

what he might do. No. 1, invent a new disease that had never been heard of before for which there is no vaccine and no cure, that pronounces a death sentence. No. 2, think of a way to transmit that disease that involves the most powerfully reliable human impulse, which is sexual activity. And, No. 3, introduce that disease into countries that are the poorest in the world and have almost no health structure to deal with the disease and in which the discussion of sexual activity is taboo.

That is exactly what has happened with HIV/AIDS. As I look back on those four countries we saw—South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, and Namibia—these are four countries, with a little exception for Botswana, where 30 years ago they were under some kind of colonial rule. Then the people who are in power in the government today fought against that rule for their freedom, they were guerrillas and they were at war. Then typically there was a civil war to decide who of the winners would govern. And now they are in charge in all four of those countries. They are doing well, in terms of their governance. They are building their democracy very well. And the governance is something they can be proud of.

But all of a sudden out of left field comes this AIDS, just as they are reaching their freedom and just as they are in charge. We saw the wife of Nelson Mandela, Graca Machel, who said to us: It took us aback. We weren't prepared. We weren't ready for it.

It seems like a cruel, terrible trick to play on people who for 30 years have struggled to gain their freedom and find themselves in charge of their own destiny.

Finally, I think we saw a good deal of hope. We saw leaders who, in spite of the terrible odds they face, are committed to fighting it. We saw people from all over the world, really, who were there, volunteering their help. We saw faith-based organizations holding hands, taking care of orphans, finding patients.

My sense of Africa is that for a long time it has generally been ignored by our country. Presidents have sometimes gone but only as an afterthought. I suspect Africa presents such challenges today, not just with HIV/AIDS but in other ways, that it will begin to attract some of the brightest, most intelligent people in the world, many of them Africans who have left to go to other parts of the world, and I believe they will come home.

I saw this morning on C-SPAN the discussion about Ghana and the energy minister who was born in Ghana and was educated in Minnesota. He was the managing partner of Deloitte and Touche for all of Africa, and he decided to go back to Ghana and help build that country.

America was built that way, by people who saw great challenge here and came to help build the country. I suspect Africa may be that sort of challenge. I am glad our President has de-

voted himself in such a strong way to it. I hope he continues that over the next several years. I believe if he does, when he goes back to Crawford, TX at the end of 8 years, it will be one of the great accomplishments of his administration.

I hope the Senate continues to put partisanship aside and to support the \$15 billion and do it in an orderly way. I commend our leader for his insistence on it. I was privileged to be a part of the delegation that went for 2 weeks and it will certainly redouble my interest and attention to our responsibilities to the people of Africa.

I thank the Senate for giving me the opportunity to present this.

PAUL WELLSTONE VETERANS HOSPITAL

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I am pleased to cosponsor legislation to name the Veterans Administration hospital in Minneapolis, MN, after the late Senator Paul Wellstone. It would be a great tribute to my departed friend and colleague, who worked tirelessly to improve the lives of veterans throughout Minnesota and across our Nation.

During the August recess, I met with the leaders of major veterans' organizations in Minnesota. Several have formally expressed their support for bestowing this honor on Senator Wellstone. Others, while not taking official positions, are now aware of the legislation and our intentions to proceed with it. So, I believe that the path is clear in Minnesota for this legislation to be enacted with very broad support.

Senator Wellstone served for seven years on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, where he fought tirelessly for more generous benefits and expanded services, including health care, for the men and women who served our Nation with great courage and dedication, and who now deserve far better than many are receiving or not receiving. In addition, he and his dedicated staff enabled countless veterans individually to receive benefits, medical care, and other services which were wrongly denied them. While living, and after his tragic death last year, Senator Wellstone has been a hero to many thousands of veterans throughout Minnesota and across our Nation. Many of them have provided the impetus and support for this legislation.

It is my hope that this measure might receive swift and favorable consideration by the Senate, and that it then be sent to the House for its concurrence and to the President for his signature, prior to the first anniversary of Senator Wellstone's death.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Sen-

ator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in Washington, DC. On August 21, 2003, a transgendered woman was murdered. Her nude body was found about 2 a.m. in a wooded area near Malcolm X Avenue and 2nd Street, SE.

The woman, identified by friends as Emonie Kiera Spaulding, 25, was the second transgendered woman to die of gunshot wounds and the third to be shot in the District during a 5-day period. The D.C. police department have arrested a suspect.

I believe that 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.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave young man from Mitchell, IN. Army Specialist Ronald "Ronnie" Allen, Jr., 22 years old, was killed near Balad on August 25, 2003 when the Army unit he was riding in was struck by another vehicle. Ronnie joined the Army with his entire life before him. He chose to risk everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

Ronnie was the 14th Hoosier soldier to be killed while serving his country in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He leaves behind his mother, Jyl Harrison, and his stepfather, Derek Harrison, and their children Andrea, Nathan and Eric. Today, I join Ronnie's family, his friends, and the entire Mitchell community in mourning his death. While we struggle to bear our sorrow over his death, we can also take pride in the example he set, bravely fighting to make the world a safer place. It is this courage and strength of character that people will remember when they think of Ronnie, a memory that will burn brightly during these continuing days of conflict and grief.

Ronald Allen, Jr. told his family he was proud to be serving his country in Iraq because he felt like he could make a real difference there. He told them he was proud to be a soldier and that he loved his country. Today, his family remembers him as a true American hero, and we honor the sacrifice he made while serving his country.

Ronald dreamed of joining the military as a young man and even early-enlisted in the Army during his junior year of high school. Two weeks after he graduated from Mitchell High School

in 2000, Ronald left home to begin full-time duty at Fort Carson in Colorado. He was assigned to the 502d Personnel Service Battalion, 43d Area Support Group.

