

Europe, in refugee camps, on Air Force bases, Navy ships, jungles, forward bases, demilitarized zones, Bob Hope went wherever we needed him, and he conveyed to our troops the commitment and love of the American people.

The front rows would be filled with soldiers injured in battle, limbs destroyed, bodies wrapped in bandages. And he would manage to make them laugh. He was able, for those moments while he was on stage, giving his best to our best, to lift those young men and women out of their war-torn bodies and help them forget the fatigue, the fear, and the loneliness of battle.

Bob Hope is a giant. Bob Hope is a national treasure. We will never, ever forget his service to the United States of America.

Happy birthday, Mr. Hope.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

the PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STATE AID MEDICAID TEMPORARY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, one of the many interesting challenges this Congress will face is that of fundamental Medicaid reform. The President unveiled an innovative and exciting proposal earlier this year, and the budget that we adopted in April anticipates Congressional action by creating a reserve fund of resources for modernizing Medicaid.

Of course, the jobs and growth package presently before us contains a temporary state aid program of \$20 billion. Under this interim plan, up to \$10 billion will flow through the Medicaid program over the next 18 months. This time-limited spending, proposed in the Senate by Senators COLLINS and NELSON, as well as Senator ROCKEFELLER, is provisional, lasting only until September 30, 2004. Further, Mr. President, my three colleagues entered a colloquy in the RECORD on May 14, 2003, to that effect. The language that passed the Senate, and the language contained in the conference report, clearly states that the program itself is repealed in 2004. The Senate sponsors of this provision have acknowledged that the program is not to be permanent, and both the chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator NICKLES, agree that this program is to last no longer than September 30, 2004. As the program unfolds, based on the commitment of its sponsors and the chairmen, I will be monitoring to ensure that the program is indeed transient, and will work with colleagues to keep it temporary.

Further, in no way does this provision in the state aid package obstruct the opportunity provided in the budget resolution for the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Energy and

Commerce Committee to move ahead on Medicaid modernization. Since the administration detailed its plan, various committees in the House and Senate have explored its features, and Medicaid modernization that enhances flexibility and responsiveness is a goal many share as we move into the 21st century. I look forward to the creativity and ingenuity of the chairmen of the relevant committees, Senator GRASSLEY and Mr. TAUZIN, as they move forward in the coming weeks and months.

ALEUTIAN ISLAND VETERANS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, as Memorial Day approaches, our Nation reflects upon the courage and heroism of our Armed Forces. During this time of reflection, I hope the Congress and the Nation remember those who defended Alaska during World War II.

The Aleutian Islands were a key part of our victory in World War II. The battle fought at Dutch Harbor contributed indirectly to our success at Midway, and the fight to reclaim Attu and Kiska deprived the Japanese of a base from which to raid Alaska and limit North Pacific operations. The geography, weather, and location of the islands made these missions particularly dangerous and difficult, and the members of the military who served there deserve special recognition.

The Voice of Anchorage Times recently reported that these veterans will be traveling back to Alaska this month. I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Voice of the Times, May 4, 2003]

THOSE ALEUTIAN ISLAND VETERANS ARE BACK
(By William J. Tobin)

Once again, as regular as the return of the long days of summer, a six-man contingent of veterans of the Thousand Mile War are back in town, preparing to leave tomorrow afternoon for Kodiak, the first stop on a journey to revisit the battlegrounds of Attu, where U.S. forces fought Japanese invaders in 1943. The 60th anniversary reunion is being led by Al King of Sunrise, Fla., who keeps Aleutian Island vets in touch with each other through his Willawaw Letter—a periodic newsletter packed with names and addresses of those who served here back in those days. Each issue also is filled with personal stories and photos provided by Willawaw warriors sharing their war stories with their fellow vets. Part of the reunion ritual again will be breakfast tomorrow morning at Gwennies Old Alaska Restaurant on Spenard Road, close by their Anchorage headquarters, the Puffin Inn.

