

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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"BIG RED ONE" D-DAY TRIBUTE

DOLE COMMENDS HISTORY OF SERVICE & SACRIFICE **AS 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY APPROACHES;** **HONORS FIRST UNIT ASHORE AT OMAHA BEACH**

As we look forward to the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of D-Day and the invasion at Normandy, I want to take a moment to recognize the contributions of one of the finest divisions in the U.S. Army, the 1st Infantry Division, the "Big Red One," headquartered at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Formed in 1917, the Big Red One was the first American unit to go overseas in World War I, the first to enter combat with the Germans, and the first to invade Germany itself. Since those early days, the division has continued to serve our country with honor and distinction.

On June 6, 1944, the Big Red One was the first unit ashore at Omaha Beach on the Normandy coast. The 1st Infantry Division's successful assault punched a hole in Hitler's "Fortress Europe," and began the liberation of Europe and the end of the Third Reich.

The Division's long history of service and sacrifice continued through Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm. In 1965 the Big Red One was the first division-size unit deployed to Vietnam, where its soldiers honorably served until 1970. During the Gulf War, the Big Red One was the first division to breach Iraqi defenses. In less than 100 hours the division attacked through 260 kilometers of enemy held territory and defeated elements of 11 Iraqi divisions.

Throughout its history, the soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division have always exemplified courage, dedication, and sacrifice. Through their service, the Big Red One has advanced the cause of freedom and protected the ideals on which our nation is built. No doubt about it, they have always lived up to their motto: "No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great. Duty first."

As the senior Senator from Kansas, I am proud to have this unit based at Fort Riley, in my home state. As we commemorate the historic events of fifty years ago, let us also express our thanks to the soldiers and families of the Big Red One for all they have done for us.

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