

on this nomination is scheduled for Thursday, November 6 in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Lee has dedicated his entire career to enforcing our nation's civil rights laws. He has more than 20 years of experience in a wide-range of areas in civil rights law, including employment discrimination, access to health care, prevention of lead poisoning, public transportation equity, and equal access to education.

The Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights must enforce our nation's civil rights laws for everyone. Mr. Lee is a problem-solver and consensus builder. His work has helped Americans regardless of age, race, and gender. He has enabled thousands of Americans to shatter the glass ceiling.

Mr. Lee has practiced mainstream civil rights law. He does not believe in quotas, which are illegal. He believes in opportunity. To achieve this goal, he has pursued flexible and reasonable remedies that in each instance were approved by a court.

Numerous civil rights groups, women's groups, and elected officials from both parties support Mr. Lee's nomination. The next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights will have to address a number of potentially divisive issues. There is no doubt that Mr. Lee has the integrity, competence, and experience to lead this division.

In addition, Mr. Lee has agreed to recuse himself from involvement with the California Proposition 209 case, if he is confirmed. This action is entirely appropriate and should help clear the way for his confirmation.

We urge you to support his nomination and report it favorably.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Mikulski, Barbara Boxer,
Patty Murray, Mary L. Landrieu, Carol
Moseley-Braun, Dianne Feinstein.●

NOMINATION OF BILL LAN LEE TO BE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

● Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, earlier this year, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Bill Lee, President Clinton's nominee for the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. I was impressed with his intelligence, his strong sense of fairness, and his dedication to ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to enjoy the same basic rights. Today I strongly urge my colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee to act favorably on the nomination of Bill Lan Lee.

Mr. Lee has an exceptional background. He is a graduate of Yale University and Columbia University Law School, and has proven his dedication to the public sector by working for the Asian American Legal Defense Fund and the Los Angeles-based Center for Law in the Public Interest. Currently, he serves as western regional counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. During his 23-years as a civil rights litigator, Mr. Lee has earned a reputation for his legal expertise and his integrity.

In July, the President nominated Mr. Lee to be the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the Department of Justice. At the time of his nomination, Mr. Lee was widely praised by both his allies and adversaries as a qualified and competent civil rights at-

torney, and was supported by both Democrats and Republicans. No one questioned his intelligence nor his qualifications to competently serve this country as the Assistant Attorney General.

That is why it is so surprising, in the eleventh hour, to now hear so much opposition to this nomination. The vote on this nomination should be based on Mr. Lee's competence, ability, and character. Instead, some Senators have decided that his nomination should be held hostage to their position on affirmative action. Rather than to fill this position, which has gone vacant for over six months, my colleagues instead have chosen to push their political agenda. I do not believe that this is at all appropriate, nor do I believe that this action is in the best interests of the American people.

I must point out that this is not a lifetime position, nor is it a regulatory position that will out last the President's term. Rather, this position carries a term that is served at the whim of the President. It seems to me that the President, who was elected by the people, should have the right to choose those who will serve under him, that he should have the option of choosing individuals whose personal views reflect his own, so long as those individuals have the requisite competence, ability, and character. But the opposition to Mr. Lee is not based on his abilities, rather, it is based on policy. I do not believe that this is a legitimate reasoning for opposing this particular nomination.

I am especially troubled by this attack on Mr. Lee because I believe it does an injustice to the American dream. The American dream is a major part of what makes this country such a special place. It says that everyone—whether rich or poor, male or female, gay or straight, black or white—everyone should have the opportunity to go as far as their talent and hard work will take them. It's a dream that says that merit, and nothing more, should determine your opportunities.

Mr. Lee is a shining example of this dream becoming reality. Out of adversity came this bright, enthusiastic gentleman who made a career of ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to share their talents and succeed. In fact, it was this belief in this idealistic view of America that made Mr. Lee pursue this position. Lee insisted in his confirmation hearing that as "a son of immigrants, the opportunity to serve the nation by enforcing the Federal civil rights laws reaffirms [his] belief in the American dream."

Despite this statement, and despite the fact that Mr. Lee has repeatedly assured his critics that he is not in favor of quotas, that he believes every talented and able individual should be given the full opportunity to compete and succeed, and that he would enforce the laws of our country, my colleagues continue to take issue with his nomination by attacking his personal be-

liefs and views on affirmative action. Unfortunately, these baseless allegations, unfounded attacks, and unwarranted comments about Mr. Lee have undermined the first real chance this Senate has had to fill this position with a qualified and competent individual. In short, they are refusing to give this qualified individual the opportunity to stand on his merit.

