

things was the first step. Gone were the speedboat, the lakeside cabin, the fancy cars.

The Fullers went to Koinonia Farm, a Christian community in Georgia, where they planned their future with Clarence Jordan, a Bible scholar and leader there. In 1968, they began building houses for poor people nearby, then went to Zaire in 1973 to start a project that ultimately built 114 houses.

In 1976, a group met in a converted chicken barn at Koinonia Farm and started Habitat for Humanity International. Participants agreed the organization would work through local chapters. They decided to accept government money only for infrastructure improvements like streets and sidewalks.

Handwritten notes from the meeting stated the group's grand ambition: to build housing for a million low-income people. That goal was reached in August 2005, when home number 200,000 was built. Each home houses an average of five people.

The farm announced plans for a simple public burial service for Mr. Fuller on Wednesday.

Besides his brother, Doyle, of Montgomery, Ala., and his wife, Mr. Fuller is survived by their son, Christopher, of Macon, Ga.; their daughters, Kim Isakson of Argyle, Tex., Faith Umstattd of Americus, and Georgia Luedi of Jacksonville, Fla.; and nine grandchildren.

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Fuller Center built a house in Shreveport, La., for a mother and her daughters, one named Genesis, the other Serenity. Mr. Fuller loved the religious connotations he saw in their names.

"What will little Genesis become?" he asked at the time. "What will little Serenity become? We don't know, but we know one thing: if we give them a good place to live, they've got a better chance."

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR RYAN CROCKER

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to an American patriot, a man of the finest caliber, and a diplomat whose skills and determination have helped alter history's course for the better.

In a few days, Ambassador Ryan Crocker will depart his post as the chief American diplomat in Iraq. His departure will mark the close of a storied career, one of nearly 40 years of distinguished service to our country. In dedicating his career to furthering America's interests and ideals in the far reaches of the globe, and in coupling his dedication with a tremendously adventurous spirit, Ryan Crocker has become known informally as our own "Lawrence of Arabia."

As a young man in Walla Walla, WA, Ryan Crocker decided to depart not for

the beaches of southern California but, rather, abroad, hitchhiking from western Europe to Southeast Asia. By the time he graduated from Whitman College in 1971, Ambassador Crocker had already visited more of the world than most Americans will throughout their lifetimes. His extensive travel and interest in global politics and culture led him to join the Foreign Service in 1971.

Ambassador Crocker quickly developed a reputation for incredible dedication in the face of challenges. From his early days at the State Department, he was assigned to some of the most difficult posts in the Foreign Service. He worked in Iran, Qatar, Egypt, and in Saddam Hussein's Iraq. He was in the Embassy in Beirut in 1983, when a Hezbollah suicide bomber killed 63 people. Thrown against the wall by the blast, Ambassador Crocker immediately began helping others escape the rubble.

He went on to serve as Ambassador to Lebanon, Kuwait, Syria, Pakistan, and Iraq. During his time in Damascus, demonstrators assaulted his residence and, in 2002, he reopened the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, which had been untouched by Americans since 1989. A newspaper account illustrates the spirit that animates this selfless patriot:

He arrived to find a cobweb-strewn wreck full of 1989 newspapers, broken Wang computers and maps of the old Soviet Union. U.S. Marines outnumbered diplomats by 3 to 1, and all 100 Americans slept on cots and shared two working toilets. Yet Crocker was upbeat. "The men and women of this mission are extremely proud to be a forward element," Crocker told [Secretary of State] Powell at the time.

Throughout all these assignments, Ryan Crocker has approached his work with resolve, tenacity, and a unique ability to see the broader strategic issues in play. Had he never gone to lead the U.S. Embassy in Iraq, the American people would owe him deep gratitude. Had he not accepted the challenge in Baghdad, he would have nevertheless won the sincere appreciation and admiration of all Senators. Yet it was in his decision to become America's Ambassador to Iraq that Ryan Crocker has left his true mark on history, and we are all the better off for it.

