

QDR comes out, and what some of the weapon systems needs are and what some of the basing needs are. We are the elected representatives of the people. We represent the people of our respective States. In my view, we should be the ones who review this type of information before we make votes on shuttering bases across the country. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, and my chairman and distinguished ranking member are here, I think we have a responsibility before we make decisions of this consequence and this magnitude about bases that may never be able to be opened again. Once we shut these things down, they are shut down for good.

There are a lot of questions that remain unanswered about the QDR, about basing needs overseas, about what our needs are going to be when those troops start coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan from other theaters.

I appreciate and respect the leaders of this committee on their thoughts. I understand their opposition to this amendment. Frankly, I would urge my colleagues who look at these issues and are concerned about moving forward too quickly on decisions that have enormous and major consequences, not only for the communities that are impacted but for the national security of the United States of America, that without having this kind of information, it seems to me at least that many of the decisions are, at a minimum, very premature.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank our colleague. We have had quite a good debate. I am prepared to move on, subject to the views of my colleague.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I think it is important that in addition to getting the general views of the administration about the importance of this BRAC process proceeding for the reasons they have set forth, the language of this amendment be forwarded to them. I will give an example of why.

As I understand it, one of the impacts of the amendment would be that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the Army to bring back to the United States about 49,000 personnel and their families because those relocations back to the United States are dependent upon certain steps being taken as proposed in the BRAC process. We are leaving a lot of people in limbo overseas, I believe—that is our conclusion—but I would like to hear from the Defense Department as to the specific ramifications of this kind of delay, in addition to the reasons they have already given for opposing any delay or cancellation of the BRAC process. So I agree with our chairman that they are very clear that they would veto this bill if this kind of amendment passes.

But in terms of the argument on the amendment, there are practical problems, in addition to the ones already raised by the Defense Department, that they may want to raise if we get them the language. I hope that over the

weekend the chairman will forward the language to the Defense Department.

Mr. WARNER. Rest assured, that will be done. I will prepare a letter. The Senator from Michigan and I will be here tomorrow morning and perhaps we can make a joint request outlining precisely what our views are.

Mr. LEVIN. I hope the Senator from South Dakota, if available tomorrow or Monday, if there is further debate on this amendment, might be present or be able to listen to the debate so he could respond to it.

Mr. WARNER. I anticipate that the reply from the administration would be forthcoming on Monday. I think the Senator would be available to debate this matter later in the afternoon.

Mr. THUNE. I will, and I welcome the opportunity to come to the floor and speak to it as well.

Mr. WARNER. The Senator has a very distinguished list of cosponsors, I might add.

Mr. LEVIN. And an even more distinguished list of opponents. Just kidding. The hour is late.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, in great seriousness, referring to the cosponsors, they are Senators LIEBERMAN, SNOWE, LAUTENBERG, JOHNSON, DODD, COLLINS, CORZINE, BINGAMAN, and DOMENICI.

I stick by my words that it is a distinguished list of cosponsors.

Mr. THUNE. I thank the chair.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, the managers wish to advise the Senate that we have accomplished a good deal today, and we will be fully in business tomorrow, with the exception of roll-call votes. It is our hope and expectation that we can go through a number of amendments and stack those votes for a time to be decided by leadership.

Therefore, Mr. President, I think we can move off of the bill and do such wrap-up as is necessary.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO FORMER SENATOR JAMES EXON

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to pay tribute to former Senator Jim Exon, a friend and colleague, who passed away on June 10, 2005.

Jim Exon is a legend in his own State. For almost three decades, he served the people of Nebraska as both Governor and Senator. And through dedication and the force of his personality, he almost singlehandedly founded the Democratic Party in his State. In his entire career, he never lost an election because his constituents recognized his basic decency and common sense.

However, Jim Exon didn't only serve his Nebraska constituents. He also served his country and our Government in ways that we could sorely use today. He was, of course, a patriot and World War II veteran who brought his wartime experience to his important role on defense matters. But beyond his obvious love of country, Jim Exon especially loved his country's democracy, which he saw as the crucial spark animating the American community.

