

that on Monday, December 8, 2014, following my remarks and those of Senator McConnell, the time until 5:30 p.m. be in morning business, for debate only, equally divided in the usual form; and that at 5:30 p.m. all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order upon which cloture was invoked; further, that following those votes, the Senate be in a period of morning business, for debate only; further, that on Tuesday, December 9, 2014, the Senate be in a period of morning business, for debate only, with the time equally divided in the usual form; that at 10:30 a.m. the Senate proceed to vote on cloture on Calendar Nos. 1080 and 1081; further, that if cloture is invoked, the time until 6 p.m. be in morning business, for debate only, equally divided in the usual form; that at 6 p.m. all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on the nominations in the order listed; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote and all rollcall votes after the first vote in each sequence be 10 minutes in length; further, with respect to the nominations in this agreement, that if any nomination is confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO SAM HEMINGWAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, one of Vermont's longest-serving journalists, Sam Hemingway, recently retired after a distinguished 37-year career with the Burlington Free Press. His career at the paper spans a period of our State's history filled with interesting stories, and Sam covered so many of them.

During the course of those many years Sam captured the pulse of Vermont, whether through his personalized columns or his probing reports. Sam's institutional memory was a rich and vital resource for the newspaper and for his readers. His writing talents,

his reporting skills and his ability to make personal connections will be sorely missed.

Marcelle and I join all Vermonters in extending all best wishes to Sam and his family as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

I ask that this Burlington Free Press article sketching Sam's tenure and retirement plans be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Oct. 7, 2014]

HEMINGWAY TO RETIRE AFTER 37 YEARS
(By Adam Silverman, Free Press Staff Writer)

Sam Hemingway, a reporter, editor and columnist who is among Vermont's most well-known journalists, will retire from the Burlington Free Press after a career of more than 37 years.

"You don't know how much this place means to me," he told the staff in announcing his departure Tuesday afternoon, "and I will miss you, and I will miss this work, so much."

A self-described "generalist," Hemingway's award-winning coverage stretched from the rejection of a controversial shopping mall development in Williston in 1977, through the illegal shipping of arms from a Vermont business to South Africa in violation of the apartheid-era embargo, to a weeks-long trip to embed with the Vermont National Guard in Afghanistan in 2010, among numerous examples across portions of five decades.

"There's a great thrill, if you're into journalism, if it's in your blood, to be present in moments of great importance and to write stories that actually make a difference," Hemingway said Tuesday in an interview before addressing his colleagues.

"When you work for a paper like this, in a state like Vermont, if you do a story and do it well, with the idea that this is going to turn the rock over and show something that people need to know about, there will be results," he continued. "You can help make something happen. That's a great feeling."

Free Press Executive Editor Michael Townsend praised Hemingway as a colleague and a journalist.

"With his breadth of experience, Sam knew where to find the information," Townsend said. "He had a great eye for a hard news story. He was dependable, productive and engaged. We will miss his unique style."

Hemingway, 66, wanted to be a newspaper reporter since boyhood in New Haven, Conn. With the help of a ditto machine, he produced a newspaper for his neighborhood. Coverage included missing dogs, families' vacations plans and who might have been suffering from the measles.

He edited his high-school newspaper and then studied journalism at Syracuse University in New York before moving to Vermont in 1971. He helped start the Lamoille County Weekly in Johnson, spent a year teaching journalism at Johnson State College, and then began freelancing for the Burlington Free Press.

He joined the staff in 1977, when he was assigned to provide full-time coverage of the debate over the Pyramid Mall proposal percolating in Williston. Hemingway attended 54 night meetings regarding the Act 250 development-control law over two years before the project was rejected.

Then came the story Space Research Corp., a North Troy weapons manufacturer that

was breaking an international embargo to sell millions of dollars of artillery and shells to South Africa—possibly with the backing of the CIA. Hemingway recalled sneaking onto the military base at Camp Lejeune, N.C., with a colleague and knocking on the door of a suspected CIA agent said to be involved—and then departing in a hurry when the agent called base security. Eventually, two company officials were convicted of related crimes.

As with his more recent coverage, including of teen girls from the Burlington area lured into working as prostitutes in New York, of the priest sex abuse claims against the Roman Catholic Church, of the heroin epidemic sweeping Vermont, Hemingway's reporting exposed a rarely seen underbelly of Vermont.

"If you didn't shine a light on it, the cases might or might not have reached a point where people went to jail," Hemingway said. "But there's more assurance that justice is going to be meted out."