Mr. President, I thank the American people deserve better, and I believe we do an injustice to them by allowing this position to go empty for this long for no good reason. This is shameful, and I urge my colleagues to reconsider their actions.●

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF LEBANON

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Lebanese-American Club of Michigan. On this day, November 22, 1997, the club will celebrate its first annual formal dinner.

The Lebanese-American Club of Detroit is to be commended. Through the tireless dedication of its members this organization has strengthened the cultural understanding of Lebanon in the State of Michigan. I am proud of the Lebanese-American community's continual efforts to foster relationships of goodwill. These efforts will go far in enhancing and promoting the community's image and understanding throughout the United States and beyond.

I am honored and delighted to see our community gathering to support Lebanon's independence. Throughout its history, the country of Lebanon and its people have faced difficult and trying circumstances. Yet despite these hardships, the people and leaders of Lebanon continue to hold strong to the belief that independence and security are essential for the country to prosper. This evening there is great cause for celebration. The United States travel ban to Lebanon has been lifted, allowing the people of these two nations to travel freely. Many of you in attendance were steadfast in your belief that this would someday occur and should be applauded for your commitment to this goal.

I am pleased to recognize this event in the U.S. Senate and again, send my best wishes to each of you.●

ARAB-AMERICAN AND CHALDEAN COUNCIL 1997 ANNUAL CIVIC AND HUMANITARIAN AWARDS BANQUET

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge an important event which is taking place in the State of Michigan. On this day, December 5, 1997, many have gathered to celebrate the Arab-American and Chaldean Council [ACC] Annual Civic and Humanitarian Awards Banquet. Each of the individuals in attendance deserve special recognition for their commitment and steadfast support of the Arab-American and Chaldean communities.

I am pleased to recognize the recipients of this evening's awards: Mr. Brian Connolly and Ms. Beverly B. Smith, civic and humanitarian; Mr. John Almstadt, 1997 leadership award; Senator Dick Posthumus, 1997 State leadership award; and Ms. Elham Jabiru-Shayota and Mr. Andrew Ansara, Entrepreneurs of the Year. Each of these recipients should take great pride in receiving these distinguished awards.

While it is important to pay special tribute to the awardees, it is also essential to honor the citizens of the Arab-American and Chaldean communities. Each of you that has worked to strengthen cultural understanding have contributed greatly to the State of Michigan. For the past 18 years, the ACC has provided tireless support and steadfast dedication to Arabic and Chaldean-speaking immigrants and refugees. Through job placement programs and mental health services, ACC has significantly enhanced the lives of many in our community. As you gather this evening to honor these awardees, I challenge each of you to be active participants in your respective communities.

To the Arab-American and Chaldean American communities and to the awardees, I send my sincere best wishes. May the spirit of this evening continue to inspire each of you. ●

REPRESENTATIVE HAMILTON RECEIVES THE EDMUND S. MUSKIE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, it was my singular honor this past September to attend the annual dinner of the Center for National Policy where Representative LEE HAMILTON of Indiana received the Edmund S. Muskie Distinguished Public Service Award. Representative HAMILTON's distinguished record of public service exemplifies, both in spirit and deed, the principles which the late Senator Muskie brought to public service.

The Congress and the American people will deeply miss LEE HAMILTON's wisdom, sound judgment, and the 30 years of dedicated and independent representation he gave to his fellow Hoosiers. These values were tangibly evidenced in LEE HAMILTON's acceptance speech which demonstrated why he is one of the most respected and listened to Members of Congress. His plain Hoosier common sense and high standards of public service have well served the Nation.

It is most fitting that he should receive this award named for another distinguished American legislator and that Congressman HAMILTON's remarks be recorded for posterity. Mr. President, I ask that they be printed in the RECORD.

The remarks follow:

REP. LEE H. HAMILTON—REFLECTIONS ON THE CONGRESS AND THE COUNTRY

REMARKS TO CENTER FOR NATIONAL POLICY UPON RECEIPT OF EDMUND S. MUSKIE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

I really do not recall enjoying speeches any more than I have tonight. Thank you one and all. Some I thought could have been a little longer, others I found a bit restrained, but overall it has been an immensely satisfying evening.

I shall think often of this evening and the high honor you have paid to me. I've always wanted to walk off the stage before I was shoved off, and your nice gesture makes me think I have done that.

Politicians do a lot of things very well but I'm not sure retiring is one of them. I've always felt that you should leave when others think you should stay.

It has occurred to me in times past that the United States government needed the equivalent of a House of Lords for retired politicians. I'm beginning to think more favorably of that idea. I'm not quite sure what its purpose would be and I know that the taxpayers wouldn't tolerate it, but it would be a nice gathering place for a bunch of has-beens. It would keep us out of mischief and perhaps more importantly keep us off the television, and an occasional good thought or deed might from time to time emerge.