Jim Exon relished forthright debate and always had tremendous faith in the fairness of our system of Government. But while he advanced his beliefs with conviction and passion, he also listened to those with whom he disagreed. Indeed, he was renowned as a fair and considerate lawmaker who routinely sought common ground with adversaries out of genuine sympathy for their concerns.

Jim Exon's facility for finding common ground with others stemmed from his roots in America's heartland. In rural areas and small towns, neighbors must depend on one another. People in the country rely on pragmatism to solve problems, having little patience with argument for its own sake. Jim Exon brought these Midwestern values to his work, fighting openly for his beliefs, while still playing a cooperative and constructive role in resolving differences.

Given his ability to see the point of view of others, it's hardly surprising that Jim Exon made abundant legislative contributions. I was privileged to serve on the Senate Budget Committee with him, where he fought to keep our Nation's fiscal house in order. Here, too, his approach was balanced, offering a fierce opposition to wasting taxpayer money on unjustified spending, while maintaining an abiding faith in effective government. Most importantly in this area, he recognized that lawmakers must resist the temptation to use public debt to shift current burdens onto future taxpayers. To Jim Exon, skyrocketing Federal debt was a shameful legacy to leave our children.

Senator Exon also understood the wisdom of investing in the family farmer, the backbone of rural communities. A tireless advocate of rural economic development, he was one of the first to recognize the importance of ethanol as fuel, a renewable energy source that we produce here at home. And he fought for better transportation, better medical care, and better

schools for rural areas facing special challenges.

Jim Exon also worked to keep America's military strong. A veteran of the South Pacific in World War II, he never wavered in his commitment to our Armed Forces. He played a crucial role on the Armed Services Committee in the aftermath of communism's collapse. Thanks in large measure to his efforts, our military remained the mightiest in the world, even though its mission was reoriented to face the challenges of the post-Cold War world. He worked tirelessly to contain nuclear proliferation.

Jim Exon accomplished much during his three terms here in the Senate. That's not surprising given the kind of man he was. He lacked pretense. He would tell you straight out what he believed, and he listened carefully to others. And he was fair. He brought Senators together by focusing on shared interests, rather than differences.

Jim Exon was a big hearty man who loved to laugh. His deep, rolling baritone had an infectious good humor and compassion behind it that won over others. He was effective, in part, because people liked to work with him.

I will miss my good friend and colleague. His accomplishments live after him. The Nation and the people of Nebraska will long remember the standards of integrity and decency that were the hallmarks of Jim Exon's service to his country.

HONORING THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I join with President Bush and Project Hope in commending the extraordinary work of the health professionals from Massachusetts General Hospital who dropped everything and went to Indonesia in January and February to provide medical care to survivors of the tsunami disaster. I especially commend Dr. Laurence Ronan, the group leader at MGH who did so much to organize the trip.

These dedicated health professionals answered the urgent call when the disaster struck. As in the past when earthquakes devastated Armenia, and El Salvador, and Iran, they volunteered their services and skills on the USS *Mercy*, the Navy hospital ship sent to the coast of Indonesia.

Massachusetts General Hospital sent the largest health team. More than 60 doctors, nurses, and social workers each spent a month helping on cases too complex to be treated by personnel already on the ground in Indonesia. They had expertise in critical medical specialties such as neurology, burns, lung disease, kidney disease, and pediatrics, and they provided care to hundreds devastated by the tsunami.

Massachusetts is very very proud of MGH and the extraordinary health professionals being honored today. Their dedication and caring have served America and the world well.

HONORING ARTHUR A. FLETCHER

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, we should all take a moment today to honor the life and the work of Arthur Fletcher. Considered "the father of affirmative action," he advised four Presidential administrations and never missed an opportunity to advance the interests of underserved people throughout the Nation. Today, Mr. Fletcher is being laid to rest, after a distinguished life of public service.