Veterans who fought with the 11th Air Force during the Aleutian campaign and members of "Americans Home from Siberia" will hold their annual reunion later this year in a spot a bit more tourist friendly than Attu. They're going to get together at the Riviera Resort and Racquet Club at Palm Spring, Calif., for a four-day Halloween weekend beginning Oct. 30. The "Home from Siberia" fliers include members of the Doolittle Raiders, the 20th Air Force and Fleet Air Wing 4, all of whom shared in the aerial battles of World War II. Herman Thompson of Talkeetna, secretary of the national 11th Air Force Association, is the reunion treas-

urer. He's collecting the \$110-a-person registration fees that cover a Friday luncheon at the Desert Willows Country Club and a Palm Springs celebrity tour, a Saturday tour of the Palm Spring Air Museum and an evening banquet at the Riviera. Thompson's phone number, for those seeking more information, is (907) 733-2626.

MEMORIAL DAY

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, as we reflect upon this Memorial Day, Americans throughout the country should take time to remember all the brave men and women who gave their lives in the defense of freedom and to preserve the liberties we cherish in this great Nation. We must never forget our fallen heroes, and we should continue to praise them for their service and commitment to country.

This year, in particular, we must be ever reverent because America lost some of her greatest sons and daughters in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Those who died did so in the defense of America from her enemies and to deliver downtrodden nations from the oppression of tyrants. I am both grateful and sorrowful this Memorial Day.

I want to express my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of those who only recently gave their lives fighting on behalf of the United States. My words cannot erase your pain, but please know my prayers are with you during this most difficult time.

It is said of those who fought in wars to defend America that "All gave some and some gave all." On this Memorial Day, I hope every American will pay tribute to those who gave all.

IN TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL LEROY BARNIDGE, JR.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, our Nation's Air Force will soon lose one of its exceptional leaders, MG Leroy Barnidge, Jr., who is retiring in the next few weeks after 32 years of outstanding service to this country.

Many in Congress have become acquainted with General Barnidge due to his service since 2001 as director of the Air Force Office of Legislative Liaison. I have had the great pleasure of meeting and working with Leroy much longer, due to his two tours of duty at Ellsworth Air Force Base, the last as base commander from August 1995 to February 1997.

There is no finer gentleman, nor one with a better sense of humor or more likable personality than Leroy Barnidge. As commander of the largest military installation in South Dakota, Leroy impressed me with his candor, his integrity, and his competence. Knowing and working with him has always been a joy, and Leroy will be missed not only in the Air Force but also by many of us in the Congress.

General Barnidge began his Air Force service as I did, through the Reserve Officer Training Corps, and was commissioned as an officer in 1971. Since then, he has held a variety of operations and maintenance assignments, including major command and joint staff billets. He is experienced in aircrew operations, flight line maintenance and combat support activities. The general has also performed major command staff and executive support functions, as well as duties as a force planner and division chief in the joint staff. He has commanded a combat crew training squadron, a logistics group, an operations group, a B-1B bomb wing at Ellsworth, and the B-2 wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

General Barnidge also completed the program for senior officials in national security at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and Seminar XXI, Foreign Political and International Relations, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He received special recognition in 1999 as the winner of the Air Combat Command Moller Trophy, recognizing him as the best among all 28 wing commanders. General Barnidge has amassed over 2,900 hours in the T-37, T-38, OV-10, B-52G, B-1B, and B-2 aircraft.

In his years of working with the Congress, General Barnidge provided a clear and credible voice for the Air Force, consistently providing accurate, concise and timely information. His integrity, professionalism, and expertise enabled him to develop and maintain an exceptional rapport between the Air Force and the Congress.

On behalf of the Congress and the country, I thank General Barnidge, his wife Sandy, and his entire family for their commitment and many sacrifices. Sandy always went out of her way to make my staff and me feel welcome, and I know she, too, has done much for the Air Force and her country during the past 32 years. Thanks to both of you for a job well done. On behalf of a grateful nation, we wish you all the best during your retirement.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senators BROWNBACK and DODD to introduce legislation authorizing the establishment of the National Museum of African American History and Culture within the Smithsonian Institution.

