

By: Price

H.R. No. 2200

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, During the D-Day invasion of Normandy 75 years ago
2 this June, Lieutenant Colonel James E. Rudder and the men of the
3 U.S. Army 2nd Ranger Battalion displayed exceptional courage and
4 fortitude in their assault on the German position at Pointe du Hoc;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Regarded as one of the most dangerous enemy
7 positions along the Normandy coast, Pointe du Hoc is a promontory
8 with sheer 100-foot cliffs, and it was the site of six large German
9 guns that posed a direct threat to the Allied troops coming ashore
10 at Utah and Omaha beaches; capturing the position and silencing
11 those guns was vital to the success of D-Day, and Allied Supreme
12 Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower assigned this difficult
13 mission to the 2nd Ranger Battalion under the leadership of
14 Lieutenant Colonel Rudder, a native Texan and a graduate of the
15 Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets; and

16 WHEREAS, At 7:10 on the morning of June 6, 1944, Lieutenant
17 Colonel Rudder and his Rangers jumped from their landing craft and
18 waded through the surf to the foot of the cliffs; braving withering
19 machine gun fire and hand grenade explosions, these valiant men
20 shot rope ladders over the cliffs and began pulling themselves up;
21 as one Ranger fell, another began to climb in his place, and by 9:30
22 a.m. the battalion had taken the promontory and destroyed the guns;
23 they continued to hold the position in the face of fierce
24 counterattacks until they were relieved on June 8; after two days of

1 fighting, only 90 of the original 225 who came ashore could still
2 bear arms; and

3 WHEREAS, The heroes of this engagement were later
4 immortalized by the historian Douglas Brinkley in his best-selling
5 book *The Boys of Pointe du Hoc*, and their sacrifice was further
6 recognized by the French, who erected a monument to the 2nd Ranger
7 Battalion atop Pointe du Hoc; this striking memorial consists of a
8 granite pylon atop what had once been a German bunker, with tablets
9 in French and English at the base; and

10 WHEREAS, During the 40th anniversary of D-Day, on June 6,
11 1984, the Ranger memorial was the site of a stirring address by
12 President Ronald Reagan, who commemorated the invasion with these
13 words: "The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was
14 right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just
15 God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next. It was
16 the deep knowledge--and pray God we have not lost it--that there is
17 a profound, moral difference between the use of force for
18 liberation and the use of force for conquest. . . . Here, in this
19 place where the West held together, let us make a vow to our dead.
20 Let us show them by our actions that we understand what they died
21 for. . . . Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor,
22 and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals
23 for which they lived and died."; and

24 WHEREAS, In 2019 our nation is commemorating the 75th
25 anniversary of D-Day and the liberation of Europe, and this
26 milestone occasion provides a fitting opportunity to reflect on the
27 remarkable leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Rudder and the selfless

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1 bravery of the "Boys of Pointe du Hoc"; now, therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
3 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the heroism of Lieutenant Colonel
4 James E. Rudder and the members of the U.S. Army 2nd Ranger
5 Battalion during the D-Day invasion of 1944.