

typhus. Through it all, she repeated the words: "I WILL be strong. I want to live."

One day at the Stutthof concentration camp, Margie was emaciated and unable to work. She was placed into new barracks and had the Roman numeral II scrawled on her forearm—it was a death sentence. That night, two of her friends did the unimaginable. Without saying a word, they pulled a helpless Margie under an electric fence to another side of the camp and they scrubbed off the number on her arm. She was no longer marked for death.

On March 10, 1945, Margie was liberated. She was 21 years old. In 1953, Margie and her husband came to the United States. She became a nurse. And just as her friends helped her at the Stutthof camp on that fateful night, she devoted her life to helping those who couldn't help themselves.

#### HANNAH MESSINGER

In 1938, Hannah and her family were forced to abandon their home and business. A few months before her twentieth birthday, Hannah married Karl Kohorn. In 1941, Carl was deported to the Theresienstadt Ghetto. Two weeks later, so was Hannah. Hannah worked as a hairdresser—an occupation in high demand—because the Germans wouldn't allow women to have long hair. In 1942, Hannah's parents and sister arrived at Theresienstadt, but stayed only three days before being deported to Auschwitz.

Hannah is one of the last living witnesses to the International Red Cross visit to Theresienstadt on June 23, 1944. The Nazis created an elaborate hoax to show how well Jews were being treated under the "benevolent" Third Reich. It was lie. More than 33,000 inmates died as a result of malnutrition, disease, or the sadistic treatment by the Nazis at Theresienstadt.

On May 8, 1945, Allied Forces liberated the Merzdorf labor camp—where Hannah was moved to. But when she returned to Prague she learned that all her family members were murdered.

After the war, Hannah began corresponding with an Aunt in Budapest—her last surviving relative in Europe. In the letters, Hannah poured her heart out sharing Holocaust experiences and losses and recounting the suffering she and her loved ones endured. When her aunt read the letters out loud, a friend of the family, Imre, was listening and fell in love with her writings. Imre began to correspond with Hannah directly. Through those letters, they fell in love. Hannah moved to the United States in 1946. Eventually, Imre joined her. They married the following year and moved to Chicago. Hannah has created pencil drawings based on her experiences as a prisoner in several concentration and labor camps from 1941–1945. A number of her pieces can be seen at the United States Holocaust Museum in 2010 and in the Smithsonian. Hannah's work allows future generations to better understand her experience and see it through her own eyes.

#### WALTER REED

On Kristallnacht, Walter was jailed by Nazi soldiers for 3 days—he was 14 years old. In 1939, his parents put him on a Kindertransport (children's transport) to Belgium. This decision saved his life. Walter lived in a boys home near Brussels until the Germans invaded in 1940. Walter and more than 90 other children escaped to southern France, where they lived in a barn and later in an abandoned chateau—they became known as the "Children of La Hille."

In 1941, Walter was able to leave France for New York. He became a U.S. citizen in 1943 and returned to Europe in 1944 as a soldier in the United States Army. Walter served in the 95th Infantry Division under General George Patton. His team was charged with

interrogating German prisoners and civilians near the front lines. Walter first arrived in the United States as a survivor of the war and he returned as an American hero.

#### JOSEPH DOBRYMAN

In 1941, Joseph was 18 years old and forced into the Bialystock Ghetto with his parents and two brothers. The Ghetto was liquidated in 1943 and everyone was sent to camps. Joseph and his brother Henry were separated from the rest of their family. In 1943, they sent to the Lomza Ghetto and then to the Danzig, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen Belsen concentration camps for the rest of the war. Joseph and Henry were liberated from Bergen Belsen by Allied Forces in 1945. They were the only members of their family that survived.

In 1949, Joseph married Nettie Goldberg and they made their way to the United States. They had no family waiting for them, but Joseph found work as a plumber and went to school at night to learn English. Joseph and Nettie settled and raised their family in Skokie, Illinois, where he still lives today.

#### LEWIS PAZOLES

Lewis was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, the son of Greek immigrants. Immediately after graduating high school, Lewis was drafted into the U.S. Army. On April 6, 1944, Lewis joined a medical battalion attached to the 83rd infantry and shipped out in a convoy to England to prepare for the Normandy invasion. Corporal Lewis Pazoles and his unit, followed General Patton's Army to Omaha Beach on June 11, 1944—five days after D-day. His unit proceeded to fight in the Battle of the Bulge—and moved through the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe toward Germany.

On April 11, 2045, the 83rd liberated Langenstein—a sub camp of Buchenwald—where they found about 1,100 malnourished and emaciated prisoners. The prisoners were forced to work 16 hour days in nearby mines and were shot if they were too weak to work. Corporal Pazoles' unit reported that the death rate at the camp was about 500 a month. The 83rd Infantry also recovered Nazi documents later used by war crime investigators.

In 1946, Corporal Pazoles was honorably discharged—he was 20 years old. He returned to the United States and became a partner in his family's grocery store business in Chicago. Today, Lewis and his wife reside in Palos Hills, Illinois.

