

the National League for Democracy, Ms. Suu Kyi's political party. They also released a few party leaders from prison.

But 1,300 remain in prison, and the top two leaders, Ms. Suu Kyi and Tin Oo, remain under house arrest.

The junta's recent charm efforts couldn't mask the fact that behind the scenes, the generals slapped life sentences on 11 league members who are in prison. That is tantamount to a death sentence in the grim Burmese gulag. The nine weren't allowed to speak in their own defense. Their only crime was witnessing an attack on Ms. Suu Kyi by government thugs last May 30.

Even if Ms. Suu Kyi is released, she may be in greater danger outside her home if the junta imposes a constitution at gunpoint that leaves it in power. Congress must keep sanctions in place until there's certifiable change. As Margaret Thatcher would say, this is no time to go wobbly.

CENTENNIAL OF WASHOE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we all understand that books are one of the greatest things ever created by human beings. Books bring the world within our reach, and they open the door of knowledge. Our Nation long ago recognized the importance of books and reading. That is why we developed a system of universal education, where every child would have an opportunity to learn how to read. And that is why we have public libraries. One hundred years ago this month, on May 31, 1904, the city of Reno, NV opened its first public library. The building was constructed on donated land, with a gift of \$15,000 from Andrew Carnegie. Mr. Carnegie believed so strongly in public libraries that he built more than 1600 of them around the world. That original library served the city of Reno for 26 years. But as the town grew and the popularity of the library increased, more space was needed. In 1930, the Reno Public library moved into the old State building in Powning Park. It also became affiliated at that time with Washoe County. Two years later, the county also opened a library in the nearby city of Sparks.

After World War II, as Washoe County began to experience more growth, the library system expanded to keep up with the demand. Under the leadership of Portia Hawley Griswold, the first library "bookmobile" hit the road in the late 1950s, bringing books to remote areas of the county. A new main branch opened in downtown Reno in 1966, thanks to a gift from the Max C. Fleischmann Foundation.

As the library system added more new locations throughout the 1970s and 1980s, it also employed new innovations. A Senior Center library made books more accessible to retirees, with volunteers delivering books to the homebound. The Gerlach High School branch launched a partnership between the county and the local school system. The Sierra View library was the first to open in a shopping center. Today, the Washoe County library system has branches in 12 locations, plus a

mobile library. Citizens can also use the library's Internet branch to look for books and conduct research for school assignments, business projects, or simply to satisfy their curiosity. Last year the people of Washoe County visited the library system 1.4 million times and checked out almost 2 million items. As it has for the last 100 years, the public library is meeting the needs of the people of Reno NV, and Washoe County. It puts books and knowledge within the reach of every citizen.

This centennial of success calls for a celebration. So a gala birthday party for the Washoe County library system will be held on May 21.

Please join me in congratulating Library Director Nancy Cummings and the trustees of the Washoe County library system—Chairman Bud Fujii, Lucille Adin, June Burton, Paul Theiner and Paul Davis. Along with the Washoe County Commission, the Friends of the Washoe County Library, and the Washoe County Library Foundation, they have continued to advance the worthy goal that Andrew Carnegie embraced a century ago.

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, Senator 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.

Two men harassed a white lesbian in Colorado as she left a 7-11 store; one of them yelled an obscenity and called her a "faggot." The victim got into her own pickup truck and drove away, but the offenders followed her and eventually drove her off the road. When she got out of her car, the two men assaulted her sexually and beat her unconscious. A detective who later interviewed the victim about the incident was verbally abusive, calling her a "liar" when she said she could not provide a detailed description of her attackers.

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.

MALTREATMENT OF IRAQI PRISONERS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the American people know about the strong and honorable character of the American soldier. Over the last 228 years, the United States Army has rightly earned the reputation of a professional fighting force that is courageous in battle and benevolent in peace.

