

We hear a sense of angst in our membership and throughout the military community. How can we be in the middle of the fall out of sequestration—furloughs, program cuts, loss of mission readiness—we have families who can't get medical appointments. They are all wondering how they will manage if the situation in Syria continues to escalate. They wonder how will it affect them. Not, if it will affect them. But, how.

"That statement, in all its small-minded glory, captures the civilian-military divide more clearly than any survey ever could."

And maybe someday we will be able to fight whole wars without using a single human . . . And Rosie the Robot will clean our kitchens while we tackle our morning commutes in flying cars. But today, in 2013, we can't have a 'surgical strike' without someone saying where to drop the bombs or where to aim those missiles. And those planes that drop the bombs? The destroyers that carry the missiles? They have pilots, captains and crews. All humans. Even the "unmanned" drones have human pilots, and the psychological wear and tear on them is staggering. Planes take off from airfields in foreign lands or from aircraft carriers, both of which are staffed by thousands of American somebodies, just like those destroyer ships. At every turn in a military operation you will find people. Intel analysts, linguists, flight crews, and cooks. Even war plans, regardless of whether they were, as you stated, "on deployment anyway" rely on thousands of people who will be pulled to a new duty, which causes reshuffling far and wide in the military community.

And this, most definitely, affects military families.

The big question is, as you said, "will it work?" and, as we learned from the most recent wars, it bears recalling that things don't always go as planned. But that's not the only question. Do not kid yourself, Barbara, and don't you dare kid the viewers who trust your reporting.

Sincerely,

REBEKAH SANDERLIN and MOLLY BLAKE,

Military Spouses.

Mr. INHOFE, Mr. President, I wish to quote from the letter I just submitted for the RECORD, and I ask my colleagues to listen to the quote. These are two ladies who are spouses of servicemen. They said:

There is no such thing as a person-less war. Our military cannot afford for Americans to forget that wars and battles and military strikes are fought by troops, that troops are people, and that those people have families. In our military communities this summer we couldn't even afford to pay Federal employees for a five-day work week. Military families can't get doctors' appointments and can't get counseling services needed to grapple with the problems we already have, problems largely created by almost 12 years of war. Today clinic hours are being slashed—along with pretty much every other service military families need. Walking around our communities lately, it doesn't look like we can afford much of anything—and certainly not a whole new war.

I am still quoting now these wives of our military men:

And maybe someday we will be able to fight whole wars without using a single human, but today, in 2013, we can't have a surgical strike without someone saying where to drop the bombs or where to aim those missiles. And those planes that drop the bombs? The destroyers that carry the missiles? They have pilots, captains, and crews. All humans. Even the "unmanned" drones have human pilots, and the psycho-

logical wear and tear on them is staggering. Planes take off from airfields in foreign lands and from aircraft carriers, both of which are staffed by thousands of American somebodies, just like those destroyer ships. At every turn in a military operation you will find people. Intel analysts, linguists, flight crews, and cooks. Even war plans . . . rely on thousands of people who will be pulled to a new duty, which causes reshuffling far and wide in the military community. And this, most definitely, affects our military families.

Again, that is a quote from two of the wives of our current servicemen. I hope all of my colleagues will read this letter. I hope they understand that the decisions we make this week about whether to go to war in Syria have a human dimension.

If we expect the brave men and women in our military to go to foreign lands and risk their lives on our behalf, we have a moral obligation to ensure that they and their families have the support and the resources that are required. Sequestration has already inflicted severe damage on our military, and we are now only a couple of weeks from another \$52 billion being slashed from an already devastated military budget.

I have been clear that I don't support the President's call for military action in Syria. He still hasn't presented Congress and the American people with a plan for what he wants to accomplish, how he intends to accomplish it, or how he intends to pay for it. Will the President pay for this operation with more furloughs and by grounding more squadrons again? The CNO has already come forward and stated that if operations against Syria extend into October, he won't be able to afford it and will likely require supplemental funding from Congress.