As I search for words to do justice in honoring Ronald Allen, Jr.'s sacrifice, I am reminded of President Lincoln's remarks as he addressed the families of the fallen soldiers in Gettysburg: "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." This statement is just as true today as it was nearly 150 years ago, as I am certain that the impact of Ronald's actions will live on far longer than any record of these words.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Ronald Allen, Jr. in the official RECORD of the U.S. Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy and peace. When I think about this just cause in which we are engaged, and the unfortunate pain that comes with the loss of our heroes, I hope that families like Ronald's can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God bless the United States of America.

Mr. President, I also wish today to honor the accomplishments of the Hoosier soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 293d Infantry Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry Regiment, from the Indiana National Guard, who have become the first National Guard battalions in the Nation to receive the Combat Infantry award since the Korean war.

The Combat Infantry award is a highly coveted honor given by the Department of the Army to soldiers who have satisfactorily performed infantry duties as part of a unit that participated in ground combat. The Infantry badge honors soldiers who have operated under the worst conditions, yet still successfully performed his or her mission in a combat environment. In addition, medics who supported the soldiers will receive the Combat Medical Badge. I am immensely proud that these Indiana battalions have become the first units in more than 50 years to earn this distinction.

All members of the battalions will receive the Combat Infantry award as a symbol of our Nation's gratitude for the bravery they demonstrated and the sacrifices they and their families have made during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 1st Battalion, 293d Infantry Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry Regiment, are the first Indiana National Guard units to go into combat since World War II. As this award recognizes, they have made an exemplary

return to battle, honoring themselves and their home State of Indiana through their efforts.

The battalions have been stationed in Iraq for more than 5 months. During their time in Iraq, the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 293d Infantry Regiment, have provided security for the Talil Air Force Base, a key airstrip in Southern Iraq. The unit took over responsibility for the base just days after the war's deadliest battle took place on April 1 to secure control of the airstrip. The members of the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry Regiment, have engaged in a wide range of missions, including guarding the Baghdad Airport, one of the most strategically important sites in Iraq.

I am proud to honor the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 293d Infantry Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 152d Infantry Regiment. The thoughts and prayers of all Hoosiers are with them as they continue their role in rebuilding Iraq. May God watch over the soldiers as they complete their duty and may God bless the United States of America.

Mr. President, I further rise today to honor the heroic service of United States Army Cpl Damien Luten, 24, of Indianapolis, IN. Corporal Luten was a member of the U.S. Army's 507th Maintenance Company, which crossed into Iraq from Kuwait on March 21, 2003, as part of a convoy supporting a patriot missile battalion, during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On March 23, 2003, the 507th Maintenance Company was ambushed by Iraqi military forces and irregulars in the city of An Nasiriyah. According to the U.S. Army, Corporal Luten's convoy found itself in a desperate situation due to a navigational error caused by the combined effects of the operational pace, acute fatigue, isolation and the harsh environmental conditions. The tragic results of this error placed the soldiers of the 507th Maintenance Company in a torrent of fire from Iraqi soldiers who attacked the isolated convoy.

Eleven of the company's 33 soldiers were killed in combat or later died from injuries. Seven soldiers were captured in the attack, including PFC Jessica Lynch who was later rescued by American Marines. This toll, though devastating, may have been much greater had it not been for the valorous acts of soldiers such as Corporal Luten, who sought to protect his unit by attempting to return fire with the unit's only .50-caliber machine gun. However, the machine gun failed and as Corporal Luten was reaching for his M-16, he was wounded in the right leg by enemy fire. Corporal Luten has been awarded the Purple Heart for the wound he received in combat.

As I reflect on Corporal Luten's service, I am reminded of a quote by Douglas MacArthur:

The soldier, above all other people prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war.

The United States will be eternally grateful for the courage and bravery Corporal Luten exhibited on the field of battle.

Corporal Luten is expected to return to his base in Fort Bliss, TX, where he will have at least one more surgery on his leg. This will be the ninth surgery Corporal Luten has undergone to repair his injured leg. If Corporal Luten has his way, his injury will not mark the end of his military service. He plans to re-enlist and enter the Army's Chaplain Corps when his current tour concludes in April 2004.

I know that all Hoosiers share my deep sense of pride in Corporal Luten and all of the men and women of our Armed Forces from Indiana who safeguard our freedom. My thoughts and prayers are with him as he continues his recovery and begins his new service in the Army.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, on rollcall vote No. 319, I was recorded as voting aye. I intended to vote "no" on the passage of H.R. 2738, the Chilean Free Trade Agreement. I ask unanimous consent to change my vote. This will not change the outcome of the vote.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and recognize Women's Equality Day on August 26, 2003. As well as celebrating Women's Equality Day, this day is also a celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Equal Rights Amendment Campaign.

This year's celebration being hosted by the Advisory Boards on the Status of Women of Essex, Bergen, and Union Counties in New Jersey is the 155th observance of Women's Equality Day.

One of the most important people in the fight for women's equality was Alice Paul. Alice Paul was born in Mt. Laurel, NJ, and spent her entire life fighting for women's rights. She believed that men and women should be equal partners in society. She led the final, successful campaign for a woman's right to vote. She inspired thousands to join the struggle as she stood up to Congress and the President.

Understanding that securing the right to vote was only the first step, Alice Paul authored the Equal Rights Amendment and drafted and lobbied for gender equality language in the United Nations Charter and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Alice Paul is a great example that one person can make a difference and motivate others to take up a noble cause.

Today, because of Alice Paul and numerous other women who preceded and followed her, we're getting closer to true equality for women.

It is important that we recognize Women's Equality Day. Since the days