

which the democracy was founded. As a British citizen, he brought a slightly different perspective to his view of the Congress, but his attack reflects the basic right to offer criticism. Therefore, though he did not admire the actions of these particular leaders, he was valuing an ideal that the "national shrine" was intended to represent.

Just as Dickens criticized the government openly and thereby enjoyed one of the privileges of democracy, so have millions of Americans come to the Capitol in order to express their grievances. Their roads led to Washington for a different purpose: for a pilgrimage of protest. These protests could easily be the subject of an entire paper, and so I will just take a look at one of the protests as an example of the many that have occurred. In an article for *New Republic* in 1931, John Dos Passos described a "hunger march" that took place at the Capitol. The situation was tense as a group of men proceeded up Constitution Avenue to the expanse between the Capitol and the Library of Congress. Dos Passos gave a picture of the scene to the reader:

"The marchers fill the broad semicircle in front of the Capitol, each group taking up its position in perfect order, as if the show had been rehearsed . . . Above the heads of the marchers are banners with slogans printed out: 'in the last war we fought for the bosses: in the next war we'll fight for the workers . . . \$150 cash . . . full pay for unemployed insurance.'"

These men had come to the Capitol to seek government aid during the Great Depression, and though the banners may have changed for each different group that came to protest, the general process of a protest pilgrimage was familiar. This group had come to Washington, like many, to raise awareness about their plight and to get the attention of lawmakers within the Capitol. In his article, Dos Passos took a highly cynical tone, describing the dome of the Capitol that "bulges smugly" and the Senate Chamber as a "termitte nest under glass." He also suggested that the Capitol building itself played an active role in the protest, for as the men shouted their demands, Dos Passos claimed that "a deep-throated echo comes back from the Capitol facade a few beats later than each shout. It's as if the status and the classical-revival republican ornaments in the pediment were shouting too." For Dos Passos, the Capitol took on a human quality, with the status seeming to participate in the march as well. The pilgrimage of protest such as this "hunger march" was but another way that the ideals embodied in the Capitol, the "national shrine," could be expressed.

Underlying many of the articles that discussed the Capitol as a pilgrim's destination was the idea that the building belonged to the American public. These articles attempted to relate a more human side to the Capitol, one that could describe the formal white building as a familiar place. The American public should think of the building as theirs. Beverly Smith suggested throughout her article that though the Capitol was a shrine, it should also be thought of as accessible, even as "a friend." She quoted a fellow journalist: "I am not one of those who can sneer at the Capitol," wrote Mary Clemmer Ames, a lady correspondent in Washington 70 years ago. 'Its faults, like the faults of a friend, are sacred.'" Her entire article contrasted the Capitol as shrine with the Capitol as a hangout, which created a picture of the building as a national space that should be a comfortable place for pilgrims. She declared that the building was a friendlier place than its image suggested, an idea that appeared in other representations of Washington from the time. Similarly, in

an article entitled "Nerve Center of the World," Albert Parry wrote that Washington could still be thought of as a small town, even though its importance was growing on the national and international scene, "If anything," he wrote, "Washington is a charming Southern town which has grown large and cosmopolitan without losing its drawl." In these and other articles on the Capitol and Washington, journalists were demystifying the formal ideal of the Capitol, making it a more accessible place.

Smith in particular wanted Americans to see ways in which the Capitol belonged to them. In one story she related a physical way in which everyday Americans left their mark on the building:

By day in the sunshine or at night under its floodlights, the great dome looms white and pure. But, if you climb the long spiral stairs to the little galleries around the dome, you see that every inch of the surface within human reach is covered with writing, in pencil, ink, crayon and lipstick—all the small familiar chirography of the American people: Jimmy loves Marge . . . Kilroy was here . . . Mr. and Mrs. G. Wallace Shiffbaour, of Minesota . . . Hubba, hubba. Hearts and arrows. Periodically the writing is painted out, but a new swarm of tourists and honeymooners covers it up again, quick as magic. "What can you do?" says a guard. "It's their Capitol, ain't it?"

Though the dome appeared to be completely "white and pure," she informed her readers that upon closer look, it was filled with graffiti, the kind that normally covered bathrooms and college hangouts. It was quite an image that she presented; as a whole, the Capitol seemed formal, pure, and stately, and yet on close inspection, it was partially made up of the marks of everyday Americans. The guard who watched people daily write upon the dome merely shrugged his shoulders at the practice. He saw no problem with the signatures, as he believed the building upon which they were writing was their property as citizens of the country.

