

But with a strength of spirit forged in the hometown churches, and neighborhood ballfields, and the schoolrooms of America, these young men who had been eating Coney dogs, dancing to Glenn Miller, and rooting for Joe Dimaggio just a short time before helped turn back one of the greatest evils this world has ever known.

There were 81 Congressional Medals of Honor awarded in all of World War II.

Twenty-seven were awarded for Iwo Jima alone.

But it was on the 5th day of fighting—50 years ago today—that Iwo Jima was burned into our memory.

Because on that day a young combat photographer named Joe Rosenthal took one of the most inspiring photographs in the history of America.

I'm talking, of course, about this famous photo of five marines and one Navy corpsman raising a triumphant American flag on Mount Suribachi above the sands of Iwo Jima.

For 50 years, this photo and the great bronze memorial made in its image have served as a lasting tribute to the courage and bravery of young Americans who served this country well, and who triumphed under conditions most of us could hardly imagine.

But of all the great tributes paid to the men of Iwo Jima the past week none is more inspiring—and I believe none speaks more to the heart of what it means to be an American—than the simple tribute paid by a sheet metal mechanic from Connecticut earlier today.

There, in the small town of Danielson, CT—population 16,000—Rick Orzulak finally lived out a tribute that was 3 years in the making.

Three years ago, Mr. Orzulak—who is a former marine himself—decided to pay a special tribute to the soldiers who fought at Iwo Jima.

He decided that with the help of the members of the local Paul C. Houghton detachment of the Marine Corps League—of which he is a member—they would recreate the flag raising in the small town of Danielson.

In order to do so, he decided, each person needed to be dressed exactly like the soldiers in the photograph—in uniforms and gear actually issued during World War II.

So, 3 years ago, with the help of his wife Beverly, Mr. Orzulak started making phone calls.

Using his own money, he tracked down frogskin pattern helmet covers from California and Montana.

He found herringbone trousers in Virginia and Mississippi.

He found K-bar knives in Massachusetts.

And crossflap canteen covers in Texas.

Until finally, one by one, each uniform was complete.

He even tracked down a U.S. flag with 48 stars.

And finally, in Danielson this morning, as the Star Spangled Banner and

then the Marine Corps hymn played, five former marines and one former Navy corpsman—Mr. Orzulak, Arthur Blackmore, Dennis O'Connell, Richard Bugan, Louis Verrette, and Francis Stevens—raised the flag in tribute to the men of Iwo Jima.

If you ask them why they did it, they'll say "we did it for one simple reason:"

To say "thank you" to the men who fought at Iwo Jima.

And "Semper Paratus" to the heroes who never came home.

Mr. Speaker, today as we join Richard Orzulak and Americans everywhere in remembering the sacrifices made at Iwo Jima, let us be strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor, and let us continue to stand up for the ideals for which they lived and died.

Let us resolve that the men who served our country will never be forgotten.

Because in the end, that's the highest tribute we can pay.

□ 2020

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LARGENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARINE LANDING ON IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Members gathered on the floor tonight to speak of an important event which took place 50 years ago. The United States was at war with Japan, and the main target in February 1945 of our forces was Iwo Jima.

This past Sunday, Mr. Speaker, we commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Marine landing on Iwo Jima at the Marine Corps War Memorial across the Potomac. I had the privilege of being there at this ceremony, and it was very well done, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Mundy, told us 50 years ago at that date, at 9 o'clock in the morning, the 3d Marine Division went ashore at Iwo Jima.

While the battle was still raging, Admiral Nimitz saluted the warriors with words that are now carved at the statue base, and it says this: "Uncommon valor was a common virtue." He said this without knowing that 27 of those who served on Iwo Jima would later be awarded the Medal of Honor. As mentioned here tonight, over half of the 27 had been killed on the island, and their families received and accepted the Medal of Honor.

One of the most remarkable things about the battle is how well both sides were prepared. The island was part of Japan's inner vital defense zone. Its commander was a general, and he had been on the island for many months, and he had designed textbook defensive positions. His men were disciplined, and resigned to the fact that they were unlikely to leave the island alive.

In the end, 90 percent of the Japanese defenders perished, but they exacted a high toll of American lives as well.