The United States Army has had centuries to earn the respect of the American people. The White House expected our military to earn the trust of the Iraqi people in only months. Despite the outstanding service of countless thousands of our troops, the shameful and disgusting abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the hands of U.S. soldiers is a tragedy that must be corrected immediately.

The photographic evidence that Iraqi prisoners have been humiliated, abused, and mistreated is absolutely shocking. One can hardly ponder the technicalities of the Geneva Conventions when the most basic rules of human decency have been violated. The disgust expressed by many Americans has been amplified a thousand times by outraged Muslims around the world.

How long might it be before Osama bin Laden uses these incidents to whip up anti-American sentiment in other corners of the world? After the bloodiest month of the occupation of Iraq, this is news our Nation can ill afford.

It is not clear at this point who should be held to account for this stain upon the reputation of our armed forces. No one has stepped forward to take responsibility for the conditions in Iraqi prisons. Instead, fingers are being pointed in every direction. Soldiers are blaming superior officers, and generals are blaming subordinates. Others blame our intelligence services, which blame contractors, who blame others still. Some military leaders claim that this is an isolated incident, others make ominous claims about patterns of abuses. With whom does this buck stop?

The Armed Services Committee today had a closed-door briefing from three Army Generals. No civilian official of the Department of Defense appeared at the briefing, nor did any member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I did not attend that briefing. Secret, closed door meetings on a subject of such enormous import smack of damage control and cover-up—and that is the last impression the Senate should be conveying. We must ensure that Congress accedes to no ground rules in its investigations that could further taint this deplorable situation.

The time for public hearings on prisons run by the U.S. Armed Forces is now. We must leave no room for charges that investigations are being glossed over, pushed aside, sat on, or ignored. I have written to the chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee to urge them to call public hearings with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers. The Armed Services Committee should also seek testimony from outside experts on the laws of war and humanitarian affairs, such as the International Committee for the Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, and scholars of international law.

These hearings should take place as soon as possible, and examine all detention facilities run by the U.S. military, including those in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The abuse of Iraqi prisoners was covered for months until it was reported by the news media. Congress has no time to spare to find out what went wrong and what is still wrong, and take action to prevent further abuse of prisoners in our charge.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPC DENNIS MORGAN

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, SPC Dennis Morgan was a dedicated soldier who fought bravely for his country. He was a member of the South Dakota National Guard and worked to protect others by finding and disarming explosive devices along the roads.

Morgan was mobilized December 7, 2003 and deployed to the Middle East in February. He was in the last vehicle of a convoy, protecting an armored personnel carrier when a roadside bomb exploded. Morgan is the first casualty involving the South Dakota National Guard, which has nearly 1,200 members in the Middle East. His wife described him as a "wonderful man, a hero, very loving and always happy."

I would like to express my deepest sympathy for the Morgan family. SPC Dennis Morgan will be greatly missed and our thoughts and prayers will be with his family and friends. He leaves behind his wife and his mother. Dennis's sacrifice will forever remind this Nation of the danger that comes with the duty to protect our Nation's interests and the freedoms of others around the world. As a Nation we are grateful to Dennis Morgan and other soldiers like him who make the ultimate sacrifice so that others can live in freedom.

HISTORIC EXPANSION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, on May 1, 2004, in a truly historic move, the European Union welcomed 10 new member states. On this momentous occasion, I offer my congratulations and best wishes to the people of the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. These countries have made great achievements, and America benefits from our close ties to these nations.

EU expansion represents yet another victory for freedom in Central and Eastern Europe, together with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Soviet Union's last gasp in 1991, and the two NATO expansions. Europe is divided no longer, and the United States enjoys an unprecedented relationship with the 10 new EU members.

I hope that our excellent relations with these countries will continue, and that we will continue to pursue our

common goals of freedom, democracy, and prosperity throughout the world.

FAILURE TO SOLVE H-2B VISA CRISIS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I regret the need to once again call attention to the fact that the Senate continues to neglect our obligation to respond to a crisis, caused by Federal policy, that is disrupting the operations of small and large businesses throughout the United States.

