

hijacking, provide further evidence of the fundamentally repressive and undemocratic nature of the Castro regime. Cuba has been stubbornly imperious to the democratizing trend sweeping the hemisphere in recent years. This, however, merely demonstrates the failure of our 40-year policy isolation.

Lifting travel restrictions on our citizens is not likely to bring about a transformation in Cuba overnight. But we have already seen what perpetuating the ban has accomplished—nothing. We have been depriving our own citizen of their liberty without bringing the blessings of liberty any closer to the Cuban people. It is time to end this fruitless policy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL ERIN M. MCCARTER, USAF

• Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, the world has just witnessed the overwhelming effectiveness of the Armed Forces of the United States. Our military's rapid success in Iraq should serve as a source of pride for our Nation, for that success is based on the people in the Armed Forces, average Americans and immigrants doing extraordinary things.

I come to the floor today to pay tribute to one of the people who has made the American military the great success it is today. At the end of this month, Lieutenant Colonel Erin McCarter will retire after over 20 years in the Air Force.

Col. McCarter hails originally from Moline, IL, one of the Quad Cities on the Mississippi River. She graduated from Moline High School and then attended the University of Iowa through the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps.

Commissioned as a second lieutenant, she started her military career during the cold war as the logistics officer accountable for nuclear munitions at Ellsworth Air Force Base. At 21, then Lt. McCarter was responsible for the nuclear munitions at a Strategic Air Command facility. It is remarkable the responsibility the military places in the hands of relatively young officers and enlisted personnel, and these young men and women are routinely up to the demands placed on them.

Col. McCarter continued her Air Force career largely in logistics and as a staff officer. She served as a wing supply and headquarters staff officer at a number of major Air Force bases, including Ramstein in Germany and Shaw in South Carolina. She served as chief of the Pacific Air Force's weapon systems support at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. While there, she also served as chief protocol officer to the commanding general, Pacific Air Forces.

She went on to command the 8th Supply Squadron at Kunsan Air Force Base in South Korea, before coming to the Pentagon. After holding staff officer positions and serving as a liaison officer to Congress, Col. McCarter became Country Director, Saudi Arabia Division, in the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs. In this capacity, she successfully managed the relationship with one of our country's key strategic allies in the Middle East.

During her Air Force career, Col. McCarter received a master's degree in business administration and completed the executive program in international business management at Georgetown University. She received the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster.

After 20 years in service to our Nation, Colonel McCarter is retiring. Our Nation's loss is Illinois's gain, however, as she is returning to the Prairie State, where most of her family continues to reside. I want to take a moment as well to thank her family. Without their continuous support, I am confident Col. McCarter would not have had as successful a career in the Air Force as she enjoyed.

Upon Col. McCarter's retirement from active duty, I want to welcome her home to Illinois and thank her for her dedication, devotion to duty, and commitment to the Air Force and our Nation. We owe her and all her colleagues in the Armed Forces a great debt.●

TRIBUTE TO JERRY BERLIN

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I pay tribute to Jerry Berlin—a friend, an American patriot, and a principled and passionate man. On April 29, in a shocking tragedy, Jerry was shot and killed by his business partner at the Signature Grand banquet hall, which they had worked so hard to build together.

It is always difficult to know what to say when people we care about are taken from us before their time. Even more difficult when the death is so sudden, so horrific, as this one was. But let me take a moment to pay tribute to the great American life that Jerry lived.

Jerry was born in New York. His family, like many others, moved down to Miami when he was a boy. In high school at Miami Beach High, Jerry acted and danced in school productions. Those who knew him might have guessed it because he always had a spark in his eye and a spring in his step.

Jerry's hard work quickly established him as a stellar lawyer, and one of the best Democratic fundraisers in the country. He believed in what our party believes: that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be

able to go as far in America as your talents will take you. And he didn't just talk about those ideals. He lived by them.

In the mid-1980s, Jerry's boundless energy led him to team with his business partner to create Signature Gardens, a banquet hall that catered literally and figuratively to the middle class. It was a place for weddings, proms, sweet sixteens, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. You name it. It was a place where the community came together. And it was a wonderful success.

All who knew Jerry are still in disbelief that his life could be taken, and in such a horrible way.

In recent years, I am told, Jerry was becoming more religious. He was exploring his faith. He even went to study in Jerusalem. I have no doubt he is with God, in peace, now. We mourn for him and pray for his children, Ashley, Bret and Sharon, his ex-wife Gwen, and his fiancée, Marna Ross.●

RETIREMENT OF WISCONSIN STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE WILLIAM BABLITCH

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career of a distinguished public servant, Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice William Bablitch. Justice Bablitch has been a voice of fairness and reason on the Wisconsin Supreme Court for nearly two decades. Upon his retirement in July of this year, Wisconsin will lose a fine jurist, but the State and the institution will be stronger for his contributions and his service.

Justice Bablitch has deep roots in Wisconsin. He was born and raised in Stevens Point and graduated from Pacelli High School. He cleaned golf clubs while working his way through college, studying first at University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point and ultimately earning his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. He spent 2 years in Liberia, West Africa in the Peace Corps, serving as an elementary school teacher. Upon his return he entered law school, and in 1968, he received his J.D. from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. His close friends say his first love has always been the law.

Justice Bablitch has spent his entire career in public service—first as the District Attorney in Portage County, later elected to the State Senate, and finally as a justice on the State Supreme Court. In Portage County, Justice Bablitch coordinated one of the first sensitive crimes units in the state and worked cooperatively with the Portage County Sheriff to help the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point through the campus demonstrations that grew out of the Kent State protests and shootings.

First elected in 1972, Justice Bablitch served as a State Senator for 11 years representing Adams, Waushara, Portage and Wood Counties. For 7 of his 11 years in the State Senate, he had the