

young man I ever met." Well, she was right. TOM is a man of deep resolve and strong character.

The Nation saw that character exhibited in the days following September 11. Senator DASCHLE showed the country the importance of setting labels aside when he publicly embraced President Bush. In the face of that terrible tragedy, America united behind our leadership.

Only a few short weeks later, Senator DASCHLE and I were both targets of anthrax attacks—some of which killed several people—in letters addressed to the two of us. I know that the attacks brought home the reality of terrorism to both of us, but also to the Senate community as a whole.

In the ensuing years, Senator DASCHLE continued to show resolute leadership in the Senate, routinely reaching across the aisle even when those on the other side of the aisle were at their most partisan.

On more than a few occasions, Senator DASCHLE and I have joined together to work on a variety of national legislative efforts. Together, we advocated for expanded benefits for members of the National Guard and Reserve. Senator DASCHLE has shown courage and resolve in holding the line against the President's most objectionable judicial nominations. We worked together on tort reform, combating corporate crime, and efforts to help off-duty police protect Americans. Those are just a few of the initiatives on which we collaborated.

But during that time, he has also been a strong voice for South Dakota on those issues important to his constituents. He has fought for improved health and education for Indians. He has led efforts to expand health services in rural areas and to prevent companies from canceling retiree benefits without notice. He is well known as a champion for ranchers and farmers in South Dakota. In fact, he made sure their voices were always heard. He worked to ensure they had drought aid, but also he worked to do what a true South Dakotan would do: He wanted to make sure they could compete on a level playing field.

Despite a well-run campaign and putting forth his best effort, Senator DASCHLE was not reelected to the Senate this fall. The morning after election day, he gave a speech before his supporters in Sioux Falls. He finished that speech by recalling two memories. The first was of a magnificent Washington skyline sunset he witnessed one fall afternoon leaving his office in the Capitol. The second was watching the Sun rise at Mount Rushmore with his family, and the warm, sweet optimistic feeling inspired by that sunrise. TOM said that, seeing both, he likes sunrises better. I agree. For the past 18 years with each daily sunrise, he sought to bring hope and optimism to this body. He has worked to better his State and his country, to ensure our children and grandchildren have a brighter world in

which to live. He is a remarkable friend and colleague, and I thank him for his service to this institution.

If I can be very personal, in my 30 years in the Senate, I have not known a more honest and more decent Senator than TOM DASCHLE. I believe that part of our Senate fabric and our Senate conscience leaves with this special person.

Mr. President, I see others seeking recognition. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, in a few minutes Senator COLEMAN will offer a resolution. I join Senators COLEMAN, KOHL, and DAYTON in supporting this resolution. By taking this up and passing it at this time, we signal that congressional concern about the deplorable human rights situation in Laos will be intense and ongoing.

As I have discussed today, I hear regular reports from constituents distraught about the conditions faced by their relatives in Laos. This is especially wrenching—and this is the point we have been trying to make all day—when we remember that the Hmong communities reportedly targeted for abuse are the same communities that worked side by side with U.S. forces during the Vietnam war. We simply cannot ignore the dismal human rights situation in Laos and be the country and the people we wish to be.

Just a word on the language of the resolution which Senator COLEMAN will describe in a moment. This resolution expresses the Senate's hope—hope—that a more open society will develop in Laos in the wake of the extension of NTR. Certainly this is my hope, although I, frankly, really see no reason to believe it will happen.

But the reality is that Laos will get NTR. The votes are there, and while I may disagree with the wisdom of colleagues taking that step, we, of course, all do hope for change in Laos—a greater respect for basic human rights, an end to repression aimed at ethnic minorities, such as the Hmong, and religious minorities, such as the Christian community, and for access to vulnerable populations.

I appreciate the efforts of my colleagues who join me in sponsoring this resolution and the efforts of the leadership on both sides, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the Finance Committee.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, first, I thank Senator FEINGOLD for his leadership on this issue, for his perseverance, persistence and being on the floor, as we discuss the miscellaneous tariff provisions, to make sure that, before we finish our work, we put forth a resolution reflecting the sense of this body that there are problems with human rights in Laos. They have to be recognized. That is what this resolution does.