Two months ago the Department of Homeland Security announced that for the first time ever the annual cap for H-2B visas had been met. These visas are used by a wide range of industries throughout the Nation to fill temporary labor needs. In my home State of Vermont, they are used primarily by the tourist industry.

Across the country, businesses in a wide range of industries had developed plans that relied on the foreign employees who had always before been available to them. For years, these employers had applied in the spring for the employees they needed for the summer, filling positions for which they were unable to find American workers. The cap had never been reached, and they had no reason to believe this year would be different. I know that the March announcement came as a shock to many employers in my State, and dozens of them contacted my office to see what could be done. This setback fell equally hard on employers in other States.

In response to these requests, I joined with a substantial bipartisan coalition in introducing S. 2252, the Save Summer Act of 2004. Senator KENNEDY is the lead sponsor of the bill, which has 18 cosponsors, including eight Republicans. Our bill would add 40,000 visas for the current fiscal year, providing relief to those summer-oriented businesses that had never even had the opportunity to apply for visas.

The following day, Senator HATCH introduced S. 2258, the Summer Operations and Services Relief and Reform Act. I do not believe that this bill, cosponsored exclusively by Republicans, is as effective a bill as S. 2252, but I would support it if it came before the Senate. Despite its sponsorship by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and by the chairman of the Immigration Subcommittee, S. 2258 has now been held hostage in the Republican cloakroom for 5 weeks.

Obtaining these visas takes weeks, if not months, because the Departments of Labor and Homeland Security must both sign off on them. I and others have repeatedly warned that we needed to pass legislation by May 1 if we were going to provide meaningful relief. That date has come and gone, and now it is too late to help many, if not all, of the businesses that had relied upon the availability of H-2B visas. It is beyond disappointing that at the Republican leadership in this body ignored

my pleas and the pleas of so many Senators. And it is inexcusable that the Republican leadership ignored the pleas of business owners across the country asking for this emergency relief.

And so it is that a tiny minority of the Republican caucus has managed to frustrate the will of a substantial bipartisan coalition of Senators who have sought to raise the H-2B cap, thereby needlessly harming businesses throughout the Nation. Meanwhile, the Republican leadership has failed to make solving this problem a priority. Perhaps if the majority leader chose to devote floor time to issues that had substantial bipartisan support, instead of using the floor to set up symbolic votes whose results are known well in advance, we would not be in this position.

These businesses contribute much to the economies of our States. They deserve better treatment than they have received at the hands of the Republican leadership of the Senate.

WORLD ASTHMA DAY

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, May 4 is World Asthma Day. Today people from across the globe will raise awareness of asthma and its impact on the lives of those millions of people who suffer from it. It should also be the day we in government recall our duty to safeguard the health of all Americans.

Asthma is a lifetime disease. It is triggered by a variety of factors, including allergens, cigarette smoke, viral infections, foods, weather changes, and air pollution. Air passages become inflamed, making it difficult for sufferers to breathe, and sometimes resulting in critical emergency situations. It is dangerous, and it is costly. Our country spends around \$3.2 billion every year just to treat asthmatic children.

That is why I am particularly concerned that asthma is on the rise, and that polluting industries and cars are making matters worse. Seventeen million Americans suffer from asthma. It is the most common chronic health problem among our Nation's children, causing missed school days, restricted activity, and costly medical bills. According to the American Lung Association, 9,000 children and 42,000 adults in Washington, DC alone have asthma.

Scientific research has increasingly linked air pollution from power plants and tailpipe exhaust to asthma. For example, researchers at the University of Southern California recently discovered that children living in high-ozone areas and participating in outdoor sports were three times more likely to develop asthma than less active kids in less polluted areas. The scientists explain that children who exercise outdoors take in more of the dirty air than other kids, leaving them more susceptible to airway damage.

A new report by the Harvard Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School expands