

John Cronan later told the “Today” show: “We didn’t have to retake the ship because we never surrendered it. We’re American seamen. We’re union members. We stuck together and did our jobs.”

Twelve crew members aboard the Maersk Alabama are members of the Seafarers International Union, SIU. Many of them trained at SIU’s maritime school, the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, in Piney Point, MD. It is the largest training facility for deep sea merchant seafarers. It teaches skills for sailors and seafarers, such as how to maintain a boat engine and how to secure a ship from pirates. I salute the SIU members aboard the Maersk Alabama for their patriotism and pluck and for their refusal to surrender their ship.

This incident reminds us of the importance of the Merchant Marines. Often unseen and unappreciated, they are vital to our economic security and our national security. They are our eyes and ears on the water. They are experts in marine safety, environmental protection and the new and latest technology. They keep our ports safe and our commerce flowing.

They are the Ready Reserve. They are there in war, transporting vital military aid and supplies to our troops. They are there in peace, supplying aid to those most in need—just as the Maersk Alabama was doing when the pirates attacked. They are prepared to risk their lives defending their flag.

Let’s salute the Merchant Marine, not just for what they did aboard the Maersk Alabama, but for what they do, what they stand for, their proud tradition. The Merchant Marine tradition is one of saving America time and time again. They have been the Nation’s fourth arm of defense since the American Revolution.

President Roosevelt called our Merchant Marines “heroes in dungarees” because during World War II these gallant men braved the waters of the North Atlantic and the dangers of the Murmansk run to keep our troops overseas fed and clothed. They have fought on the front lines of every war since then—from Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf to the Iraq War. They were there on 9/11, ferrying thousands of people to safety in New York. They were there in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. And they have been there providing food to starving children in Ethiopia, Somalia and dozens of other regions around the world.

The maritime community has been a major player in my personal and political history, from growing up in east Baltimore to my early days in Congress on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. I got my start in politics by representing blue collar workers in Baltimore, the shipyard workers and the dock workers.

I am relieved by the safe return of the Maersk Alabama’s crew and captain and I am grateful for all of those involved in their safe rescue and re-

turn: the Navy and their elite Navy SEALs squad and President Obama and his administration for handling the hostage situation with great skill.

As we welcome them home, let us acknowledge not just their heroism off the horn of Africa, but the everyday heroics of our Merchant Marines; their skills and training, their patriotism and proud tradition, and the role they play every day, in every way, supporting our troops, guarding our ports, keeping our economy strong and safeguarding our interests overseas.

#### TRIBUTE TO JUDY COLLINS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Marcelle and I have been privileged to have known Judy Collins for years. We have heard her sing in New York, in Washington, DC, and in Vermont, and every time we have been thrilled. I have even been known to call her phone just to hear her sing on her answering machine.

The New York Times on April 23 of this year wrote a review of her current engagement at the Café Carlyle, and I talked with Judy about it. I know that she and Louis keep a very busy schedule, but I just wanted to congratulate her on another well deserved review.

I would ask unanimous consent to have the New York Times article printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New York Times, Apr. 23, 2009]

FOLK GODDESS DESCENDS FROM HER LOFTY PEDESTAL

(By Stephen Holden)

It wasn’t always so. But nowadays a Judy Collins concert is a seamless flow of music and storytelling. Alternating between the guitar and the piano, Ms. Collins offers a version of a personal musical history that is too complicated and rich to be covered in a single evening.

On Tuesday night at the Café Carlyle, where she began a six-week engagement, the emphasis was on her folk-music side, and for more than half the show she accompanied herself on acoustic guitar, with Russell Walden assisting on piano and backup vocals.

Her song “Mountain Girl,” performed early in the evening, set the tone. Ms. Collins grew up in Colorado, and her silvery vibrato-free voice might be described as an Alpine instrument. Especially when she sings a cappella, it has the ringing purity of a voice emanating from a lofty altitude and reverberating in an endless echo chamber of mountain passes. Ms. Collins, who will turn 70 on May 1, has miraculously retained her upper register. The higher she sings, most of the time with perfect intonation, the more she projects the ethereality of a flute played by the wind.

The influence that propelled her from a piano prodigy who played Mozart, she recalled, wasn’t the sound of the Weavers or Woody Guthrie, but that of Jo Stafford on her 1950s folk albums. In particular it was Ms. Stafford’s recording of “Barbara Allen,” first heard on the radio, that drew Ms. Collins away from classical piano. And as she sang this ballad of unrequited love, death and grief, her vocal similarities with Stafford, who died last year, were striking. Both singers expressed a demure self-containment

in unadorned phrases that imbued their performances with faraway longing.

In recent years Ms. Collins has descended from the folk-goddess pedestal to emerge as a funny, self-effacing Irish-American storyteller, and the tension between her pristine singing voice and her salty reminiscences lends her shows a theatrical dimension. She reminisced at length about her first meeting with Leonard Cohen, who had no confidence in his talents until she recorded his song “Suzanne.” He returned the favor by persuading her to take up songwriting.

Her wildest tale described an adventure in Chicago on a winter night in which she caroused until 3 a.m. with two folk-singing colleagues, one of whom gave her a handgun for protection during the walk back to her hotel. Once safely in her room, she tried to remove the clip, and the gun went off.

Those were the wild old days to which Ms. Collins increasingly alludes in her shows. The more she talks about her itinerant life as a folk musician, the more you want to know. The high point of the show was her rendition of a recent Jimmy Webb song, “Paul Gauguin in the South Seas.” The song, which describes the painter’s retreat from civilization in a search for paradise that eventually landed him in the Marquesas Islands, evokes the quest of any artist for sacred ground that has never been visited: an elusive place Ms. Collins conjures when her voice soars.

#### TRIBUTE TO BUDDY AND JULIE MILLER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Marcelle and I have gotten to know Buddy and Julie Miller over the years—especially with their friend of ours, Emmy Lou Harris. So many times when I have traveled I have listened to Buddy and Julie’s music on my headphones and one of the great thrills I had was when they dedicated a song to Marcelle and me years ago at the Birchmere.

The Wall Street Journal this week wrote an excellent article about the “first couple of Americana.” I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, Apr. 28, 2009]

BUDDY AND JULIE MILLER: FIRST COUPLE OF AMERICANA SINGS OF SETBACKS AND SORROWS  
(By Barry Mazor)

NASHVILLE—By virtue of their broad musical accomplishments, Buddy and Julie Miller have essentially reigned since the mid-1990s as the unpretentious but royal couple of Americana music, that lovably motley modern-roots music genre derived from the American music traditions of country, folk, gospel, roots rock and more. Their CDs, whether recorded together or individually, have consistently garnered high praise for both the songs they write for them and for the often touching, sometimes feisty country-soul delivery. Their long-incubating new release, “Written In Chalk” (New West Records), is no different in that regard.

Songs of theirs have been recorded by everyone from country hit makers Lee Ann Womack, Patty Loveless, the Dixie Chicks and Dierks Bentley, to jazz great Jimmy Scott. Mr. Miller was seen bringing his always coveted, tasteful guitar work behind Alison Krauss and Robert Plant on this year’s Grammy Awards show, as he did throughout their recent tour of major arenas. (Led Zeppelin veteran Mr. Plant performs a comic duet with Mr. Miller on the