

And in Texas, he is known as the father of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Senator Bentsen ran against the first President Bush twice. Bentsen ran against and beat Bush in the election for Senator from Texas, in 1970. And later, Senator Bentsen ran with Governor Dukakis on the 1988 Presidential ticket.

But after that election, Chairman Bentsen was still for giving President Bush authority to negotiate trade agreements. He simply thought that it was the right thing for the country.

Senator Bentsen embodied the finest characteristics of public service. Some might say that he embodied a different era of the United States Senate. If that is so, then we are the poorer for having lost it. We are certainly the poorer for having lost him.

Our hearts go out to B.A., and the entire Bentsen family, on their great loss. Lloyd Bentsen was always very sweet and deferential to B.A. He often said the B.A. stood for "best asset." Lloyd and B.A. Bentsen were married for 63 years.

Very often I would see the two of them together. It reminds me of the relationship of Senator and Mrs. Byrd.

They were very close; teasing each other. It was a wonderful relationship to behold. I have many memories of Lloyd and B.A. being together, whether flying on a plane to South America or here in the Senate, wherever.

My heart goes out to you B.A. and to your family.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote:

Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.

So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men.

Senator Lloyd Bentsen was a great man. And for years beyond our ken, the light that Lloyd Bentsen leaves behind will lie upon the paths of men, upon the paths of the United States, and upon the paths of this Senate.

I very much thank my friend from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Montana, Mr. BAUCUS, for that lovely thought to which he refers by the great poet Longfellow, in his alluding to our former fellow colleague, Lloyd Bentsen.

I thank the Senator from Montana for speaking as he has about our late former colleague, Lloyd Bentsen.

Lloyd and I served in the House together, too. We had a great admiration for him there. I said, "There is a young man going places"—and he went. He went places.

I join with my colleague, Senator BAUCUS, today in his message as words of reverence for Lloyd Bentsen, and for B.A., Lloyd's lovely wife. I suppose she is in Texas today.

Mr. BAUCUS. She is.

Mr. BYRD. I want to associate myself, again, may I say, with my colleague in every word he has chosen to speak about Lloyd Bentsen.

Mr. President, for how much time am I recognized?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For as much time as the Senator wishes to consume.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN HEROES

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I speak today in memory of our fallen heroes. Next Monday, the last Monday in May, the Nation honors the men and women who have given their lives in battle.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the practice of decorating the graves of those who died in battle was already an established custom in many places, especially in the South, but it was a tribute to the healing of the Nation that both sides were able to put aside their past differences to mourn the fallen together after that terrible conflict.

Although many communities lay claim to being the birthplace of Memorial Day, since World War I, when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring those who were lost in battle in any war—those Americans—Memorial Day belongs to us all.

Mr. President, death knows no divisions or political views. Death knows no distinctions between uniforms or battlegrounds. The Nation knew that all too well after the Civil War. Death unites the fallen—death unites the fallen—in God's care. And death heaps grief and loss in equal measure on all those left to mourn.

It is a lesson that some strident few today need to be reminded of, as they use military burials as a place of protest. No matter what views one may hold about the current conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, or indeed of any conflicts anywhere, there is no place for intrusions during these solemn rites, no cause worth offering further pain to the families of the fallen.

The men and women in our military who don the uniform of the United States are not, as someone has so inelegantly put it, "the deciders." They must, instead, put aside their personal views and focus on working seamlessly with the other members of their unit, so that the unit survives.

Every death is accompanied by stories of heroism, from the one who sacrificed his all to keep his fellow soldiers safe, to the heroes who brought the fallen home. No protests can change, and none should mar, those acts of bravery or those honored dead.

Memorial Day is a day to put aside our own schedules and to spend some time remembering those who have risked all and lost all in service to the Nation. It is a day to recall and revere their bravery, their duty, their strength, and their humanity. It is a

day of tribute to them, and to their families, to whom the Nation owes so much.

The poet Joyce Kilmer, himself a sergeant with the "Fighting 69th" Division, who lost his own life in 1918 during World War I, wrote a poem called "Memorial Day."

The bugle echoes shrill and sweet,
But not of war it sings to-day.
The road is rhythmic with the feet
Of men-at-arms who come to pray.
The roses blossom white and red
On tombs where weary soldiers lie;
Flags wave above the honored dead
And martial music cleaves the sky.

Above their wreath-strewn graves we kneel,
They kept the faith and fought the fight.
Through flying lead and crimson steel
They plunged for Freedom and the Right.

