

of labor, recognize their key role in stimulating the economy. Look at our senior citizens. They are the real salt, the rock of America. Our mothers and fathers and grandfathers, most of them passed through the Depression era. Some are a little old for the Depression era, but they have values that are so important for our country. They are the people who paid taxes all their lives. They worked all their lives. They provided service to so many of us and our families and to other neighbors in the community. Let us recognize their key role in stimulating the economy, and let us pass the Finance Committee substitute for those 20 million American seniors.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

IN MEMORY OF SISTER DOROTHY MARIE HENNESSEY

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, on January 25, all who work and struggle for social and economic justice, who dedicate themselves to peace and ending war, lost a wonderful friend in Sister Dorothy Marie Hennessey. The world lost a true Christian soul who, in her own quiet, humble way, fought relentlessly for peace and social justice.

Sister Dorothy lived 94 years, 67 of them as a member of the Sisters of St. Frances. She was the eldest of 15 brothers and sisters who grew up on a farm near Oneida, IA, taught by their parents that the Golden Rule was not an abstraction but a way of life. She fondly always remembered that her family "always fed and housed the tramps who came to [their] farm."

Sister Dorothy kept her theology simple and straightforward. She said:

I've learned in 75 years in the convent that God is a compassionate God who loves all of us, but who also loves the poor and the people who are oppressed.

But Sister Dorothy also believed, in the words of President Kennedy, that "God's work on Earth must truly be our own." She was the opposite of a cloistered nun. She was an activist. She stepped forward boldly, if humbly, to make the world a better and fairer and more just place.

She taught in Catholic schools in the Dubuque area for 28 years and another 4 years in Portland, OR. But in the 1960s, her social consciousness came alive. She was deeply disturbed by the tragedy unfolding in Vietnam. And she was shocked to learn from her brother, also a priest—Father Ron Hennessey, a longtime missionary in Latin America—about the atrocities committed by dictators and their death squads in Central America.

Father Ron was, as we know—and he was a friend of mine, and I knew him well—also a friend of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, and he witnessed the Salvadoran military firing on mourners after the archbishop's assassination.

Sister Dorothy became a leader in a newly formed human rights group in Dubuque and spent the rest of her life engaging in principled acts of dissent and protest, at times putting her own life at risk.

For example, in 1984, she went to Nicaragua with the group Witness for Peace, acting as human shields to protect northern border villages from attacks by the CIA-backed Contras.

In 1986, at the age of 73, she joined more than 1,000 activists in the Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament, traveling 3,500 miles from Los Angeles to Washington, DC—at the age of 73.

Beginning in 1997, she participated in annual protests at the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, GA, where graduates had been implicated in human rights abuses all over Latin America, Central America, including the murder of six Jesuit priests in El Salvador.

Sister Dorothy was arrested three times for crossing the line onto the Army base. On the third occasion, at the age of 88, she was one of 3,600 protesters who were arrested. Twenty-six of them were selected by lottery to be prosecuted in Federal court, including Sister Dorothy and her sibling, Sister Gwen, also a Franciscan Nun.

Sister Dorothy was sentenced by a Federal judge to 6 months of detention in her convent, but she refused this leniency. She insisted on receiving the same treatment as her other 25 co-defendants. So her sentence was changed to 6 months at the Federal Prison Camp in Illinois. As a Des Moines Register columnist noted, "She was allowed to take her hearing aids, but not her Bible."

After a month and a half, she was transferred to a correctional facility in Dubuque, supposedly for health reasons. But Sister Dorothy knew better. The real reason was the Federal Government's sheer embarrassment at incarcerating an 88-year-old nun because she dared to stand up for justice.

During her time in prison, Sister Dorothy was interviewed by a reporter with the Public Broadcasting System. She said:

I feel that it's our duty. We can't protest everything, but we can pick out some of the worst things to protest, and that's what I've tried to do.

So into her eighties, nineties, Sister Dorothy continued to find new ways to serve people and to help change the world for the good. From 1996 to 2000, she worked as a daily volunteer at Clare House, a residence in Cedar Rapids for people with AIDS. She cooked and cleaned for the patients. She spoke out loudly and clearly, also, for the rights of gays and lesbians.