The Capitol as a destination and a place for pilgrimage drew countless number of Americans to its step. The roads and paths of many different types of pilgrims led to Washington and to the United States Capitol. Pilgrims to the Capitol were sometimes eager, sometimes critical. They came to see their leaders in action, to wander the halls, to view the places where certain events occurred, and to participate in the democratic process. They encountered or red about a space that could become as familiar to them as an "old comfortable home." By appealing to different interest, these journalists made the building understandable and intriguing to all types of readers and visitors. The *Woman's Home Companion* offered advice on how to organize a trip to Washington and the best times to visit the Capitol; the *Saturday Evening Post* wrote stores full of human interest, including both formal descriptions and little-known facts. Besides the stories of contemporary life, articles focused on the Capitol's interior: paintings and sculptures that celebrated great moments in the history of the United States and great leaders past. Mentor published articles specific to its readers, focusing on the art within the Capitol. Through these articles, authors reached out to readers to make the Capitol more accessible to all. The civic space, the "shrine," offered visitors and readers alike a glimpse of the past, the present, and the future. Authors invited readers to consider the building as belonging to all Americans, and not as an untouchable place. While Americans no longer participate in the ritual of signing their name on the dome, they still come to experience the Capitol as countless have

done before them. The Capitol remains a central destination for all who find themselves on a road that leads to Washington.

#### IN THANKSGIVING

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, as the City of New Orleans and countless other communities along the U.S. gulf coast continue to clean up from the twin disasters that were Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as Florida reels from yet another major hurricane there, as U.S. casualties in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts soar above 2,000, and as scandal engulfs the White House itself, it might seem difficult to find anything to be thankful for on this Thanksgiving.

For many families in the United States this holiday season, the tables, if tables they can find to set, will be set with fewer plates than usual, and the fare might be somewhat skimpier than in years past. Their homes are in ruins, their jobs lost, their friends and family members scattered, and their prospects for rebuilding the lives they once knew are uncertain. It can be difficult to take the long view in the face of such circumstances, or to reflect on history with any equanimity, even though history is replete with examples of recoveries from terrible disasters. One has only to think of Hurricane Camille, or the Great Depression, or World War II, or the San Francisco earthquake, the great Chicago fire, to find evidence that out of the ashes of war and devastation can come the rebirth of cities, communities, and economies. There is hope.

There is also much worth celebrating as families sit down to their Thanksgiving tables. We may be grateful that the loss of life to the hurricanes was not greater. We can all celebrate the tremendous outpouring of support that spontaneously erupted from the hearts, hands, and wallets of Americans outside the gulf coast disaster zone and from friends around the world who were glad to come in their turn to our assistance as the United States has in the past come to theirs. Communities all along the periphery opened their doors to welcome refugees from the storms, and volunteers flooded into the area in such force that relief organizations were overwhelmed. The public response to the gulf coast disasters was truly inspiring and heartwarming. It proved that a core value of this Nation, its sense of community, remains strong and vital.

We can also celebrate the ability of our Nation's first responders to learn from their mistakes. While the planning and response to Hurricane Katrina was in most people's estimates pretty abysmal, the preparation for and response to Hurricane Rita was a little better. And, unfortunately for the people of Florida, they have gotten a lot of practice in the last couple of years, and their preparations for and response to hurricanes is well rehearsed. There is much we can learn from these terrible

events, and hope that we take those lessons to heart.

The brightest spot in the war in Iraq is the performance of our troops. Day after dangerous day, they do their duty. They patrol, they seek out insurgents, they struggle to provide a secure environment for the rebuilding of that nation. Day after day, they face down their own fears and travel those lethal roads to take the battle to the enemy. However one may feel about the path that led us to Iraq, we can feel nothing but love, pride, and respect for our men and women in uniform. Whatever the circumstances under which we sent them there, through misread intelligence or misleading rhetoric, the U.S. military has gone, and gone again and again, and performed their duties with courage and dedication.

Even the scandal that now haunts the White House, and which is beginning to wash over the President's closest advisors, may give us cause for celebration, and not for any partisan reasons. As Americans, we may be thankful for living in a nation in which no man is king, to rule at his own whim and to undermine his detractors at will and without consequence. We may be thankful for our system of government, with its checks and balances between the three branches of government firmly established in our Constitution. And we may celebrate the wisdom of guaranteeing freedom of expression and the existence of a free press.

Though the wheels of government may sometimes grind exceedingly slowly, we can be grateful that they still can be pushed and cajoled into conducting their oversight functions and asserting those checks and balances. That is what keeps this country strong. President Abraham Lincoln said "Let the people know the truth and the country is safe." Whatever may be the final outcome of the investigation into possible retribution by the White House against Ambassador Wilson and his wife for Wilson's role in unmasking a fraud in the government's case for going to war in Iraq, the Nation is safer and better off for having the means for citizens, acting through their elected officials and their legal system, to challenge possible abuses of power.