He was sworn in not here in Washington, as is customary, but in Baghdad, and in March 2007, as the surge of troops to Iraq was commencing, GEN David Petraeus had taken over as commander, and our Nation was making its greatest, and possibly final, push to avoid disaster in Iraq. Let us remember that in 2007, as public support for the war plummeted, we in Congress were engaged in a great debate about the way forward in Iraq. Sectarian violence was spiraling out of control, life had become a struggle for survival, and a full-scale civil war seemed almost unavoidable. Al-Qaida in Iraq was on the offensive and entire Iraqi provinces were under the control of extremists. Noting that "here in Iraq, America faces its most critical foreign policy

challenge," Ambassador Crocker did not sugarcoat the situation or present an overly rosy scenario. He never does. He stressed just how hard the path ahead would be but stressed also that it was not impossible. As he would later testify before the Armed Services Committee, "hard does not mean hopeless."

It was this combination—cold-eyed appraisal of the reality of Iraq combined with hope that things could change for the better—that was so refreshing every time I visited Baghdad. In a true partnership with General Petraeus, Ambassador Crocker executed a civil military counterinsurgency plan for Iraq that turned the tide of violence in a timeframe and to a degree that surprised even the optimists. He ensured unprecedented cooperation between the military, the Embassy, and our allies. His decades of experience in the Middle East proved invaluable as he navigated an increasingly complex and contentious regional dynamic. His efforts, in coordination with the brave men and women of the military and State Department, are the reason we find ourselves in a situation many thought was not possible.

Ryan Crocker's determination to succeed in a situation where many would have failed should inspire us all. Yet any who have followed the career of this skilled and extraordinary diplomat shouldn't be surprised. His creative and pragmatic approach to diplomacy has earned respect both at home and abroad. His list of awards and achievements is long and distinguished, including the Presidential Meritorious Service Award, the State Department Distinguished Honor Award, the American Foreign Service Association Rivkin Award, and most recently the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian commendation.

I am immensely grateful for the enormous contributions that Ambassador Crocker has made to the Department of State, to our Nation, and the people of Iraq. As he departs Baghdad, he will be sorely missed. We wish Ambassador Crocker and his family all the best as he enters the next chapter of his life. He has earned the respect and admiration of a grateful nation.

I have had the great honor for many years to travel the world and encounter many of our wonderful Foreign Service personnel and the men and women who serve in posts throughout the world. They serve with dedication and most of the time without the appreciation they deserve. I have been so impressed with the people who have dedicated their lives to serving this Nation all around the world, in many cases in the most difficult of circumstances. I know of no one I have met in my life who epitomizes public service more than Ryan Crocker; a quiet demeanor, modesty, and, frankly, a knowledge of the issues and the complexities which would take many hours to describe that prevail in the Middle East.

Ryan Crocker came at a seminal time to the Embassy in Baghdad, and in partnership with one of our great military leaders, General Petraeus—a true and equal partnership—those two individuals changed the course of history. Many in this body at that time had believed there was no hope for Iraq and that the situation could not be salvaged. Because of Ryan Crocker, David Petraeus, and many others, with their leadership we have just witnessed an election taking place in Iraq that was virtually without incident.

Ambassador Crocker will be the first to tell us there is a long way to go in Iraq. There are many challenges ahead, but we do have an ally, a democratic nation, and the hope of a society free of the oppression and repression that unfortunately has characterized the situation in Iraq for centuries.

So, again, I know in the future young Americans who serve this country will continue to be inspired by the performance and the dedication of Ryan Crocker. We will miss him. We will miss him enormously, but I know he will continue to serve this country in any way possible for as long as he lives. Thank you, Ryan Crocker.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

HONORING ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, today marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of one of this Nation's finest leaders. Abraham Lincoln was born in 1809 destined for greatness but with humble beginnings. It is remarkable and inspiring to study the life of Abraham Lincoln. Today is a fitting time to reflect on some of the lessons we can continue to learn from him, especially in light of the challenges we are facing today.

President Lincoln's rise to leadership was full of trials and setbacks, most of which would have deterred a lesser man but not Abraham Lincoln. Throughout his lifetime, he was the picture of incomparable character, willing to put his ego aside for the greater good, committed to freedom for the generations, and a true believer that he was not superior to anyone.