On a personal note, I will always be grateful to Sister Dorothy for her many years of friendship and counsel. It has been one of the privileges of my life to know so many members of that wonderful, wonderful Hennessey family—Father Ron, all the years he risked his life in Central America, and both Sister Dorothy and Sister Gwen, and another sister. There is Sister Miriam, who was tragically killed in a car accident some years ago. What a wonderful family.

Sister Dorothy worked for a while as a senior intern in my Dubuque office. I say "for a while"—actually, for 8 years. She was a great mentor and inspiration to all of my staff.

So I will always cherish my friendship not only with Sister Dorothy but also with Sister Gwen, Sister Miriam, Father Ron, and so many other members whom I have known of the entire Hennessey family.

Madam President, as you can clearly see, Sister Dorothy was a remarkable person. I am reminded of the old saying: We make a living by what we make; but we make a life by what we give. Throughout her amazing life, Sister Dorothy was the ultimate giver. She gave her adult life to the church and to the Sisters of St. Frances. She gave more than three decades of dedicated service to her students. She gave her service on boards and in countless volunteer organizations. And, as I have pointed out, she gave of herself in dissent and protest many times against oppression and to end war.

She gave us her moral passion. She gave us her fine Christian example. She gave us her courage and decency, her love and friendship. She gave it all she had to make sure the world was a better place, that we all—all—had that prickling conscience that things were not right when poor people suffered, when war became the norm, when there were so many abuses of human rights and oppression against the disenfranchised and the poor in this country and in other places around the globe.

So after a rich lifetime of service, Sister Dorothy has been called home. She left the world a better place. I am deeply grateful to have had her as a friend. To all of the Franciscan nuns, to her family, of course, my deepest condolences from me and all of my family on her passing, but also our deepest thanks for sharing such a wonderful, magnificent person with us during her lifetime.

We will remember her and hopefully honor Sister Dorothy by continuing to do what we can to make sure that our Government works more for social justice and economic justice, that we turn away from the instruments of war and the funding for war and making war sort of the norm, and that we reach out in understanding and peace to the rest of the world. She would have not only asked nothing less, she would have demanded nothing less of us.

So we say goodbye to Sister Dorothy and, again, honor her memory by continuing to do what we can in our lifetimes to continue in her great work.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that an article that appeared today in the Des Moines Register by Rekha Basu regarding Sister Dorothy be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Des Moines Register, Jan. 30, 2008]
BASU: DUBUQUE NUN TAUGHT US TO STAND UP FOR BELIEFS

(By Rekha Basu)

At 88, Sister Dorothy Marie Hennessey of Dubuque was arrested for trespassing on a U.S. military base. She'd been protesting a school reputed to train Latin American military members to repress democracy advocates. Noting her advanced age, the judge offered her the option of staying under house arrest in her convent.

"I appreciate your thoughtfulness," replied the diminutive nun. "But I am not an invalid. I'd like to have the same sentence the others have."

So Sister Hennessey began her six-month prison term (the maximum sentence), along with 25 others, at the Federal Correctional Institution in Pekin, Ill. She was allowed to take her hearing aids, but not her Bible.

The woman dubbed "the radical nun," the activist who in her 70s walked across the country to protest the Cold War, died last week at age 94—and the planet is poorer for it. We lost a passionate champion of peace and justice who, even while protesting war and injustice, maintained an unflinching sense of optimism.

"I consider it a spiritual commitment because I've learned in my almost 70 years in the convent that God is a compassionate God who loves all of us," she once said, "but who also loves the poor and the people who are oppressed."

Though she was a giant in every way but physically, Sister Hennessey's name wasn't a household one in Iowa. It should be. She earned a place in both the Iowa Women's Archives and Wikipedia, was written about in the New York Times and was interviewed on PBS. And with her biological sister Gwen, also a Franciscan nun, she was awarded the Pacem in Terris Award from the Davenport Catholic Diocese in 2002, earning a place among such luminaries as Daniel Berrigan, Cesar Chavez, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Teresa. The award is named after a Papal encyclical by Pope John XXIII that calls upon people of goodwill to bring peace among nations. It recognized the sisters for "living out the Gospel through their work on behalf of the poor and for peace."

The oldest of 15 children, Sister Hennessey was born in 1913 in Manchester and raised on a farm. She spent 75 years at St. Francis in Dubuque and taught in various Iowa communities and in Portland, Ore.

