

his Senate sojourn with the singular achievement of being the only person in history to be elected to the Senate in that fashion.

As he began his Senate service with a "first" he also leaves it by setting two more records—that of being the longest serving Senator in U.S. history and also being the oldest person to serve in the U.S. Senate. May I note here that he is also the only person in the Senate who is old enough to be my big brother. But, Strom, like Casey Stengel, I'll never make the mistake of being 70 again.

Strom Thurmond's life is not just about length and achievement, it is about personal service and commitment.

Now, I am not speaking here about Strom's well-known appreciation for the gentler sex. I am speaking about his love of his country and his commitment to serve it.

Consider the fact that Strom Thurmond volunteered for service in World War II. He did that when he could have stayed safely at home. Strom was beyond draft age in 1942. Additionally, as a judge, he held draft-exempted status. Yet he went. And in 1944, Strom Thurmond was part of D-Day—the invasion of the beaches of Normandy that signaled the defeat of worldwide fascism. He risked his life to serve the nation he loved.

After the war, Strom Thurmond served the State that he loved by becoming its Governor.

In 1948, Governor Strom Thurmond tried again to serve the country that he loved by running for President as a States rights Democrat. He carried four States and won 39 electoral votes. Undaunted, in 1954 Strom found another way to serve his beloved State and country by being elected to the U.S. Senate. It is in this role, that of U.S. Senator, that we have come to understand the extraordinary service of this man from South Carolina.

Strom Thurmond is a man who, because of the quantity of his years, has seen enormous change—the rise and fall of Nazi Germany; the Russian Revolution; the rise and fall of the Soviet empire; two world wars; space exploration; civil rights upheaval; and incredible advances in technology and medicine. Indeed, the world is very different from the one that Strom Thurmond knew as a young man. He has been witness to the "vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave."

And yet Strom has never lost his desire to serve, to make his contribution, to add his voice and his views to the rich conglomeration of beliefs and viewpoints which, when mixed together, yield an idea called America.

Strom is never one to become discouraged, disheartened or disenchanted. He loves his country, and he has been a faithful and devoted defender of the Nation's need for a strong defense. No summer soldier, no sunshine patriot, he.

Youth is not a time of life—it is a state of mind. It is not a matter of red cheeks, red lips and supple knees. It is a temper of the will; a quality of the imagination. Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for a adventure over a life of ease. This often exists in a man of 50, more than in a boy of 20. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old by deserting their dreams.

Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.

Whether 70 or 16, there is in every being's heart a love of wonder; the sweet amazement at the stars and starlike things and thoughts.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence,

as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of your heart, there is a wireless station. So long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, grandeur, courage, and power form the Earth, from men and from the Infinite—so long are you young. When the wires are all down and the central places of your heart are covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then are you grown old, indeed!

In the words of Pericles: "It is only the love of honor that never grows old."

Today, it is not the length but the quality of Strom Thurmond's life which we celebrate. For that marvelous life of character and courage I salute him. It is a privilege to know him, an honor to serve with him, and an education to ponder his remarkable life.

MULTIPLICATION TABLE OF HAPPINESS

Count your garden by the flowers
Never by the leaves that fall;
Count your days by the sunny hours,
Not remembering clouds at all;
Count your nights by stars, not shadows,
Count your life by smiles, not tears,
And on this beautiful December afternoon,
Count your age by friends, not years.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an American political icon, patriot, war hero, and lifelong South Carolinian, Senator Strom Thurmond. While many will recall Senator Thurmond's half-century career on the political stage, I shall fondly remember the many kindnesses he extended to my family and me. He was a warm-hearted, gentle man, and I will count it as one of my life's honors to have served with him in the U.S. Senate.

I join my colleagues in extending my heartfelt condolences to his family who have lost a beloved husband, father, and grandfather. Strom was a legend in the Senate and touched many of us during his long career. In fact, I will always remember Senator Thurmond's 90th birthday party when he turned to the audience and said, "If you all eat right, exercise, and don't drink whiskey, you'll be here for the 100th birthday party." Strom Thurmond was a remarkable American; I don't think we'll see another one like him for a long time, if ever.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, we mourn the loss of Strom Thurmond, the legendary Senator who held his first public office in the late 1920s and who died on June 27 in his hometown of Edgefield, SC. The State of South Carolina lost a beloved native son and the Senate lost a cheerful, robust, honorable, and dedicated colleague. He was someone who was always eager to help me and to accommodate my concerns. It was an honor to work with him on issues of national defense, foreign policy, and many other matters important to the people of the United States.