I thank Senator FEINGOLD. I thank my colleague, Senator DAYTON, who has been working with us, and Senator KOHL.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the adoption of the resolution relating to Laotian human rights, which I will send to the desk in a moment, that the pending conference report to accompany H.R. 1047 be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN LAOS

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the resolution, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 475) to condemn human rights abuses in Laos.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to this resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 475) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 475

Whereas the Lao People's Democratic Republic is an authoritarian, Communist, one-party state;

Whereas the Government of Laos has a poor human rights record, particularly with regard to its treatment of minorities;

Whereas the United States Central Intelligence Agency trained and armed tens of thousands of Hmong guerrillas to disrupt Viet Cong supply lines and rescue downed pilots during the Vietnam war;

Whereas in 1975, the Kingdom of Laos was overthrown by the Communist Pathet Lao regime, and tens of thousands of Laotians, including the Hmong, were killed or died at the hands of Communist forces while attempting to flee the Lao Communist regime, and many others perished in reeducation and labor camps;

Whereas tens of thousands of Hmong became refugees, eventually resettling in the United States, where they now reside as American citizens and lead constructive lives as members of our communities;

Whereas remnants of former Hmong insurgent groups and their families who once fought with the United States and the Royal Lao Government still remain in remote areas of Laos, including Xaisomboun Special Zone and the Luang Prabang Province;

Whereas in August 2003 the United Nations Committee to Eliminate Racial Discrimination strongly criticized the Lao People's Democratic Republic for failing to honor its obligations, expressed its grave concerns regarding reports of human rights violations,

including brutalities inflicted on the Hmong, and deplored the measures taken by the Lao authorities to prevent any reporting of the situation of the Hmong;

Whereas in October 2003, Amnesty International issued a statement detailing its concern about the use of starvation by the Lao Government as a "weapon of war against civilians" in Laos and the deteriorating situation facing thousands of family members of ethnic minority groups;

Whereas the Department of State reported in its most recent Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Laos that the "Government's human rights record remained poor," and highlighted press reports that one group of Hmong in Xaisomboun Special Zone, mostly women and children, was being systematically hunted down and attacked by government air and ground forces and that it was at the point of starvation;

Whereas international organizations, the Department of State, and Members of Congress have received reports of mistreatment over the past 6 months of Hmong in Laos emerging from remote areas of Laos, including the Xaisomboun Special Zone, the Luang Prabang-Xiang Khouang border area;

Whereas the Lao Government has not allowed independent organizations to monitor the treatment of the Hmong emerging from remote areas of Laos;

Whereas in September 2004, Amnesty International issued a statement condemning recent reports that Lao soldiers murdered 5 Hmong children, raping 4 girls, who were foraging for food close to their camp, and called it a war crime; and

Whereas the Lao People's Democratic Republic has failed to substantially improve the status of human rights for its citizens: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) Condemns the consistent pattern of serious human rights abuses in the Lao People's Democratic Republic;

(2) Urges the Government of Laos to increase international access to vulnerable populations and to respect the basic human rights of all Laotians, including ethnic and religious minorities; and

(3) Hopes that the Lao government intensifies its efforts to make its economy and society more open and transparent in light of the congressional grant of normal trade relations to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. COLEMAN. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, this is an issue in which I, Senators FEINGOLD, COLEMAN, and many others have taken a deep interest. I believe this resolution is an important statement. It makes very clear, when the Senate passes the miscellaneous tariff bill with Laos NTR, that we still condemn the consistent pattern of serious human rights abuses, and we will continue to press forward for increased access for the Hmong and other ethnic minorities in remote areas of Laos.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues Senator FEINGOLD and Senator COLEMAN for permitting me to have this time and also to commend them for their outstanding leadership regarding the violation of human rights in Laos. I join with them in opposing the granting of permanent trade relations for that country due to the

oppression of Hmong and other violations of human rights in Laos. I strongly support, proudly, and am a cosponsor of their resolution to express the strong opposition of the Senate to those continuing violations.

