

Congress, and every year we go through the same struggle to get VA health care the money it needs to adequately serve its veteran patients. We must change the way funds are allocated so that all of our veterans are guaranteed the care they so clearly deserve.

I want the 115,000 veterans who choose to make Hawaii their home to be assured that they will receive the services they have earned. The nearly 18,000 veterans who avail themselves of VA health care on Oahu, the Big Island, Kauai, and Maui should not have to worry if resources for doctors and nurses will materialize next year. The reservists and guardsmen who are deployed for the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan also must receive the care they need upon their return. And the fact that a whole population of veterans is denied care because VA does not have adequate funding is shameful.

Memorial Day is a day of both sorrow and joy. We mourn those we have lost in battle, and we celebrate the freedoms we currently enjoy thanks to those brave individuals. As we gather together over the long weekend to celebrate this important holiday, let us make sure to take a moment to remember and thank those who lost their lives in order to secure our futures. Then, for the rest of our tenure in Congress, let us not waiver from the commitments made to these brave men and women in terms of programs, services and benefits.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, Memorial Day is a day of mixed emotions: sorrow for the families whose sons and daughters have given their lives for our country, coupled with universal pride in the great Americans who for generations and particularly today teach us the full meaning of service and sacrifice. The courage and bravery of our young men and women fighting overseas continues to inspire all of us, and indeed inspire the free world and those yearning for freedom.

America's fallen soldiers shouldered a responsibility greater than any of us will ever know. Their families, their units, and their nation depended on them, and they answered the call of duty with selflessness and devotion. Our soldiers did not shirk from this responsibility, and all the uncertainty, danger and honor that came with it. Their families remember them as special sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, and cherished friends. Their Nation remembers them as special citizens. Grown men will touch their names etched on granite walls and will today weep for fallen comrades who gave their lives so that others can live.

In this time of war, and in memory of our fallen heroes, we must be mindful to do everything in our power to keep our troops safe as they keep us safe. We must do better to take care of their families, who sacrifice in ways too many to count.

While we can never repay our Nation's debt to families who have made the ultimate sacrifice, we must always remember the legacy of their fallen sons and daughters: a safer and freer world. On this Memorial Day, I believe it appropriate to take a small step in that direction by recognizing in the record those exceptional individuals from Massachusetts who this year gave their lives, and earned the eternal gratitude of the American people:

Arredondo, Alexander S., Lance Corporal, USMC, 25-Aug-2004—Randolph, MA; Connolly, David, S., Major, USA, 6-Apr-2005—Boston, MA; Cunningham, Darren J., Staff Sergeant, USA, 30-Sep-2004—Groton, MA; Depew, Cory R., Private, USA, 04-Jan-2005—Haverhill, MA; Desiato, Travis R., Lance Corporal, USMC, 15-Nov-2004—Bedford, MA; Farrar Jr., Andrew K., Sergeant, USMC, 28-Jan-2005—Weymouth, MA; Fontecchio, Elia P., Gunnery Sergeant, USMC, 04-Aug-2004—Milford, MA; Fuller, Travis J., 1st Lieutenant, USMC, 26-Jan-2005—Granville, MA; Gavriel, Dimitrios, Lance Corporal, USMC, 18-Nov-2004—Haverhill, MA; Johnson, Markus J., Private, USA, 1st Class, 01-Jun-2004—Springfield, MA; Lusk, Joe F. II, Captain, USA, 21-Jan-2005—Framingham, MA; Moore, James M., Colonel, USA, 29-November-2004—Peabody, MA; Oliveira, Brian, Corporal, USMC, 25-Oct-2004—Raynham, MA; Ouellette, Brian J., Petty Officer, 1st Class, USN, 29-May-2004—Needham, MA; Palacios, Gabriel T., Specialist, USA, 21-Jan-2004—Lynn, MA; Schamberg, Kurt D., Sergeant, USA, 20-May-2005—Melrose, MA; Sullivan, Christopher J., Captain, USA, 18-Jan-2005—Princeton, MA; Vangyzen IV, John J., Lance Corporal, USMC, 05-Jul-2004—Bristol, MA; and Zabierek, Andrew J., Lance Corporal, USMC, 21-May-2004—Chelmsford, MA.

THE PASSING OF A GREAT AMERICAN SOLDIER—ARMY COLONEL DAVID H. HACKWORTH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I was very sad to learn that Colonel Hackworth had died on May 4, 2005, in Tijuana, Mexico.

Tijuana is the place where Colonel Hackworth chose to make his last stand. He went there to fight one last battle. He had a particularly deadly form of cancer that spread. He went to Mexico, hoping for a miracle with an experimental drug treatment program.