South Carolinians' outpouring of respect when he died was massive. Senator Thurmond had been a judge, a soldier who landed in Normandy as a member of the 82nd Airborne Division in 1942, a Governor of South Carolina, and chairman of the Judiciary and Armed Services committees in this body. He was also someone who

changed his mind on an issue of great import—race in America—and he was a fine example to his fellow citizens on that score.

Strom Thurmond was an indomitable spirit. He represented continuity in the U.S. Senate, becoming, in 1996, its oldest serving Member and, in 1997, its longest serving Member. Those are for the record books. But on a personal level, I can say I admired tremendously his buoyant spirit. I appreciated him for assisting me in so many ways, and for his stalwart service to our country.

THAILAND'S BUSINESS AS USUAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in the struggle for freedom in Burma, I am becoming increasingly convinced that Thailand is on the side of the representative junta in Rangoon.

To with, the Foreign Minister of Thailand was recently quoted: "We are trying to find an exit for the Myanmar Government, the also reduce pressure from the international community."

Instead of trying to find an "exit" for the repressive State Peace and Development Council, SPDC, Thailand should be trying to secure the release of democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other democrats jailed in the wake of the brutal May 30 attack on the National League for Democracy, NLD.

Thailand's "business-as-usual" approach places that country at odds with other Associated of Southeast Asian Nation, ASEAN, members—including Malaysia. Given the SPDC's refusal to release Suu Kyi and other Burmese democrats, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir rightly commented that Burma could be expelled from ASEAN "as a last result."

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra must defend democracy in Burma and should join with Malaysia and other ASEAN members in holding the SPDC accountable for their actions.

Thailand should take note that I included a provision in S. 1426, the fiscal year 2004 Foreign Operations appropriations bill, that conditions United States assistance to that country on a determination by the Secretary of State that Thailand: one, supports the advancement of democracy in Burma and is taking action to sanction the military junta in Rangoon; two, is not hampering the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in Thailand who have fled Burma; and three is not forcibly repatriating Burmese to Burma.

It is past time for Thailand to prove its commitment to the cause of freedom and the rule of law in Burma. The Thai Foreign Minister has an opportunity to set the record straight in Bali this week. He should not miss it.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA FLATT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my fellow Nevadan, Linda Flatt, from Henderson, NV.

Linda is a living example of how a person can turn her grief into action and help others.

On June 29, 1993, Linda's son Paul took his own life. He was 25 years old. In addition to having to accept the loss of her son, Linda had to accept the way she lost him.

First, Linda attended suicide survivors meetings. She transformed herself from being a victim to a survivor. She could have stopped there but she did not.

Even when she was able to accept her son's suicide, Linda realized it affected other people. All she had to do was look at her own family. Paul had left behind many relatives and friends. Unfortunately, for every family like Linda's, there are many more in Nevada and nationwide.

Linda educated herself about the problem of suicide. Eventually she linked up with the Suicide Prevention Action Network and came to Washington for a National Awareness Event. This marked the beginning of Linda Flatt's transformation from suicide survivor to community activist.

Since 1998, Linda Flatt has made it her business, as a private citizen, to educate people in Nevada about suicide. She has not just told them it is a problem; she has told them there is a solution. Prevention is the solution.

On the national front, we have developed a strategy for suicide prevention. But Nevada, which had the highest rate of suicide in the country until this year, did not. Linda Flatt did not think that was right.

Linda took the national model, and started presenting it to the Nevada Legislature. She learned about State government and the legislative process. She contacted the press and the media. She lined up witnesses for hearings. She proposed resolutions and budgets. And finally, this year, the Nevada Legislature passed SB 49, which creates a State Office of Suicide Prevention in Nevada.

On behalf of the citizens of the State of Nevada, I wish to thank Linda Flatt for her tireless efforts and unwavering faith. To say that Linda Flatt is a model citizen does not really do her justice. She has already made a difference in the lives of countless people and will, no doubt, continue to do so. I feel great pride in knowing and recognizing the accomplishments of Linda Flatt.

