

In the Armed Services Committee Department of Energy oversight hearing last week, Secretary of Energy Abraham stated “. . . that the results of the most recent process, which was just completed in January, enjoys the full confidence of the lab directors and the certification that just took place by my predecessor and the immediate past Secretary of Defense, another one of our former colleagues, is one that I have high confidence in.” The United States has no alternative to the Stockpile Stewardship Program unless we want to return to the level of nuclear testing prior to the testing moratorium. The annual certification process provides a clear, candid and careful assessment of each nuclear weapon type in the stockpile.

I am especially concerned about recent news reports that President Bush wants to cut back funds for the Stockpile Stewardship Program. During the presidential campaign, President Bush stated that, while he was in favor of the nuclear weapon testing moratorium, he was opposed to CTBT ratification because it “is not enforceable” and it would “stop us from ensuring the safety and reliability of our nation’s deterrent, should the need arise.” For the Stockpile Stewardship Program to work, it must have both sufficient funds and a strong commitment from the Congress and Administration.

I do not believe that the American public wants to see resumed nuclear weapon testing, nor do they want any other country to do so. We all agree that the spread of weapons of mass destruction is one of the greatest national security threats we face. The CTBT establishes an international norm against nuclear testing while preserving the undisputed U.S. advantage in nuclear weapon technology. It reduces the likelihood that significant new threats will arise from proliferating nations while enhancing the already formidable U.S. monitoring capability. Finally, it strengthens our ability to persuade other nations to respect the obligations of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime.

We need to examine all the risks in a careful and deliberate manner, just as General Shalikashvili has done. Two days before the Senate’s October 1999 vote against ratification of the CTBT, 62 of our colleagues sent a bipartisan letter to their respective leaders requesting that consideration of the Treaty be postponed until the next Congress. It is now sixteen months later. Let us work together to discuss how, not if, the U.S. should lead global efforts to deal with nuclear proliferation.

MINNESOTA FATALITIES IN THE OAHU ARMY HELICOPTER CRASH

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I had planned to deliver this morning my first formal Senate remarks about the urgent need to provide prescription

drug coverage for America’s senior citizens. It is a crisis affecting many Minnesota seniors, and I will return to the floor very soon to address its urgency.

However, I have decided to defer my first address, to show my deep respect for the courageous soldiers killed in the recent crash of two Army Black Hawk helicopters. Two of the victims were native Minnesotans: Sergeant Thomas E. Barber and Major Robert L. Olson.

I offer my deepest condolences to the families and friends of Major Olson, Sergeant Barber, and the four other soldiers who gave their lives in the service of our country. We join with you in mourning their deaths, and we pay tribute to them for their ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our national defense. My prayers also extend to the eleven (11) other soldiers, who were injured in the accident. May they be graced with swift and complete recoveries.

As President Abraham Lincoln stated in his famous address at Gettysburg, “The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

This tragedy should remind us that, even during times of peace, our freedom and our security are neither free nor secure. They must continually be earned and protected, in order to be assured. For these always awesome, often invisible, and usually thankless responsibilities, we rely upon our Armed Forces, and especially upon the men and women in uniform.

They risk their lives, so that we can enjoy our lives. And sometimes, they are called upon even to give up their lives, in order to safeguard our lives. They make the ultimate sacrifice; they pay the ultimate price; they commit the ultimate acts of heroism, so that we might be safe, secure, and free.

All of us Americans owe these two Minnesotans, Major Robert L. Olson and Sergeant Thomas E. Barber, and their fellow soldiers a debt which we can never repay. We owe their families and friends our lifelong gratitude, support, and assistance for the burdens they must now bear on all our behalf. And we can only stand in awe and admiration as we witness such courage, such heroism, and such devotion as the men and women who serve their great country with their abilities and who protect it with their lives.

LITHUANIA’S NATIONAL DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Friday, February 16th is Lithuania’s National Day marking the day in 1918 when the Lithuanian National Assembly declared independence after World War I.

