

the border, and we realize that the United States has officially evacuated American citizens from Lebanon because of the danger.

We are also very aware of the fact that we have asked other Americans who remained to remove themselves as quickly as possible. It is estimated that 20 to 25 percent of the population of Lebanon has now been displaced. They are refugees—people who have been forced to leave their homes because of the danger of remaining because of the hostilities that continue between Israel and Hezbollah.

The purpose of this legislation is not new. It is something that has been done repeatedly. It grants temporary protected status to those Lebanese visitors in the United States who are legally here on visas which permit them to be here and which may soon expire. When they do, under the law these people are expected to leave the United States and return to Lebanon.

We have in the past been sensitized to the fact that sending many of these families from the United States to war-torn countries under these circumstances may in fact endanger those families.

The United States has many, many times in the past said we will grant temporary protected status to visitors in the United States to protect them from returning to a dangerous situation.

It is an act of compassion, an act of humanitarian caring, and I think speaks well of the United States. In the past we have even granted this status to Lebanese visitors when Lebanon was at war in the 1990s for the very same reason.

Today, there are seven countries around the world where the United States has granted temporary protected status to visitors from those countries in the United States.

This temporary protected status does not put these visitors on a path to legalization or citizenship. It simply allows them if they wish to stay in the U.S. while the hostilities continue up to a year. It would be a renewal after that point.

The reason I offered it at this late hour is because it is a matter of great urgency. It is important that we do this in a timely fashion.

As we consider this measure, the Bush administration is considering whether to do this administratively, which they can. We have done it legislatively. It has been done administratively.

My concern is that tomorrow I am certain some Lebanese visitors to the U.S. will find that their visas have expired, and they will face a very difficult decision. If they comply with the law and leave, returning to Lebanon, they could be endangering families and children who are here innocently visiting members of their family and friends. We don't want that to happen. These poor people from Lebanon, these innocent victims, should not have to return to this scene.

Of course, our State Department and the Department of Homeland Security would retain the authority to review each and every person. If for any reason some Lebanese visitor to the United States should not be allowed to remain in the United States, they can be denied the status. So it is done on a case-by-case basis. It offers a protection, which I think is the humanitarian thing to do.

Throughout history there have been times when in the course of war people have turned refugees from their country, left their country and turned to other countries for refuge. In many instances, countries have welcomed them understanding that that is the right and humane thing to do. In other instances, countries have shunned them. Those countries have been embarrassed by the history that was written afterwards.

I am lucky to be a Senator in this great country, a country which has extended this generosity and this welcome time and time again.

I am urging my colleagues this evening to join me in passing this bill, an extraordinary passage by unanimous consent so that we can send a clear message to the administration and to the Lebanese visitors to the United States that we deeply care about their safety and their security.

I see the majority leader is on the floor. I will make the formal unanimous consent request.

I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 3765, the Lebanese Temporary Protected Status bill that has been introduced by myself, Senator SUNUNU, Senator FEINGOLD, and Senator STABENOW, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion reconsider be laid upon the table without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, reserving right to object, S. 3765 to permit nationals being granted temporary protected status in United States is a bill that I personally support. And the chairman of the Judiciary Committee commented to the distinguished assistant minority leader his support. I just received it 15 minutes ago. I am trying to clear it but have not heard back from everybody tonight.

Without giving everyone the opportunity to review it, I am going to have to object tonight.

Again, we will see what happens over the next 30 or 40 minutes that we are in tonight. Not having heard back from everyone, I am unable to verify. So I do object.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand. I gave this to the majority leader maybe 45 minutes ago at most. I certainly didn't want to try to surprise him and mislead him because I think this is a matter that is very important. I sincerely hope we can clear this tonight. If we are unable to clear this and

pass this legislation—or even if we do—I urge Michael Chertoff, Secretary of the Homeland Security Department, to grant this status to Lebanon and to do it immediately—immediately. The people of Lebanon cannot wait until Congress returns to Washington in September. And his immediate action will save lives and give peace of mind to a lot of our friends from Lebanon and to their families who live in the United States.

I yield the floor.

---

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, during the next probably 20 or 30 minutes we will be working on a number of issues which are coming up unexpectedly at this late hour given the fact that we will be out for 4 weeks. It is a little bit disjointed as we pull together a number of these unanimous consent requests. And then we have the issue of nominations and a few more remarks.

---

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 3769

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration of S. 3769 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am not familiar with this bill. I have been informed by our cloakroom that there are objections to this from Members who are familiar with the content of the bill and/or members of the Foreign Relations Committee. I hope those as well can be resolved this evening. Absent that happening, I will have to object to this unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I am disappointed that tonight we could not pass this bill. This is the Cuba Transition Act of 2006 which I cosponsored along with the Senators ENSIGN and MARTINEZ.

This bill would have authorized assistance to the people of Cuba, encouraged a democratic election process, and created a fund to support independent civil-society-building efforts.

It would have created the Fund For a Free Cuba which would have provided assistance to a transitional government in Cuba, and included assistance

to political prisoners and their families, other dissidents, independent libraries, youth organizations, workers rights activists, agricultural cooperatives, associations of the self-employed, journalists, economists, and medical doctors.

This has been cleared by our side. I believe that the other side, the Democrats, will have an opportunity to show solidarity with the Cuban people. We will try to clear this bill through the Senate when we reconvene.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if I might be allowed to comment as well, as the Senator from Tennessee, the majority leader, describes the bill, it sounds as if it is one that I gladly and wholeheartedly would support. I know Senator MARTINEZ has a special interest in this issue, having been born in Cuba and then coming to the United States and still with the great love for the land where he was born.

