

the National League for Democracy, Ms. Suu Kyi's political party. They also released a few party leaders from prison.

But 1,300 remain in prison, and the top two leaders, Ms. Suu Kyi and Tin Oo, remain under house arrest.

The junta's recent charm efforts couldn't mask the fact that behind the scenes, the generals slapped life sentences on 11 league members who are in prison. That is tantamount to a death sentence in the grim Burmese gulag. The nine weren't allowed to speak in their own defense. Their only crime was witnessing an attack on Ms. Suu Kyi by government thugs last May 30.

Even if Ms. Suu Kyi is released, she may be in greater danger outside her home if the junta imposes a constitution at gunpoint that leaves it in power. Congress must keep sanctions in place until there's certifiable change. As Margaret Thatcher would say, this is no time to go wobbly.

#### CENTENNIAL OF WASHOE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we all understand that books are one of the greatest things ever created by human beings. Books bring the world within our reach, and they open the door of knowledge. Our Nation long ago recognized the importance of books and reading. That is why we developed a system of universal education, where every child would have an opportunity to learn how to read. And that is why we have public libraries. One hundred years ago this month, on May 31, 1904, the city of Reno, NV opened its first public library. The building was constructed on donated land, with a gift of \$15,000 from Andrew Carnegie. Mr. Carnegie believed so strongly in public libraries that he built more than 1600 of them around the world. That original library served the city of Reno for 26 years. But as the town grew and the popularity of the library increased, more space was needed. In 1930, the Reno Public library moved into the old State building in Powning Park. It also became affiliated at that time with Washoe County. Two years later, the county also opened a library in the nearby city of Sparks.

After World War II, as Washoe County began to experience more growth, the library system expanded to keep up with the demand. Under the leadership of Portia Hawley Griswold, the first library "bookmobile" hit the road in the late 1950s, bringing books to remote areas of the county. A new main branch opened in downtown Reno in 1966, thanks to a gift from the Max C. Fleischmann Foundation.

As the library system added more new locations throughout the 1970s and 1980s, it also employed new innovations. A Senior Center library made books more accessible to retirees, with volunteers delivering books to the homebound. The Gerlach High School branch launched a partnership between the county and the local school system. The Sierra View library was the first to open in a shopping center. Today, the Washoe County library system has branches in 12 locations, plus a

mobile library. Citizens can also use the library's Internet branch to look for books and conduct research for school assignments, business projects, or simply to satisfy their curiosity. Last year the people of Washoe County visited the library system 1.4 million times and checked out almost 2 million items. As it has for the last 100 years, the public library is meeting the needs of the people of Reno NV, and Washoe County. It puts books and knowledge within the reach of every citizen.

This centennial of success calls for a celebration. So a gala birthday party for the Washoe County library system will be held on May 21.

Please join me in congratulating Library Director Nancy Cummings and the trustees of the Washoe County library system—Chairman Bud Fujii, Lucille Adin, June Burton, Paul Theiner and Paul Davis. Along with the Washoe County Commission, the Friends of the Washoe County Library, and the Washoe County Library Foundation, they have continued to advance the worthy goal that Andrew Carnegie embraced a century ago.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

Two men harassed a white lesbian in Colorado as she left a 7-11 store; one of them yelled an obscenity and called her a "faggot." The victim got into her own pickup truck and drove away, but the offenders followed her and eventually drove her off the road. When she got out of her car, the two men assaulted her sexually and beat her unconscious. A detective who later interviewed the victim about the incident was verbally abusive, calling her a "liar" when she said she could not provide a detailed description of her attackers.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### MALTREATMENT OF IRAQI PRISONERS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the American people know about the strong and honorable character of the American soldier. Over the last 228 years, the United States Army has rightly earned the reputation of a professional fighting force that is courageous in battle and benevolent in peace.

The United States Army has had centuries to earn the respect of the American people. The White House expected our military to earn the trust of the Iraqi people in only months. Despite the outstanding service of countless thousands of our troops, the shameful and disgusting abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the hands of U.S. soldiers is a tragedy that must be corrected immediately.

The photographic evidence that Iraqi prisoners have been humiliated, abused, and mistreated is absolutely shocking. One can hardly ponder the technicalities of the Geneva Conventions when the most basic rules of human decency have been violated. The disgust expressed by many Americans has been amplified a thousand times by outraged Muslims around the world.

How long might it be before Osama bin Laden uses these incidents to whip up anti-American sentiment in other corners of the world? After the bloodiest month of the occupation of Iraq, this is news our Nation can ill afford.

It is not clear at this point who should be held to account for this stain upon the reputation of our armed forces. No one has stepped forward to take responsibility for the conditions in Iraqi prisons. Instead, fingers are being pointed in every direction. Soldiers are blaming superior officers, and generals are blaming subordinates. Others blame our intelligence services, which blame contractors, who blame others still. Some military leaders claim that this is an isolated incident, others make ominous claims about patterns of abuses. With whom does this buck stop?

The Armed Services Committee today had a closed-door briefing from three Army Generals. No civilian official of the Department of Defense appeared at the briefing, nor did any member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I did not attend that briefing. Secret, closed door meetings on a subject of such enormous import smack of damage control and cover-up—and that is the last impression the Senate should be conveying. We must ensure that Congress accedes to no ground rules in its investigations that could further taint this deplorable situation.

The time for public hearings on prisons run by the U.S. Armed Forces is now. We must leave no room for charges that investigations are being glossed over, pushed aside, sat on, or ignored. I have written to the chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee to urge them to call public hearings with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers. The Armed Services Committee should also seek testimony from outside experts on the laws of war and humanitarian affairs, such as the International Committee for the Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, and scholars of international law.