Furthermore, the President hasn't told us how a strike in Syria fits into a broader strategy for the Middle East. What we decide to do is not just about Syria. It is bigger than that. This is about the growing threat from Iran, stability in the Middle East, and our commitment to Israel and allies and our ability to respond to other contingencies that are there.

I recall knowing what was going to happen. This is 4½ years ago, back when President Obama was first elected, his first election. I knew that when he came out with his first budget, he was going to do something devastating to the military. So I put myself into Afghanistan, knowing, with the tanks going back and forth, that I would be able to get the interest and the attention of the American people, and it worked. So in that very first budget 4½ years ago, he did away with the early fifth-generation bomber then, the F-22; did away with our future combat system—the first ground capability increase in about 50 years; did away with our lift capacity, the C-17. Then, the worst thing, which I hope doesn't turn out to create the worst problem for America, he did away with the ground-based operation in Poland. That was

just the first budget. That was 4½ years ago. Since that time, in his extended budget, he has taken \$487 billion out of the military, and with sequestration it will be another \$½ trillion. This just can't happen.

It is not just me who is saying this. People would expect it more from me. I am the ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I have gone there and worked with these guys and noticed the problems they have. I would suggest that not just me but Admiral Winnefeld, who is the second highest military guy, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said:

There could be, for the first time in my career— An admiral speaking now, the second highest person in our military—

instances where we may be asked to respond to a crisis and we will have to say we cannot.

And then we go to the very top person, General Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said, "Our military force is so degraded, so unready, it would be immoral to use force."

I only say this because we are going to be facing this, and I would be opposed to this even with my amendment to postpone the sequestration of the military for 1 year. However, if that passes, I will still oppose this taking place. I don't think many people in America realize what has happened to our military under the Obama administration.

Well, I have just stated what has happened. This is certainly not a time when we would use force in Syria. Keep in mind that General Dempsey said it would be immoral to use force, we are so degraded, and that is exactly what we will be voting on in the next couple of days.

With that, I yield the floor.

CHIRIBIQUETE NATIONAL PARK

Mr. LEAHY, Mr. President, I want to speak briefly about a recent development in Colombia of which many Senators may not be aware.

Colombia is ranked as the second most biologically diverse country in the world. The variety of plant and animal life is staggering, which reflects its similarly diverse geography—from Amazon rainforest to glacier-covered mountains, and Caribbean and Pacific coastlines.

To its credit, Colombia has an extensive system of national parks and biological reserves. I have long been convinced that as security improves in that country and long after the oil wells are depleted, its national parks and other protected areas will be among Colombia's greatest resource, attracting eco-tourists from around the world.

On August 21 President Santos took an historic leap forward by doubling the size of Chiribiquete National Park, which is home to a myriad of species including jaguars and is comprised of extraordinary rock formations and

dense jungle. Chiribiquete was already Colombia's largest park, and it has now become the size of Belgium.

There is more that needs to be done to protect Colombia's environment, particularly from the damage caused by mining and other extractive industries which has often occurred in, or adjacent to, environmentally fragile areas or indigenous reserves.

But President Santos' single stroke of the pen has done more for environmental conservation and species protection than what most heads of state do in a lifetime. I commend him for it and congratulate the Colombian people. Colombia has set an example for all of us who care about the environment and recognize that we have a responsibility to protect it for future generations.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH ROBERTS

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, Today I wish to recognize one of my staff members who is currently battling cancer. Joseph F. Roberts has worked in my Rapid City congressional district office since September 2002. Combined with service in the Peace Corps and the U.S. Air Force, Joe has served our Nation for approximately 19 years in Federal and military service.

As a member of my staff, Joe has provided exemplary constituent service to veterans and their families, as well as servicemembers and constituents facing numerous issues. He has always approached his work with a high degree of professionalism and a genuine caring attitude. That caring attitude stems from years of therapy and counseling services in the private sector he provided to the people of western South Dakota.

His service in the U.S. Air Force has served him well in working with veterans, and he has taken particular interest with veterans who suffer from military sexual assault, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Veterans and their families know they have a true advocate with Joe in their corner when it comes to obtaining answers and decisions on claims, searches for records and medical care issues. Joe's time in the Peace Corps brought him to Romania and Guyana where he served in a number of capacities including education and training on domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse and communication, as well as working on infrastructure issues and providing psychotherapy and other counseling assistance. These experiences helped him greatly in my district office as he assisted constituents with local, State and Federal issues and problems, including a wide array of immigration and passport issues.