It was her brother, the late Ron Hennessey, a longtime missionary in Latin America, who first inspired her social activism. His letters from Guatemala and El Salvador in the 1980s told of terrorism and killings of Mayan Indians in his parish by Guatemalan death squads. Brutal wars in Central America were being waged using American guns and money.

A friend of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, Father Hennessey wrote of witnessing the Salvadoran military firing on mourners in the cathedral after Romero's assassination.

Sister Hennessey centered her protests on the Army's School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Ga., because it trained Latin American soldiers and police. The school said it gave them a professional education. Protesters said it taught torture. Graduates from the school were later implicated in the 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests and two women in El Salvador. The protest that sent Sister Hennessey to prison involved a mock funeral procession. The school was closed a month later, but it reopened under a different name.

In an interview from prison in 2001 on PBS "Religion and Ethics," Sister Hennessey told host Bob Abernethy, "I feel that it's our duty. We can't protest everything, but we can pick out some of the worst things to protest, and that's what I've tried to do."

Fortunately, her sister remains to carry on the family legacy.

Sister Hennessey taught many things, including courage, compassion and the importance of independent thought and creative action.

She taught that aging gracefully can be compatible with living meaningfully, and even dangerously. But most important, she taught that we don't have to stand by in frustration when wrongs are perpetrated, even by our government; that the world is best served when we stand up for what's right. And that you do whatever you can from wherever you are.

In her case, it was the Lord's work.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, what is the pending business before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

FARM BILL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues in the Democratic leadership to move forward with the 2007 farm bill. Last July, the House of Representatives passed the 2007 farm bill by a vote of 231 to 191. Last December, the Senate followed suit by passing its version of the 2007 farm bill by a vote of 79 to 14. Certainly there are controversial provisions in each bill that must be addressed as we move forward. However, the bipartisan support for these bills is overwhelming. In fact, with 79 votes, this Senate-passed farm bill received more votes than any farm bill in the past 30 years.

Unfortunately, little progress has been made since that time. The respective chairs of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees need to focus on naming conferees and working together to reconcile their differences. Right now, my understanding is both chairs have been meeting with the administration, both saying they are making

no headway. It seems to me that ultimately we need to work in a bipartisan manner to resolve the differences between the House and the Senate versions of the farm bill, and that begins by naming conferees to a farm bill conference committee. We only have 6 weeks left to name conferees, reconcile the Senate and House-passed farm bills, and deliver a farm bill that meets the needs of America's producers and can be signed into law by the President.

Additionally, in March, the Congressional Budget Office will issue a new baseline for agricultural programs. On account of high prices and a successful agricultural industry, the CBO will likely predict that few farm payments will be made in the coming years. The result is that Congress will have even fewer dollars to write the new farm bill, which will further magnify our current budgetary issues associated with this farm bill.

Our farmers and ranchers are already making their planting decisions for this spring. Many are wondering what regulatory regime will impact their operations. Will it be the 2007 farm bill—now the 2008 farm bill—which Congress and the Agriculture Committees have been debating for the past 12 months? Will it be the 2002 farm bill which has served our producers well but expires in 45 days or will it be the 1949 and 1938 farm bills, which are the last farm bills with permanent authorizations?

In recent days, some have threatened to let the 2002 farm bill expire and revert to a permanent farm bill policy which was drafted almost 60 years ago. The two laws that would govern most farm programs passed in either 1938 or 1949 are what we refer to as permanent law. If Congress fails to approve new legislation that would set aside those permanent laws, and if Congress also fails to extend the current farm bill, then these two old laws once again become operational.

Now, among other things, permanent legislation would require USDA to establish acreage allotments and marketing quotas for price-supported crops and for producers to vote whether to approve quotas. Some agricultural producers actually might benefit from the permanent farm bill, while other producers in our conservation programs would dramatically suffer. If you are a wheat grower, the loan rate for wheat would be \$8.32. That is something a lot of wheat growers would probably like to see. Corn loan rates would be \$4.12, and, of course, there would be no countercyclical or direct payments that we have in the farm bill that we are operating under today, and no support program for soybeans under the permanent farm law we would revert to—the 1938–1949 laws I referred to—if, in fact, we don't take action to either extend the current farm bill or get the new one passed.

Milk purchases by the Commodity Credit Corporation would be established at \$28.20 per hundredweight, far