

BOONE COUNTY VETERANS: DAVID MONDT
(By Alexander Hutchins)

At 21 years of age, many kids are still wet behind the ears and trying to carve out a living for themselves. When David Mondt was 22, he was flying nighttime raids to drop paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne into the battlefields of Europe.

Mondt, 87, previously a first lieutenant in the Army Air Corps during World War II, was born in Boone and has lived in the community nearly his entire life. He lived in Perry for a year in his childhood, at which time he was hit by a Hawkeye Laundry truck. No lasting injuries resulted from the accident, but Mondt soon returned to Boone and continued his education.

"The biggest thing was getting a bicycle, which I eventually did," Mondt said of the most significant part of his childhood.

When World War II began, Mondt watched the Iowa National Guard mobilize and head to Louisiana.

"Then they started the draft, and I didn't want to wait for that, so I joined the Air Force," he said.

Mondt began training to be an Army Air Corps mechanic when he first joined, as pilot training was only available to soldiers 21 and older. While in mechanic training, the age requirements for pilot training were lowered, and Mondt, then 18, applied and was accepted into program. He went into the pilot school in Texas, and mere days before graduating the program was scrapped and modified to the Flight Officer Program.

"In one day, November the 10th, 1942, I was a Private, a Staff Sergeant and a flight officer in a matter of hours," Mondt said.

Mondt was eventually placed with the 62nd Troop Carrier Squadron, men with whom he would fly for the rest of the war. Every man in the squadron would return home alive at the war's conclusion.

The squadron flew mostly day-to-day supply and troop transport missions. Mondt flew a C-47 Skytrain cargo plane for the entirety of the war, and said he missed a pre-D-Day appearance by General Eisenhower because he was running a load of supplies. Mondt originally flew runs in North Africa, then as part of the American invasion of Italy where he dropped paratroopers on Sicily.

After the fascist collapse in Italy, Mondt was sent to England and prepared for the D-Day invasion. Mondt would drop members of the 82nd Airborne in the now-famous invasion of Europe, and in the nighttime raid the C-47s received enemy fire, but managed to deploy the paratroopers successfully.

"Everything was fine, as long as you were over England or over the water. When we hit the coast of France we started receiving fire from the Germans," Mondt said. One plane from the squadron was shot down, but the crew survived.

Mondt's plane would return from the mission, but it was hit by anti-aircraft fire. All the windows were blown out and Mondt was hit by the shrapnel flying about the cabin. Mondt received the Purple Heart for his injury, although he would carry pieces of shrapnel in his back for years.

Despite all the events conspiring around him that would become critical to world history, Mondt said that in the end the daily activities were orderly and regimented.

"Whatever they told you to do, you did," Mondt said. "It was really just an everyday occurrence. When you weren't dropping paratroopers, you were hauling supplies to front-line troops."

Mondt flew British and Polish soldiers into the Battle of Arnhem, but toward the end of the war more flights were daytime operations. Mondt said that after crossing the Rhine River, there were hardly any German

air forces left. The planes had all been bombed at the airfields by the Army Air Corps.

"If you got back from the flight, you got a place to sleep, and it was warm, and [you got] good food. The ground troops ate out of mess kits. We never did," Mondt said.

When he returned to the U.S. after his tour of duty, he was offered a chance to leave the Air Corps while in St. Louis. Mondt accepted and returned to Iowa. He didn't spend long out of an airplane, however, as he joined the Army Aviation of the National Guard upon returning to Boone. He would fly aircraft with the National Guard, including helicopter training in Texas, and would serve in the Guard until the age of 60. At one point Mondt was told the Army would be decommissioning all of its planes for helicopters, but he never heard what came of that plan.

Life was normal after the war. Mondt sold insurance when he wasn't on Guard duty, and he married his wife, Yvonna. They raised four children and lived a quiet life.

"Mowing grass," Mondt said jokingly when asked what he did for a hobby while living in Boone. Mondt said the war had little permanent effect on him, as his outlook on life after the war was similar to his outlook on life before the conflict.

"It [the war] hasn't affected me at all, as far as I can recall," Mondt said. Beginning in 1951 his squadron from the war began holding reunions, and the original gathering had 41 participants. Though the numbers have dwindled, Mondt still attends reunion functions for the war.

I commend David Mondt for his many years of loyalty and service to our great nation. It is an immense honor to represent him in the United States Congress, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE HINDU TEMPLE OF CANTON

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedication of the Hindu Temple of Canton, a beacon of community and spirituality benefitting the Hindu community of Greater Detroit.

