

KOREAN WAR VETERAN 1ST LT.
LEON J. JACQUES, JR.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the late 1st Lt. Leon J. Jacques, Jr., of Milford, NH, for his heroic services to the United States of America during the Korean war.

Leon was a graduate of Saint Anselm College and the United States Military Academy at West Point who also attended the Ground General School at Fort Riley, KS and the United States Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, GA.

He was assigned to the 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division in Kumamoto, Japan. After the outbreak of war in Korea on June 25, 1950, Leon was committed to combat in Korea. During the first two weeks of combat, more than forty percent of the men fighting were killed, wounded, prisoners of war, or missing in action.

On July 12, 1950, Leon and his men were captured as prisoners of war and it was later learned that Leon had been killed by the enemy. He was in charge of several soldiers who were harassed by the enemy. Leon demanded that they stop and for making this statement, he was killed. According to a report received, "Lt. Jacques' complete disregard for his personal safety and valor in response to enemy aggression were in the finest tradition of military service and reflected great credit upon himself, the 21st Infantry Regiment and the United States Army."

Thanks to the generous efforts of Colonel Phil Day US Army (Ret), Leon has been honored with ten award medals including: Bronze Star Medal with "v" device, United Nations Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation and the combat infantryman badge.

As the son of a World War II Naval aviator who was killed in a war related incident and a veteran of the Vietnam war, I empathize with the Jacques family. Leon is an American hero whose selfless dedication to his State and country has benefitted his fellow citizens with the blessings of freedom and liberty. It is truly an honor and a privilege to represent his family in the United States Senate.

RECOGNIZING THE HEROES OF THE ALEUTIANS CAMPAIGN

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to share a story about a remarkable group of veterans that fought for our freedom over 50 years ago. During October 4-7, 2001, a small band of World War II veterans and their families gathered in Anchorage for what was probably their last reunion. They shared the common experience of having fought an air war in one of the most difficult theaters of operations during World War II, the Aleutian Islands.

For those of you who have not had the opportunity to visit the Aleutians,

let me tell you what you are missing. Some of the harshest and most unbearable weather exists in this region of my State. Some call the Aleutians the birth place of the winds. It is my honor to recognize these fine men who fought to protect our nation.

These courageous individuals are also the founders of today's Eleventh Air Force. Appropriately, those who spent their youth defending Alaska elected "Back to Our Roots," as their reunion theme.

The men and women of the Eleventh Air Force served their Nation well, helping drive the Japanese from the western Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska during the Aleutian Campaign. It was the only campaign fought on the North American continent during the war. It was also the first time since the War of 1812 that a foreign military force had occupied North American soil.

Later, the men of the Eleventh Air Force flew some of the war's longest missions against Japanese installations in the northern Kurile Islands from bases on Attu and Shemya Islands. During the Aleutian Campaign, the veterans of the Eleventh Air Force flew 297 missions and dropped 3,662 tons of bombs on Japanese installations on Attu and Kiska. One hundred and fourteen men were killed; another forty-two were reported missing in action and another forty-six died as a result of accidents.

Following the end of the campaign, the Eleventh Air Force was reduced in strength from a high of 16,526 in August 1943 to a low of 6,849 by the war's end. The two bomber squadrons that remained along with Navy air units flew bombing and reconnaissance missions against Japanese targets in the northern Kurile Islands. The military used the highly classified operation, code named Wedlock, which also involved submarine patrols and shore bombardment, to divert Japanese attention north and mislead them about U.S. strategy in the Pacific.

It succeeded in its objective. The Japanese increased their garrison in the northern Kuriles from 8,000 in 1943, to 41,000 in 1944. They maintained 400 aircraft there in anticipation that America was planning to invade Japan by a northern route.

During this time, Eleventh Air Force bombers flew 276 missions, losing 74 crew members killed in action and 11 taken prisoners of war, of which 3 died in captivity. Another 179 were interned in the Soviet Union—where they landed after experiencing difficulties returning to their home bases. They were among the 291 young American aircrews who temporarily wound up in Soviet hands as the result of the air war in the Pacific.

Unlike other World War II theaters of operations, the Aleutians has not been properly recognized. The men and

women who served on those wind swept and hauntingly beautiful islands have not been forgotten. Alaskans are grateful for what they did to defend our freedom and land. Their efforts, and those who served elsewhere in the territory, contributed immeasurably to the growth and development of my State. They helped provide the foundation that ultimately led to the achievement of statehood.

Those who fought for our Nation's values during a difficult time in the Aleutians and the North Pacific Theater are truly heroes. It is my honor to say thank you and recognize them on this Veterans Day.

VETERANS DAY, 2001

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, it is my privilege to rise and thank the men and women who have served in our Nation's armed forces. This Sunday, November 11, 2001, our country takes a moment to recognize the men and women who have made our country a free Nation for over 225 years.

Veterans Day is a day that is as diverse and as rich in history as the many battles that were fought defending our freedom. November 11, 1918 is the date most remembered as the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. This day began with the laying down of arms and blowing of whistles. Impromptu parades were held and shops closed for the day to honor veterans. 83 years ago November 11 became known as "Armistice Day."

For 16 peaceful years following World War I, the United States along with other countries such as Canada, Australia and Britain celebrated this day. A moment of silence at the allotted hour of 11AM was held to remember the sacrifices that men and women made in order to ensure that freedom reigns.

Sadly, as we all know, war is a part of our lives. Around every corner adversity and evil exists. However, Americans being steadfast and always determined to live life peacefully continued to observe a day of remembrance and appreciation on November 11.

In 1938 Congress passed a bill that November 11 "shall be dedicated to the cause of world peace and . . . hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day." But shortly thereafter World War II broke out. Over Sixteen million—I repeat, over sixteen million—Americans took part in World War II. Veterans Day was officially recognized in 1954 when the late President Eisenhower signed a bill that proclaimed November 11 as Veterans Day.

We also pay tribute to those soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice. In 1921 an American soldier, whose name was "known but to God," was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. This soldier became the personification of dignity and reverence for America's veterans. In 1958, two more unidentified