No award comes to one person alone. All who receive an honor stand on the shoulders of many others. I acknowledge no all-inclusive list tonight of people who share this award with me, but among them most importantly are: my wife, Nancy, and our children, Tracy, Debbie, and Doug; I cannot begin to tell you the contributions they have made—but for a sample consider not having their husband and father around the house for 30 weekends a year for 30 years; the man who got me started in this political business, and he has remained a trusted friend and advisor, Dick Stoner, and his wife, Virginia; and, of course, a long list of outstanding staff members, without whose help I would have accomplished very little. The best advice for any Member remains—hire a staff a lot smarter than you are; and I have done that.

The award is all the more meaningful because it is named for Edmund Muskie. I still remember the clarity and persuasiveness of his statements on the budget, the environment, and foreign policy.

Mike Barnes and Mo Steinbruner have been doing an excellent job of continuing his important work at the Center for National Policy. As Madeleine Albright correctly noted last year, CNP is more than a think tank, it's an action tank.

And a word of special appreciation to Hank Schacht, the Chairman and CEO of Lucent Technologies. If you want a model for an American business executive, look no further. He combines all the skills of an outstandingly successful business executive with a commitment to the public interest that is simply extraordinary.

I've been asked to reminisce for a few minutes. Obviously they didn't expect anything too heavy from me this evening, and I'm pleased to comply.

EARLY YEARS IN CONGRESS

I've been fortunate to serve many years in Congress. I've served with 8 Presidents; I've worked with 11 Secretaries of State; and when I complete my 17th Congress, I'll be one of only around 80 Member in the history of the House who have served that long.

I remember, of course, my early years in Congress. I remember that the Speaker of the House then, John McCormack, could not remember my name. He called me John and Henry and Carl on various days. Then one day before the Democratic caucus to elect

the Speaker he called me on the phone. I told him I wouldn't vote for him, but would vote instead for Mo Udall. That's probably not the smartest judgment I ever made. From that day on, however, he knew my name, and the next time he saw me in the hall he called me Lee. And to his eternal credit he never held it against me.

I remember those early days when Members of Congress could put a new post office in every village and hamlet, and I did. I build 17 in my first year in Congress.

And I remember needing only one staffer to help me answer constituent mail, and getting only an occasional visit from a lobbyist. I also remember that I could accept any gift offered, and make any amount of money of outside income, unrestricted and unreported. I even remember—in those pre-Vietnam and pre-Watergate days—people believing and trusting what government officials and politicians said.

I remember that when I first ran for Congress in 1964, my total campaign budget was \$30,000, compared to \$1 million last election.

And I remember many close personal relationships across the aisle. Early in my career, I made a parliamentary mistake on the floor. A senior Republican (and good friend) came over, put his arm around me, and gently pointed out my mistake and how to correct it—and this was a bill he opposed. I can't imagine that happening today.

I remember walking into the House Foreign Affairs Committee room, which was then a small room now occupied by the House TV-radio gallery. I was told by the staff director there were no seats at the Committee table for me or the other two freshmen Democratic Members. He told me that if I wanted a seat I had to arrive before the lobbyists and the spectators came in. But it really didn't matter whether I came or not; as a freshman I was not going to be recognized to speak.

UNFORGETTABLE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

I remember some unforgettable Members of Congress, including the awesome—even fearsome—Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Emanuel Celler. I was the designated spokesman when a group of us went to talk to him about the President's proposal to extend the term of House Members from two to four years. We favored the bill and had introduced it. And I asked him how he stood on the bill. His response has become a part of Washington lore. He said, "I don't stand on it, I'm sitting on it. It rests four-square under my fanny and will never see the light of day." And of course it didn't, and we learned something about congressional power.

I remember Chairman Jamie Whitten, who would bring the most complicated appropriations bill, thousands of pages in length, to the floor of the House and spend his entire allotted debate time on a conference report thanking everyone under the sun, and saying nothing about the bill. The first few times he did it I thought he might not be smart enough to explain the bill. I finally figured out that he was too smart to explain it, and he never did, and he always got it passed.

I remember how deeply disappointed President Johnson was when I offered the first amendment to reduce U.S. involvement in Vietnam. It was a switch of position for me, although others had preceded me. I was one of his favorites from the class of '64, and he had come to campaign for me in '66. He had taken a special interest in my career. I will never forget his eyes when he asked me, "How could you do that to me, Lee?"

I remember Hale Boggs addressing President Nixon and members of his entire Cabinet in the Cabinet Room. He made an impassioned plea as only he could do on a subject