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TRIBUTE TO ALVIN SEYMOUR MERRILL

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I am grateful for the opportunity today to pay tribute to a wonderful man, loving husband, father, and grandfather, and a true hero—Mr. Alvin Seymour Merrill. Al recently passed away after living a lifetime of dedicated service to his family, community, and to our country. Al was my brother-in-law and a person whom I truly admired and respected for the love and devotion he displayed not only to my sister and their children and grandchildren, but to the ideals of freedom America represents.

Al was born and raised in a rural Utah farming community. He was the seventh of nine children, raised by a widowed mother. His work on the farm led him to a life of service in the United States Marine Corps, USMC. It was while he was waiting for some farm machinery to be repaired in Salt Lake City that he was approached by a recruiter for the USMC and asked to join the service. He signed the paper, and was shortly on his way to boot camp. This fortuitous day led to long and distinguished 20 years of active duty as a Marine. He loved the Marines and gladly answered their call of duty in many places throughout the world.

Al rose through the ranks in the USMC and became a First Sergeant a position only entrusted to the best and bravest. He served in the Korean and Vietnam Wars and received two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star for extraordinary valor and heroism. He was also a survivor of the historic Korean Battle of the Chosin Reservoir. In fact, his name is forever etched on a monument at Utah's Hill Air Force Base honoring the men who survived this battle.

Al's respect and love for the Marines didn't end with his active duty. He took great pride in escorting war dead after the Korean War and arranging proper burials for his fellow Marines. He also served as a drill instructor and

trained many new recruits entering the Marine Corps. His dedication to this training was extraordinary—he wanted all Marines to have the best training possible in case they might also face combat.

It was Al's service in combat which led to his death many years later. During service in Vietnam, Al was exposed to Agent Orange. He didn't realize this had happened until 30 years later when it began to attack his body and slowly rob him of his life. When asked if he was bitter about this exposure he replied, "No, I knew the risks when I signed up." In addition to this exposure, Al carried shrapnel in his body as a result of injuries sustained in fighting for our country.

I cannot even begin to express what his quiet bravery and dignity has meant to his family and to all those who knew him. He was a true war hero and an example of someone who was willing to give the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country and the freedom we cherish.

Al was also an ROTC Instructor at the University of Utah, and South and Cottonwood High Schools in Utah. He retired from an honorable career with the Utah Transit Authority. In addition, he was also politically active and always found time to help candidates running for office get elected. Al was elected himself to serve one term in the Utah House of Representatives.

Al chose to live his life in service to his fellow men, not only in the Marines but also in his community and his church. He served three full-time missions for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, spreading his message of Christ's love and hope to people throughout our Nation.

Al was fortunate to marry a wonderful, devoted woman, my sister, Frances Hatch Merrill, who stood by his side for 47 years. Her devotion to him and his life was an inspiration to all as we watched her help Al with serious health challenges and remain a stead-

fast partner until the end. Al and Frances were blessed with eight children and 12 grandchildren whom they love very much.

Mr. President, Al Merrill's life was dedicated to service and it is this legacy of faith and strength that he will leave to his family.

We just buried him recently in Arlington National Cemetery in a wonderful plot right near the administration building. We are so grateful to the Marine Corps for what they have done to help us in the memorialization of this wonderful man. We are so grateful for the Marine Corps members who showed up to represent him at the cemetery. We are so grateful to the Marine Corps person who played taps for my brother-in-law.

Al Merrill was a wonderful man and a true American hero. I never heard him once brag about his service, and he was in both wars. Everybody who knew him knew what a wonderful man he was. I will be eternally grateful for the example he set for all of us to follow. Al Merrill was truly a giant among men.

I have been reading a history of the Marine Corps and he is mentioned prominently throughout this history, what he meant as an example of morality and decency to other young recruits through the years and as he grew older in the corps. He told my sister one time: Fran, you have to know that the Marine Corps comes first.

That was nice for him to say; we knew his family and his wife came first, but the Marine Corps came an equal first, no question about it.

Thank you for this opportunity to honor Alvin C. Merrill and the life he lived in service to his family, his community, and to our great country of America.

WORLD HEART DAY

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, heart disease is the world's No. 1 killer. Heart disease is responsible for one in

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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every three deaths. It afflicts men, women, and children. It crosses all geographic and economic lines.

That is why on September 26, 2004, the World Heart Federation, working with cardiovascular associations in the United States and 100 other countries, will recognize the fifth annual World Heart Day.

World Heart Day is a day devoted to heart disease prevention. This year's theme is "Children, Adolescents and Heart Disease." But before we think it is a problem confined to children in poor countries, we need to look in our own backyard.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: an estimated 15 percent of children and adolescents ages 6 to 19 years are overweight; approximately 22 percent of high school students smoke; and one-third of high school students did not meet sufficient standards for physical activity. These are troubling numbers and they are all contributing factors to heart disease.

Heart disease continues to claim more lives in the United States than any other illness. The seriousness of these statistics cannot be ignored and I encourage every American family to take steps now to prevent disease in the future. Through education and prevention measures, we can greatly reduce the incidence of chronic conditions brought about by poor health choices for a whole generation.

