

cultures and in this way, in the language of Rotary International, “provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.”

In this way, Rotary Clubs and Rotarians can be pathbuilders to peace.

Now both because of the pressures of the economic recession and the commitment of Rotary International and, indeed, of our conference in Indianapolis to “World Peace and Understanding”, I want to call to your attention a development only several days ago that I believe directly relevant to our discussions.

I could, of course, speak of President Obama’s stimulus plan with its several features designed to put more cash into the pockets of taxpayers, laid-off workers, and first-time homebuyers as well as college students. But I want rather to take note of the action only last month of Congress in voting, by overwhelming bipartisan majorities, approval of the Serve America Act of 2009. This legislation, co-sponsored by Senators Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Orrin Hatch, Republican of Utah, would by 2017 triple the number of participants in AmeriCorps, our major national service program, and create a number of new volunteer programs. AmeriCorps members work for ten months to one year for a modest stipend, and when they finish, get a grant for education.

JOHN BRADEMAS CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF CONGRESS

Finally, I shall take advantage of this forum to say just a word about what is now my own major initiative in my capacity as president emeritus of New York University. It is the John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress, located in NYU’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service.

For I think it is not as widely understood as it should be that in our American separation-of-powers constitutional system, Congress—the Senate and House of Representatives—the legislative branch of our national government, can be a source of national policy as well as are the President of the United States and members of the executive branch.

I’ve earlier given you one example directly related to the commitment of Rotary, the International Education Act. This measure did not originate in the White House but on Capitol Hill.

It is, however, not easy for even informed Americans to understand the operation of Congress. After all, there are 100 Senators and 435 Representatives and we do not, customarily, have the strict party discipline commonly found in parliamentary democracies.

So how does Congress make policy?

Our Center sponsors lectures, symposia and research on the ways in which the Congress of the United States initiates and shapes national policy.

A modest example: While in Congress I was chief author in the House of Representatives of the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act of 1975. This law enables museums, galleries, and universities to borrow art from abroad as well as lend parts of their collections to museums in other countries without paying the prohibitive cost of private insurance. The Federal Government, under this legislation, indemnifies the works on loan.

So, last January, we convened, at NYU, under the auspices of the Brademas Center, a colloquium, which examined the impact of this legislation and ways to expand it. The session was led by former National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Bill Ivey and brought together leaders from the museum, foundation and performing arts worlds as well as scholars of arts and public policy and public officials. Based on our discussions, we

are preparing a report to the President and Congress with recommendations for expanding international arts and cultural exchanges as part of a renewed strategy for U.S. public diplomacy.

To reiterate, in view of the commitment of Rotary “to encourage and foster the ideal of humanitarian service” and “to help build goodwill and civil peace in the world”, I believe it wholly fitting that Rotarians as individuals and Rotary Clubs as community organizations, wherever located, encourage and support education about other countries and cultures.

To conclude, as I reflected on what I might say to you today, I realized that such is the role of the United States in the world today that challenges never cease.

For example, in light of President Obama’s recent encounter with President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, we must ask where is United States policy toward Cuba going?

Given the recent attacks on American vessels by Somali pirates operating off the coast of Somalia, what is our appropriate response?

Then comes the controversy over the correct action—if any—to take with respect to Central Intelligence Agency interrogators who apparently tortured detainees during the presidency of George W. Bush.

And beyond these challenges in foreign policy is, of course, the economic challenge here at home—the recession. That is the subject for another speech and one I shall certainly not inflict on you today.

Clearly, as we look at the challenges our country faces both at home and abroad, we can all agree that dealing with them requires the most knowledgeable and intelligent responses our country can make. And that’s why I believe that the commitment of Rotarians “to bring together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world” is still as valid, indeed, essential today as when I was one of the “High School Boys” attending luncheons at the South Bend Rotary Club.

Again, I count it an honor to have been invited to address you and I wish you, my fellow Hoosiers, all the best in the years ahead!