So even in these dark days, there is cause for thanksgiving. I hope that the recent dip in gasoline prices will allow families to come together, pull out the good china and set a beautiful table overflowing with all the dishes that make this feast so memorable and so mouthwatering: turkey, roasted, grilled, smoked, barbecued or deep fried; stuffing in all its regional variations with herbs or oysters or sausage or cornbread; hams coated in pineapples and cloves or cured with smoke or sugar; cranberries served jellied or chopped, with oranges or not; green bean casserole with a crown of fried onions; yeast rolls or biscuits dripping with butter or gravy; sweet potatoes in

casseroles or with marshmallows and brown sugar; and pies—glorious pies with spicy pumpkin topped with whipped cream, and fruit pies in flaky shells, topped with cheese or ice cream. Americans know how to cook, and all the variations on our traditional Thanksgiving meal surely mean that this feast will never settle into routine.

Thanksgiving. Can there be a better day? It starts with parades to watch for the youngsters. Then the action in the kitchen heats up, competing with football games and the happy arrival of guests for our attention with a whole array of enticing aromas and clattering noises. The meal itself is wonderful, with family and friends around the table giving thanks and meaning it. And after the meal, in the warm glow of a full stomach, there is time for companionship as the leftovers are put away and the dishes are washed. The evenings are primed for walks in the cool weather, or short naps, or other sports, before the leftovers make their first reappearance. There are few days like this, devoted entirely to family without the distraction of, say presents at Christmas or Easter egg hunts. Thanksgiving is the one time we can really focus on all that we have to be thankful for just by looking around that table. My wife Erma and I have so much to be thankful for, and I know that she joins me in wishing a very happy thanksgiving to all Americans. May each of you, no matter how desperate your present circumstances may be, be blessed and see all that you have to be thankful for.

Mr. President, I wish you a happy Thanksgiving. I would like to close with a poem by Charles Frederick White, written in November 1895. His words serve to remind us that Thanksgivings past were not very different than today.

#### THOUGHTS OF THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day is coming soon,  
That long remembered day  
When nature gives her blessed boon  
To all America.  
On that glad day, in all our land,  
The people, in their wake,  
Give thanks to God, whose mighty hand  
Deals blessings good and great.  
The roast goose, steaming on the plate,  
The sweet potato cobbler,  
The cranberry sauce, the pudding baked,  
The seasoned turkey gobbler,  
All these delights and many more,  
From north, south, west and east,  
Do all the nation keep in store  
For this Thanksgiving feast.  
Alas, for those who are denied  
This blessed boon of God!  
May all the needy be supplied  
Like Israel by the rod.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

#### TRIBUTE TO SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to pay tribute to one of the most effective and outstanding Members of the Senate, Sen-

ator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine. Today, Senator COLLINS cast her 2,942nd consecutive vote as a Senator, breaking the record of the former Senator from Maine, Margaret Chase Smith. In doing this, Senator COLLINS has maintained a perfect voting record since she was sworn in to the Senate in January 1997.

Senator COLLINS recently honored Margaret Chase Smith just a few weeks ago during a ceremony to unveil an official portrait of Senator Smith, a portrait entitled "The Great Lady From Maine" which now hangs proudly in the U.S. Capitol. As Senator COLLINS said in a tribute to Senator Smith at that unveiling:

For every woman serving in the Senate, Margaret Chase Smith blazed the path, but she was a special inspiration to me.

Senator COLLINS met Margaret Chase Smith as a senior in high school, participating in a Senate youth conference here in Washington. She remembers Senator Smith telling her to "stand tall for what I believed." Senator COLLINS continues to use this advice today as she chairs the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee and working for the people of Maine.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the Senate when I congratulate her on this truly remarkable accomplishment.

#### AFGHANISTAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, freedom continues to advance in Afghanistan. Of course, they are a great ally in the war on terror. In fact, I recall visiting Afghanistan just a little over 2 years ago with the current occupant of the Chair, and we had an opportunity to see firsthand the progress they had made at that time, not to mention how far they have come since.

A few days ago the results of that country's historic parliamentary elections, held in mid-September, were officially certified. At the time that Senator BURNS and I were there, they had not yet had the election of the President, not officially. They have since had that election. Now they have had a parliamentary election. Those results are now certified. A joint Afghan and United Nations election commission has declared the winners in races for 249 seats in the lower parliamentary house, as well as members of 34 provincial councils around the country.

Afghanistan's continued progress toward democracy is obviously a victory in the war on terror. Four years ago, the ruthless Taliban regime ruled Afghanistan with an unyielding, murderous intolerance, and they laid down that country's welcome mat to all the terrorists to "come on in." I would like to remind my colleagues that 4 short years ago Afghanistan was ruled by a regime so intolerant that as part of an effort to erase any trace of Afghanistan's history before the rise of Islam in the seventh century, the Taliban destroyed two priceless Buddhist statues. These statues had been carved into the