Just before leaving his home in Connecticut for the last time in January 2005, he sent me one final message:

Give Senator Grassley my best. Have run out of conventional options re my cancer. Got until March to find a solution. Off to Mexico to see if we can't out Gee this monster. I am not sweating my final orders from Headquarters. It has been a fun ride. Plan on being planted in Arlington.

"Out-Geeing the G" was one of Colonel Hackworth's favorite expressions.

He invented the term while leading troops in combat during the Vietnam war. He told his troops that they could beat the Viet Cong by using the guerillas' own mobile, hit-and-run tactics.

"We are going to do what they do but just do it better," he said. "We out-gee the G."

"Out-geeing the G" was the heart and soul of Colonel Hackworth's brand of soldiering.

Sadly, Colonel Hackworth was not able to "out-Gee" the enemy this time.

Colonel Hackworth began his military career just up the coast from Tijuana—in Santa Monica, CA.

At the age of 10, after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, he worked as a shoeshine boy at a military post there where a group of soldiers adopted him as a mascot. They had a special uniform made for him to wear. Both his parents died before his first birthday.

At this point in his life, Colonel Hackworth said: "I knew my destiny. Nothing would be better than to be a soldier."

You can't utter the name David Hackworth without also saying the word soldier in the same breath. He was a "soldier's" soldier.

He was a soldier from the day he put on that special uniform in Santa Monica to the moment he died. He may have taken off his uniform after publicly denouncing the Vietnam war on national TV in 1971, but he continued to soldier until the very end of his life.

I know that Colonel Hackworth was a highly respected combat veteran. I know he distinguished himself as a leader of troops in the field in Korea and Vietnam. I know he was awarded a large number of combat decorations for valor.

Colonel Hackworth was a true American hero.

But I do not want to leave my colleagues with a false impression.

I did not know Colonel Hackworth when he was fighting wars and winning medals for valor. I have only read about that part of his life. I did not meet him until much later—after he had started a new career.

I came to know Colonel Hackworth after he became a reporter and began covering the Pentagon.

He was still a soldier all right—but a different kind of soldier.

Colonel Hackworth had become what I would call a brave-hearted soldier for the truth.

When I met him, he had taken off his uniform. He was fighting a different kind of war. He was a soldier in civilian clothes. But he still had a mission. He wanted to bring truth, justice, and accountability to military headquarters—the Pentagon. He wanted to shed some light on what he perceived as gross incompetence and corruption on the part of some senior officers.

He was a contributing editor and reporter for Newsweek Magazine and syndicated columnist.

Colonel Hackworth and I shared a small piece of common ground—watchdogging the Pentagon.

From the moment when I was first elected to the Senate, I have worked

very hard to ferret out fraud, waste, and abuse at the Pentagon and stop it. I do it because I don't want to see a single tax dollar wasted.

Colonel Hackworth attacked the very same problem but from a different angle.

As in everything he did, he always looked at a problem from a common soldier's perspective.

As I said, his main concern was incompetence and corruption among some senior officers in the Pentagon. He called them "perfumed princes." These were some of the same officers he saw come and go in Vietnam. They came to Vietnam to get their "tickets punched." They got their "tickets punched" by commanding a battalion or brigade for a shortened tour of duty before rotating home to the Pentagon for promotion.

To the hardcore soldier like Colonel Hackworth, "ticket punching" in Vietnam translated into unnecessary casualties on the battlefield. The wasting of one soldier's life produced real fury inside this man. He could not—and would not—tolerate it.

One illustrative incident, which occurred in Vietnam, is described in his book "About Face."

During a very intense combat operation, a "perfumed prince" riding in a helicopter overhead issued an order to a unit under Colonel Hackworth's command—without Colonel Hackworth's knowledge or approval. That order resulted in a significant loss of life in one of Colonel Hackworth's units.

Colonel Hackworth believed that those casualties were avoidable and unnecessary.

When he returned to home base, he sought out that officer, put a 45 caliber weapon to his head, and threatened to kill him if he ever did anything like that again.

That is Colonel Hackworth's own account of what happened on that day so long ago.

Colonel Hackworth loved his troops above all else and would go to any length to protect them from harm and abuse.

His lifelong commitment to the common soldier was the driving force behind the stories he produced as a reporter with Newsweek and other publications.

In Colonel Hackworth's mind, the terrible loss of life in Vietnam had its origins in a disease that he set out to cure—the gross incompetence and corruption—that he perceived at the highest echelons in the Pentagon.

Colonel Hackworth was determined to wipe it out and right a wrong.

Over the years, we collaborated on a number of investigations. The one I remember best is the one involving Air Force General Joseph Ashy in 1994-95.

Colonel Hackworth conducted his own investigation. He gathered the facts and the documents. I, in turn, referred Colonel Hackworth's allegations to the inspector general, IG, for review.

