

positive development for Ukraine's and Russia's democrats.

We were all moved by the horrific attack on the schoolchildren and families of Beslan school last September. There can be no justification for such brutal acts and we condemn them with every fiber of our soul. Our hearts and sympathy go out to the families of these victims as they continue to cope with the loss of their loved ones. The United States condemns terrorism in all forms. But the tragedy of the Beslan school should not be used by President Putin to retreat from democratic reforms. In the wake of the Beslan crisis, President Putin abolished the popular election of regional governors in favor of presidential appointees. These changes to the Russian political system enhance the power of the executive branch, while reducing the checks and balances that make democracies work. As former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "We understand the need to fight against terrorism . . . but in an attempt to go after terrorists I think one has to strike a proper balance to make sure that you don't move in a direction that takes you away from the democratic reforms or the democratic process."

Allowing Russia to continue its involvement in the G8 and to host the 2006 G8 Summit while continuing to undermine democracy makes mockery of the very principles that bind the G8 countries together. This resolution is not anti-Russian; it is a strong show of support for Russia's democrats who have long urged the United States to not turn a blind eye to undemocratic developments in Russia. Sharing a deeply personal moment from his time in Soviet Gulag, Natan Sharansky recently told a group of Senators how deeply supported he felt when President Reagan gave his famous "evil empire" speech that honestly addressed the oppression of the Soviet system. Since then Russia has come a long way, but we must speak openly in the face of the backsliding we are seeing.

As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently said, "The real deepening of our relations can only take place on the basis of common values." To do otherwise would be to shirk our responsibilities as a leader of the democratic world. And as President Bush said so eloquently in his inaugural and State of the Union addresses, America's security is advanced by the advancement of freedom. This resolution puts those sentiments into concrete action and I urge my fellow Senators to support it.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new

categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

In December of 2004, a gay man was attacked outside of his Kansas City home by two unknown assailants. Floyd Elliot reported to authorities that two men held him down, cut him with a knife, and used the knife to burn letters into his skin. It looks as if the assailants were attempting to "brand" a homosexual slur onto the victim's chest. The attack is being investigated as a hate crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HARRY T. CORBETT

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I would like to commend Mr. Harry T. Corbett, Postmaster of the Wentzville Post Office, for his 38-year tenure with the United States Postal Service. Mr. Corbett will retire from the U.S. Postal Service on March 3, 2005. Mr. Corbett began his career with the Postal Service in March of 1967 as a substitute city carrier for the Saint Ann, Missouri Post Office. In 1980, he was named Postmaster of the Wentzville Post Office.

In the 38 years between being a substitute city carrier and Postmaster, Mr. Corbett held several positions within the postal system. In 1968, he became a full-time city carrier and was later promoted to the position of Window Distribution Clerk in Saint Ann, Missouri. Three years later, he was reassigned to the Florissant post office as a substitute carrier, then to full-time carrier and then to Distribution Clerk Letter Sorting Machines. In 1974, Mr. Corbett was reassigned to the Saint Louis Mail Processing Plant as a Mail Sorting Machine Clerk. Mr. Corbett obtained his first position of leadership when he was promoted to Foreman Mails EAS Level 15 in December of 1974. Three years later, he was promoted to Supervisor Mails Multi-Position LSM EAS 16. The following year he was promoted to General Foreman Mails EAS 17. Mr. Corbett became Postmaster EAS 18 of the Wentzville, Missouri, Post Office on June 14, 1980. In March 1988, he reached EAS 20 level.

Mr. Corbett is involved in several area organizations and charitable causes, such as the National Associa-

tion of Postmasters of the United States, the Wentzville Rotary Club, and the Wentzville Chamber of Commerce. He is a member of St. Patrick Church and sits of the Developmental Disability Resource Board of St. Charles County. In addition, he is actively involved in the Crossroads Regional Medical Center Charitable Foundation.

Mr. Corbett has been married to Nancy K. Scott Corbett for 32 years and he has two sons, Bret and Jeff Corbett. Bret is married to Courtney Carrothers Corbett. Mr. Corbett has been blessed with four grandchildren: Mackenzie, Abigail, Emma, and Kaiya. Following his retirement from the United States Postal Service, Mr. Corbett looks forward to golfing, fishing, camping, and traveling. He also plans to spend quality time with his family.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1084. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Implementation of the Government in the Sunshine Act Calendar Year 2004" received on February 16, 2005; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-1085. A communication from the Chair, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2004" received on February 17, 2005; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-1086. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on DoD Actions to Support Voting Assistance to Armed Forces Outside the U.S." received on February 14, 2005; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1087. A communication from the Publications Control Officer, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Law Enforcement Reporting" (RIN0702-AA42-U) received on February 16, 2005; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1088. A communication from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition