

These police are like our own “Cops on the Beat.”

Finally, so many of the Capitol Hill Police Officers are my Maryland constituents, just like J.J. Chestnut.

Officer Chestnut was always one of the stars: trained as an MP in the military, he was with the Capitol Police for 18 years and was known for having a unique touch with tourists and constituents. We were very proud of him, and he was even nominated at one time for Capitol Police Officer of the Year.

And I know how proud we were of Detective Gibson as well: he was from just across the river in Virginia. He was a true hero—stopping the gunman from entering the building.

Mr. President, I join my colleagues in the Senate in marking this sad anniversary and in paying respect to the families of Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson. They were heroes that sad day in 1998, and they are heroes for today and all eternity.

FDA SAFETY AND INNOVATION ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I rise to say a few words about the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act, legislation Congress passed with strong bipartisan support just before we returned home to our States for the Fourth of July.

This bill was a big one. It was a big bill with complex provisions and an essential purpose: to safeguard the public, to protect patients and encourage innovation and invention, which are so important to treating and curing diseases in this country as well as other problems. And this measure was revolutionary in many ways. It contained complex, new provisions, provisions that we must make sure are implemented as Congress intended.

I was proud to work on many parts of this bill with my colleagues, including title VIII of this legislation, to generate new antibiotics to treat emerging serious and life threatening superbug infections. I want to clarify two points for the record on this legislation: I want to be clear that pathogens identified in this title are illustrative, not all-inclusive. There are many deadly pathogens that we may not even know of yet; title VIII is intended to spur innovation against all superbug infections as soon as they arise. And, I want to be clear, language in section 801(b) is not intended to prohibit or preclude innovative drug products that will spur the antibiotic pipeline, so long as they meet the definition for a qualified infectious disease product.

FDA approval of new antibiotics has decreased by 70 percent since the mid-1980s, yet reports from the CDC suggest that resistant MRSA infection deaths are now at more than 17,000 lives lost in the United States each year—more than AIDS. Resistant infections have now been elevated to one of the World Health Organization's top three threats to human health. It is my sincere hope

that title VIII will spur production of the weapons we need to fight this threat.

FISCAL YEAR 2013 APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues in support of Senate debate and passage of the fiscal year 2013 appropriations bills.

I want to begin by commending both Chairman INOUE and Vice-Chair COCHRAN for their leadership on the Appropriations Committee. In what has been largely a bipartisan process, the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved 9 of the 12 funding bills so far. A lot of hard work on both sides has gone into putting these bills together.

As ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, Senator MURRAY and I worked closely together to craft a truly bipartisan fiscal year 2013 appropriations bill. The T-HUD bill strikes a balance between thoughtful investment and fiscal restraint. In fact, this bill honors an allocation that is nearly \$14.5 billion below fiscal year 2010 levels, a 22-percent reduction. These deep cuts reflect an even deeper commitment to getting our fiscal house in order.

I am proud of the work that went into this bill and the strong bipartisan vote this past April to report it out of committee. Like the T-HUD bill, the Agriculture; Commerce, Justice, and Science; Energy and Water; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs; State and Foreign Operations; and Department of Homeland Security bills have all been reported with overwhelming bipartisan support. In putting together these bills, the Appropriations Committee functioned the way committees are supposed to: we worked together to develop thoughtful and responsible bills that could be recommended for the full Senate for consideration.

As such, I was very disappointed to hear the majority leader's recent announcement that not one of the 12 appropriations bills would be brought to the Senate floor until after the election, virtually guaranteeing that we end up with a continuing resolution or catch-all omnibus that the full Senate has not had an opportunity to properly vet. I hope he will reconsider in light of our commitment to work with him to develop a workable and fair process for considering these bills.

Given the immense workload that we have before the end of the year—including enacting appropriations bills and preventing the so-called fiscal cliff, when enormous tax hikes and indiscriminate cuts to defense spending are set to kick in—I am disappointed that we have spent much of July haggling over proposals that never really stood a chance of going anywhere.

I understand that the majority leader has said that he doesn't want to bring the bills to the floor because the House

is writing its bills to a lower level, but we have a process to deal with disagreements. It is called a conference. The Senate Appropriations Committee has reported several bipartisan bills that are ready for floor consideration. Why not bring them to the floor, allow Senators to offer amendments, and let the Senate work its will on this important constitutional responsibility?

As our Nation's economy struggles to recover, it is important that we complete appropriations bills on time and through regular order. It is important for the Senate as an institution that we proceed. It is also important for the American people to see that we can work together in an open and bipartisan manner to establish priorities, make hard decisions, and complete the work that the Constitution requires of us.

Last November, I joined Chairman MURRAY as well as Chairmen KOHL and MIKULSKI and Ranking Members BLUNT and HUTCHISON to usher the first group of fiscal year 2012 spending bills to final passage, avoiding a long-term continuing resolution for fiscal year 2012. It is my hope that we will build on last year's success and bring the fiscal year 2013 appropriations bill to the floor to be considered through a similarly open and transparent process.

These bills make investments that not only create jobs now when they are needed most but also establish the foundations for future growth. Just as important to our economic future, however, is reigning in Federal spending; we must strike the right balance between thoughtful investments and fiscal restraint, thereby setting the stage for future economic growth. Uncertainty only makes matters worse.

CHRIS BOHJALIAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont boasts many talented artists, creators, composers and authors. Not least among them is Chris Bohjalian of Lincoln, an accomplished writer whose recent novel, *The Sandcastle Girls*, is drawing the praise and accolades of critics and readers alike. Marcelle and I were inspired by the story Chris has committed to the printed page; it is a novel that I believe will secure his place among the most accomplished writers of the 21st Century.

I read with interest an interview with Chris published in Vermont's Burlington Free Press on July 15. Like many artists and authors, Chris drew from his own heritage in his case, Armenian—to pen a moving story of compassion and perseverance amid horror and tragedy. Perhaps this is why he has called *The Sandcastle Girls* the “most important book” he will ever write.

Chris is a longtime friend, and I have always enjoyed reading his works. *The Sandcastle Girls* is an achievement that stands apart and will deeply affect its readers.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article, “The

Most Important Book I Will Ever Write.”

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, July 15, 2012]

“THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK I WILL EVER WRITE”—BOHJALIAN TALKS ABOUT ‘THE SANDCASTLE GIRLS’

(By Sally Pollak)

Chris Bohjalian is a novelist who lives in Lincoln. Bohjalian, 51, writes a Sunday column for the Burlington Free Press. “The Sandcastle Girls,” his 14th novel, comes out Tuesday. In a recent conversation with Free Press reporter Sally Pollak, Bohjalian said “The Sandcastle Girls” is the most important novel he will ever write. He said, as well, he thinks it’s the best book he’s ever written.

“The Sandcastle Girls” is set in Aleppo, Syria, during the Armenian genocide, nearly a century in the past. The story centers around a young American woman, Elizabeth Endicott, who travels to the Middle East to assist Armenian refugees. She befriends (and aids) a group of interesting people, and falls in love with an Armenian engineer who has suffered devastating losses.

The book is narrated by a contemporary American novelist of Armenian heritage, Laura Petrosian. Bohjalian says Petrosian is a female version of himself.

BFP: What compelled you to write this book?

CB: This is the second time I’ve tried to write about the Armenian genocide. I tried to write about it when I finished “Water Witches,” prior to writing “Midwives.” I wrote an entire novel called “Sugar Daddy.” Terrible book, never published.

Not only was it a terrible, terrible book, but about this time Carol Edgarian wrote “Rise the Euphrates” about the Armenian genocide.

And I remember thinking to myself, Why does the world need my book when it has “Rise the Euphrates?”

Rather than try to save the novel I went onto my next project, a novel about a midwife who dies in childbirth, and wrote that book instead.

I was about 100 pages into the manuscript about the Sandcastle girls when Mark Mustian published his interesting and marvelous novel about the genocide, “The Gardame.” Once again I thought the world doesn’t need my novel.

But I was so emotionally invested in these characters, I cared so much about the story, that I soldiered on and finished it. I’m really glad I did. I love this novel. Elizabeth Endicott, Nevart and Hatoun are my three favorite female characters, along with Sibyl Danfroth in “Midwives,” that I’ve ever written.

BFP: “The Sandcastle Girls” is a mystery, a love story and a narrative of war. How do you approach writing a novel that weaves together these themes?

CB: Those elements are woven together through the characters. I know when I read a novel, I’m interested in characters I care about. And so when I began this book I began with the people, I began with the characters. And I do care so deeply about the characters in this book, especially those women.

BFP: How did you come up with “the compound” in your novel, the setting for much of the action and the place where many of your characters live?

CB: Partly, I was simply after historical authenticity: Where would Elizabeth Endicott, an American, be living? Then, however, I saw the importance of the juxtaposition of

where Elizabeth lays her head at night compared to where the refugees who are coming from the desert are sleeping. The square of the citadel is an innermost ring of Dante’s inferno, compared to the compound.

BFP: Did you know when you started writing the book how you were going to resolve it?

CB: I never know where my books are going when I begin them. I depend upon my characters to take me by the hand and lead me through the dark of the story. I didn’t know this novel was even going to have a component that was mysterious when I began it. All I knew was that I wanted to examine what my narrator calls the “Slaughter You Know Next to Nothing About.”

BFP: Can you describe the sense of responsibility or obligation you might have felt writing a novel that would tell people something about this mass killing, now a century in the past?

CB: I know in my heart this is the most important book I’m ever going to write. I’m telling a story that is not known but was precedent-setting for some of the most horrific tragedies and crimes of the last century. There’s a direct line between the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, the killing fields of Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda. It’s a long list.

In 1915, there were roughly two million Armenians living in the Ottoman empire. By the end of the First World War, 1.5 million would be dead, three out of every four of them. In 1915, I had four Armenian great-grandparents. By the end of that year, at least one would be dead. Both of my Armenian grandparents are genocide survivors.

My family history is a part of that horrific global narrative. So when I started this book, I began with the personal. My narrator, Laura Petrosian, is a female version of me. That’s my grandparents’ house in the novel.

Elizabeth Endicott and Armen Petrosian (central characters in the book) are not my grandparents. They are completely fictional.

BFP: When did your grandparents, Leo and Haigoohi Bohjalian, come to this country?

CB: There were two points of arrival. I believe my grandfather, Leo, first arrived here in 1920 but he didn’t stay. He went back to get my grandmother and they lived in Paris until late 1927, or very early 1928.

BFP: What do you know about your own Armenian ancestors? And how does your family’s history figure into this work?

CB: I know almost nothing about my Armenian ancestry; I know even less about my (maternal) Swedish ancestry.

I don’t know what demons dogged my mother and father, but they never talked to me about their childhoods. That’s why perhaps “The Sandcastle Girls” is a novel and not a memoir. I couldn’t tell you enough about my Armenian and Swedish ancestors to write a memoir. I have wondered if I am going to learn a lot about my (Armenian) ancestors when this book comes out, which would be great.

My aunt believes that Haigoohi’s father (Bohjalian’s great-grandfather) was murdered by Turkish soldiers because he supplied horses to the army. They killed the Armenian and took the horses.

The history of “The Sandcastle Girls” is accurate. I did my research and I did my homework. I believe that Aleppo of 1915 (where the novel is set) is the real thing.

I knew so little about the Armenian genocide as a child, and what my grandparents must have endured, that I saw no irony in the fact that my first serious girlfriend when I was 13 and 14 years old was Turkish. I understood as a child that my grandparents were from Armenia and were magnificently exotic, by the standards of both grand-

parents. My mother really did call their house the Ottoman Annex of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Their English, up to as late as 1970, was heavily accented.

BFP: Your father, Aram Bohjalian, died last summer, about a year before the publication of “The Sandcastle Girls.” Did you get a chance to talk to him about the book? What were his feelings about the novel?

CB: My father’s eyesight had been diminished by macular degeneration for so long, he was not able to read even large-print books. That photograph (of Bohjalian’s father and grandparents) is one of many photographs that my dad and I pored over the last two years of his life. Because he was so ill, I was visiting him a lot. The way I would try to take his mind off the pain he was in was to get out family photo albums and ask him to tell me stories, ask him to tell me about the different people in the photographs. A lot of it he didn’t know.

My father, as a first generation son of immigrants, in many ways distanced himself as much as he could from his Armenian ancestry. He grew up in a house in Westchester County in which everyone spoke Armenian or Turkish. When he started kindergarten, he spoke not a single word of English. He didn’t even know how to ask where the bathroom was. In terms of distancing himself from his Armenain ancestry, he became as American as possible.

He was not as handsome as Don Draper in “Mad Men” but he was a Mad Man. He was an advertising executive at large New York City ad agencies.

I think my father knew more than he wanted to share with me. He had mixed emotions about it. On the one hand, he was always really proud of me; even when his eyesight was gone, he loved listening to my books on audio, even the bad ones.

But I think he also felt that this story was too painful for a novel. I remember once reminding him when we talked about this that I had written novels about a woman dying in childbirth, a couple who had their twin daughters washed away in a flood, the Holocaust, and a domestic abuse murder-suicide. And I also told him that as an Armenian-American, I felt an incredible desire to write this story because it feels so much a part of me.

BFP: Can you tell us something about your recent trip to Armenia and Lebanon?

CB: The principal driving force that led me to Armenia was the death of my father, and not simply his death but his illness. The more time I spent looking at old family photographs, the more time I spent seeing images of Leo and Haigoohi, the more I felt this profound desire to see Mount Ararat.

I have never in my life been outside Vermont and felt less like a stranger in a strange land, than when I was in Yerevan, Armenia. I was so happy there in ways I hadn’t expected.

BFP: “The Sandcastle Girls” will be released Tuesday. Are you nervous as publication approaches?

CB: I’ve never been as emotionally invested in how people respond to a book as I am with this one. Because this is the most important book I will ever write. And I think it’s the best book I’ve ever written. And the reason why it’s the most important book is pure and simple: because it’s about the “Slaughter You Know Next to Nothing About.”

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

STENNIS CENTER PROGRAM FOR CONGRESSIONAL INTERNS

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, for 10 years, summer interns working in Congressional offices have benefitted from a program run by the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Leadership. This 6-week program is designed to enhance their internship experience by giving them an inside view of how Congress works and a deeper appreciation for the role that Congress plays in our democracy. Each week, the interns meet with senior congressional staff and other experts to discuss issues such as the legislative process, separation of powers, balancing governing and campaigning, political polarization, and more. My office has had the benefit of hosting Stennis interns over years and I know it contributes to a richer experience for all who participate.

Interns are selected for this program based on their college record, community service experience, and interest in a career in public service. This year, 28 outstanding interns, most of them juniors and seniors in college who are working in Republican and Democratic offices in both the House and Senate, have taken part.

I congratulate the interns for their involvement in this valuable program and I thank the Stennis Center and the Senior Stennis Fellows for providing such a meaningful experience for these interns and for encouraging them to consider a future career in public service.

I ask that a list of 2012 Stennis Congressional Interns and the offices in which they work be printed in the RECORD.

The list follows.

Nick Briggs, attending Brown University, interning in the office of Rep. JIM MCGOVERN;

Julia Caulfield, attending Western Washington University, interning in the office of Sen. MARK BEGICH;

Ryan Clarke, attending the University of North Florida, interning in the office of the House Democratic Leader;

Rebecca Dailey, attending Boston College, interning in the office of Sen. MARK BEGICH;

Myranda Elliott, attending Hofstra University, interning in the office of Rep. PAUL GOSAR;

Robert Glass, attending Georgia Southwestern State University, interning in the office of Rep. JOHN BARROW;

Alison Gocke, attending Princeton University, interning in the House Committee on Natural Resources;

Sadhna Gupta, attending Duke University, interning in the office of Rep. JIM MCGOVERN;

Geoff Henderson, attending Haverford College, interning in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs;

Katie Hill, attending Brown University, interning in the office of Rep. DAVID CICILLINE;

Kayla Howe, attending The Monterey Institute of International Studies, interning in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs;

Dan Hsieh, attending Seattle University School of Law, interning in the office of Sen. MIKE ENZI;

Elizabeth Joseph, attending the University of Texas at Austin, interning in the office of Sen. THAD COCHRAN;

Isabella Leavitt, attending Arizona State University, interning in the office of Rep. RAÚL GRIJALVA;

Ju Young Lee, attending Claremont McKenna College, interning in the office of Rep. BARBARA LEE;

Hunter Ligon, attending the University of Oklahoma, interning in the office of Rep. JAMES LANKFORD;

Jennifer Lundemo, attending Dickinson State University, interning in the office of Sen. KENT CONRAD;

Ty McNamee, attending the University of Wyoming, interning in the office of Sen. MIKE ENZI;

Zach Ostro, attending the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, interning in the office of Rep. MARCIA FUDGE;

James Pollack, attending Harvard University, interning in the office of Rep. JACKIE SPEIER;

Stephanie Rice, attending Boston College, interning in the House Committee on Financial Services;

Sterling Robinson, Jr., attending Hofstra Law School, interning in the office of Rep. CHARLES RANGEL;

Amir Rowe, attending St. John's University, interning in the office of Rep. CHARLES RANGEL;

Ray Salazar, attending Hawaii Pacific University, interning in the office of Rep. COLLEEN HANABUSA;

Mike Sardano, attending New England Law Boston, interning in the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration;

Elizabeth Teagle, attending the University of Georgia, interning in the office of Sen. SAXBY CHAMBLISS;

Kanoe Tjorvatjoglou, attending George Mason University, interning in the office of Rep. COLLEEN HANABUSA;

Guy Wood, attending Princeton University, interning in the office of Sen. THAD COCHRAN. •

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL
TIMOTHY J. LOWENBERG

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Major General Timothy J. Lowenberg for his exemplary record of service to the Washington National Guard, Washington State, and the United States of America.

MG Timothy J. Lowenberg will retire on July 31, 2012 after a distinguished career with the Washington National Guard and 44 years of military service to this country. General Lowenberg has been the Adjutant General for Washington State since September 1999 and in this role he has served as the commander of all Washington National Guard forces, Director of Washington State's Emergency Management programs, and Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor of Washington. Beyond these already extensive responsibilities, General Lowenberg is recognized nationally for his work on Homeland Security policy. In a defining mark of General Lowenberg's forward-leaning leadership, he established the Washington State Domestic Security Infrastructure in 1999, prior to the events of 9/11. This collaborative effort to establish a Statewide system capable of responding to major disaster events pre-

ceded the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security by several years.

While his list of titles would be a strong credit to any individual, an equally impressive aspect of General Lowenberg's career has been his ability to provide this leadership during one of the most dynamic periods of Washington State's history. During his tenure, General Lowenberg has led Washington State in the response to 53 Governor Emergency Proclamations, 10 Presidential Major Disaster Declarations, and one Presidential Emergency Declaration. Beyond the sheer volume of emergencies General Lowenberg has addressed during his time as Adjutant General, he has displayed great flexibility and a talent for adapting to the needs of any given situation. One of his signature accomplishments was working with me and others toward the establishment of the 2010 Olympics Security Committee and the construction of the 2010 Olympic Coordination Center. In the years that led up to the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, General Lowenberg recognized the need for local, State, Federal, and international cooperation to ensure an effective and smooth response to the games. He managed to operate this committee without the benefit of a National Security Special Event designation, achieving the desired outcome without the benefit of additional funding.

Had General Lowenberg spent his time as Adjutant General only responding to emergencies and planning for disasters, he would still have been able to retire as one of the most accomplished Adjutant Generals in the country, but he also commanded the Washington National Guard during a time of war. Though it is easy to forget, our world looked quite different in 2001. The servicemembers who initially deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq didn't have Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, up-armored Humvees, or even the kind of extensive body armor we see today. Some National Guard members deployed to war zones without body armor, necessary equipment, or even vehicles. In the face of these hardships, General Lowenberg and the Washington National Guard stood fast and persevered. Over the last decade Washington Guard members have deployed and sacrificed alongside the Active-Duty military again and again, and in the words of former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, the Washington National Guard and all State Guard members have changed from, "a strategic reserve to an integral part of the operational force."

While these brave servicemembers were deployed, General Lowenberg worked with me to modernize Cold War-era benefits that no longer sufficiently supported the post-9/11 Guard members and their families. Guard members deploying in the early half of the last decade were doing so without the promise of adequate veterans' benefits, without appropriate TRICARE