May we, their grateful children, learn
Their strength, who lie beneath this sod,
Who went through fire and death to earn
At last the accolade of [Almighty] God.

In shining rank on rank arrayed
They march, the legions of the Lord;
He is their Captain unafraid,
The Prince of Peace . . . Who brought a sword.

Mr. President, all too often these days, Memorial Day is just another 3-day weekend, an opportunity to work on the yard a little bit, an opportunity to go shopping, or to host a backyard barbecue. Fewer and fewer Americans honor the men and women in uniform and their fallen compatriots. Fewer, still, visit military cemeteries or actually decorate graves in the old-fashioned way.

But for those who went to Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday, May 25, I say you may have witnessed the beautiful scene known as "Flags-In." Just prior to each Memorial Day weekend, every available soldier from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Division, the Old Guard, honors their fallen brethren by placing a small American flag before each of the more than 220,000 grave-stones and 7,300 niches at the cemetery's columbarium. An additional 13,500 flags are set in place at the Soldier's and Airman's Home National Cemetery, also in Washington, DC.

Flags are placed at the graves of each of the four individuals at the Tomb of the Unknowns by the tomb sentinels. Then, in order to ensure that each flag remains in place and standing proudly, the Old Guard patrols the cemetery throughout the weekend, watching over their fallen comrades. It is a stirring sight to see that, truly, none of these great sacrifices are forgotten, and to witness how seriously these young soldiers take their duty.

There will be speeches on Memorial Day—formerly referred to as Decoration Day. And I have made many of those speeches in my long years on Memorial Day. And on this coming Memorial Day, there will again be speeches, and wreaths will be laid. A moment of silence will be observed. For these few moments, our Nation both mourns and celebrates. Privately, we mourn the loss of so many young men and women, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, friends and relatives.

Our hearts and our prayers go out to all the families who have lost a loved one in the Nation's service, and especially to those families who have borne their tragedies so recently and whose tears are still so close to the surface.

The Senate's thoughts and prayers are also with those whose family members have been wounded and who fight now for their lives.

As a nation, we celebrate and we honor the patriotism and the heroism that have kept us free, kept us united, and kept us strong for these past two and a third centuries. It is on the shoulders of these brave legions of the fallen and their comrades in uniform, past and present, that our Nation is carried to greatness.

Technological and scientific progress is a source of pride and strength, economic prosperity a boon, and our Constitution—thank God—a blessing. But none of these gifts is sustainable without the will and the resolve to defend them, to the death if necessary.

Those we honor on Memorial Day have gone that extra mile. They have worn the uniform with pride, and they have won and kept our freedom with their effort and their sacrifice. They have fought together around the globe, in the dark, in the mud, in the dust, on holidays, anniversaries, and weekends. Some have missed the births of their children. Some have missed growing old with their loved ones. They will enjoy no more 3-day weekends, no family vacations, no backyard barbecues. But in our moment of silence, as the flags snap in front of the rows upon rows of marble markers, let us think on all that they have given for us, and be humbled.

Edgar Guest, a prolific poet of the first half of the last century, wrote many favorite poems of mine. His work was published in the newspapers, for he worked for the Detroit Free Press. His poem, Memorial Day, suggests a fitting tribute to all those we honor on Memorial Day.

Let me read a few lines.

The finest tribute we can pay
unto our hero dead today,
is not a rose wreath, white and red,
in memory of the blood they shed;
it is to stand beside each mound,
each couch of consecrated ground,
and pledge ourselves as warriors true
unto the work they died to do.

Into god's valleys where they lie
at rest, beneath the open sky,
triumphant now o'er every foe,
as living tributes let us go.

No wreath of rose or immortelles
or spoken word or tolling bells
will do to-day, unless we give
our pledge that liberty shall live.

Our hearts must be the roses red
we place above our hero dead;
today beside their graves we must
renew allegiance to their trust;
must bare our heads and humbly say
we hold the flag as dear as they,
and stand, as once they stood, to die
to keep the stars and stripes on high.

The finest tribute we can pay
unto our hero dead today
is not of speech or roses red,

but living, throbbing hearts instead,
that shall renew the pledge they sealed
with death upon the battlefield:
that freedom's flag shall bear no stain
and free men wear no tyrant's chain.

Mr. President, I have another statement which I must give. I see the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Mr. McCONNELL, on the floor. I will yield to him if he wishes.