PROTECT ACT OF 2003 TECHNICAL AMENDMENT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to commend my colleagues in the House of Representatives for passing S. 1280, the PROTECT Act of 2003 Technical Amendment. This bill is directed to that portion of the PROTECT Act authorizing a pilot program to study the feasibility of instituting a national background check for volunteers who work with children. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

will provide their expertise by evaluating criminal records of volunteers provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to determine if the volunteers are fit to interact and work with children.

When authorizing the pilot program, Congress immunized the National Center for its operation of the child abuse cyber-tip line but neglected to extend it to their activities connected to their operation of the background check pilot program. In order for the Center to fully implement the pilot program, this bill immunizes the Center for decisions it makes based on the criminal records provided to them in any one of the following instances: 1. a decision that the records indicate that a volunteer is not fit to work with children; 2. a decision that an individual is fit to serve as a volunteer based on the government providing incomplete or inaccurate criminal history records; or, 3. a decision that an individual is fit to serve as a volunteer where the Center is provided no criminal history records.

Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Senator BIDEN, and I have been the principal authors of this bill. We all agree that this is the proper interpretation of this technical amendment. I commend Chairman SENSENBRENNER in the House of Representatives for moving this time-sensitive bill through the House of Representatives so quickly.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise to commend the other body for its prompt action on S. 1280, legislation introduced by Chairman HATCH and myself and passed unanimously by the Senate on July 14. Enactment of S. 1280 will clear the way for the commencement of the Child Safety Pilot Program created by the Protect Act, a program designed to keep our kids safe from pedophiles and other criminals.

S. 1280 builds upon language included in the Protect Act at section 108 which authorized a pilot program to study the feasibility of national criminal history background checks for volunteers with organizations that work with children. In section 108, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is authorized to assist child-serving organizations in evaluating criminal history records to determine whether potential volunteers are fit to work with children.

We need to do all that we can to keep pedophiles and other convicted felons away from our kids. That was the intent of the background check provisions Senator HATCH, Chairman SENSENBRENNER, and I worked to include in the Protect Act. Instead of giving volunteer organizations raw criminal history data, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, "NCMEC", agreed to review the FBI's data to determine whether it reveals a criminal history rendering someone unfit to work with children.

Under section 108 of the Protect Act, NCMEC will evaluate FBI-provided criminal history records, make a determination whether these records render

a potential volunteer unfit to work with children, and pass this resulting fitness determination on to the requesting volunteer organization. Unfortunately, the Protect Act did not limit NCMEC's civil liability in this area. NCMEC volunteered to take on this task, but they indicated they would be unable to make fitness determinations if they are subject to civil suits by aggrieved volunteers. And while the Protect Act provided NCMEC with a shield from civil liability for operating its cyber tip line, so long as NCMEC does so consistent with the purpose of the tip line, no similar protection was provided with respect to NCMEC's activities under the pilot background check program.

S. 1280 extends NCMEC's immunity from civil liability to actions they take pursuant to the pilot program. NCMEC will still be subject to suit for any criminal actions they take, and liable civilly if a plaintiff can show actual malice or intentional misconduct on NCMEC's part. Specifically, S. 1280 immunizes NCMEC for decisions it makes based on the criminal records provided to them by the FBI in any of the following instances: 1. When NCMEC provides a volunteer organization with a fitness determination indicating that a volunteer is not fit to work with children; 2. When NCMEC provides a volunteer organization with a fitness determination that an individual is fit to serve as a volunteer based on incomplete or inaccurate criminal history records provided by the FBI; or 3. When NCMEC provides a volunteer organization with a fitness determination that an individual is fit to serve as a volunteer based on a lack of criminal history records from the FBI. As an author of S. 1280, I understand my interpretation of the legislation is consistent with that of Chairman HATCH and SENSENBRENNER.

Enactment of S. 1280 will permit the pilot programs authorized in the Protect Act to begin on the date called for in the legislation, July 29, 2003. I thank my colleagues in the other body for taking prompt action on S. 1280. I thank Chairman HATCH for his continued devotion to child safety issues, and I look forward to the commencement of the Child Safety Pilot Program next week.

CANADIAN HARP SEAL HUNT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Humane Society of the United States, HSUS, has recently brought to my attention a matter that I want to share with my colleagues. According to this prestigious organization, the Canadian government provides millions of dollars of subsidies to the sealing industry every year. These subsidies facilitate the slaughter of innocent animals and artificially extend the life of an industry which has ceased to exist in most developed countries.

In 2001, a group of independent veterinarians traveled to observe the seal