



Ritchie Boys Congressional Gold Medal Act

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Background

One of the greatest war hero stories never told, due to the classified nature of their work, the Ritchie Boys were a group of 15,200 servicemembers who trained in United States Army Intelligence methods at Camp Ritchie, Maryland, during World War II. About 40% of those who passed through Camp Ritchie were immigrants, and approximately 2,800 of the Ritchie Boys were Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria who had detailed familiarity with German cultural attitudes and communication. This vital knowledge, coupled with their language skills, is how the Ritchie Boys were able to gather approximately 60 percent of the actionable intelligence in Europe during the war. Recently declassified reports are making it clear how vital a role the Ritchie Boys played in the Allied victory.

Contributions and Accomplishments

The Ritchie Boys played a critical role in the war effort, providing invaluable intelligence and psychological warfare capabilities. Their contributions included:

- Interrogating German prisoners of war, obtaining crucial information on enemy strategies, troop movements, and morale;
- Serving as translators and interpreters, facilitating communication between Allied forces and German civilians or captured soldiers, and later contributing to war crimes prosecution;
- Providing over 60% of the actionable U.S. intelligence gathered in Europe during the war;
- Substantially contributing to the defeat of the Nazi and Imperial Japanese regimes, and playing crucial roles in postwar governance;
- Continuing to serve our country through distinguished careers in academia, government, cultural fields, philanthropy, and the private sector.

The Ritchie Boys Congressional Gold Medal Act

The Ritchie Boys Congressional Gold Medal Act honors the exceptional contributions of these unsung World War II heroes. This legislation will:

- Award the Congressional Gold Medal, one of the highest civilian honors in the United States, to the Ritchie Boys collectively, in recognition of their significant contributions to the victory of the Allied forces;
- Provides that following the award of the Gold Medal, it shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution for display and made available for research or display at other sites as appropriate;
- Raise awareness of the remarkable story of the Ritchie Boys, their resilience, and their determination to fight against the very regime they had escaped from; and
- Celebrate the importance of diversity and the power of immigrants who have contributed to the betterment of American society.

Support for the Ritchie Boy Congressional Gold Medal Act

Association of the United States Army, United States Army Warrant Officers Association, Ritchie History Museum, the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at West Point, and more.