As an affirmative action supporter, Mr. Fletcher identified with Abraham Lincoln's legacy and felt that in order to make the greatest changes he needed to work from inside the political system. He was appointed by President Nixon to be the Assistant Secretary of Wage and Labor Standards. From this position, he developed "the revised Philadelphia Plan" which became the blueprint for affirmative action plans, creating a framework for employers to use in hiring. He continued to advise three more presidents: He was the Deputy Urban Affairs Adviser for President Gerald R. Ford, an adviser to President Ronald Reagan, and the Chairman of the Civil Rights Commission between 1990 and 1993. During his service in these administrations, Mr. Fletcher never shied away from addressing the most challenging opposition as he worked to expand equality and opportunity.

Mr. Fletcher is probably best known for the phrase, "a mind is a terrible thing to waste" which he helped develop while serving as the executive director of the United Negro College Fund, however his influence was more far reaching. For example, Mr. Fletcher personally helped finance the lawsuit against the Topeka Board of Education in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case, which successfully sought to desegregate the Topeka public school system.

His interests seemed to know no bounds as he played football for the Los Angeles Rams and then became the first African American player for the Baltimore Colts. He ran for high public office, including President of the United States in 1996, always to advance the virtues of affirmative action.

As a lifetime advocate Arthur Fletcher himself was a story of affirmative action, not only working for the advancement of others but blazing a trail for others to follow of hard work and determination. His contributions to American society have benefited millions and raised the lifestyles of African Americans and all traditionally underserved people across our country. His family can take pride in the great strides that our country has made as a result of his hard work.

My deepest sympathy goes out to his three children, his many grandchildren, and of course his wife Bernyce Hassan-Fletcher. His legacy lives on in all of us who believe in the struggle for racial and gender equality and who continue to fight for equal opportunity for all. He will be greatly missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. ALFRED WILLIAM EDEL

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am saddened to report the passing of one of the most innovative news personalities in South Dakota broadcasting history, Alfred William Edel.

On July 3, South Dakota and the broadcasting industry lost a veteran radio and television reporter to cancer. Al's extraordinary contributions to news media set him apart from other dedicated reporters.

Born in Buffalo, NY, in 1935, Al received his bachelor's degree from the College of Wooster, OH, in 1957, and then went on to secure his master's degree in communications from Syracuse University in 1959. Following his graduation from Syracuse, Al became a radio broadcaster and editor at WKBW in his hometown of Buffalo. Although his time at WKBW was short, it was clear from the start that his deep, booming voice would take him far.

In 1960, Al joined the Department of Defense's American Forces Network, AFN, in Frankfurt, Germany. Al worked as a news writer and anchor, relaying the news to millions of GIs and American civilians stationed throughout the continent. The local community quickly appreciated and welcomed his quick understanding of the region's issues and his innate ability to infuse humor into his insightful and succinct reports. Interestingly, Al's two sons, Scot and Tod, were both born in the U.S. Army's 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt. As a result of his success in Germany, Al was promoted to chief of AFN's London news bureau in 1961. Following his term in London, Al, his wife Lee, and their two children packed up and moved back to the U.S. in 1966. At that time, he anchored ABC Radio's newscasts that aired daily throughout our Nation.

Eager to try his hand in television, Al left ABC in 1970 to accept a position as prime-time news anchor at KSOO-TV in Sioux Falls, SD. KSOO would later become KSFY, which continues to broadcast today. As a member of KSOO-TV's team, Al and the news bureau nearly led the market with their tenacity and determination to cover all the news, even if their competitors were not interested in the story. Steve Hemmingsen, a reporter for KELO-Land News, recalls that Al and KSOO-TV went "the extra mile to cover stories that KELO didn't think of covering. General Douglas MacArthur's 'hit 'em where they ain't' philosophy of war transposed to television. [Al] helped wake [KELO] up and changed the way we do business." In addition to his ubiquitous strategy, Al's famous, deep, rumbling "Good evening," and his trademark, "Rest easy" lured viewers to his program.

Despite his success and popularity in South Dakota, Al accepted an offer in 1980 and moved to Washington as a