

that we lose the multiple-use aspect of public and even private lands because of endangered species.

There are a lot of things I think we ought to be doing.

Finally, it seems to me that we ought to have a system that takes a look at programs after they have been in place 10 years, or whatever—after they have been there for a while. We should restudy those programs, reanalyze those programs to see if, indeed, the need for them is still what it was when they started; to see if they could be made more efficient after 10 years or, indeed, if they don't need to be there anymore. I know it is very difficult. There gets to be a support group that forms around all the programs that are funded, of course. It becomes difficult to change.

But it is too bad, when we think about it, to pass programs that are spending Federal money and have them out there when there is no longer any need for them or when the time has come where something different needs to be done.

I am hopeful we can get something done. I am thinking about putting something in bill form that will provide a review or oversight of programs that are in place to see if they are still important, to see if they are still being done efficiently, and to see if they could be done a better way or, indeed, need to be done at all.

These are some of the things I think are very important. I hope we try to set some priorities. I understand out of 100 people there are going to be many different ideas, but that is part of our challenge, to put 100 people together and decide what are the five most important issues that impact this country and impact our States.

I hope we can do that and I look forward to that opportunity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). The Senator from Missouri.

HONORING POPE JOHN PAUL II

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I rise today just for a few moments to offer a few words in honor of the life of Pope John Paul II. Much has been said this week, and will be said this week, about his life. I want to pay tribute to him on behalf of all the Missourians who are mourning his passing this week.

The Pope left an indelible mark on the history of mankind and, indeed, of the world. I think the title of George Weigel's biography captured the Pope's work the best. He called him "A Witness To Hope." The moral clarity his leadership provided helped spread democracy and justice around a world that desperately needed it. But even more than that, he brought faith and hope to the empty, to the hopeless, to the last and the least among us.

He was a faithful servant of God, an inspiration to Missourians, to countries and cultures around the world. Certainly he was an inspiration to me. One of the greatest honors I have had

in all my years in public life was the opportunity to meet him when he visited Missouri 6 years ago.

As we mourn the Pope's passing, we celebrate his spiritual leadership. I want to say, also, we should celebrate his qualities which most impressed me in the brief moment I had to meet him at that time—I mean his humanness, his courage, his works. Those works for years to come will continue giving people hope for the next world and better lives in this one.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today, to join my colleagues and the rest of the world in the remembrance of Pope John Paul II.

Since the passing of the Pope, it has often been noted that this Pope was by far the most traveled of any in history—quite possibly the one person seen live by the most people of all time.

We were fortunate in my State to receive the Pope twice, once in Anchorage in 1981 and then again in Fairbanks in 1984. During his Anchorage visit, the Pope celebrated Mass with more than 40,000 Alaskans in a downtown Anchorage park. It was the largest gathering of Alaskans up until that time, and beginning in the cold, wet, early February morning, until his departure, crowds lined the streets and Alaskans strained to get a glimpse of the Pontiff. Always known for his compassion and generosity, the Pope extended his visit in Anchorage more than an hour to meet in private with 150 disabled Alaskans at Holy Family Cathedral.

The Pope's visit to the Fairbanks International Airport was even more momentous, and was transformed into the site of major diplomacy. It was an opportunity for the Pope to meet with President Ronald Reagan, who was returning from overseas and, like the Pope, stopped in Alaska to refuel his aircraft. The President, who had arrived the previous night, was the first to greet the Pope. They visited briefly and then the Pope surprised many by making an unexpected tour through the crowd that waited outside the airport in the drizzling rain.

While in Alaska, the Pope spoke about the unity of faith that binds Alaska's diverse Catholic community—from Native Alaskans to people from all over the world. During his Anchorage stopover, John Paul II even enjoyed a brief ride on a dogsled.

Like many Americans and individuals all over the world, I grieve for the loss of the Holy Father. From his humble beginnings to the principal voice for human rights for over two decades, Pope John Paul II will always be remembered. He was an extraordinary, inspirational and spiritual person and the world is a better place thanks to his service and spiritual leadership.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish to submit for the RECORD today a statement joining my colleagues and my countrymen and women in paying tribute to the departed and beloved Pope John Paul II. I join them in

mourning his loss, and I extend my condolences to Roman Catholics in Connecticut and all over the world.