MISCELLANEOUS TRADE AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 2004—CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, today I voted against invoking cloture and ending debate on the conference report accompanying the Miscellaneous Tariff Bill, H.R. 1047. Normally, this is a non-controversial bill passed by unanimous consent. However, this year's bill is different. While it contains many provisions that I support and have worked with other Senators to someday enact, it also includes a specific provision to repeal the Antidumping Act of 1916. This bill would repeal the 1916 Act in response to an international ruling, which found that this U.S. trade law is WTO-violative even though no court ruling under this U.S. law has resulted in any need for the United States to compensate any of America's trading partners.

I disagree with repeal of the Antidumping Act of 1916, because I believe that this attempt by the WTO to force the United States to abolish this trade law, legitimately enacted at the start of the prior century, is misguided and unfair. Our trade foes have little reason to criticize this trade law; few cases have been brought under its provisions, and even fewer have resulted in judgements against any foreign firm. The WTO's attempt to abolish this law is simply one of a long line of decisions by this international body meant to open U.S. markets to cheap, unfairly traded imports, and to undermine the ability of the United States Congress to exercise its sovereign right to regulate domestic and foreign commerce.

Repealing this U.S. trade law would set a bad precedent and could only encourage other nations to seek similar, ill-informed "justice" at the WTO. That, in turn, will lead to disaster for the U.S. industrial base, where American producers will assuredly suffer the ill-effects of increased, dumped imports, which will drive down the prices of American-made goods and put more and more American manufacturers out of work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the conference report is adopted and the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

The conference report was agreed to. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COLEMAN). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

FAREWELL

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I rise with some sadness on my last time

to speak on the Senate floor. It is a very bittersweet occasion for me because I have loved every minute of the last 6 years, and I will miss this body greatly. I am sure I will think about it every remaining day in my life hence forward. The past 6 years have been amongst the most thrilling in my life, and it has been a privilege and honor to serve here.

I rise really to thank my colleagues for their kindness to me over the years and to thank my staff and my family and the entire Senate staff and everyone who is part of this institution for the wonderful 6 years I have had here.

I was first elected to the Senate from Illinois in 1998. I was sworn in in 1999, and almost immediately thereafter, the first Presidential impeachment trial in 130 years began. For my first 35 days, I think it was, or 38 days, on the Senate floor, I was immersed in the impeachment trial of former President Clinton. Thereafter, we had times of war, war in Kosovo and Afghanistan and now Iraq. We had the events of 9/11. I have served in times of war and peace, in times of great prosperity, as well as in times of recession. I have seen a whole lot.

What I will remember most probably is the wonderful people who are part of the Senate. When I entered the Senate in 1999, I came in as the youngest Member. I was 38 at the time. I am older now, obviously, and have probably less hair and more gray hair. The oldest Member of the Senate at that time was Strom Thurmond. He was 96 years of age. I will never forget Strom Thurmond telling me, when he was 96, about how he used to work out 45 minutes every day, and I was thinking about whether I might be as active as Strom when I am 96, if I make it that long. Even at that age, I remember Strom giving me advice, telling me about how I could help the coal industry in southern Illinois. It was remarkable to meet someone like that.

There are many who have retired. There are others like Strom who have passed away. There are some giants who are still with us, such as Senator ROBERT BYRD. One of my first memories of meeting Senator BYRD is going in to talk to him after I first got elected and asking him to sign for me a copy of his book on the history of the Roman Republic. Early on in my term in the Senate, I actually read Senator BYRD's whole book on the history of the Roman Republic. I have to say it is a marvelous book, and any Member of the Senate who has not read that book should please go out and get it because it has beautiful lessons for every Member of the Senate. It traces the decline and fall of the Roman Republic. It traces the decline of the Republic to the Roman Senate giving up more and more of its powers to the Executive, finally to the point where the Senate became meaningless and Rome was just governed by Caesars, dictators, and kings. It is an outstanding book.

To meet the man who wrote this book and to realize that book was