

more than half of the equipment to be parachuted in was lost. But soldiers persisted, risks paid off, and bravery triumphed over peril. On that dangerous early morning, following a treacherous English Channel crossing, 150,000 Allied troops took the shore, and 100,000 continued inland. Mr. President, 9,000 men were lost that day, but it went down in history as the decisive battle that turned the tide of the war.

I am proud to bring your attention to what these men did. And as I recognize their valor on this remarkable anniversary, I think it is both fitting and necessary to recognize the valor of our troops in battle today who are no less brave, and who face uncertainty and risk, as did those who fought for freedom in the Second World War. I wish I could stand up here and draw other comparisons between these two wars—WWII and the global war on terror—and between the threats of Nazism and terrorism, because it is without a doubt that World War II, despite our human losses, brought a unity of cause to our Nation, and that would be a great place for us to be again. But the fact is that we are in a different world and a different century; we face a different enemy, and, most of all, our Nation has tremendous differences on how to deal with this enemy.

However, as with the heroism demonstrated by our fighting forces both then and now, there are other unmistakable parallels. The invasion on D-day marked a pivotal time in history when the outcome was uncertain. The great generals going into battle had faith and trust in their troops, but knew their bold strategy carried with it great risk. Just before the invasion, MG Leroy Watson, commander of the 3rd Armored Division, sent his troops this message:

This is the greatest military operation in the history of the world. Its success or failure will determine the course of events for the next hundred years.

General Eisenhower, also uncertain about the outcome, prepared a letter which he never had to deliver, accepting responsibility for the loss. He expected catastrophic failure and military victory. He wrote to his troops:

My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the Air and the Navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do.

The leaders knew the danger, but also knew the consequences of failure. In Iraq, and in the fight against terrorism, we must continue to stay the course, because the stakes of not winning are too high, and, as was the case on D-day, we are again in a pivotal time in history. And again, the outcome will surely determine the course of events for the remainder of this century.

D-day was a tremendous battle, with thousands of casualties over the course of a day. It was a time of great loss for our Nation. And amidst those losses stand stories of bravery, individual

valor and resounding brotherhood—stories that enveloped the historic battle and personalized it for a nation. And I can tell you that the soldiers I met in Iraq, and the troops whose stories I heard at Fort Benning and Fort Stewart, will be remembered in the annals of our Nation as warriors who are as brave, as strong, and as committed as the heroes of D-day we remember today.

And the Generals who led these brave men will also never be forgotten. World War II saw Eisenhower, Patton, Marshall and Bradley—all of these men have secured their places in history. And today and in the future we will remember the legacies of Petraeus, Odierno, McChrystal, and Fallon—generals and admirals whose leadership, ingenuity, courage and forthrightness are shaping the Iraq strategy, and no doubt its military outcome.

So in drawing these parallels, my conclusion is that in the history of war, there are some constants: the bravery of soldiers, the uncertainty of battle, the value of leadership, and the necessity of victory. These things never change. They were evident on June 6, 1944, and they are evident today. And so it is on the 63rd anniversary of D-day, the decisive battle of World War II, that I recognize the heroes who fought, lived, and died valiantly. And I thank them and their families for setting an example and standard our warriors remember on the battlefield today, and for creating a generation that is willing and able to set the same standard and example for our heroes of tomorrow. I hope that our men and women in uniform serving around the world today will draw courage from the example of those who have gone before them as they execute the responsibilities we as a nation have trusted them to carry out.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "BILL" FRANCE, JR.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I wish to speak today to pay tribute to a great Floridian, Bill France, Jr.—a man who lived the American dream, a man who literally turned an idea and hard work into a multibillion dollar national exhibition we today know as NASCAR.

Bill France was a great Floridian in many other ways as well. He was someone who contributed greatly to his local community of Daytona Beach, FL, as well as to the State of Florida at large. Mr. France left us at his home in Daytona Beach, when he passed away earlier this week after a long and difficult battle with cancer.

What we in Florida know, and what the news reports confirmed immediately following his death, is that Bill made NASCAR everything it is today: The sold-out races, the national network television coverage, the regalia and the memorabilia—it all can be credited to this man and his love of the sport.

Born right here in the Nation's capital, Bill France moved as a young man with his family, Bill France, Sr., and his mother Anne to Daytona Beach, FL, in 1935 to escape the Great Depression. With \$100 in his pocket, Bill, Sr., started a new life for his family in Florida, setting up an auto repair shop and quickly taking a great interest in racing. In 1938, he would set up the Daytona Beach Road Course, and from there, as they say, the rest is history.

This course he set up back in those days was so unique, and to see photographs of it is one of those things that one can only harken back to the old Florida that is no more. But the races were essentially conducted on the strip of sand in Daytona Beach. They would circle around A1A, the strip of highway that was there at the time, and then circle back around on to the beach. The spectators would sit there on the beach side and watch these cars as they raced literally on the beach.

Bill, Jr., spent his young life around the racetrack and worked toward the legacy his father had begun to build. He worked on cars, helped out during races, and beginning in 1956, he worked every day of the week for more than a year on the construction of the Daytona International Speedway.

In 1972, Bill, Jr., took the reins of the racing organization that his father had helped to found in 1948 and took the risks and made the decisions that took NASCAR to a whole new level.

The International Motorsports Hall of Fame describes it this way:

Other than the founding of NASCAR itself, Bill, Jr.'s appointment to leadership is probably the most significant event in the history of the sanctioning body. As rule-maker, promoter, ambassador and salesman, France has set the standard by which all other forms of motor sports are measured. He has taken it from a regional sport to a national sport, and nurtured its growing popularity on television, culminating in a record-setting \$2.4 billion broadcast contract.

He served for a quarter century leading NASCAR to unbelievable heights and set the stage for what it has become today.

I know I speak for hundreds of thousands of fans, the drivers, the pit crews and anyone and everyone who enjoys NASCAR, as well as Floridians and Daytona Beach residents, when I say a well deserved "thank you" to Bill France, Jr., for making our weekends a lot more exciting, more enjoyable, and a lot faster. Florida thanks you for your vision, Bill. We will miss you, but you leave behind a legacy we will never forget.

REMEMBERING SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I rise to honor Senator Craig Thomas, who, very sadly, passed away Monday evening. As all of us in the Senate know, Craig was a respected Member of this body. A number of my colleagues have made very kind remarks on the floor about their relationship with