbad; Army SP James Pirtle of La Mesa; and Marine PFC Christopher Ramos of Albuquerque.

As we enjoy this holiday weekend with our family and friends, let us take some time to recognize the valor with which so many of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have fought when called upon by their country. Finally, may our United States continue to be blessed and may America forever remain the land of the free and the home of the brave.

HONORING WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, more than 60 years ago a generation of Americans answered the call to service, leaving their daily lives and joining the fight in a world war that would dramatically change the way this country, and the world, conducted itself. Raised during the Great Depression, this "Greatest Generation" would have such a profound impact on our history that is almost impossible to overstate. Their legacy is formidable and lasting.

Almost six decades later, we are finally paying full tribute to those men and women, and this generation, who

served and sacrificed their lives in defense of this great Nation and who ultimately saved the world from tyranny and tyrants. No doubt, those men and women and their triumph over evil have served as a stark reminder and inspiration to the men and women in uniform who have followed in their permanent footsteps.

However, the presence of this generation was not limited to the islands of the Pacific or the beaches of Normandy; it was also displayed by those who remained in this country to mobilize the home front during and after the war. No one can question the hard work and dedication this generation embraced that ultimately pushed this nation to the position of global economic, military, political, and social leadership we still maintain today. Almost overnight, America moved from isolation to a country of engagement.

Having learned this lesson well, America remained engaged with the world after the war, struggling against the advance of communism, and ultimately winning that battle.

I am proud of the role the citizens of my state played in these struggles, and as such, I would like to take a moment to honor those Idahoans who served and to those who lost their lives as a result of World War II. Their strong commitment and dedication to their state and to our country has not and will not go unnoticed. I am reminded of a saying, "For your tomorrow, we gave our today." This statement embodies what this generation gave; but words can't fully describe what the soldiers and survivors of WWII contributed to this nation, during and after the war. That contribution changed the course, not only of our Nation, but of the entire world. We continue to see the repercussions of it today, and to be honest, I believe the effect will continue to be felt long after all of us are gone. The official motto of Idaho is "Esto Perpetua," meaning "May it last forever." Well, the same could probably be said of the influence of this generation on America.

Still, despite playing such a profound role in American history, until this year, there was no monument or memorial in our Nation's capital that honored the sacrifices of all World War II veterans. We have monuments and memorials for Vietnam and the Korean War, as we should. Just across the river in Arlington, there is the Iwo Jima Memorial which honors the U.S. Marines who served in World War II. It is a beautiful and fitting commemoration of the leathernecks' service in that conflict but just that branch, not all the services.

This Memorial Day, we will dedicate, at long last, the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall. I believe it is fitting that the memorial should take its place alongside Lincoln, Jefferson and Washington, in the place our nation comes to remember and honor the greatest deeds in our great history. I thank our veterans for

their service, for guaranteeing my freedom and those of all Americans, and I wish them a Happy Memorial Day.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, this week marks the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, the Supreme Court decision that ultimately ended legal segregation in schools and helped catalyze a better education for all of America's children.

This landmark decision was the first significant action by an institution of national government in the struggle for equality. However, it would be naive to believe that Brown erased the hatred and ignorance that black families faced when testing their rights to a better education. One of the most dramatic examples occurred on September 24, 1957 when President Eisenhower ordered federal troops to Little Rock, AR to allow nine black children, the Little Rock Nine, to attend the all-white Central High School.

Of her experience, Melba Pattillo Beals of the Little Rock Nine recalls: "I had to become a warrior. I had to learn not how to dress the best but how to get from that door to the end of the hall without dying." Her act of courage, and those of the other eight students who integrated Little Rock Central, helped change history for all Americans in a tale that continues to have immediacy.

Another one of those students was Ernest Green, who best explains why the Little Rock Nine sacrificed their innocence for a chance at a better education. He said, "We wanted to widen options for ourselves and later for our children." Mr. Green was the first black student to graduate from Central High School. He later served as Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Affairs under President Jimmy Carter and now serves as the vice president of Lehman Brothers.

Turning opportunity into achievement is what civil rights pioneer Daisy Bates had in mind when she helped the Little Rock Nine break down the barriers that stood between them and an equal education. Despite threats on her life and financial ruin, Daisy Bates made significant strides in the courtroom and increased public awareness through her newspaper.

Mr. President, as a former student of Central High, I can tell you the impact of the Little Rock Nine is still felt in the hearts of its student body and teachers past and present. In 2007, Central High will commemorate the 50th anniversary of its desegregation crises. The National Park Service plans to build the Little Rock Central High School Visitors Center in time for this watershed anniversary, and I will be urging my colleagues to support funding for this endeavor later this year.

What we know today is that children all over America have the right to learn—whether their ancestors came to America on slave ships or the Mayflower. What we know today is that we all benefit when we learn together and work together for a common purpose. What we know today is