I have always been impressed by Joe's sense of dedication and commit-

ment to helping people. One of the great rewards in life is helping others and whether it has been his work in the Peace Corps, his private work as a therapist and counselor, or his work in constituent service in my office, Joe has helped many people. Over the years, I have received numerous thank you notes and letters from constituents praising the work of Joe Roberts.

And he has approached his battles with cancer over the years with commitment, humor and perspective, always sharing, teaching and counseling despite the challenges of the disease.

I take this opportunity to thank Joe for his service and his work on my behalf with the people of South Dakota. I congratulate him on his many years of service to the people of South Dakota and to his country and commend him for a job well done.●

RECOGNIZING THE ORPHEUM THEATER CENTER

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the Orpheum Theater Center in Sioux Falls, SD on its centennial anniversary. Since 1913, the Orpheum Theater has established itself as a place of excellence in the arts.

On a breezy Thursday evening in October, exactly 100 years ago today, the Orpheum Theater opened its doors and charged patrons an unheard of price of \$5 per seat. The opening night performances stunned the audience with a broad spectrum of entertainment including the Orpheum Concert Orchestra, two comedy acts, and headlines from around the world via a state-of-the-art newsreel.

Over the past 100 years, the Orpheum Theater has changed owners several times and has undergone many renovations, most recently in 2009. Thanks to its dedicated staff and exceptional volunteers the Orpheum Theater has consistently provided a superb place to experience performing arts and annually 100,000 people visit this world-class venue.

South Dakotans have congregated at the Orpheum Theater for elegant performances by entertainers both from within our community and around the world. I congratulate the Orpheum Theater Center on reaching this milestone, and wish it continued success. Encore!●

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY CHAPEL DEDICATION

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Cadet Chapel at the U.S. Air Force Academy. In the half century since its founding, the Cadet Chapel has become a National Historic Landmark and the most popular manmade attraction in Colorado. Each year more than 750,000 visitors explore this iconic and unique building.

Today, the Cadet Chapel is a multifaith house of worship specifi-

cally designed to provide multiple distinct worship areas under a single roof, meeting the spiritual needs of the Academy's cadets. The chapel's aluminum, glass and steel structure features 17 spires that soar 150 feet toward the Colorado sky.

Annually, over 4,000 cadets are provided 850 religious worship and educational opportunities to practice their personal faith. The chapel also provides religious rites and observances such as baptisms and dedications, weddings, funerals and memorial services. Most worship services are open to the general public and thousands of visitors each year attend worship.

The Cadet Chapel fosters outstanding civic involvement by partnering with the local community to host four annual free concerts with over 2000 attendees. The U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel is truly unique. Its iconic architectural structure serves as a symbol of the Academy and is recognized worldwide. Most important, the Cadet Chapel enables the free exercise of religion for cadets in this unique campus setting and aids the Chaplain Corps at the Air Force Academy to inspire men and women to become leaders of character through spiritual formation.

In the 50 years since the Cadet Chapel was dedicated our Nation has sent Air Force Academy graduates to serve in the skies and jungles of Vietnam and the deserts of Iraq. Those that once bowed their head beneath the spires of the Chapel served our country in the former Yugoslavia and in the mountains of Afghanistan, and they continue to serve the cause of freedom around the globe today. We thank them for their service, and we congratulate the Air Force on the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Air Force Academy's Cadet Chapel.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 367. An act to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

H.R. 1582. An act to protect consumers by prohibiting the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from promulgating as final certain energy-related rules that are estimated to cost more than \$1billion and will cause significant adverse effects to the economy.

H.R. 1897. An act to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

H.R. 2009. An act to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from enforcing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

H.R. 2879. An act to provide limitations on bonuses for Federal employees during sequestration, to provide for investigative leave requirements for members of the Senior Executive Service, to establish certain