We are working to do our part at the national level.

Thanks to the Red Dress campaign this year and the involvement of First Lady Laura Bush, the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, the American Heart Association and other organizations, we have educated millions of women about their risk for heart disease. Now we must expand our efforts to include the entire family.

The American College of Cardiology has already committed to a community outreach campaign beginning in 2005 on heart disease awareness for children and adolescents patients. I hope other health organizations will choose to do the same. The lessons of World Heart Day should be shared with the public not just on September 26, but year-round.

I commend the World Heart Federation for organizing this annual event and I ask my congressional colleagues to remind their constituents about the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise to preventing heart disease.

PRIME MINISTER AYAD ALLAWI'S SPEECH

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, earlier today the Prime Minister of Iraq, Dr. Ayad Allawi, made a very powerful speech before a Joint Session of Congress. He was joined by several members of his cabinet.

The Prime Minister is a very strong and capable leader. He is a man of vision and principle. He is committed to

combating terrorism, and to leading Iraq down the path toward democracy.

I first met the Prime Minister nearly three months ago, just after he was selected to be Prime Minister. His actions over the last few months have confirmed my opinion of him then—that this man has what it takes to bring peace, stability, and freedom to Iraq.

This morning, the Prime Minister spoke and made the following points:

We are succeeding in Iraq.

Our struggle is your struggle; our cause is your cause.

The fight against terrorists in Iraq today is the world's fight.

The terrorists will not succeed. We will not compromise with terror.

The Prime Minister also said that his three goals are: defeat the terrorists; improve quality of life for Iraqis; bring democracy to Iraq. These are also the United States goals. They should be the international community's goals.

I was heartened and inspired by Prime Minister Allawi's remarks. His commitment to values we hold dear is apparent as he leads his country through these difficult times.

He and his government are doing well. They are exercising their sovereignty, taking on the insurgents and terrorists, and pursuing reconstruction and development. Maybe most importantly, they are determined to lead their country toward democracy.

The key to Iraq's success, however, is bringing stability and security to the country. Iraq continues to build its military and police forces, but in the meantime, Prime Minister Allawi and his government will require the assistance of U.S. forces.

The last few weeks have been difficult in Iraq, for Americans and Iraqis alike. We mourn the deaths of our young service men and women who are the frontlines of this global war on terrorism.

But we know that they have sacrificed for our own security, because a free, democratic Iraq won't provide a sanctuary or safe have for terrorists and their ilk.

The Iraqi people have also paid a heavy toll, especially those Iraqis who have volunteered to join their country's security forces in an effort to protect their country from the terrorists. In fact, over the last several months, more Iraqis have been killed than non-Iraqis.

We should not be surprised by these attacks, however. We know they would increase. The terrorists will do everything they can to disrupt the political process that is evolving and carrying us forward to elections in January.

But they have not been successful! In the last few weeks, Iraq has organized a conference to select an interim national council that will serve a legislative and oversight role over Iraq's executive branch.

In fact, I recently had the opportunity to call and speak with the Chairman of the Council, my counter-

part. He told me how committed he and his colleagues were to defeating the terrorists and bringing democracy and freedom to Iraq.

Prime Minister Allawi has also been clear and resolute in his determination to fighting the terrorists. He has also made clear that Iraqis need to take the lead in combating this threat. He has also made clear that Iraq must stick to the electoral timetable that has been established.

The Prime Minister is correct. We must stick to the January date for national elections. Iraq was able to elect its interim national council in September. Iraq can elect its national assembly in January.

We can win the war against terrorism and extremism militarily, but we must also win politically, with the people.

We must not be dissuaded by the naysayers, many of whom also said that the interim Iraqi government—Prime Minister Allawi and his cabinet—should not have assumed sovereignty on June 1, that it should have been delayed because of the terrorists. History has proven them wrong.

To not hold elections in January would be to give the terrorists what they want, and to deny the majority of Iraqis that which they want most.

Second, we can help Iraq gain control of the security situation, and put an Iraqi face on the solution, by improving and accelerating the training of Iraqi military and police forces.

We can do this by getting NATO on the ground immediately to help expand the training infrastructure and expedite the training.

The third key to moving forward on the path of democracy is to improve the daily lives of Iraqis. The U.S. can help in this by accelerating and making more efficient the reconstruction and development monies the Congress has made available to Iraq.

We need to get Iraqis back to work for the future of Iraq; we need to get them invested, so that rather than blowing up pipelines they are fixing them, and rather than shutting down market places, they are working in them.

Finally, we need greater involvement by the international community. The U.S. already has over 30 coalition partners on the ground with military forces, in harms way, in Iraq. They are doing a superb job. But we also need other countries to do their share: by relieving Iraq's heavy debt burden, by increasing economic and other reconstruction assistance, by providing security forces and other resources to help train Iraqi security forces, by urging Iraq's neighbors to better control the borders to prevent terrorists and others from crossing into Iraq.

It is clear to me that the frontlines on the Global War on Terrorism are being fought in Iraq.

We must and will defeat the terrorists. Doing so would have a major impact on their capabilities and resolve.

As the President has said over and over, this is a long fight, and that it is