

Attorney General-designate Sally Quillian Yates; his brother William Holder; and his sisters-in-law Deborah Holder, Margie Malone Tuckson, Joyce Phillips, and Gwen Moseby.

Statement on the Death of Theodore M. Hesburgh *February 27, 2015*

Michelle and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Father Ted Hesburgh. During his lifetime of service to his country, his church, and his beloved University of Notre Dame, Father Hesburgh inspired generations of young men and women to lead with the courage of their convictions. His deep and abiding faith in a loving God and in the power of our shared humanity led him to join the first-ever United States Civil Rights Commission and join hands with Dr. King to sing “We Shall Overcome.” His belief that what unites us is greater than what divides us made him a champion of academic freedom and open debate.

When I delivered the commencement address at Notre Dame in 2009, I was honored to thank Father Hesburgh for his contributions to our country and our world. Father Hesburgh often spoke of his beloved university as both a lighthouse and a crossroads: the lighthouse standing apart, shining with the wisdom of the Catholic tradition; and the crossroads joining the differences of culture, religion, and conviction with friendship, civility, and love. The same can be said of the man generations of students knew simply as Father Ted. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, his friends, and the Notre Dame community that loved him so dearly.

Statement on the Death of Leonard S. Nimoy *February 27, 2015*

Long before being nerdy was cool, there was Leonard Nimoy. Leonard was a lifelong lover of the arts and humanities, a supporter of the sciences, generous with his talent and his time. And of course, Leonard was Spock: cool, logical, big eared, and level headed, the center of Star Trek’s optimistic, inclusive vision of humanity’s future. I loved Spock.

In 2007, I had the chance to meet Leonard in person. It was only logical to greet him with the Vulcan salute, the universal sign for “Live long and prosper.” And after 83 years on this planet—and on his visits to many others—it’s clear Leonard Nimoy did just that. Michelle and I join his family, friends, and countless fans who miss him so dearly today.

Statement on the Death of Boris Efimovich Nemtsov *February 27, 2015*

The United States condemns the brutal murder of Boris Nemtsov. And we call upon the Russian Government to conduct a prompt, impartial, and transparent investigation into the circumstances of his murder and ensure that those responsible for this vicious killing are brought to justice.

Nemtsov was a tireless advocate for his country, seeking for his fellow Russian citizens the

rights to which all people are entitled. I admired Nemtsov’s courageous dedication to the struggle against corruption in Russia and appreciated his willingness to share his candid views with me when we met in Moscow in 2009.

We offer our sincere condolences to Boris Efimovich’s family and to the Russian people, who have lost one of the most dedicated and eloquent defenders of their rights.