

THE VALUE OF SERVING OTHERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Cameron Ball of Henderson, NV, recently delivered a moving speech on the value of serving others to the Coronado High School Honor Society. Over the past year, Cameron and the student body of Coronado High School have worked tirelessly to improve their community. Many of these students will enter college next year, but I hope they will keep Cameron's speech close to heart; service is a lifelong pursuit, and we all have an obligation to help others. I congratulate these students on their accomplishments for Coronado High School and Henderson, NV.

I ask unanimous consent Cameron Ball's speech be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SPEECH TO 2005–2006 INDUCTEES OF CORONADO HIGH SCHOOL'S NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Throughout the year, you have all proved yourselves involved, caring, and crucial parts of our community. If we were to have taken turns volunteering, one at a time, we would have performed community service for more than a year. Although this is a formal recognition of all your hard work and service, you must all remember that dedication to a cause does not end here, but it is a lifelong process. Induction into NHS does not directly make your deeds significant, and stops short of granting you success in life. Induction into this club provides you with the experience you will need to launch yourself into greater tasks. Emerson wrote: "The only reward of virtue, is virtue: the only way to have a friend, is to be one."

Induction into National Honor Society is not a life-defining moment, but an infinitesimal instant in a continuum of time. The significance of this club and its actions, your actions, will seem to fade over the years. Spent will be the money we worked so hard at raising from Hip Hop 4 Hearts; the smiles we have put on the faces of those whom we fed, clothes and given gifts will have waned. The tangible accomplishments of this club will vanish gradually like footprints in the sand. Instead, thoughts of college life will fill your mind; money will still be sorely needed the world over; and everywhere, pariahs of humanity will hide in obscure poverty, waiting to be lifted from the black pit of circumstance.

Nevertheless, our actions and intentions have not been in vain. NHS has not immortalized the happiness of an individual. That would be impossible. National Honor Society has catalyzed your involvement in a lifelong process: a journey of love; a wrestle with dignity; a mission to make a difference. The road that lies before you is intrinsically more important than what you have done with these past three quarters of your high school career. With your experience and whetted appetite to serve, you will find that it becomes easier to replenish the smiles on the faces of troubled friends and strangers. If you pledge yourself to improving the lives of others, you ensure that life continues. My life, taken alone, is meaningless. As soon as I become one with my community, I gain an identity: a purpose. I can do this by volunteering, donating the fruits of my labor to a worthy cause, or simply by giving everyone I see a smile. After all, "a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature" (Emerson). Deeds, both great and small, are never wasted. As Emily Dickinson wrote:

If I can stop one heart from breaking,

I shall not live in vain:
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

Your deeds have been exceptional thus far, and for that we recognize you here today. The next step in serving is to shed yourself of recognition for your actions. Give back to your community more than you take from it, and do so modestly. Do not boast of your accomplishments. Conceit never cured any illnesses. Lao Tzu, ancient philosopher, proclaims: "True virtue does not 'act,' and has no intentions . . . Know glory, but cleave to humiliation." By doing this, you will rally others to your side—kindle in the despondent, a flame of hope. Know your charge. Lift others to your side, and never push them down. As for yourself, transcend the grasps of hubris, and look to austere altruism for your guidance, albeit at times seemingly insignificant, for even the smallest action can change the course of history.

DEATH OF FORMER ESTONIAN PRESIDENT LENNART MERI

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today I would like to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of the late Estonian President Lennart Meri. President Meri was an inspiration to his countrymen, a true friend of the United States, and a stalwart advocate for freedom. His passing on March 14, 2006, was a tremendous loss to the people of Estonia and the world.

Born in 1929 to the renowned diplomat and Shakespearean translator Georg Meri, Lennart's early childhood exemplified the plight of the Estonian people. Living in a country ravaged by war and subjected to the brutality of Soviet occupation, Lennart attended nine different schools and studied in four different languages. He was eventually deported from his homeland to Siberia along with thousands of other Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. During his forced exile, he helped feed his family by picking potatoes.

President Meri experienced more hardship as a boy than most men do in a lifetime, but he was quick to turn his struggles into opportunities. In the course of his itinerant education he became fluent in French, German, English, and Russian. He also developed a tenacity that would serve him well throughout his life.

Lennart eventually came back to Estonia to study history and languages, graduating from Tartu University with honors in 1958. The Soviet Government prevented Lennart from working as an Estonian historian, but he again found possibility where others might have only seen discouragement. Instead of accepting defeat, he established himself as a writer, filmmaker, and dramatist, and used these avenues to preserve Estonia's national identity.

For over 20 years, the Soviet Union refused to allow Lennart to venture beyond the Iron Curtain. Ultimately, when he did travel abroad, he served as a lone, unofficial emissary of what was by then an almost forgotten country.

He established contact with politicians and journalists, recounting the story of Estonia to whoever would listen. When the collapse of the Soviet empire finally freed his country, Lennart was able to continue representing his newly independent homeland as an Ambassador and Foreign Minister. Ultimately, Lennart served two terms as President of the country he had loved and championed for so long.

Lennart's accomplishments were myriad; he helped build Estonia's Foreign Service from the ground up, established strong ties with the West, and reached an historic agreement with Boris Yeltsin to end Russia's military presence in Estonia. Beyond these remarkable achievements, though, Lennart left behind a bequest of liberty that will endure along with the free nation of Estonia. I hope each of us will appreciate that legacy and continue working to advance the cause of freedom.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I want to give a statement on Women's History Month. This is an important time for Americans to reflect on the invaluable contributions women make in our society. Women are our families, our coworkers, and our neighbors. They juggle many roles in making our homes, our neighborhoods, and our country stronger. Eighty million women in our country are mothers. Sixty percent of American women work at least part time. Nearly 2 million American women are veterans. More than 200,000 women are doctors, and more than 2½ million women are registered nurses.

South Dakota's own history is filled with women who balanced the needs of their families and their communities to make our country better. Mamie Pyle is one such woman. In 1902, Mamie's husband passed away when she was just 36, leaving her to raise four young children on her own. Not only did Mamie find a way to send all four of her children to college in the early 1900s, but she also led the South Dakota women's suffrage movement for a decade. Because of Mamie's determination, South Dakota ratified the national women's suffrage amendment in 1919. Mamie continued to serve her community as a member of the Huron College board of trustees for more than 40 years. In 1947, South Dakotans honored Mamie by naming her the State's Mother of the Year at age 81.

It is women like Mamie who teach South Dakota girls—and all of us—of the difference one person can make in our society and of the thousands of women who have made South Dakota the great State it is today.

This month we remember that women are our soldiers, our doctors, our social workers, our mothers, and our teachers. And we remember the women who came before them and made these roles possible. So many of