But Lithuania was not “new” in 1918; it simply took its place among modern, democratic nation-states after an ancient history of a distinct culture and people. The Baltic peoples settled in the Baltic region during the second millennium BC, and the Medieval Lithuanian empire stretched for a time from the Baltic to Balkans and lasted hundreds of years.

But February 16th carried a special meaning for Lithuanians during the dark days of Soviet occupation. Lithuanians carried their hopes and dreams for freedom, democracy, and independence in their hearts and marked that special day silently or risked persecution by the KGB. Woe to those who showed the Lithuanian flag or celebrated on February 16th. They risked being hauled off to jail or into exile.

On March 1, 1990, Lithuania reasserted its independence from the domination of the Soviet Union. Lithuania led the way for other Soviet Republics to throw off the yoke of Soviet Communist imperialism, resulting in the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

This declaration was not without cost. In January 1991, Soviet paratroopers stormed the Press House in Vilnius, injuring four people. Barricades were set up in front of the Lithuanian Parliament, the Seimas. On January 13, 1991, Soviet forces attacked the television station and tower in Vilnius, killing 14 Lithuanians. One woman was killed when she tried to block a Soviet armored personnel carrier. Five hundred people were injured during these attacks. Just last month, Lithuanians commemorated the tenth anniversary of those tragic events.

But these courageous Lithuanians did not suffer and die in vain. Lithuania has now become a vibrant democracy. It has established a free-market economy and the rule of law. Lithuania wants to be fully integrated into Europe, and is seeking membership in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The United States always refused to recognize the Soviet domination of the Baltic states. The U.S. position was that it would only recognize a free and independent Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. What we celebrate this year is what we must help preserve next year and the year after that. We must carry on that principle today by being sure that Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia are admitted into NATO as an unequivocal statement that we will never again tolerate domination of the Baltic states.

I support admitting the Baltic states into NATO and I hope my colleagues here in the Senate will support their entry also in the next round of NATO expansion.

That debate we will save for another day, but I am sure all my colleagues

can agree on the importance of Lithuania's contribution to freedom and independence for the former Soviet Republics and will join me in congratulating Lithuania on its National Day.

I am honored that my mother was born in the tiny Lithuanian village of Jurbarkas many years ago; that she came to this country proud of her heritage, but determined to be an American citizen. My late brother, Bill, and I visited Lithuania a few years ago and found that we have cousins in Jurbarkas that we had not known we had. For our family, the Iron Curtain literally cut off the Lithuanian branch from their American cousins. This Senator, the son of that proud Lithuanian mother, now serves in this great body and takes pride in being able to rise and salute the Lithuanian people on their independence.

MINNESOTA CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, This month in Minnesota and across the country we celebrate "Black History Month"—a time when our nation rightfully recognizes the many and varied achievements of African Americans and the positive contributions they have made to American society and to our way of life.

In 1926, Carter Woodson—considered by many to be the "Father of Black History"—created Negro History Week, which became Black History Week in the early 1970s. In 1976, February was chosen to be Black History Month, because it included the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, both of whom made heroic contributions to the lives of African Americans in this country.

Today, Americans of all races recognize Black History Month as an important way to celebrate the achievements of African-Americans in Minnesota and the United States.

However, today, and throughout our history as we honor this commemoration, we must also remember that we have a long way to go to ensure full and equal rights, opportunities, and benefits for all Americans.

We must be bolder in our efforts to ensure that all Americans—of every race—have the opportunity to share in—and contribute to—our economic prosperity. That means a quality education, adequate housing and health care for all Americans. And it means that our tax and budget policies must spread their benefits across all social and economic lines.

We must renew our commitments to ensure that all American—of every race—can fully share in—and contribute to—our economic prosperity. That means quality education, housing, and health care for all Americans. It means a good job with living wages, so that everyone can earn the American dream. And it means our tax and budget policies must spread their benefits across all social and economic lines.