Here are some of the honors that Corporal Pazoles received during his service: The Victory Medal, The European African Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with 1 Silver Battle Star, 3 Overseas Service Bars, the Good Conduct Medal, the Purple Heart, and a Bronze Star. Lewis Pazoles is an American hero.

#### HARRY NICHOLS

Harry was born in Alliance, Ohio, and was drafted in the U.S. Army in 1942. On June 6, 1944, Harry was in the third wave of U.S. forces who stormed Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. Known as Operation Neptune, it was the largest amphibious operation ever attempted. More than 160,000 Allied troops landed along the 50-mile stretch of heavily fortified French coastline to fight the Nazis. Afterward, Harry fought in the battle of St.-Lô and the Battle of the Bulge. He helped liberate the French cities of Laval, LeMans, Orleans and Nance. Harry also fought through Luxemburg and Holland, crossed the Rhine River into Germany and up the Elbe River before May 7, 1945—V-E Day.

In 1945, while training with his unit to fight in the invasion of Japan—the Japanese surrendered. Harry returned home to Ohio

and began working in a bakery. In the late 1940s, he made his way to Chicago where he worked as a waiter, a grocer and florist. Harry Nichols is an American hero.

#### ANTHONY GARGANO

On December 7, 1941, Tony's 22nd birthday, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Less than six weeks later, Tony enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was assigned to one of three ships masquerading as merchant vessels. In 1942, he and his shipmates were captured by the Japanese and taken to Hakodate prison camp on an island just north of mainland Japan. Tony remained a POW for three years and was set free the day the Japanese surrendered and abandoned the camp. He returned to America, married the love of his life—Julia—and worked six days a week as a maitre'd at Elliot's Pine Log Restaurant.

For nearly 70 years, Tony has kept the details of war and the horrors of his imprisonment to himself, but has recently begun to share his story. Tony will tell you, he is not a hero, his brothers lost in battle are the heroes. What an inspiration.

### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, after finally scheduling a few confirmation votes on Federal judges last month, Senate Republicans have reverted back to holding up the confirmation process for no good reason. The American people and the entire Federal justice system depend on the Members of this body to fulfill our constitutional duty of providing advice and consent on judicial nominees. This senatorial duty is one we cannot neglect. However, that is exactly what has happened since Senate Republicans took over the majority this year.

I had hoped that last month's judicial confirmation votes were an indication that Senate Republicans were finally ready to make progress on the backlog of well-qualified and uncontroversial nominees awaiting their confirmation vote. But again, this week, there is no sign of when the next judicial nominee will receive a vote. This is no way to lead the Senate. When Senate Democrats were in the majority during the last 2 years of the Bush Presidency, we had already confirmed 34 judges by this same time. I have heard Republicans trying to justify their slowdown on judicial nominations by claiming they should somehow receive credit for 11 judges confirmed at the end of the last Congress. That excuse holds no water. It is well-established Senate precedent that all pending consensus nominees should be confirmed before the end of a year. And even if we added those 11 judges to the 9 confirmed this year, that would still bring us to only 20—which is a far cry from the 34 Democrats confirmed in the last 2 years of the Bush administration.

The process of confirming judges is about ensuring that the American people have a fully functioning judiciary. Instead, because of Republican obstruction, judicial vacancies have increased by more than 50 percent since they took over the majority, and caseloads are piling up in courts throughout the

country. Equally alarming is the fact that the number of judicial emergency vacancies since Senate Republicans took the majority has risen by 158 percent. These vacancies impact communities across America, and it is doing the most harm to States represented by at least one Republican Senator. Of the 66 current vacancies that exist, 48 of them—or more than 70 percent—are in States with at least one Republican Senator.

We should take action right now and hold confirmation votes on the 21 judicial nominees pending on the floor. The next pending district and circuit court nominees—who will both fill judicial emergency vacancies—were nominated 1 year ago, yet both are still awaiting the majority leader's action to simply schedule their confirmation votes. The next district court nominee on the Executive Calendar is LaShann Hall, an outstanding African-American woman who has been nominated to serve in the Eastern District of New York. And directly following that nomination is Judge Luis Felipe Restrepo who, when confirmed, will be the first ever Hispanic judge from Pennsylvania on the third circuit and only the second Hispanic judge to serve on the third circuit. Judge Restrepo has strong bipartisan support from his home State Senators, Senator TOOMEY and Senator CASEY. At Judge Restrepo's hearing, Senator TOOMEY stated that "there is no question [Judge Restrepo] is a very well qualified candidate to serve on the Third Circuit" and underscored the fact that he recommended that the President nominate Judge Restrepo. Although there is an urgent need to fill the emergency vacancy on the third circuit, the Republican leadership has refused to hold a confirmation vote. All Democrats support this nominee. I hope Senator TOOMEY will seek a firm commitment from his Republican leadership to schedule a vote this week for Judge Restrepo.