I have spoken to him for the last several days while there apparently is a transition of power in place there. And I know how important this is to him personally and to so many other people of Cuban dissent who live in the United States.

I am sorry that it cannot be cleared, but there are some on this side of the aisle who have expressed some reservation or objection at this point. But I personally hope that we can do this as quickly as possible so that the people of Cuba can appreciate and enjoy freedom as soon as we can give them a helping hand.

#### RETIREMENT OF MARTY BERMAN

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Senate community is losing a longtime and valued employee. After 18 years of loyal and distinguished service, Marty Berman is retiring from the Senate Recording Studio. Marty played an integral part in the television broadcast of the Senate's proceedings and in helping facilitate the audio and video needs of Senators and their staffs.

His service to his country really started 45 years ago. Marty served faithfully, enlisting twice in a military career that began when he was 17 and lasted 6 years, from 1961 to 1967. Before leaving the military, he was a communications specialist with duty in Vietnam.

Marty brought extensive television experience to his job at SRS. In the private sector he worked at Satellite News Network, CNN, and finally at CBS. His work for Charles Kuralt and "CBS Sunday Morning" was nominated for an Emmy. A 13-minute long story he had photographed was aired, which is the television equivalent of a long book.

His career at the recording studio began in 1988 where he quickly came to specialize in audio operations. However, his contributions were not only technical. He also had just the right personal touch with Senators. It isn't always easy to get up in front of TV cameras and lights to speak, even for

Senators, but Marty had the ability to put any Senator at ease. When floor directing, he spoke to each Senator easily and with warmth, and they trusted him. He was never intimidated, but he was always respectful.

Marty can be a bit feisty, but his bark is much worse than his bite. To those who have gotten to know him, he is warm and caring, too.

Marty ended where he had started, working the Senate television shift. In 18 years he braved many long days and late nights through the Senate's always unpredictable schedule. Throughout his time at the studio, Marty could always be counted on to be at his post. That included his work as chief STV audio operator where for most days during his shift he started up in the audio booth, assuring that the Senators could always be heard in the Chamber and on television.

Marty is the father of 3 grown children: Tracy, Eric, and Alex. The 3 have been the pride of his life and have become responsible and caring adults. He is also the proud grandfather of two. His marriage to Darlene has brought him much happiness. Both share the same three hobbies: antique collecting, antique collecting, and more antique collecting. Their home is a somewhat cluttered but fascinating museum of American Western and American Indian artifacts, pottery, Big Little Books, and just about anything else you can think of. Last, but not least, there are four others who hold a place in his heart. They are Hoover the yellow lab, Clarence the basset hound, Crystal, the cat, and Birdie the cockatiel. Birdie likes to lay back and listen to the blues with Marty and Darlene and can even whistle Colonel Bogey's March from "Bridge on the River Kwai."

Marty's unique personality, loyalty, and dedication will be missed. We all join to wish Marty the best as he begins this next adventure in his life and know he will enjoy the newfound time for family, friends, pets, and antique collecting.

#### 160TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ELECTION TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Leo Tolstoy said of Abraham Lincoln that "His example is universal and will last thousands of years . . . He was bigger than his country—bigger than all the Presidents together . . . and as a great character he will live as long as the world lives."

Abraham Lincoln has been known and admired through the generations—and around the world. But Abraham Lincoln is known primarily for his presidency and his leadership of the United States through the dark days of the Civil War. We recall his unwavering commitment to the "American experiment" in democracy and his refusal to allow the national Union to fail, regardless of the odds against him.

Few people remember, though, that Abraham Lincoln was also a Member of Congress at one time. Today, August 3, in fact, marks the 160th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's election to a single term in the U.S. House of Representatives. I also had the privilege of representing the 20th Congressional District of Illinois as a member of the House for 14 years.

There is a reason few people remember Lincoln's service in Congress. Frankly, his one term, in the 30th Congress, which sat from December 1847 to March of 1849, was rather unremarkable. He was a young country lawyer who served with the likes of John Quincy Adams in the House and Daniel Webster and John Calhoun in the Senate. Most of his colleagues viewed him as a Westerner of average talent.

He was a conscientious and hard-working Member, though, which isn't particularly surprising. He served on various committees, he voted on the floor of the House in nearly all of the rollcall votes during his term, and he corresponded faithfully with his constituents.

His most famous contribution to the political and policy debates of his term—criticism of President James Polk for the Nation's involvement in the Mexican war—earned him scorn and disfavor back in Illinois where the war had been popular. Illinois Democrats called Lincoln, himself a Whig at the time, a disgrace.

Lincoln left Congress and returned to his legal practice, arguing cases in country courthouses of Illinois' Eighth Judicial Circuit, and thinking he had no future in politics.

On the contrary, Lincoln's time walking the Halls of this building introduced him to the issues on the national political stage. The Congress in which he served debated the Wilmot Proviso, which would have prevented the spread of slavery into territories newly acquired from Mexico. Those debates exposed Lincoln to the divisiveness and explosiveness of the issue that severely tried his presidency a decade and a half later and nearly destroyed the country. His time in Congress also produced personal and political connections that served him years later as President and Commander-in-Chief.

Today, we mark the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's election to the House of Representatives as the beginning of this great man's ascent on the national political stage. In February 2009, the Nation will mark the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Congress established the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to help our Nation mark this milestone. I am privileged to cochair the Commission along with Congressman RAY LAHOOD and Lincoln Scholar Harold Holzer—we like to call ourselves "a team of rivals." We have been working diligently to ensure