

During his tenure on the bench, Judge Mukasey handled some of the most challenging cases in recent history. In 1995, he presided over the terrorism trial of the “blind Sheik” Omar Abdel Rahman and nine other defendants accused of plotting terrorist attacks on various sites in New York City. Rahman was also one of the terrorist masterminds of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

While presiding over the case of Jose Padilla—an American citizen who was later convicted of, among other things, conspiring to provide material support to al-Qaida—Mukasey issued key rulings that helped set judicial precedent in the war against terrorists. And in the wake of September 11, 2001, he presided over the difficult litigation of World Trade Center—related insurance claims.

During these cases and throughout his career, Judge Mukasey’s knowledge, integrity, and consummate fairness have won him the respect of his colleagues, the attorneys who appeared before him, and many others. In its opinion upholding the verdicts in the 1995 terrorism case, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in an unusual public commendation praised Mukasey’s “extraordinary skill and patience, assuring fairness to the prosecution and to each defendant and helpfulness to the jury.” The court added, “[h]is was an outstanding achievement in the face of challenges far beyond those normally endured by a trial judge.”

Judge Mukasey’s career has been characterized by his commitment to upholding the rule of law. He has never served in a political role, and his nomination should be considered above the partisan fray.

According to the Justice Department’s mission statement, the Attorney General’s first allegiance should be to “the fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans,” not to any individual or political party. Indeed, Judge Mukasey’s reputation for fairness and impartiality is so well-known and respected that the senior Senator from New York, Senator SCHUMER, even recommended him to be a Supreme Court justice.

It is unfortunate, however, that despite the nonpolitical character of Mukasey’s nomination, some Democrats may attempt to hold his nomination hostage in exchange for documents related to the firing of U.S. attorneys. Leaving aside the fact that Congress has no right to these documents, which are covered by executive privilege, Judge Mukasey’s nomination has nothing to do with the firing of these U.S. attorneys.

The President has nominated a distinguished and nonpolitical candidate. The Senate should reciprocate by using the confirmation process not to settle old scores or politicize the nomination, but to examine the qualifications of the nominee fairly.

Since the Carter administration, attorney general nominees have been

confirmed, on average, in approximately 3 weeks, with some being confirmed even more quickly. The Senate should immediately move to consider Judge Mukasey’s nomination and confirm him before Columbus Day.

The Justice Department needs an Attorney General with the foresight, experience, and resolve to lead the Nation’s top law enforcement agency and tackle the difficult challenges presented by the post-9/11 world. I believe the qualities and background of Judge Michael Mukasey, combined with his extensive experience in national security and terrorism cases, commends him to serve as attorney general in these troubled times.

#### TRAILS ACT TECHNICAL CORRECTION ACT

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I rise with my colleague from Missouri, Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL, to correct a small but important injustice in the National Trails System Act. The Trails Act Technical Correction Act of 2007 is a Senate companion to a bipartisan House bill sponsored by Representatives CARNAHAN, AKIN, CLAY, EMERSON, and GRAVES. Our bipartisan bill will ensure that property owners are compensated for land taken from them as Congress intended.

In 1992, the Federal Government confiscated property owned by 102 St. Louis County residents through the Federal Rails-to-Trails Act. The taking imposed an easement on their property for a public recreational hiking/biking trail. A trail easement was established on their property on December 20, 1992. After 12 years of bureaucratic fighting and delay, the Justice Department admitted the government’s takings liability and agreed to pay the property owners a total of \$2,385,000.85 for their property, interest and legal fees.

However, 2 days before the U.S. Court of Claims was scheduled to approve the agreement, the Federal circuit issued the Caldwell decision regarding a Rails-to-Trails takings case in Georgia. That decision interpreted the statute of limitations for a taking in this program as beginning with a notice of interim trail use, not the commonly understood later date the trail easement was legally imposed on the property. Under the new date, the statute of limitations on the St. Louis County takings claim had expired. The Justice Department accordingly sought dismissal of the claims without payment and the court of claims judge agreed.

Our bill clarifies in statute that the statute of limitations for a takings claim under the Trails Act begins on the date an interest is conveyed and allows for reconsideration of past claims dismissed because of this issue. This technical clarification—the takings statute of limitations starts upon the taking—makes the most sense. It also corrects a past injustice that deprived landowners of their rightful compensation. It makes no change to the sub-

stance of the Rails-to-Trails program and is supported on a bipartisan basis. I urge my colleagues to agree to its passage.

#### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to take some time to remind our colleagues, and indeed all Americans, that today, September 21, 2007, is the International Day of Peace. The United Nations and its member states unanimously established an International Day of Peace in 1981. However it was not until 2001 that September 21 was agreed to as the permanent date. According to the U.N. resolution, the International Day of Peace should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples. I applaud Governor Chet Culver for his proclamation affirming Iowa’s observance of International Peace Day. And, at this time, I would like to do my own part to mark this day, especially on the behalf of the many Iowans who are committed to the ideals of peace.

Unfortunately, this may be International Peace Day, but this is hardly a day of peace. The United States is in the fifth year of a devastating war in Iraq, a war of choice that was launched preemptively by the current U.S. administration. The Middle East is marked by conflict and bloodshed from Lebanon to Israel to the Palestinian territories to Iraq and Afghanistan. The genocide in Darfur continues to rage. Militias continue to prey on innocent women in Eastern Congo. In Guatemala, there is an increase in violence against women and against those fighting for the rights of the indigenous population as a result of the most recent elections. HIV/AIDS continues to ravage the continent of Africa. Millions of children are forced to work in abusive conditions—in many cases, as outright slaves—and are denied an education.

