

for educational and welfare reform. In 1988, he was elected to the Senate. But, BOB KERREY established himself as a man of great courage and intellect long before he was elected governor or entered the U.S. Senate. He was an American hero long before he became a Senate hero. Now he's both. Time and time again, he earned his reputation as one of the most courageous members of this body by taking on the toughest issues around—from entitlements to health care, and speaking his mind no matter what. He took on sacred cows where others feared to act. He did so with tremendous dash and daring, with a wonderful youthfulness and enthusiasm. His speeches against amending the First Amendment of our Constitution relative to flag burning, for instance, have been speeches which I have often used as a resource back home to prove that the most courageous among us—those that have put their lives on the line for this country—also believe in its Constitution with great passion and believe we must not reduce its protections of our freedoms in response to the behavior of a few misguided or extreme individuals.

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Agriculture Committee, BOB has earned a reputation as a proponent of tax reform, Medicare and Social Security reform, and as a tireless advocate for the nations' farmers.

The Senate will sorely miss Senator BOB KERREY's wise and experienced voice on national security matters. And, I will deeply miss his presence, although I trust that we will see him often and that his new role at the New School University will not keep him from weighing in on public policy issues that so need his special touch.

I have often thought, only half in jest, that Senator KERREY should be awarded a second Congressional Medal of Honor for his many brave stands in the Senate to match the one he won in war. It has truly been a privilege to serve with BOB KERREY and I will miss the noble passion and purpose he has brought to so many causes.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend Senator BOB KERREY. I have mixed emotions knowing that the United States Senate, the State of Nebraska, and the nation are losing a valued public servant at a time when we can ill afford to lose a person of such great talent. I am saddened thinking about the loss of his valued presence in this chamber. But, I also recognize that my friend is leaving by his own choice to take on the challenges of a new adventure as president of the New School University of New York City. New challenges and new accomplishments are about to be added to his already legendary list of achievements that include Medal of Honor recipient, entrepreneur, governor, and Senator.

I smile as I think about the good company my colleague has been at the Senate Committee on Agriculture. I always felt as if the hearing room brightened up a notch when Senator KERREY entered the room. I appreciated greatly the fact that we never failed to share a few light moments together, even as we worked to help the farmers and ranchers we represent. His collegial approach crossed the aisle, too. Senator KERREY moved landmark agricultural legislation to passage with hard work and the respect he garnered from his colleagues on both sides of the aisle, as he did this session with the crop insurance reform bill.

We also served together on the Senate Finance Committee, where Senator CONRAD has been an absolute bulldog on the issue of entitlement reform. Senator KERREY headed up the bipartisan entitlement commission and served on the Medicare Commission. He was a particularly active participant in the centrist coalition, which worked to find common ground on budget issues during the partisan stalemate in 1995 and 1996—an effort that helped produce the 1997 Balanced Budget Act. On these very difficult issues, Senator KERREY has always been willing to consider policies that make sense for the long term even when these policies carry a high political price in the short term. He was a leader in insisting that the Senate version of the Balanced Budget Act contain long term Medicare reforms as well as short term fixes. Yet throughout these discussions, Senator KERREY has also been a strong defender of the most vulnerable among us—from children in low income families struggling to get by with cash assistance, food stamps and Medicaid to rural seniors who depend on adequate Medicare reimbursement to maintain health care in their local community.

All of us will miss his keen intellect, his insight and his candor. We will miss his terrific sense of humor. We will miss his positive attitude. We will miss the unique perspective he brings to every discussion. We will miss his integrity and his courage. But most of all, we will miss the boundless enthusiasm he brings to public service. There is no question the Senate will soon be made poorer by his departure, and there is no doubt Senator KERREY will make the university community he now joins richer by brining these wonderful attributes to his new position.

We thank you Senator KERREY for your service to the United State Senate.

And I thank you for your friendship.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President. I rise today to pay tribute to Senator ROBERT KERREY of Nebraska. As Undersecretary, then Secretary of Navy for over five years during the war in Vietnam, I learned first hand the courage and sacrifice of the men and women of the armed forces who served our Nation.

Lieutenant, USN, BOB KERREY earned our nation's highest recognition for his valor and unwavering leadership during that conflict. Those same extraordinary personal attributes BOB KERREY brought to the Senate.

Serving with BOB is a reward all Senators will cherish. Though the challenges of education will be his next call to duty, I predict he will someday soon be back in public office. Enjoy this respite, my friend, but harken to the bugle-call in years to come for another career to strengthen our nation with your "brand" of leadership.

I shall miss our vigorous floor debates, our trips abroad to visit our troops, our moments of levity as two old bachelors.

As we sailors say, "well done sir"!

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR SLADE GORTON

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as this session of Congress ends, Senator SLADE GORTON of Washington will leave the Senate. Senator GORTON has long been a leader among the Republicans and a thoughtful voice in the Senate.

Senator GORTON, a hard-worker, has served not only on the Senate Appropriations Committee, where he chairs the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, but on the Budget Committee, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and the Indian Affairs Committee. He has carried an impressive workload.

In addition, SLADE GORTON, a former Attorney General in the State of Washington, earned a reputation as a tough proponent of fighting violent crime, particularly international terrorism.

While proud of his conservative credentials, SLADE GORTON was often willing to reach across party lines to work with Democrats on issues like consumer affairs and an increase in the minimum wage.

I admired SLADE GORTON's work along with Senator Joe LIEBERMAN to fashion a sensible, balanced and expeditious way to consider the impeachment resolution sent to the Senate by the House of Representatives in 1998. While the plan was ultimately not adopted by the Senate, the careful and judicious effort to put such a plan forward reflected SLADE's commitment to the dignity of the United States Senate.

As this year winds to an end, I know that I am joined by my colleagues in the Senate in wishing SLADE GORTON and his wife, Sally, their three children and seven grandchildren, the very best in the years ahead.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to add my voice to those paying tribute to Senator SLADE GORTON upon his departure from the Senate.

I have had the privilege of serving with Senator GORTON on the Senate