Hemingway is perhaps best known for his column, which he wrote from 1989 to 2005 (with a yearlong hiatus to cover the presidential campaign of former Gov. Howard Dean).

"It was wonderful to have a voice," Hemingway said. "The great thing about that column was it wasn't just a political column, it wasn't just a crime column, it wasn't a slice of life, it wasn't a feature—it was all of those things. And it would change. Sometimes it was first-person. Sometimes it was personal. Sometimes it was investigative. I broke stories in the column. And it was very well-read."

The column aimed to give a voice to the powerless, Hemingway said.

"It was average folks," he said, "and that was the whole point of the column: to be an outlet for people who weren't newsmakers who maybe had trouble with government or a problem or a personal issue, somebody who lost a kid in a traffic accident."

Hemingway's work earned him 11 Best of Gannett awards from the Burlington Free Press' parent company, along with citations for excellence from the New England Newspaper and Press Association, the Vermont Press Association and others.

The time is right to step away, Hemingway said. He has been thinking of stepping away for some time, and he's ready for a change. He plans to write, travel and spend time with family: his wife, Lee, his four adult children and his two grandchildren—and a third on the way.

His announcement came as the Burlington Free Press shared plans for a newsroom reorganization, a process other Gannett properties also are undergoing. Hemingway said his departure is unrelated.

"It's very hard to walk away from this," Hemingway said. "I need to go. It's time for me to go."

He has yet to decide on the timing of his last day.

"I'll miss my colleagues in the newsroom," he said. "I'll miss the camaraderie of the journalism community at large in Vermont, which, even though we sometimes compete, we all for the most part respect each other."

Hemingway ended with advice for his colleagues:

"Don't just do the stories that you have to do. Try to keep looking for the stories that need to be done. . . . You have to push the limits, go after stories that are out there but aren't waiting to be written, that you've got to go and dig out."

"That's what I've tried to do."

CONGRATULATING CELLARS AT JASPER HILL

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is a farming State: dairy, livestock, vegetables or fruit, farms across Vermont are known for their innovative and sustainable approaches to farming and food production.

The dairy industry in particular is known throughout Vermont, and far beyond. Dairy cows are a familiar sight for those who live in or visit our State, and Vermont farms have been recognized both domestically and internationally for their dairy-based products. The cheese-making tradition in Vermont dates back to the early 1900s, when Vermont dairy farmers sought uses for their surplus milk. Since those early days, many farms have developed methods for artisanal cheese production.

Recently, Jasper Hill—a celebrated farm in Greensboro Bend, VT—won international recognition at the World Cheese Awards in London, when its Bayley Hazen Blue cheese won the award for the “World’s Best Unpasteurized Cheese.” Besting more than 2,600 submissions, Jasper Hill’s award-winning blue cheese also took home a Super Gold award. Six other cheeses produced by Jasper Hill also won awards. And two other Vermont cheese makers—Grafton Village Cheese and the Vermont Creamery—were also recognized.

Some might skip over a story about the World Cheese Awards. But in Vermont, we take pride in the products we produce from the livestock nurtured and raised on Vermont’s rich land. Farming remains a fabric of our American story, and in Vermont, it is a tradition that has spanned generations.

Congratulations to the Cellars at Jasper Hill, to Grafton Village Cheese, and to the Vermont Creamery for their recent recognitions. They represent the quality and high standards that are a hallmark of the Vermont brand.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of a story recently featured about these dairies on Vermont Public Radio be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Vermont Public Radio, Nov. 17, 2014]

CELLARS AT JASPER HILL WINS “WORLD’S BEST UNPASTEURIZED CHEESE”

(By Angela Evancie)

Before a recent batch of the Cellars at Jasper Hill’s Bayley Hazen Blue cheese was finished aging, before it was ready to sell, and before it would be crowned—or rinded?—“World’s Best Unpasteurized Cheese” at the World Cheese Awards in London, its makers knew they had something special.

“I’m not lying when I say we were excited about it at a young age,” Vince Razonale, sales and inventory manager for Jasper Hill, said by phone Monday. “We tasted it on day 50, and this particular batch was one that we thought was really on point.” (So on point, they thought, that it merited an Instagram post.)

The more than 250 international cheese experts who judged the 26th annual World

Cheese Awards this weekend agreed. Bayley Hazen Blue was selected from more than 2,600 cheeses, first winning a Super Gold award and then its “World’s Best” award.