It is impossible to overstate the great sense of loss that is being felt by the 1 billion Catholics worldwide, but a telling sign of the Holy Father's lasting legacy is that his life and death have touched billions of non-Catholics as well. The Pontiff built bridges to non-Catholics and transformed forever the Church's perception of Jews in particular from a separated people to "older" brothers and sisters in faith.

Pope John Paul II's outreach to people of all faiths began when he was a young man. Known to his friends and family as "Lolek," the future Pontiff grew up in Wadowice, Poland, in the 1920s and 1930s. Wadowice was a town of about 7,000, more than 20 percent of whom were Jewish, including young Lolek's best friend, Jurek Kluger.

One of Lolek and Jurek's favorite pastimes was soccer. One day, Jurek went to the Parish church to meet up with Lolek before heading to a soccer match together. A woman in the church expressed her amazement at the sight of a Jewish boy standing next to the altar. To the future Pope, however, it was a natural and effortless interfaith communion. As the young Lolek remarked to the amazed onlooker, "Aren't we all God's children?"

Pope John Paul II worked to protect all of God's children as a courageous champion of religious freedom and human rights and a tireless advocate for the poor and sick throughout the world. His fervent opposition to the brutal scourge of Nazism was matched by his tireless work to break Eastern Europe free from the oppressive grip of communism.

In June of 1979, 8 months after being elected to take the throne of St. Peter, Pope John Paul II made a triumphant return to Poland. His beloved nation was struggling to survive under the iron fist of Soviet rule. An adoring crowd of 1 million supporters gave him a hero's welcome.

For his fellow Poles, who for decades were deprived of their freedom to worship, the Pontiff had a strong, clear and inspirational message. "You are men. You have dignity. Don't crawl on your bellies," he said. This visit was a crucial turning point in America's Cold War with the Soviet Union.

Working together with the people of Poland and the United States, the Pontiff transformed his homeland into the spiritual battlefield of the Cold War. Forging an allegiance with Lech Walesa, the Pope provided religious support for the anti-communist Solidarity movement. Over the next decade, a tidal wave of the spirit overcame communism in Poland. One by one, the dominoes of Communist oppression fell across Eastern Europe as faith and freedom triumphed. Stalin once mocked the power of the papacy by asking, rhetorically, "The Pope? How many divisions has he got?" In one of history's sweet ironies, it was indeed a

Pope none other than Pope John Paul II who helped dismantle Stalin's empire, not with divisions of armed soldiers, but legions of faithful followers who yearned to be free.

In another historic trip 22 years later, the Pontiff made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He visited Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial, where he prayed and met with survivors. On his last day in Jerusalem, he went to the Western Wall of the Temple. There, the Holy Father prayed silently before leaving a small written prayer stuffed into a crack in the wall, surrounded by the thousands of notes and prayers people leave there every day.

During his Papacy, while much of the world could not resist the temptation of moral compromise and material excess, Pope John Paul II remained steadfast in his morality and spirituality. He was a tower of integrity, a role model for everyone who sought to defend their values from the growing culture of moral relativism. In an age of materialism and genocide, he was the world's most consistent advocate of spiritual and humanitarian values.

While the Pope's values remained traditional, his ability to communicate was progressive and modern. He forever revolutionized how the church could spread its teachings. He masterfully used modern technology to bring the church to the world.

In each of the seven languages he spoke, he had a unique ability to touch each one in his presence as if they were the only one to whom he was speaking. The Pope was able to inspire those who came to hear his message to go forth and make the world a better place. On January 4, 2001, he called upon a group of hundreds of believers gathered in St. Peter's Square—including a Roman Catholic member of my own staff, Kenneth Dagliere—to make the most of their God-given potential. "If you are to be what you are meant to be, you will set the world ablaze," he told them. Those words are as autobiographical as they are inspirational.

Much as he did in life, Pope John Paul II provided a life-affirming example of dignity in his death. While we are saddened by his death, we take solace in knowing that he left us peacefully and surrounded by those closest to him in his Papal residence. Outside, in St. Peter's Square, hundreds of thousands of adorers held constant vigil, praying for a man who had touched their lives in a way few ever could. It was a spontaneous outpouring of love for a man who seemed to possess an eternal capacity to spread strength and love wherever he went.