ALASKA DECORATION OF HONOR CEREMONY

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to rise today in honor of the military men and women serving our country across the country and overseas. As Memorial Day approaches, I want to personally recognize the sacrifice these service men and women and their families are making for our Nation.

In 233 years of American history, the struggle for freedom has remained ever present. During this time, our Nation has surrendered its bravest men and women to liberate the oppressed and to ensure freedom for future generations. In doing so, battle lines were drawn and blood was spilled on both U.S. and foreign soil.

I am certain the dedicated service and sacrifice of our men and women who met the challenges defined by those battle lines safeguarded the freedom and democracy we all cherish. In recognition of that fact, we pause each year on Memorial Day to recognize and honor those who have given their all on the field of battle.

There is simply no greater service and no braver act than a warrior willing to stand in the face of evil and selflessly make the ultimate sacrifice.

We must never forget these brave Americans and their actions which have earned them a place in our hearts and their names on the role of honor for this State and this Nation.

This year we also pause to specifically honor those Alaskans who have given the last full measure of devotion on the battlefield in defense of freedom and democracy. We recognize them with the Alaska Decoration of Honor.

Alaska celebrates the 50th anniversary of its statehood this year. There will be hundreds of events and celebrations to mark this anniversary, but one of the most important ones is this weekend in Anchorage when every Alaska soldier killed in action is presented with the Alaska Decoration of Honor.

I thank the families of these soldiers for traveling to Alaska to be part of the ceremony, and again honor our current service men and women on this Memorial Day.

2008 ALASKA DECORATION OF HONOR MEDAL RECIPIENTS

Shawn G. Adams, Jesse Bryon Albrecht, Christopher M. Alcozer, Eugene Henry Eli Alex, Charles D. Allen, Carl Anderson Jr., Thomas Edward Andrson, Kurtis Dean Kama-O-Apelila Arcala, Brian D. Ardron, Michael Dean Banta, Edward Nasuesak Barr, Thomas M. Barr, Daniel D. Bartels, Richard Gene Bauer, Ryan J. Baum, Shane R. Becker, Larry LeRoy Betts, Jeffrey Dean Bisson, Alan R. Blohm, Jeremiah J. Boehmer.

Matthew Charles Bohling, Matthew T. Bolar, John G. Borbonus, Christopher Robert Brevard, James L. Bridges, David Dee Brown Jr., Charles Edward Brown, William F. Brown, Gary Edwin Bullock, Jaime L. Campbell, William Steven Childers, Johnathan Bryan Chism, Donald Georg Chmiel, Donald V. Clark, Brad A. Clemmons, Adare William Cleveland, Ryan D. Collins, Clinton Arthur Cook, Jason Jarrard Corbett, Daniel Franklin Cox.

Shawn R. Creighton, Eric B. Das, George W. Dauma Jr., Carletta S. Davis, David J. Davis, Michael W. Davis, Wilbert Davis, Dustin R. Donica, William Bradley Duncan, Scott Douglas Dykman, William Albert Eaton, Michael Ignatius Edwards, Cody J. Eggleston, David Henry Elisovsky, Robert Thomas Elliott III, Shawn Patrick Falter, Sean Patrick Fennerty, David Lynn Ferry, Sean P. Fisher, Nick Ulysses Fleener.

Victor M. Fontanilla, Phillip Cody Ford, Kraig D. Foyteck, Lucas Frantz, Grant B. Fraser, Jacob Noal Fritz, Charles F. Gamble Jr., Brennan Chris Gibson, Micah S. Gifford, Dale Anthony Griffin, Howard Wayne Gulliksen, Daniel Lee Harmon, Dustin J. Harris, Raymond L. Henry, Irving Hernandez Jr., Adam Herold, Patrick W. Herried, Kenneth Hess, William Earl Hibpshman, Michael Thomas Hoke.