Just a little over a year ago, I stood at the Temple site along with the members of the Hindu Temple to turn the first shovels of soil for this center's major expansion. Its completion marks a new phase of growth and prominence for this vibrant community, and I am proud and honored to recognize this dedication.

In October of 1986, a small group of dedicated members of the Hindu community decided that there was a clear need to build a Temple that would cater to the western suburbs of Detroit. Construction began in 1988, and the Temple first opened its doors on December 25, 1990.

For the past 20 years, the Temple has fulfilled its role as a true center of the community—offering classes and concerts, hosting countless gatherings, annual celebrations of Indian Independence Day, and supporting the broader community through a Scholarship Program for graduates of Plymouth Canton High School.

With the completion of this new expansion, the Temple will be able to welcome ever-larg-

er numbers of members into its doors and continue to provide the rich and dynamic programming that has become its signature.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to mark the dedication of the Hindu Temple of Canton and the milestone of progress and growth it represents for the Hindu Community of metro Detroit.

COMMEMORATING SEPTEMBER 11

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, it is difficult to believe that it has been 9 years to the day when our Nation was attacked by foreign terrorists who claimed the lives of 2,977 Americans including 411 of our Nation's bravest first responders.

As a Member of the Homeland Security Committee I am proud of the steps we have taken since that fateful day to make the American people safer, but our work is far from complete and this is a mission we, as public servants, can never stop striving to achieve.

I am also proud that this Congress passed the aptly-named Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act which designates September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

On September 11 more so than any other day of the year we should come together as Americans and find new ways to serve our Nation.

For it was on September 11 that so many Americans unexpectedly found themselves in the middle of a truly horrible situation and yet summoned the courage to help save others without regard to themselves.

So I say to all of you that many of the wounds of that fateful day will heal over time, but that we will never forget the heroism we witnessed, the lessons we learned, and the redemption the American people earned through our own strength.

On September 11, more than any other day in our history, we witnessed what it truly means to serve our Nation as a first responder.

We witnessed police officers, fire fighters, and paramedics racing up flights of stairs, hoping to save even a few more lives, without once thinking about their own safety.

Its not only those of you who are already serving our communities that understand this sacrifice, it is also evident in all of our current trainees, because after 9/11 no one could possibly make the commitment to being a first responder without fully understanding what kind of sacrifice was being asked of them.

As a public servant, I can not pretend to relate to this level of sacrifice, but I do strongly share your determination that those first responders who lost their lives on 9/11 should not just merely be commemorated, but in fact their memories should spur us towards making our Nation stronger and safer.

As a Member of Congress and as an original member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I believe we must commit ourselves to providing our Nation's first responders with all the tools they need to protect our communities.

I also believe it is critical on this day to say that we need Congress to bring back the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act—and this time we need bipartisan support to pass it.

While the entire Nation watched with sorrow for those we lost and tried to heal emotionally after that day—there were only a few brave souls who went back to that rubble day-after-day and endured the physical and mental strain of clearing the remains of the towers in lower Manhattan.

On that day we gave those brave souls the “all clear” sign, but we now know that we were exposing those men and women to a poisonous dust that would stay with them for the rest of their lives.

We need this bill because it will finally provide comprehensive health care and compensation for thousands of our ailing 9/11 heroes.

This isn’t just a bill for New York and New Jersey—this is a bill for all Americans. We know that people from all 50 States were in lower Manhattan on or after 9/11 and now are facing serious health concerns.

This is not about Bill Pascrell or any other public official, but I tell you all of this because I want you, the protectors of our communities, to know that I stand firmly behind the mission of our Nation’s first responders.

We can not turn back the clock and provide our first responders with the equipment they should have had on 9/11, but we must take every step necessary to ensure that all of you are equipped with the tools necessary to face all the threats of the future.

These are bipartisan solutions that all Americans have embraced because we understand now that if we are not strong here in our communities than we are not safe as a Nation.

I want to conclude by simply stating that even 9 years after 9/11 we will continue to bow our heads for those we lost, but we will also hold our hands in solidarity with one another, in the determination of those brave first responders who proved on 9/11 that we may have been attacked, but that we would not be defeated.

FINDINGS OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE RELATING TO EFFICIENCY AND REFORM PURSUANT TO H. RES. 1493

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1493 and on behalf of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I submit the following findings that identify potential changes in law that help achieve deficit reduction by reducing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement, promoting efficiency and reform of government, and controlling spending within government programs authorized by the Committee.