We must increase our efforts to ensure that our justice system is color blind when it comes to enacting and enforcing our laws. Racial profiling, hate crimes, prejudice, and discrimination must be eliminated now and forever.

Ever since a Minneapolis Mayor named Hubert Humphrey challenged the consensus of the Democratic Party on civil rights in 1948, the women and men who have lead and shaped my party have made tremendous contributions to achieving these national goals. But this work is yet unfinished, and it is now, during Black History Month, that all members of this new Congress and our new President must rededicate ourselves to these causes.

I voted against confirmation of our new Attorney General, John Ashcroft, because I did not think he was adequately committed to upholding our nation's long and hard-fought tradition—forged by Democrats and Republicans alike—on civil rights. Now that he has been confirmed, however, I hope he will demonstrate through his actions that he truly is interested in justice for all Americans, regardless of race.

I intend to hold him to the promises he made during his confirmation process that he will not repeat his past actions that demonstrated a racial insensitivity which not only divided many communities, but also the work of this Senate.

The Bush Administration's recent announcement that it will appoint an African American as Attorney General Ashcroft's top deputy is a good start to healing some of these rifts, but we must see action.

Minnesota takes great pride in the African Americans who have made our state and our country a better place to live, work, and recreate. Their contributions to the arts, business, politics and culture are numerous.

Starting back in the Civil War, Black Minnesotans were involved in important undertakings that contributed to the good of the nation. In 1860, although there were only 259 residents of African descent in the state, 104 Black men served in the Union army. Despite being paid less and suffering from racial prejudice, they fought courageously along with their white brethren.

Minnesotans also played important roles in more recent civil rights advances. The U.S. Postal Service recently honored St. Paul native Roy Wilkins as the 24th American honored in the Black Heritage Commemorative Stamp Series. As a leader of the NAACP when this country made significant civil rights advances, his legacy is felt today across this country.

Alan Page was first known to most of us as an all-pro Hall of Fame lineman for the Minnesota Vikings. However, Alan has often said he takes more pride in his subsequent career as a Special Assistant Attorney General and an Associate Justice on the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Nellie Stone Johnson has had a long and distinguished record of public service in support of the advancement of minority concerns, the rights of workers, and equal opportunities for all people. Her life is chronicled with a series of "firsts." As a leader of organized labor in the 1930s and 1940s, she was the first woman vice president of the Minnesota Culinary Council and the first woman vice president of Local 665 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union. She was also the first African American elected to citywide office in Minneapolis when she won a seat on the Library Board in 1945.

Sharon Sayles-Belton, another of Minnesota's greatest mayors, has for almost eight years led initiatives to make our state's largest city a better place to live, work, do business and educate our children.

And Billy McGee, a Public Defender who passed away last year, was a tireless champion of civil and human rights in the Twin Cities community. Everyone knew that they could call Billy at all hours and be assured of his help.

Minnesota native Dave Winfield and World Series hero Kirby Puckett were both voted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame last year. Not only are they great athletes, they are greatly respected and enormously contributing civic leaders.

And William Finney is the distinguished Chief of Police of our capitol city, St. Paul. He has successfully integrated that police force, combated crime afflicting citizens of all races and nationalities, and helped lead the way for racial and social advances in his city.

Those are just a few of the Minnesotans who have and continue to set examples for the rest of us. There are many more women and men who are giving their very best to improve our state. As we celebrate Black History Month, we can all do well to look to their examples of activism and excellence. And we can strive to follow their leadership in making this country all that it should be for all our citizens.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING CHASKA POLICE OFFICERS BRADY JUELL AND MIKE KLEBER

● Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor two Minnesota heroes.

Chaska police officers Brady Juell and Mike Kleber saved the lives of more than a dozen residents as fire burned through an apartment building.

On the morning of Tuesday February 6, 2001 a fire broke out in an apartment building in Chaska, Minnesota. With little regard for their own safety, Officers Juell and Kleber searched and found resident after resident. In some instances they literally pulled people to safety.