Jaron D. Holliday, Jerry Verne Horn, Michael R. Hullender, Christian P. Humphreys, Kurt Int-Hout, Sam Ivey, Steven R. Jewell, Christopher C. Johnson, Jeremiah Jewel Johnson, Wayne Elmer Jones, Alexander Jordon, Jason A. Karella, Adam P. Kennedy, Gilbert Ketzler Jr., George Gregory Kilbuck, Jeremiah K. Kinchen, Donald Harry Kito, Howard Mark Koslosky, Russell A. Kurtz, Kermit Harold La Belle Jr.

Jason K. LaFleur, Mickey Daniel Lang, Jason Lantieri, David Alen Lape, Michael H.

Lasky, Aaron Latimer, Robert Edward Lee, Henry W. Linck, James T. Lindsey, Norman Lewis Lingley, Joseph I. Love-Fowler, Jeremy M. Loveless, Bryan C. Luckey, Bradley W. Marshall, Thomas M. Martin, Brian McElroy, Jackie L. McFarlane Jr., Patrick M. McInerney, Jacob Gerald McMillan, Philip David McNeill.

Benjamin E. Mejia, Jacob Eugene Melson, Kenneth Bruce Millhouse, Johnathon Miles Millican, Robert J. Montgomery, Trista L. Moretti, Christopher R. Moringstar, Shawn Matthew Murphy, Jason L. Norton, Toby Richard Olsen, Warren Paulsen, Joshua M. Pearce, Cody J. Phelps, William Francis Piaskowski, Heath K. Pickard, Larry Joe Plett, David Shelton Prentice, Cody A. Putman, Lloyd Steven Rainey, Daniel F. Reyes.

Stanley B. Reynolds, Andrew William Rice Jr., Floyd Whitley Richardson, Norman Franklin Ridley, Michelle R. Ring, Timothy J. Roark, Donald Robert Robison, Jessie S. Rogers, Jonathan Rojas, Donald Ray Sanders, Daniel R. Sexton, Frederick M. Simeonoff, Nicholas R. Sowinski, Donald Walter Sperl, Clifford A. Spohn III, Lance Craig Springer II, Derek T. Stenroos, Joseph A. Strong, Stephen Sutherland, William Arthur Thompson.

Douglas L. Tinsley, Chester William Troxel, Colby J. Umbrell, Joe Wayne Vanderpool, John S. Vaughan, Dustin S. Wakeman, Mark A. Wall, William Francis Walters, Shannon Weaver, Mason Douglas Whetstone, Arthur Joseph Whitney Jr., Jamie Duggan Wilson, Daniel Eugene Woodcock, Shane William Woods, James R. Worster, David Reese Young Jr.

POST-DEPLOYMENT HEALTH ASSESSMENT ACT OF 2009

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to offer my support for the Post-Deployment Health Assessment Act of 2009. I am pleased to join my colleague, the senior Senator from Montana, in cosponsoring this important legislation.

The Post Deployment Health Assessment Act requires the Defense Department to increase mandatory mental health screenings for military personnel who deploy to combat. This legislation is important and necessary because of the alarming increase in combat-related psychological injuries suffered by our soldiers overseas.

A RAND study in 2008 concludes that nearly 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or depression. That is nearly 300,000 returning American servicemembers. It also finds that rates of marital stress, substance abuse, and suicide are all increasing.

According to a report released earlier this year, the Army's suicide rate hit a record high last year, putting the suicide-per-capita rate higher than the national population. In the first three months of this year, there have already been 56 reported suicides in the Army. If that rate is maintained for the rest of this year, we will have another unfortunate, record-breaking year for military suicides.

