

replied that he had always admired Mrs. Nixon, and wished to honor her memory. The reporter persisted. Why should he honor the wife of the man whose alleged dirty tricks may have denied him the White House?

And you know what George told him? In what may be the classiest remark I've ever heard, George looked him straight in the eye and said, "You can't keep on campaigning forever."

Four years later I had my own taste of defeat, following a hard fought campaign as President Ford's running mate. When it was over, I got some bracing advice from Hubert Humphrey—yet another proud son of South Dakota who knew what it felt like to lose a close one. Hubert, like George, had a gift for bipartisan friendship that made him a genuinely beloved figure in the Senate. We worked closely on issues dealing with agriculture and nutrition. He was promoting Minnesota dairy farmers, and I was pushing Kansas wheat, but we shared a common vision—the same vision with which George McGovern gave life to President Kennedy's Food for Peace Program—with which he inspired school lunch programs and food stamps and which, even now, underlies his dream of a world in which no child goes to bed hungry.

George and Eleanor call this the third freedom. They have even set a deadline of 2030 by which they hope to banish hunger around the globe. To some this may seem impossibly visionary. Not to the McGovern. "People call me an idealist," Woodrow Wilson once said. "Well, that is how I know I am an American."

Is it idealistic to insist, as George and I do, that school children deserve not only a square lunch, but breakfast as well? Is it idealistic to demand that the children of low income and working families have the same access to basic nutrition as their well-heeled classmates? Is it idealistic to want to share America's bounty with hungry children in other lands—to feed their bodies out of our abundance, to demonstrate that the freedom we cherish is not the freedom to starve, but the freedom to soar.

Is that idealistic—or just plain American? Here in the Heartland our ideals and our interests are inseparable. To us freedom is a theory, a mere abstraction, unless it improves the quality of life for those who are set free. Earlier I mentioned Mount Rushmore. One of the four Presidents enshrined there is Theodore Roosevelt. One hundred years ago TR professed horror when told of Americans who, when traveling abroad, apologetically asked their foreign hosts to refrain from judging the United States based on its politicians.

But they must judge his country by the actions of its politicians, said TR. Was that idealistic? Or was it simply the old rugged faith in the ability of so-called ordinary men and women to govern themselves? It is easy to be cynical about modern day politics. But the easy course will never fix what is broken. In America, government is nothing if it is not self-government. For in the mirror of democracy we see reflected back to us both our noblest, and our meanest, attributes. It is the purpose of this college to promote the best that we can be. It is the goal of the McGovern Center to foster service before self. And it is the hope of America that our politics can be as decent as our people—that civility need never be confused with weakness—nor compromise with surrender.

When we come home to this America, we will fulfill the promise of our birth. We will create a legacy to inspire generations yet unborn. And we will uphold the McGovern tradition of idealistic leadership—for that is how we know we are Americans.

Thank you very much.

HEROICS OF ALAN JOHNSTON

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and recognize with the highest esteem Mr. Alan Johnston of Windsor, ME, for the tremendous courage and enormous valor he demonstrated in Iraq in 2004 that helped save many lives.

CPT Aaron P. Hill of the U.S. Marine Corps recounted in a witness statement that Alan Johnston's heroic actions on August 7, 2004, had he been in military uniform, would have earned him a medal. Mr. Johnston, a civilian contractor who was overseeing construction of two medical clinics in Iraq, acted swiftly and selflessly to rescue others during a suicide attack on the headquarters facility at the Al Kasik Military Base located approximately 35 miles northwest of Mosul, Iraq.

Captain Hill was part of a unit advising Iraqi soldiers in Northern Iraq. He credits Mr. Johnston with saving a number of lives after insurgents drove two water trucks packed with as many as 8,000 pounds of explosives to the headquarters building. The blasts from this insurgent attack lasted over 90 minutes and destroyed the 2-level headquarters building, resulting in 14 deaths and an estimated 40 severely to critically injured people.

Acting without hesitation, Mr. Johnston sounded the alarm, throwing those around him to the floor, saving many lives. In the devastation that followed, acting with total disregard to his own safety, Mr. Johnston emerged from the wreckage and began to assist in evacuating and treating the survivors. Despite the continuing barrage of mortars and rockets, Mr. Johnston continued to offer help with his medical expertise, calm demeanor, and steadfast devotion to helping his fellow man.

Mr. Johnston not only reduced casualties and treated the wounded but restored critical support systems, including power and water. He also helped to find ways to feed the thousands of Iraqi soldiers dependent on the American military for support.

Alan Johnston, a 6-year veteran of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and an emergency medical technician for nearly 18 years, suffered injuries to his head and leg but treated himself and remained at the base in Iraq for 3 months after the attack. He left Iraq in December of 2004 and underwent another series of leg surgeries once he returned to the United States.

As a result of Captain Hill's eyewitness account of Alan Johnston's actions, last month I had the solemn privilege of pinning the Defense of Freedom Medal on Mr. Johnston's lapel at a medal ceremony held at my Augusta, ME, office with Mr. Johnston's family present, officially acknowledging these courageous actions. This award is a rare and unique commendation issued only to civilians and is equivalent to the Purple Heart awarded to military service men and women.

But what is most remarkable is that this occasion marked the first time a

civilian, private contractor was awarded this particular medal. Mr. Johnston's lifesaving response to serve and sacrifice on behalf of others was something he chose to do. It was not his duty. It was not his responsibility it was his goodwill and American patriotism that drove him to put his life at risk in order to assist and save others. There is only one word that sufficiently describes this exemplary Mainer, and that word is hero. I was extremely proud to present him with the Defense of Freedom Medal.

Mr. Johnston's awe-inspiring willingness to think of others ahead of himself will forever be remembered by those whose lives he touched and saved that day. The courageous commitment and valiant care demonstrated by Alan Johnston of Windsor, ME, exemplifies the very best of what it means to be a Mainer and an American

TRIBUTE TO ROB McCLINTIC

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today in celebration of my longtime friend and staff member, Rob McClintic. After 23 years of work in the U.S. Congress, Rob has decided to retire from the Senate.

Rob started with my office on March 13, 1998, while I was still in the U.S. House of Representatives. When I won the election to the Senate in 2000, I couldn't imagine not bringing Rob to work in the Senate with me.

Rob is often the first contact with my constituents and visitors. As a staff assistant, Rob has been tasked with answering phone calls from constituents and greeting visitors. Everyone who works in Congress knows that answering phones is an extremely important job and can be tremendously challenging. This is one of the main ways that Senators and Representatives hear how their constituents are feeling on important issues. Rob has at busy times answered well over 100 or more phone calls a day. In 23 years on the Hill, Rob surely has answered over 600,000 phone calls. This is, needless to say, a tremendous feat.

Rob is also responsible for giving tours of the Capitol building and for setting up other tours around Washington, DC. His knowledge of the history of the Capitol is outstanding. He knows every corner of the Capitol and provides a personal touch on each and every tour. Rob not only just gave tours, he made sure that the visitors from Michigan enjoyed their stay in DC, and experienced the history of Congress.

Prior to working for me, Rob worked for Congressman Phil Sharp from Indiana, Rob's home State, from April 1983 through January 1995 and Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio from August 1995 through February 1998.

Upon leaving the Senate, Rob will be moving back to his home State of Indiana to be closer to friends and family. I know his family is proud of him and will welcome him home with open arms.