

Coffin but to know him personally. He has had an extraordinary impact on his community, his state, his country, and the world. His conscience is like a beacon, which challenges and guides us all.

Not long ago, I celebrated my 60th birthday. I hope that 15 years from now I will be able to look back at my own life, and look forward to the days ahead, with the sense of accomplishment, pride, and commitment to equality, justice and peace that William Sloane Coffin should feel on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

Happy birthday my friend.●

#### NATIONAL GRANGE WEEK

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Minnesota members of the National Grange. This week is Grange Week, which celebrates the oldest U.S. rural community service, family-orientated organization with a special interest in agriculture. In recognition of its members in Minnesota, and across the United States, I want to take this time to reflect on the accomplishments of the National Grange during the past 133 years.

Organized in 1867, the National Grange assisted farmers who were trying to dig out of financial troubles that plagued them after the Civil War. Today, this organization continues to advance the best interests of agriculture and promote the family values that are rooted so deeply in rural America.

This commitment is easily seen in the Grange's involvement in many local service projects, such as organizing community response teams to cope with disasters, assisting in community development revitalization, volunteering at local schools, and promoting farm and home safety, along with other important activities.

In my home state of Minnesota, the State Grange has been influential in the development of many key projects and services since 1867. Around the turn of the century, the State Grange played a crucial role in helping farmers and people in rural areas get home delivery of their mail and take part in rural electrification projects. They also helped form the University of Minnesota School of Agriculture.

Mr. President, because its members understand the importance of the family farm and the communities they reside in, it is easy to see why the Grange has been so successful in its many endeavors. I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of the Minnesota Grange, and I wish them well and commend them for their many hours of volunteer service—service that is vital to all our communities.●

#### LARRY COOKE

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Vermonter and good friend, Larry Cooke, who recently died after a long illness. Born and raised in Vermont,

Larry's love and devotion to his state and home town of Brattleboro framed all of his actions. We in Vermont are saddened by his loss but heartened by the legacy that he leaves behind.

Larry's dedication to public service began early in his life. As an eighth grader, he was elected president of his class and never looked back. Like many of an earlier generation, Larry was a self-made man, going to work for his father immediately after graduating from Brattleboro Union High School.

Demonstrating a devotion to his country that would extend throughout his life, Larry joined the Army and served in Germany before coming home to earn his real estate license. In this profession that he found his true calling, and it is here that he leaves his biggest footprint on the town of Brattleboro.

Larry devoted his career to affordable housing and environmentally friendly developments. His most important projects have included renovating historic buildings to their original condition while making them viable for modern day usage.

Larry was a consistent and important champion of affordable housing, taking the lead on the issue at the age of thirty as a candidate for Brattleboro town selectman. He then went on to serve on the Brattleboro Housing Authority for two decades, building and renovating affordable housing and apartments throughout the area.

As if his professional and private life did not take up enough of his time, Larry was active in every aspect of town affairs. He has served as president of the Kiwanis Club and as a incorporator of Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. Among other activities too numerous to mention, Larry was a Mason, a member of the American Legion, the Shriners, and the Elks.

Before he died, this close friend of mine gave one last gift to his community. Larry donated a historic home in the center of Brattleboro to the town's historical society for use as its headquarters and museum. Although only a small part of Larry's life-long contribution to Brattleboro, the home will stand as a lasting monument to a man who devoted his life to the betterment of his community.

It has been said that we live in deeds, not years. While Larry died young, his accomplishments rival those of the oldest of men. He will be missed not only by Brattleboro and Vermont, but also by this country, where his life stands as a shining example for us all. My deepest condolences go out to Larry's devoted wife, Kathleen, and his four daughters.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Evans, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal and sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

[NOTE: The following message was signed by the President on Tuesday, April 25, 2000 and received in the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2000.]

#### REPORT OF THE VETO OF THE NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 101

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States; which was ordered to be spread upon the Journal.

#### *To the Senate of the United States:*

I am returning herewith without my approval S. 1287, the "Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2000."

The overriding goal of the Federal Government's high-level radioactive waste management policy is the establishment of a permanent, geologic repository. This policy not only addresses commercial spent nuclear fuel but also advances our non-proliferation efforts by providing an option for disposal of surplus plutonium from nuclear weapons stockpiles and an alternative to reprocessing. It supports our national defense by allowing continuing operation of our nuclear navy, and it is essential for the cleanup of the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons complex.

Since 1993, my Administration has been conducting a rigorous world-class scientific and technical program to evaluate the suitability of the Yucca Mountain, Nevada, site for use as a repository. The work being done at Yucca Mountain represents a significant scientific and technical undertaking, and public confidence in this first-of-a-kind effort is essential.

Unfortunately, the bill passed by the Congress will do nothing to advance the scientific program at Yucca Mountain or promote public confidence in the decision of whether or not to recommend the site for a repository in 2001. Instead, this bill could be a step backward in both respects. The bill would limit the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to issue radiation standards that protect human health and the environment and would prohibit the issuance of EPA's final standards until June 2001. EPA's current intent is to issue final radiation standards this summer so that they will be in place well in advance of the Department of Energy's recommendation in 2001 on the suitability of the Yucca Mountain site.

There is no scientific reason to delay issuance of these final radiation standards beyond the last year of this Administration; in fact, waiting until