I thank the distinguished Senator for his characteristic courtesy.

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 29, 1937

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, Monday next is Memorial Day. Monday next, being May 29, my memory goes back to May 29, 1937. It was a Saturday. I was working in the meat shop as a meat cutter at the Koppers Store in Stotesbury, Raleigh County, WV. It was a coal mining community. I started working there in the gas station for Koppers Store for \$50 a month. I walked 4 miles to work and 4 miles back home, unless I might catch a bread truck or a milk truck.

But on that Saturday, May 29, 1937, at 5 o'clock p.m., my two senior meat cutters at the Koppers Store in Stotesbury, WV, and I closed up the meat department and went home. I put on my best suit—actually, my only suit—and where did I go? I headed off to Sophia, 4 miles away, to the house of the local hard-shell Baptist preacher U.G. Nichols. And there I met with my high school sweetheart, Erma Ora James. May God bless her sweet memory. She was the beautiful daughter of a coal miner. This was a coal miner who helped to teach me to play the old fiddle tunes long ago: "Sally Goodin," "Mississippi Sawyer," "Arkansas Traveler," and "She'll Be Comin Round the Mountain," and so on.

At 6 o'clock that evening, Preacher Nichols pronounced Erma—God bless her sweet name—and me "husband and wife." That union, I am very proud to say, endured for 68 years, 9 months, and 24 days. So on May 29, 3 days from now, Erma and I would have celebrated our 69th wedding anniversary. That is something to brag about. Dizzy Dean said it was all right to brag, if you have done it, and Erma and I did it. Erma didn't quite go all the way. But on May 29, Erma and I would have celebrated our 69th wedding anniversary. That is something not heard about very often these days, a 69th wedding anniversary.

The Scriptures tell us that "whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favour of the Lord." Well, on that blessed day in 1937—a long time ago—I certainly found a good thing. In looking back on the life that Erma and I shared, I can say, in accordance with the scriptural passage, that I must have been favored by the Lord.

"The joys of marriage are the heaven on earth," wrote the English dramatist, John Ford, five centuries ago. How right John Ford was. When I think of Erma, I still think of the beautiful

line from a song that I used to hear and play, I believe, when I played the fiddle: "She came like an angel from the sky." For almost 69 years, this angel from the sky not only tolerated me, but she was the guiding light for me. She was my teacher. She taught me how to drive an automobile. She was my banker, my accountant.

Very early in our marriage, as a matter of fact, on Sunday, the day after the Saturday evening on which Erma and I made our vows, I turned to her and said: "Here is my wallet." I think I had saved up probably \$300. I said: "You keep it. When I need a dollar, I'll come to you and ask for it." That is the way it was, and that is the way it has been throughout our 69 years.

What a job she did from the meager paychecks, and they were meager. Can you imagine. I started at \$50 a month, and by the time I married, I had advanced. I was getting \$70 a month when I married that sweetheart. She bought from this meager paycheck the things that we needed, our groceries. She paid the bills. She saved some money for a rainy day, and she gave me a monthly allowance.

Erma was my greatest critic, and she was my greatest supporter.

When I left the West Virginia Legislature to come to Congress, the other body, the House of Representatives, and this body, which also makes up the Congress, I was carrying 22 credit hours at Marshall College, now Marshall University, but she, Erma, managed our little grocery store. She took care of our two daughters, and she kept the home fires burning.

When I was attending law school while serving in the U.S. Congress, she would drive from our home at that time in Arlington, VA. She would meet me on Capitol Hill here, around 5:30 p.m., and she would give me my supper. She brought it to me in a paper bag. I would eat my supper while Erma drove me in our car to American University Law School for my classes at 6 p.m. Then she would return later that evening, 8 o'clock or 9 o'clock, to pick me up and take me to our home in Arlington.

I also said, quite truly, that Erma had put three kids through school: our two daughters and me. Erma was the mother of two most wonderful children, my daughters Mona Carole and Marjorie Ellen. Marjorie Ellen was here yesterday with me as we had lunch with some friends in recognition—one might call it celebration, but I call it in recognition—of our 69th wedding anniversary. These two daughters have grown up to become outstanding women and mothers themselves. Marjorie was here with me and with her husband, John Moore. Like me, those daughters owe so much to the marvelous and wonderful woman they called "mother."

Through the years, Erma was my constant companion. She was there with me, by my side, on the campaign trails. She was with me in 1958 when, as