This is what Colonel Hackworth reported in the press:

General Ashy flew himself, his aide and family cat from Italy to Colorado aboard a 200-seat Air Force plane; he flew his wife round-trip on an Air Force VIP aircraft from Colorado to Washington; and he made palatial renovations at his headquarters.

The IG concluded that General Ashy's "wasteful escapades" cost the taxpayers \$424,602.00.

Colonel Hackworth found out about General Ashy's "escapades" from one of his beloved soldiers who was denied a seat—and free ride home—on Ashy's airplane.

Colonel Hackworth's comments were as follows:

The taxpayers got ripped-off for almost a half a million bucks by a member of our military elite and virtually nothing is being done about it. . . . The Air Force spinmeisters lied through their teeth about what General Ashy did. . . . Besides being a blatant waste of money, this incident is about deception and the art of diffusing responsibility. . . . Ashy was fined a mere \$5,020.00 and continues to have four stars and his finger on the nuclear button.

General Ashy wrote out a check for the fine and sent it to Air Force Headquarters on June 26, 1995. However, instead of depositing his check at the bank, the check was stashed in a safe in Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall's office—for what I suspect was permanent safekeeping. At my request, the IG began making new inquiries and the check finally went to the bank on September 15, 1995.

This great American soldier told us—in "plain old English"—what he expected from the top brass at the Pentagon. He expected them to lead by example. If they failed his leadership and integrity test at headquarters, he believed they would fail on the battlefield.

His pronouncements were blunt, for sure. They were almost always harsh and sometimes coarse. But they always conveyed an important lesson tempered by battlefield experiences. So I listened and learned. His opinions on the Pentagon brass had credibility in my book. He had put them to the ultimate test on so many distant battlefields. That was good enough for me.

The lessons taught by this great American soldier are lessons that will stand the test of time. Setting the example has been the most powerful element of leadership since the beginning of time. Colonel Hackworth kept going back to those enduring principles. As a Nation, we must do the same. We must rely on those ideas. They are too important to be forgotten. They must be followed.

Colonel Hackworth was a constant and forceful reminder of just how important those principles really are.

The memory of Colonel Hackworth and all that he stood for lives on in our hearts and minds.

Colonel Hackworth has left us. His remains will be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery on May 31. But he will not be forgotten. He will never fade away.

COLONELONEL DAVID H. HACKWORTH

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a true American hero, COL. David H. Hackworth, who spent his last years in Connecticut. Colonel Hackworth was one the most legendary and highly decorated soldiers of the U.S. Army. As Memorial Day approaches, there is no better time to remember the sacrifices, courage and tactical genius of this legendary soldier who spent more than half a century fighting on the world's most dangerous battlefields. As World War II was coming to a close, a 14-year-old David Hackworth lied about his age to join the Merchant Marine and a year later joined the U.S. Army—spending the next 26 years fighting our nation's battles. A true leader, "Hack" as he was known, received a battlefield commission in Korea to become the Army's youngest captain and was promoted in Vietnam to the Army's youngest full colonel. Three times he was nominated for the Medal of Honor. His decorations are numerous and include the Army Medal of Valor, the Distinguished Service Cross, ten Silver Stars, eight Bronze Stars and the United Nations Peace Medal. But the awards of which he was proudest are his eight purple hearts and the Combat Infantryman's Badge. Mr. President, As you know, there is only one way to get this badge: serve 90 days in a front-line infantry unit under fire and survive.

In just one example of his bravery, Colonel Hackworth got out on the strut of a helicopter to drag to safety his men who were pinned down and facing certain death. It is no wonder, Colonel Hackworth has so many supporters.

But these statistics do not capture the Colonel Hackworth, the iconoclastic straight talker, who lead from the front and spoke from his heart. One of the most telling stories about Colonel Hackworth's leadership was his transformation of the 4/39 Infantry Battalion from a demoralized outfit into an effective counter-insurgency fighting force that routed enemy units in the jungles of Vietnam. Colonel Hackworth's training methods and tactics were so successful, he wrote them down in a book "The Vietnam Primer" that is still read by commanders today.

GEN. Hal Moore, the coauthor of "We Were Soldiers Once and Young," called him "the Patton of Vietnam," while General Creighton Abrams, the last American commander in that disastrous war, described him as "the best battalion commander I ever saw in the United States Army."

Gruff and full of purple prose, Colonel Hackworth ran afoul of the Army's top leadership and retired following a confrontation in which he said in 1971 that the Vietnam War was hopeless. Often called the champion of the common soldier, "Hack" spoke truth to power. After leaving the service, Colonel Hackworth launched himself into new careers as a journalist, businessman, restaurateur and best-selling author as