Soldiers returning from deployment are already required to receive an in-person mental health assessment when they return home. The Post Deploy-

ment Health Assessment Act requires that soldiers receive an assessment from personnel trained to conduct such screenings before they deploy. That way, the screening personnel has a reference point and can monitor the soldier's progress and any serious changes that may have occurred during the soldier's deployment. The Post Deployment Health Assessment Act also requires soldiers to receive mental health assessments every six months for two years after they return from combat. The periodic assessments allow health personnel to monitor a soldier's adjustment from the combat zone back into normal society. By providing the mental health screening program called for in the Post Deployment Health Assessment Act, we will give the Defense Department an effective system for diagnosing the unseen scars that are so prevalent amongst our combat veterans.

The program proposed by this bill is based on a pilot program developed by the Montana National Guard. When I heard about it, the program made a great deal of sense to me. That unit has improved the mental health care its servicemembers receive, and it seems natural to implement such a program to benefit all of our warriors and veterans.

Since the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Congress has acted to protect the physical health of the soldiers on the front lines. Congress responded to the needs of our fighting men and women by funding more body armor and reinforced vehicles. Now, we must do more to protect the mental health of our war fighters by giving them the access to mental health screenings that can help them get ahead of debilitating depression and other disorders that result from intense combat experiences.

Finally, I point out that my colleagues need look no further for support than to the veterans whom this bill will help. It has been endorsed by groups representing our brave warriors such as the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the National Guard Association, and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard.

I urge my colleagues to support the Post-Deployment Health Assessment Act of 2009, and I look forward to its swift passage so that our soldiers and veterans can get the treatment and protection they need.

TRIBUTE TO LTC JOHN H. BURSON III, MD

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the selfless commitment to the U.S. Army Reserve and to this Nation, of a true American patriot, LTC John H. Burson III, MD.

Lieutenant Colonel Burson is a citizen of Carrollton, GA, and earned his bachelor's, medical, doctor of philosophy and doctor of medicine degrees from the Georgia Institute of Technology and Emory University.

During his medical career, Dr. Burson pioneered a new health care facility with outpatient surgery in Villa Rica, GA, that served as the forerunner for a new Villa Rica hospital with multiclinic services.

Later, he led and personally funded college students to visit various World War II historical sites including an extended tour of Normandy and related battlefields in order to educate America's youth about American history, especially the military. I would like to yield to my friend, Senator ISAKSON for further remarks.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for yielding and also rise in recognition of Lieutenant Colonel Burson and his incredible life story. Lieutenant Colonel Burson volunteered for reserve duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom at the age of 70 in order to relieve active-duty doctors so they could carry out other duties. To this end, he searched nationwide for military units in need of a medical doctor and even delayed the celebration of his 50th wedding anniversary for his upcoming deployment with the medical unit of the Indiana National Guard.

Lieutenant Colonel Burson was assigned as medical officer for the U.S. Embassy in Iraq from November 2005 to March 2006 and served as one of the doctors overseeing treatment of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. During this time, he was part of the team that successfully convinced Hussein to end his hunger strike. He did this while also performing surgery and treating patients at a nearby trauma/emergency care unit. Lieutenant Colonel Burson was 71 by the time he completed this deployment.

At such a point in life, many men and women are well into their retirements. However, after his first deployment to Iraq, Lieutenant Colonel Burson instead renewed his search for a combat arms unit in need of a doctor during the 2007 troop surge in Iraq. He served an additional deployment with an Army Reserve military police battalion from Raleigh, NC, from August 2007 to November 2007 at age 73.

Today, as we stand before you on this floor, this extraordinary American will have just returned home after his third combat deployment. At 75 years of age, he has just completed another full tour, this time in Afghanistan.

MR. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his kind observations regarding Dr. Burson's service. Lieutenant Colonel Burson illustrates the selflessness, commitment to excellence, and courage that exemplifies American character. We applaud the altruistic manner with which he has undertaken and completed each mission. Three combat tours can wear on the best of men, but Lieutenant Colonel Burson has met these challenges head on and succeeded. As long as this great Nation has men like Colonel Burson, who hold true to the values that reveal the best in us, we will remain a world leader.