In addition to Judge Restrepo, a number of these pending nominees have the support of their Republican home State Senators. Just last week, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted out two Iowa nominees recommended to the President by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. However, if Republican obstruction continues and if home State Senators cannot persuade the majority leader to schedule a vote for their nominees soon, then it is unlikely that even highly qualified nominees with Republican support will be confirmed by the end of the year.

No Senator has raised a single objection to any of the 21 judicial nominees pending on the floor. Each one was reported out of the Judiciary Committee by unanimous voice vote, and each has the backing of their home State Senators, including Republican Senators. Senate Republicans have no excuses left.

I hope the Republican Senator from Pennsylvania and the other Republican Senators will implore their leadership

to schedule votes on the judicial nominees pending on the floor without further delay.

#### DETENTION OF HOSSAM BAHGAT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, there is no right that is more fundamental to a democracy than freedom of expression. When this right, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is threatened or curtailed, dictatorship is the predictable result. Regrettably, that is what we see happening in Egypt today.

Like others here, I received word this morning that Hossam Bahgat, an Egyptian journalist and one of that country's prominent human rights defenders, has been detained and may be charged in military court. He is apparently accused of publishing false news related to an article about an allegedly foiled military coup.

According to information I have received, an October 13 article by Mr. Bahgat described the military prosecution of 26 officers and 2 Muslim Brotherhood members for allegedly planning to overthrow the government. The next day, the same publication printed the article in English under the title, "A coup busted?" For this, Mr. Bahgat is being investigated by military prosecutors and could face 1 or more years behind bars.

According to Mr. Bahgat's article, which was based on the indictment in that case, authorities had summoned or arrested most of the defendants in April. Some of the detained officers alleged that they were tortured during interrogations inside military intelligence headquarters. Eight of the officers and the two Muslim Brotherhood leaders who were prosecuted in absentia were sentenced to life in prison, Mr. Bahgat reported. The rest were sentenced to between 10 and 15 years.

Lawyers for Mr. Bahgat have reported that military prosecutors are investigating him for allegedly violating articles 102 and 188 of the penal code, both of which are minor, vaguely worded offenses that concern the publication of false news.

Article 102 allows the prosecution of anyone who "intentionally broadcasts false or tendentious news, data, or rumors, or propagates subversive propaganda, if this is liable to disturb the public security, spread terror among the people, or harm the public interest." It provides for an undefined period of detention and a fine of up to 200 Egyptian pounds, US\$25.

Article 188 allows prosecution of anyone who "with ill intent publishes false news, data, or rumors, or forged or fabricated papers, or falsely attributed to others, if this is liable to disturb the general peace or provoke panic among the people or harm the public interest." It provides for detention of up to 1 year and a fine of up to 20,000 Egyptian pounds, US\$2,490.

According to Human Rights Watch, Mr. Bahgat was not the first journalist

to report on the alleged military coup. In a statement, Mr. Bahgat's lawyers stated that he had no criminal intent and that other media outlets had previously reported the verdict.

It is well established that civilians should not be prosecuted in military courts, yet that is what is happening to Mr. Bahgat. In October 2014, President al-Sisi greatly expanded military court jurisdiction for a period of 2 years, allowing the military prosecution of civilians for crimes that occur on "public" or "vital" property. Since then, Egyptian media outlets and human rights groups have reported that thousands of civilians have been charged in military courts, many of them for acts related to protesting and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Egypt's military courts operate under the authority of the Ministry of Defense, not civilian judicial authorities. According to human rights groups, they typically deny defendants the rights accorded by civilian courts, including to be informed of the charges against them, the right to a lawyer, and to be brought promptly before a judge following arrest. This is particularly concerning given the pattern of abuse of detainees in Egypt.

As a former prosecutor who has served as both chairman and ranking member of our Judiciary Committee, I have spoken many times about the importance of an independent judiciary. Nowhere is this needed more today than in Egypt, where sham trials, some lasting only a few minutes, followed by sentences of death or life in prison, are common.

I hope the Egyptian Government will see the wisdom of proceeding no further in its attempt to silence reputable journalists like Mr. Bahgat. Sometimes the news is favorable; sometimes it is unfavorable. That is the way life is, and it is not for government officials—whether elected or unelected—to decide what their citizens should read.

#### TRIBUTE TO RALPH BAGNESKI

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and honor Ralph Bagneski, Milwaukee County's 2016 Veteran of the Year. Mr. Bagneski has served our Nation for 35 years with distinction. As we observe Veterans Day, I am proud to pay tribute to him and to his fellow Wisconsin veterans who have served our Nation to protect and defend the American freedoms we hold dear.

A native of Milwaukee, Mr. Bagneski enlisted in the United States Marine Corps after his graduation from Washington High School. He served on Active Duty during the Vietnam war from 1967 through 1971, leaving full-time service having achieved the post of rifleman squad leader, 96th Rifle Company. From 1973 to 1987, Mr. Bagneski also served in the Wisconsin National Guard, attaining the rank of first sergeant. In addition, Mr. Bagneski served for more than 15 years in the United