The Japanese knew exactly on the island where the Marines were coming in to land, and they had trained their big guns on that position. The American invasion force was battle-tested. Mr. Speaker, it was a good force, and had the largest number of Marines ever engaged in a single action.

The 4th Marine Division had conducted successful amphibious operations in the Marshall and Marianas Islands. The 3d Marine Division fought in the Solomons and on Guam.

Among the invaders were two marines who had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor who participated on that day. In addition to a veteran landing force, the Marines had strong support from our American battleships, and the big guns were firing on the island as well as the Marine, Navy, and Army Air Force planes.

The initial bombardment knocked out many of the Japanese shore defenses, but well-protected Japanese guns, as I understand it, on the northern part of the island fired killing salvos on the marines gathered on the beachhead. One marine said and described Japanese shelling as one of the worst bloodlettings of the war. They rolled their artillery barrages up and down the beach, he said. "I really don't see how anybody could live through the heavy fire barrages." Many of the Japanese fortifications were not affected by American artillery or by our air bombardment, so that the only way to advance had to be a frontal attack that the American Marines made.

I can think of very few occasions since the American Revolution where American forces were required to attack such heavily fortified positions. In this single action, we took more casualties than in any other battle that our country has ever fought another enemy. Only one other battle in the history of the world has had more casualties than we took at Iwo Jima. That was where the British lost 60,000 soldiers in a frontal trench attack in World War I.

Mount Suribachi fell on this day that we are celebrating 50 years ago, Mr. Speaker, and all the American forces who saw the now immortal flag-raising cheered this tactical victory. Unfortunately, the main battle was still ahead, and it took the Marines over a month to overcome the well-entrenched Japanese in the 4 miles of terrain north of Suribachi.

Three of the six who raised the flag were killed several days later.

Every marine knows the translation of the Marine Corps motto "Always Faithful." Roughly one out of every three marines who landed at Iwo Jima was a casualty, either killed or wounded. Twenty thousand Japanese were killed, and over 6,000 American personnel lost their lives in the face of some of the fiercest defenses ever encountered by an attacking force.

The marines were faithful to their fellow marines, to their commanding officers, and to the American ideals which are symbolized so well by the image of the flag raising over Suribachi.

The flag symbolizes the idea of democracy and freedom, and we still enjoy that democracy and freedom. Freedom from oppression, freedom to choose, and freedom to speak your beliefs. But the price of those freedoms has always been dear. Three of the men pictured in the famous photograph and in the bronze statue by Felix de Weldon died on Iwo Jima. The uncommon valor which was so common on the beaches and rocks of Iwo Jima must always be remembered.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation for the work of the Marine Corps Historical Center here in Washington, Dan Crawford, a historian at the Center, has been very helpful in getting us the facts about this important battle. In addition, this pamphlet written by Col. Joseph Alexander, USMC (Ret.) entitled "Closing In: Marines in the Seizure of Iwo Jima," was the source of much of the information which we used tonight. It is available from the Marine Corps Historical foundation in Quantico, VA. The toll-free telephone number is 1-800-336-0291, Extension 60.

□ 2030

IN HONOR OF THOSE SERVICEMEN WHO FOUGHT AND WON THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I certainly thank the Speaker, and I thank the former speaker in the well, the gentleman from Mississippi [SONNY MONTGOMERY]. He is certainly one of the strongest supporters of our veterans in this Nation, and I take my hat off to him.

Mr. Speaker, having had the privilege of serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, I'm especially pleased to participate in this special order tonight to honor those courageous servicemen who fought and won the epic battle of Iwo Jima during World War Two. The men faced death against great odds and many, in fact, lost their lives on this island halfway around the world. The significance of their efforts is timeless and worthy of continued attention. In fact, if not for the efforts of these selfless patriots, we almost certainly would not be the leader of the free

world, a position we have retained ever since their victory. In that respect, Mr. Speaker, each and every citizen in this country, of all ages, owe an extreme debt of gratitude to these defenders of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, words cannot possibly do justice to the horrific events and extraordinary feats of valor that comprised this bloodiest of battles in Marine Corps history. However, in an attempt to demonstrate the burdens under which these brave soldiers performed, it is necessary to review what was at stake as they approached the beaches of Iwo Jima that February morning in 1945. When we begin to acknowledge the extent of their sacrifice, it will become clear that this battle was not only momentous and a turning point then, but has implications even today.