Mr. President, Pope John Paul II leaves behind a lasting legacy of faith and leadership. He will be truly missed by hundreds of millions of God's children throughout the world. I thank the Almighty for giving us the gift of Pope John Paul II. And I thank Lolek, who became Pope John Paul II, for using those gifts to bringing us all closer to God.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

FIRST LIEUTENANT DAN THOMAS MALCOM, JR.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor U.S. Army 1LT Dan Thomas Malcom, Jr., who was killed proudly fighting for his country in Fallujah, Iraq, on November 10, 2004. A marine and Citadel graduate from McDuffie and Miller County, GA, Dan was 24 years old.

First Lieutenant Dan Thomas Malcom, Jr., the son of Dan and Cherrie Malcom, was born April 4, 1979, in Augusta, GA. His father, Dan Senior, was a Marine Corps veteran of combat in Vietnam who tragically was killed in a construction accident just prior to Dan junior's birth. From the earliest age, Dan junior wanted to "be a Marine like my Daddy". Raised in McDuffie, then later Miller County, GA, Dan attended Miller County High School where he was a star student.

Dan graduated from the Citadel in Charleston, SC, in 2001 where he was Lima Company executive officer. Dan was well respected by his classmates and known for his attention to his academic and military duties.

Dan was commissioned into the Marine Corps upon graduation. Dan was serving his second tour in Iraq when, on November 10, 2004, he was killed by a sniper in Fallujah, a town infested with insurgents. The details of his death include the following: As the marines of 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry were clearing Fallujah of the insurgents, Dan's platoon was sent to a rooftop to provide supporting fire to marines maneuvering on the enemy. Dan's marines quickly found themselves under sniper attack from a nearby mosque. Dan left his safe position and led his entire platoon down a stair case to safety. As the last one to clear the rooftop, Dan was hit by a deflected bullet which bounced off his helmet. As Dan jumped down the stairwell, he was hit in the lower back by a second shot which killed him instantly.

Dan was buried at Arlington Cemetery on 23 November 2004, where he rested with our Nation's honored dead. Dan Thomas Malcom, Jr., was all that America stands for. By his short life and through his bravery at the end we are enriched. Dan is survived by his mother, Mrs. Cherrie Malcom, and sister, Mrs. Dana Killebrew. It is our hope that the memory of his life will serve as a beacon for others to honor and remember.

Dan Thomas Malcom, Jr., was a great American, a great marine, a

great leader, and an outstanding young man. He and his comrades in Iraq deserve our deepest gratitude and respect as they go about the extraordinarily challenging but extraordinarily important job of rebuilding a country which will result in freedom and prosperity for millions of Iraqis. I join with Dan's family, friends, and fellow soldiers in mourning his loss and want them to know that Dan's sacrifice will not be lost or forgotten, but will truly make a difference in the lives of the Iraqi people.

A MATTER OF PRIORITIES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to bring an editorial from Monday's edition of the New York Times to the attention of my colleagues. The editorial, titled "Guns for Terrorists," is a logical commentary on several potentially dangerous shortfalls in our Nation's gun safety laws that not only potentially allow individuals on terrorist watch lists to buy guns but also require that records related to the sale be destroyed within 24 hours of the purchase.

Under current law, individuals included on Federal terrorist watch lists are not automatically prohibited from purchasing firearms. A report released by the General Accountability Office on March 8, 2005, found that from February 3, 2004, through June 30, 2004, a total of 44 attempts to purchase firearms were made by individuals designated by the Federal Government as known or suspected terrorists. In 35 cases, the transactions were authorized to proceed because federal authorities were unable to find any information in the national instant criminal background check system, NICS, that would prohibit the individual from lawfully receiving or possessing firearms. Current law also requires that records, even in these cases, where known or suspected terrorists successfully purchase firearms, be destroyed within 24 hours.

Learning about a suspected terrorist's purchase of a firearm could potentially be critical to counterterrorism investigators working to prevent a terrorist attack. Common sense tells us that the automatic destruction of documents related to the successful purchase of firearms by individuals on terrorist watch lists would significantly hamper these investigations. I have co-sponsored the Terrorist Apprehension RECORD Retention Act. The legislation would require that in cases where a known or suspected terrorist successfully purchased a firearm, records pertaining to the transaction be retained for 10 years. The bill also requires that all NICS information be shared with appropriate Federal and State counterterrorism officials anytime an individual on a terrorist watch list attempts to buy a firearm.

We should be working to pass legislation to close loopholes that allow potential terrorists to buy dangerous weapons like the AK-47 assault rifle, the .50 caliber sniper rifle, and the