

IN RECOGNITION OF RUBY  
LEHRMANN

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 2004*

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the retirement of Ruby Lehrmann, Chief United States Probation Officer for the Western District of Texas. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Ruby's long and prestigious career, as well as the countless contributions she has made to her community.

Ruby's professional life reflects hard work, determination, and commitment that began during her college years at Sam Houston State University, where she earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in the field of Health Education. During her undergraduate studies, Ruby was a summer intern with the Goree Unit of the Texas Department of Corrections. Through this internship experience, Ruby began to lay the foundation for her impressive career.

After obtaining her Master's degree, Ruby continued a steady climb up the ranks in the Texas Department of Corrections until she became Assistant Warden for the Goree Unit. In September of 1975, this remarkable woman became the first female U.S. Probation Officer for the Western District of Texas. She was then promoted to Deputy Chief United States Probation Officer in 1983 and was named Chief United States Probation Officer for the Western District of Texas in January of 1995.

Throughout her admirable career, Ruby has always maintained her commitment to education. She has served as an adjunct professor for St. Mary's University and Our Lady of the Lake University. In this capacity, Ruby has shared her knowledge and experiences with others in order to help them achieve success as she has. She has also served as a co-chairman and mentor for Burnet Elementary school in the San Antonio Independent School District.

Ruby's dauntless commitment to her community has been very impressive. She has contributed to San Antonio through volunteer service for many organizations, including the San Antonio Conservation Society and the United Way. In addition to these activities, Ruby is also deeply involved in her church, Concordia Lutheran. There, she has served on a number of committees and has been a coach and a Sunday School teacher.

I deeply appreciate Ruby's many contributions to the Texas Department of Corrections, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, and the city of San Antonio. Her dedication to her career and the humanitarianism she consistently exhibits in her community have made Ruby a role model for all of us. I am proud of Ruby's accomplishments and I wish her continued happiness and success upon her retirement.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY  
SPEECH BY SPEAKER HASTERT

SPEECH OF

HON. RALPH REGULA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 2004*

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, at the ceremony recognizing the 60th Anniversary of D-Day held at the United States Memorial Cemetery at Omaha Beach, you, Speaker DENNIS HASTERT, delivered a moving tribute to the courage and sacrifice of those who fought and died for freedom. The text of these thoughtful remarks follows:

D-DAY MINUS 1

REMARKS BY SPEAKER J. DENNIS HASTERT FOLLOWING A MASS BY HIS EMINENCE FRANCIS CARDINAL GEORGE OF CHICAGO  
[From the Omaha Beach Cemetery, France, June 5, 2004]

Thank you Cardinal George for your inspirational words.

Today we stand in this now peaceful cemetery, on the cliffs overlooking the sea, in this field of white crosses and Stars of David—straight and tall—as if they were young men standing at attention.

Together we have made a pilgrimage to this “hallowed ground”—as Abraham Lincoln would have phrased it—to bear witness to what took place here and to spend, at least a fleeting moment, with our brothers that lie beneath this ground—men who sacrificed on this foreign shore so that we might live as free men and women.

It is our privilege, and our duty, to reflect upon the courage and the heroism of those who were called upon to defend our freedom. We honor those who lie here, but we also embrace those who survived, and returned home to raise their families and to build our nation as a beacon to freedom loving people around the world.

Not far from here, at Pointe du Hoc, are the cliffs they said no man could scale. But they were scaled by determined men with ladders and ropes and grappling hooks in the midst of a merciless hail of bullets and shrapnel.

Twenty years ago, on the 40th Anniversary of D-Day, President Reagan looked out at those cliffs and asked, “who were these men?”

They were ordinary men doing extraordinary things. Men who sought no territory—who sought no plunder—and who sought no glory. They simply came, and many died, so we could live in freedom.

“Where do we find such men?” asked President Reagan. He knew the answer. Over there—across the sea—In America.

Sixty years ago today, D-Day minus One, what were those young men thinking as they waited to embark on one of the great crusades of the millennium?

In those tension filled hours some found comfort in quiet prayer. Others may have wondered why they were here.

What threat forced these farmers, accountants, factory workers, college students, athletes and assorted other laborers and professionals, to leave their families, their careers and their American way of life?

They knew the answer. Hitler's Germany was that threat. Hitler's hatred of freedom, his assault on common decency, his brutal murder of millions of his own citizens, and his determination to impose his sick vision of the future on the free world.

To end Hitler's regime and restore common decency in the world: that is why they were there.

Operation Overlord, as with the entire war effort, caused great hardship. But out of such hardship was drawn great courage, and from great courage were forged great leaders. Some of that “greatest generation” returned home and entered politics and went on to serve our Nation in the Congress of the United States.

Sam Gibbons parachuted behind the lines here in Normandy, preparing the way for the invasion that would follow. He would later become a leader on the Ways and Means Committee.

Bob Michel, our beloved leader from Illinois, went ashore here in Normandy and fought the Nazis all the way to Bastogne, where he was wounded at the Battle of the Bulge.

The list of members who served our nation in the Second World War, and still serve in the House of Representatives, is growing ever shorter with the passage of time.

But those proud members—Henry Hyde of Illinois, Cass Ballenger of North Carolina, John Dingell of Michigan, Amo Houghton of New York, Ralph Hall of Texas, and Ralph Regula of Ohio, still bring great honor to the United States House of Representatives.

These Members of Congress and the men of the 1st Division, some of whom are here today, and their millions of comrades-in-arms, understood that the world-wide threat of fascism, if left unchecked, would destroy the free world. They faced that threat and they beat it.

I want to tell you that the “Greatest Generation” still lives today and like the boys of the 1940s, it has a very young face. They are the grandsons and the granddaughters of those who hit this beach in France or raised that flag on Iwo Jimi or pushed the communists back in Korea or in Vietnam.

How do I know that these young warriors of the 21st century are also part of “The Greatest Generation?” Because I have met some of them. I have visited them in hospital wards at Walter Reed and in Landstuhl in Germany.

When you visit these young men and women—some of whom have been severely wounded, and you ask them what they want, you always get the same answer, “I just want to go back and join my unit, sir, to be with my comrades and do my job.”

It happens over and over again, the same response given with pride and determination. I ask myself, often with tears in my eyes as I walk away, “Where do we find such men and women?” And I know the answer. All around me. Everywhere I look. In America.

Today we face the threat of world-wide terrorism. Like the Nazis of the 1930's, the terrorists of the 1990's were a threat too often ignored.

But like Pearl Harbor, September 11th, 2001, shocked us out of our complacency. As Americans, we love peace, but we love freedom more. So we are facing the threat. And we will beat it.

In war, we often sacrifice some of the best and the brightest to further the cause of freedom. But we also forge the leaders for the next generation.

We cannot know who will be the Bob Michel, or Bob Dole, or Sam Gibbons of this new generation. But they are out there. Perhaps serving today in a remote mountain camp in Afghanistan, or in a village in Iraq, or on a ship at sea.

Their mission is not very different from that of 1944—to preserve the freedoms that we cherish and to restore freedom to oppressed people. They are fighting to make our homeland safe. They are sacrificing for others.

Who are these ordinary men and women doing extraordinary things you ask? I cannot tell you their names. But this I know: They are Americans.