Strategically, this 8-square mile hunk of rock (known as the island of Iwo Jima) was as crucial to ending the war with Japan as attacks on their mainland. The reason being, even our superior B-29 bombers couldn't effectively raid the Japanese mainland, because accompanying fighter planes couldn't make the long trip from United States bases on the Mariana Islands to the mainland. Without these fighter escorts, the bombers were subject to Japanese attacks, because radar gave the Japanese 2-hour advance notice of the bombers' arrival. As a result, Mr. Speaker, Iwo Jima, which lay exactly between the Mariana Islands and Japan, became a necessity, if we were to break the Japanese will and end the war.

The troops going in that day clearly understood the significance, as it was the largest Marine force ever deployed for one mission, and these patriotic souls were prepared to sacrifice their lives to attain this island. It was a battle of will on will, Mr. Speaker, a strict frontal assault on a position defended to the maximum extent, yet they refused to yield.

In the end, one third of all marines killed in World War Two died on this uninhabited Pacific island. However, they died of single task and single mind, seizing this island in the spirit of democracy and liberty over imperialism and oppression. I'd like to share a quote of Maj. Gen. Graves B. Erskine, who commanded the 3d Marine Division in this battle. It sums up the commitment of these men to overcoming such unparalleled burdens.

Victory was never in doubt. Its cost was. What was in doubt (in all our minds) was whether there would be any of us left . . . at the end, or whether the last Marine would die knocking out the last Japanese gun and gunner.

It's hard to imagine the adversity each and every man storming this island was faced with. However, Mr. Speaker, this battle not only represented the costliest in terms of casualties that the Marine Corps ever experienced in its almost 200-year history but it also produced the most Congres-

sional Medals of Honor in the war. Confronting death against great odds, these men responded above and beyond the call of duty. Pitting their will against that of the Japanese, Mr. Speaker, made it no contest in the eyes of these honorable Americans. After all, they had the will of free people throughout the world on their side.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share with you the extraordinary feats of one such Congressional Medal of Honor winner from my home State of New York, Pfc. Douglas Thomas Jacobson of Rochester, NY. As a member of the 4th Marine Division on February 26, 1945, Jacobson waged a battle to penetrate the Japanese cross-island defense. Private Jacobson, just 19 years of age, singlehandedly destroyed 16 enemy positions allowing his unit to gain the strong ground and breach the defense of the enemy. Mr. Speaker, the spirit and valor of this man went undaunted in the face of an established and fortified enemy. All of us could only hope we could respond as selflessly and honorably as Douglas Jacobson. Appropriately, he was honored again this past week at the 50th anniversary of the onset of the battle by President Clinton.

The actions of people like Pfc. Douglas Jacobson was of immediate significance. Seizing the island of Iwo Jima allowed fighters to escort the bombers on their missions over Japan, but of equal importance, it provided a secure airfield for emergency landings when returning from these air raids. According to the Navy Office of Information, by wars end, 2,400 bombers with 27,000 crewmen made emergency landings on Iwo Jima airfields.

However, Mr. Speaker, the significance goes beyond even that, if you can imagine. This was a fight that took place half way around the world yet reeked of American spirit and democratic consequences. It marked the beginning of our realization that this Nation must carry the torch for freedom against imperialist domination and tyranny. Mr. Speaker, this victory and the victory in World War Two geared us for our fight against Communist oppression which made its face known shortly thereafter. Now, communism has been dealt a major blow yet it lingers on in places like Cuba and China where people are subject to repugnant human rights violations and denial of basic dignity. Even more nations are ruled by harsh dictators without respect for individual freedoms, and who are content to jeopardize the very existence of their people in order to sustain their elitist inner circle.

The lessons of Iwo Jima and events in World War Two, prove that we need to maintain preparedness in order to overcome such imperialism. Furthermore, it is an insult to freedom fighters such as those who lost their lives in Iwo Jima when we constantly yield privileges such as equal trade status to empires like China, an empire that