These traits may seem like words that are easy to put together, but to live your life by them is truly exemplary. It is especially remarkable in the face of adversity. It is said that trials don't build character, they simply reveal it. Well, President Lincoln

served in the highest office of our country at one of the most tumultuous times in our history. His character was revealed time and time again. Americans are still proud of his leadership and his vision.

During Lincoln's Presidency, our Nation faced the gravest of challenges. We were at war amongst ourselves, and the consequences of our leadership would go down in history. Either America would cease to exist, or we would survive, heal, and one day be stronger than ever. Abraham Lincoln made it possible for us to be here today as the United States of America.

Today, we face many overwhelming challenges. They are significant, but they are not as dire as the Civil War. We can work together to get out of this economic downturn.

In 1862, Lincoln declared:

The bottom is out of the tub.

It sort of feels that way today. All you have to do is talk to people to realize the numbness that is permeating our country. Those who have lost jobs or homes are facing a painful reality. Most Americans are not sure what to do. If you are thinking about buying a home or a car, you think many times about it because of the uncertainty of our economy today. We have to do something here that will boost the confidence of Americans. They have to become consumers again if we want to get this economy going. That means dealing with the underlying housing crisis that set off the bottom falling out of this "tub."

The other issue we have to remember is that the money we spend today will have to be paid for by our children and our grandchildren. So each dollar that goes into this stimulus bill needs to be spent efficiently, and it needs to be far reaching. Each dollar needs to go toward creating jobs and stimulating growth. That way, we can recover from this deepening recession and continue to grow.

Unfortunately, this so-called stimulus bill is not even close to ideal legislation. It will bury us in debt, reduce our creditworthiness as a nation, and only minimally stimulate the economy. It just doesn't speak to the opportunity Abraham Lincoln knew was possible in this country.

He once said:

There is no permanent class of hired laborers amongst us. Twenty-five years ago, I was a hired laborer.

Americans have a unique gift in this country. That gift is opportunity—the opportunity to grow, change course, and improve one's circumstances.

One of the great freedoms we have in America is the freedom to fail. Abraham Lincoln knew a lot about that freedom. He failed many times, but he also knew about the gift of opportunity, and he took advantage of it. We have seen the resilience and ingenuity of the American people throughout history. Our job is to do what we can to let that promise grow and not get in the way.

I believe the stimulus bill we will vote on soon could have been vastly improved if it had been written from the beginning with Republicans and Democrats as part of the process. That is a lesson we should take from President Lincoln. The political process can be messy and petty. We should put our egos aside, as Lincoln did when he brought his greatest rivals into his Cabinet. We should focus on the end goal being the good of our country, not groups to whom each of us is beholden.

We should understand there are no guarantees when it comes to the future of our country. We always have to work to protect what has been defended for more than 200 years. Lincoln reminded us that "it is not merely for today, but for all time to come that we should perpetuate for our children's children this great and free government, which we have enjoyed all of our lives." If we ignore the consequences of our actions today, then we take for granted what is to come for the future of our great country.

President Lincoln was a visionary. On this special day, we cannot lose sight of the tremendous lessons of his lifetime. It is never too late for us to join together as Americans to create a better and a stronger future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. BARRIS. Mr. President, it is my great honor to stand here today and commemorate Abraham Lincoln on the bicentennial of his birth.

Abraham Lincoln's leadership during one of our darkest periods forever changed the face of our Nation. Because of his bold vision and undivided faith in the future of our great Nation, freedom and justice for all was realized. Without doubt, as this resolution affirms, President Lincoln "redefined what it means to be an American." Today, I wish to take a moment to recognize another part of his legacy.

In this resolution, it states that "despite less than a year of formal schooling, he developed an avid love for reading and learning." Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah Bush Johnston, encouraged Lincoln to read, write, and think freely, even as she and Lincoln's father could not afford to send him to school. And herein lies the brilliance of Lincoln's rise.

From the backcountry in Illinois to the White House in Washington, DC, Abraham Lincoln rose to the highest office in the land by educating himself. In his first political address in 1832, seeking a seat in the Illinois General Assembly, he said:

I desire to see the time when education . . . shall become much more general than at present, and I should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to its advancement.

As President Lincoln showed us, education is the foundation of our future success. In this period of economic stress and uncertainty, we draw on Lincoln's legacy and move forward because of his strength.