The effort to construct a museum dedicated to African American history and culture began in the early 1900's by an association working to commemorate the valor and deed of Negro soldiers and sailors who fought in American wars and contributions of African Americans in science, art, literature, business and other endeavors.

I have conferred with African American constituents in Alaska regarding the significance of this bill—the late JP Jones, Bill Sykes, and James Hayes to name a few.

Today, we are taking an important step toward bringing this overdue effort closer to a reality.

The provisions of the bill direct the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents to consult with the Commission on Fine Arts, the National Capitol Planning Commission, and three members of President Bush's Commission on the National Museum of African American History and Culture when selecting the museum site. The legislation directs the Board of Regents to complete this work within 18 months.

The legislation authorizes \$17 million in federal funds for the museum in fiscal year 2004. The funding for the museum will be fifty percent federal funding and the remaining fifty percent will come from non-federal sources.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as this bill moves through the legislative process.

PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT OF RE-AUTHORIZATION OF ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, in 1994 President Clinton signed into law a ban on the production of certain semiautomatic assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. The 1994 law banned a list of 19 specific weapons as well as a number of other weapons incorporating certain design characteristics, such as bayonets and pistol grips. This law is scheduled to sunset on September 13, 2004. If the law is not reauthorized, the production of military-style semiautomatic weapons can legally resume.

In March of this year, in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Attorney General John Ashcroft indicated the Bush administration's support for the current ban on assault weapons but would not indicate support for reauthorization of the ban. Recently, the White House indicated the President does support reauthorizing the ban. However, a senior White House adviser reportedly said that this bill would never make it to the President's desk. And a spokesperson for House Majority Leader TOM DELAY recently said "we have no intentions of bringing it up."

Failure to reauthorize the legislation would be irresponsible because the assault weapon ban works. According to National Institute of Justice statistics reported by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, gun trace requests for assault weapons declined 20 percent in the first calendar year after the ban took effect, dropping from 4,077 in 1994 to 3,268 in 1995. Over the same time period, gun murders declined only 10 percent and trace requests for all types of guns declined 11 percent.

Given the firepower of these firearms, it is not surprising that so many law enforcement organizations supported the Federal assault weapons ban and worked for its passage. Among the many that supported the ban were the Law Enforcement Steering Committee, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Inter-

national Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major City Chiefs Association, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, the National Association of Police Organizations, the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association, the National Black Police Association, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Police Executive Research Forum, and the Police Foundation.

It is critical that we reauthorize the assault weapons ban. Absent such action, AK47s, UZIs, and other semi-automatic weapons will again become easily obtainable weapons of choice for gang members, drug dealers, and other dangerous criminals. I urge the President to show his support for this bill by asking the House Republican Leadership to pass this bill in the House and the Senate Leadership to pass it in the Senate.

MEMORIAL DAY 2003

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on this Memorial Day, I encourage New Mexicans to take a few moments to remember those Americans who have given their lives in the name of freedom. It is upon the sacrifice of these Americans—from all generations—that the freedom we enjoy today is built.

From the Bataan Peninsula to Normandy, from the Ia Drang Valley to Inchon, from Afghanistan to Iraq, and many other conflicts, American men and women have fought and died because they believed in their country and believed in preserving its many blessings.

As we enjoy this holiday weekend with our families and friends, let us take a few minutes to recognize the courage with which so many of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have fought when called upon by their country. Let us also remember all those who never made it back to the country they loved because they gave their lives for it in a far away land.

At this moment in America's history, I could not be more proud of our men and women in uniform. I think it is important to note that in the wake of successful combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the same courage and commitment shown by Americans of generations past lives on today in the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, I rise to observe the significance of Memorial Day—and to pay tribute to the Americans we honor on this day. Three days from now, we will, as a nation, remember those who lost their lives in service to our country. They secured our freedom with the most precious gifts they could offer—their love for this country and their lives.

America has honored its fallen soldiers with a Memorial Day, sometimes called Decoration Day, since the Civil