On February 26, 2010, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2701, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. This legislation includes a number of changes in law that would help achieve deficit reduction by reducing waste, fraud, abuse, and mis-

management, as well as promote efficiency and reform in government, and control spending within intelligence programs.

Creation of an Inspector General for the Intelligence Community. The bill would create a statutory and independent inspector general for the Intelligence Community (IC/IG), whose office would have authority to conduct audits and investigations within and across the elements of the Intelligence Community. The IC/IG would be a powerful tool for identifying waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the Intelligence Community.

Granting access to the General Accounting Office. The bill would require the General Accounting Office be given access to Intelligence Community records and personnel for the purposes of conducting audits and investigation as directed by the congressional intelligence committees. These audits and investigations have proven critical to Congress’ ability to identify waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement throughout the federal government; this provision will bring the same level of congressional oversight to the Intelligence Community.

Review of covert action programs by Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency. The bill would require that the CIA/JIG conduct audits of each covert action program at least once every three years, which would ensure that these critical and sometimes costly programs receive an appropriate level of scrutiny.

Improvements to congressional oversight. The bill would enhance congressional oversight over the Intelligence Community in a number of ways, which would better enable Congress to help reduce the deficit by promoting efficiency, controlling spending, and reducing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. These include:

Reform to congressional reporting on covert actions. The bill would make a number of improvements to the process through which the Intelligence Community informs Congress regarding certain sensitive covert actions, including a requirement that all notifications to the Gang of 8 (the Speaker of the House, House Minority Leader, Senate Majority and Minority Leader, and the Chair and Ranking Member of the two Intelligence Committees) be provided in writing; and that all members of the congressional intelligence committees be provided with “general information” regarding a notification to the Gang of 8. The bill also defines the specific terms that would necessitate congressional notification.

Certification of compliance with oversight requirements. The bill would require the head of each element of the Intelligence Community to certify semi-annually that the element has notified Congress of all significant and significant anticipated intelligence activities, as required by law.

Cybersecurity oversight. The bill would require notification to Congress of all new and existing cybersecurity programs, giving Congress better visibility into this evolving and resource-intensive mission.

Security clearance reform. The bill would require extensive reporting to Congress, including a comprehensive quadrennial audit, regarding the processes used by the federal government to provide security clearances. It would also create an ombudsman responsible for addressing complaints regarding the security clearance system. Committee hearings and other investigations have identified numer-

ous inefficiencies in the security clearance systems, which these reforms will help to address.

Reform and oversight of personnel policies. The bill includes a number of provisions intended to help control the growth of personnel and other administrative costs within the Intelligence Community. These include:

Caps on personnel levels at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The bill would limit the number of personnel at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), which has increased substantially since the ODNI was created.

Annual personnel level assessments. The bill would require that the Intelligence Community conduct a comprehensive review of all personnel, both federal employees and contractors across all agencies, which would assist the Intelligence Community and Congress in identifying redundancies, excessive growth, and other inefficiencies.

Report on intelligence community contractors. The bill would require a comprehensive report on the use of personal services contractors within the Intelligence Community, the impact of these contractors on personnel management systems, plans to convert positions from contractor to federal employee, and accountability methods. The use of contractors in the Intelligence Community has increased substantially over the past ten years, at considerable cost to the taxpayer.

This report will enable Congress to identify contractor mismanagement and to monitor the implementation of responsible and cost-effective policies regarding contractors across the Intelligence Community.

Reports and plans. The bill includes provisions to require reports or plans on various subjects, which will assist Congress and the Intelligence Community in determining ways to achieve a variety of missions more efficiently and effectively without waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement. These include:

Report on intelligence resources dedicated to Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill would require a report summarizing the intelligence resources dedicated to Operation New Dawn (formerly Operation Iraqi Freedom) and Operation Enduring Freedom, so that Congress can ensure that they are used in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

Report on transformation of the intelligence capabilities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has undertaken significant internal restructuring to better enable it to collect intelligence on potential terrorists, among other threats. The bill requires a comprehensive assessment of this effort, which would allow Congress and the FBI determine whether further changes are necessary and/or cost-effective.

Intelligence community financial improvement and audit readiness. The bill requires that each element of the Intelligence Community produce a plan for achieving full, unqualified audits by September 30, 2013, which is an integral step toward implementation of sound financial management practices at these agencies.

Inspector General report on over-classification. The bill requires that the IC/IG conduct an analysis of the over-classification of national security information and recommend ways to resolve the problem. Over-classification can inhibit the sharing of intelligence, which can lead to redundancy and waste.