Historically, the mixture of strength and a preference for peaceful relations with the rest of the world is what has given the United States its moral standing. In the past, it was our willingness to come to the aid of those who could not defend themselves, and a commitment to resolving conflicts peacefully, if at all possible, that made us the beacon of hope for a better world.

But a true commitment to peace is not measured by a proclamation or by high-minded speeches on one day of the year. It takes more than good intentions and high ideals. What it takes is the hard work of diplomacy, people-to-people exchanges, and active, assertive peace movements in each country. It takes a sustained effort to understand our adversaries and, if at all possible, to resolve our differences peacefully.

I have long been committed to finding peaceful solutions to conflicts. That is why I was present at the creation of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Throughout our long history, America has been proud of its strong, well-led military. And this outstanding military leadership is no accident. It is possible because we maintain prestigious, world-class military academies that train some of the best and brightest minds in America in the art and science of war. But Americans also have a long history as a peace-loving people. Time and again, we have brokered peace agreements between warring nations, and we have intervened to head off potential conflicts. The Institute of Peace draws on this proud tradition, and today makes a vital intellectual investment in the art and science of peacemaking.

I look forward to a time, hopefully not too far in the future, that will truly be a day of peace. But let us remember that peace is not merely the cessation or absence of hostilities. The ideals of peace require us to practice understanding, tolerance, and honorable compromise. The ideals of peace require us to look upon our fellow human beings and to see them as our brothers and sisters. The ideals of peace require us to reject unprovoked aggression and violence as acceptable instruments of national policy.

On this International Day of Peace, I salute the many good people in Iowa, across America, and around the world who devote themselves 365 days a year to the cause of peace and nonviolence. The world is a better place because of their activism and engagement, and because they summon us to what Lincoln called the better angels of our nature.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TO THE CHARLES F. KETTERING MUSEUM

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in 1916, history records a number of momentous events, events that changed the course of our world. President Woodrow Wilson was elected to a second term. World War I was ramping up: Germany and Austria declared war on Portugal in March; Romania declared war on Austria in August; Italy declared war on Germany that same month; and Germany, Turkey, and Bulgaria declared war on Romania. Pancho Villa invaded New Mexico, and the United States responded by sending troops under General John J. Pershing into Mexico. It is said that total miles of U.S. railroad trackage reached its historic peak.

That same year, something equally revolutionary occurred that contributed to a significant change in the way farming was done in Idaho. In the fall of 1916, inventor, philosopher and engineer Charles F. Kettering from Centerville, OH, designed a self-starter for the Massey-Harris tractor. He did this for Thomas Lyon Hamer, a fellow Ohioan, so that Hamer's nephew, Thomas Ray Hamer, could operate the tractor and farm his land in St. An-

thony, Idaho, without the well-known danger posed by the hand-crank.

Thomas Ray Hamer, a Representative in Idaho's state legislature in 1896, was an attorney and a farmer. He also served in the military, in the First Regiment, Idaho Volunteer Infantry and as a captain and lieutenant colonel in the Philippines. He also served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippine Islands. During World War I, he served as a judge advocate general. He spent his later years practicing law in St. Anthony and Boise, ID, and Portland, OR.

It gives me great pleasure to recognize Charles F. Kettering's significant contribution to Idaho history and Idaho agriculture. Were it not for Kettering's willingness to help a friend and his creative ingenuity, a great Idahoan may not have gone on to a second successful military career and secured his place in Idaho history. Charles Kettering—at his death, coholder of more than 140 patents and possessing honorary doctorates from nearly 30 universities lived by his own words: "With willing hands and open minds, the future will be greater than the most fantastic story you can write." Kettering's "willing hands" left their unmistakable handprint on the fields of my State of Idaho.●

#### CONGRATULATING THE GEORGIA LOGISTICS COMMAND

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I congratulate in the RECORD the men and women who serve at the Marine Corps Logistics Command's Maintenance Center in Albany, GA, for being selected for the second time to receive the Robert T. Mason Depot Maintenance Excellence Award.

The Robert T. Mason Depot Maintenance Excellence Award is named for the former Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense of Maintenance Policy, Programs and Resources who was a champion of organic depot maintenance for three decades.

In 2005, the Marine Corps Logistics Command's Maintenance Center in Albany, GA, was the inaugural winner of this award for Depot Maintenance Excellence. That year's recipient was the Design and Manufacture Vehicle Armor Protective Kits Program of the Maintenance Center in Albany, Georgia, for its support of the Global War on Terror. This program provided protective armor kits for U.S. Marine Corps combat vehicles, allowing the Marines to be a more effective fight force and had a direct impact on their safety and morale.

This year, the award went to the Dedicated Design and Prototype Effort Team of the Maintenance Center in Albany, Georgia. They provide exceptional and responsive maintenance support by demonstrating the ability to be responsive, resourceful, agile and creative by designing and prototyping multiple systems in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

I am pleased to acknowledge the great achievement of these men and women of the Marine Corps Logistics Command's Maintenance Center who provide support for our men and women fighting the global war on terror.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 2084. An original bill to promote school safety, improved law enforcement, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-183).

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. SUNUNU):

S. 2083. A bill to require any Federal or State court to recognize any notarization made by a notary public licensed by a State other than the State where the court is located when such notarization occurs in or affects interstate commerce; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 2084. An original bill to promote school safety, improved law enforcement, and for other purposes; from the Committee on the Judiciary; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 2085. A bill to delay for 6 months the requirement to use of tamper-resistant prescription pads under the Medicaid program; to the Committee on Finance.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. SALAZAR):

S. Res. 325. A resolution supporting efforts to increase childhood cancer awareness, treatment, and research; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.