It isn’t the only superlative Vermont can add to its list of aged-milk achievements; Grafton Village Cheese also earned two Super Golds, for its Shespos and Bismark cheeses, while Vermont Creamery took home one gold for its Bijou goat’s milk cheese, and seven bronzes. Six other cheeses by Jasper Hill also won awards, including gold medals for its Cabot Clothbound and Moses Sleeper. “Ten years ago, American cheese was something to be laughed at in England. Now, collectively, we’re a force to be reckoned with.”—Vince Razonale, Jasper Hill Farm

Vermont cheese has certainly made a notable debut on the domestic stage. Vermont’s Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Ross recently noted that cheeses made here have been named “Best In Show” at the American Cheese Society Conference for the past two years: Jasper Hill’s Winnimere in 2013, and the Farms for City Kids Foundation’s Tarentaise Reserve this year.

But Razonale says the international acclaim shows how far cheese making, in the U.S. in general and Vermont in particular, has come.

“Ten years ago, American cheese was something to be laughed at in England. Now, collectively, we’re a force to be reckoned with.”

ALAN GROSS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the fifth anniversary of the unfair arrest and imprisonment of an American citizen in Cuba from Maryland, Mr. Alan Gross. I stand with his wife Judy, and their two daughters in calling for the immediate release of Mr. Gross by the Cuban government.

In 2009, Mr. Gross went to Cuba as a contractor for the U.S. Agency for International Development. On this visit to Cuba, he wanted to assist Cuba’s Jewish community by improving their access to the internet. With a background in social work, he dedicated his career to helping others around the world.

The Cuban government arrested Mr. Gross on December 3, 2009. He was held for 14 months without being charged with a crime. He was eventually charged as a spy and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

At 65 years old, Mr. Gross’ physical and mental health has suffered severely over the past 5 years. He has lost a significant amount of weight and developed several painful medical conditions. His contact with his family is extremely limited, compounding his anxiety. On his birthday, May 2, 2014, Mr. Gross made several statements that demonstrated the mental strain and anguish that he feels daily. Following the death of his mother in June, he was visited by his wife Judy and said his goodbyes to her. Mr. Gross’ current physical and mental state is at a critical point. The Cuban government must allow him to come home to the United States.

Judy Gross has never given up. She continues to put pressure on the Cuban government, speaking out against the poor treatment of her husband. She is

a true inspiration, continuing her fight despite the health and financial challenges that her family has felt.

Every day I think of and pray for the Gross family. I pray that they are reunited soon. If Cuba wants to improve relations with the United States, they need to release Mr. Gross now. I thank my colleagues for standing with me and calling for the release of Alan Gross. I look forward to the day that we welcome him home to Maryland, and most importantly, to his family.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, last week I released a staff report that found litigation missteps at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are costing taxpayers millions, while at the same time EEOC faces a deep backlog of discrimination complaints.

The report finds that the EEOC has had a recent pattern of pursuing questionable cases through sometimes overly aggressive means and as a result has suffered significant court losses that are embarrassing to the agency and costly to taxpayers.

Courts have found EEOC’s litigation tactics to be so egregious they have ordered EEOC to pay defendants’ attorney’s fees in 10 cases since 2011. The courts have criticized EEOC for misuse of its authority, poor expert analysis, and pursuit of novel cases unsupported by law.

While the agency has pursued high-profile lawsuits without a complainant, in March 2014 EEOC reported almost 71,000 unresolved complaints of discrimination from individuals who filed charges. The agency’s litigation has recovered almost \$200 million less for victims than under the previous administration over the same timeframe.

The report finds that EEOC also has suffered from a troubling lack of transparency. In the past 2½ years, EEOC has ignored calls from current Commissioners and Congress to allow public review of significant and controversial guidance prior to its adoption. Also, the Office of General Counsel has, since 2010, failed to issue its standard annual report, and the agency is being sued for violating the Freedom of Information Act.

Certainly, the EEOC of today has had successful enforcement efforts and court victories for victims of discrimination, but this report finds the agency is increasingly demonstrating poor judgment and using questionable tactics in pursuit of cases that are not fulfilling the EEOC’s objective of protecting employees from workplace discrimination.

The full report, “EEOC: An Agency on the Wrong Track? Litigation Failures, Misfocused Priorities and Lack of Transparency Raise Concerns about Important Anti-Discrimination Agency,” may be viewed on the HELP Committee’s website, <http://www.help.senate.gov/>.