still haunts his legacy today. These were dangerous times generating extreme responses from both sides.

During the presidential elections of 1856, the conflict crescendoed, and the central debate was slavery in Kansas. That year, the new Republican party ''emerged with a single plank in its platform: Stop the bloody struggle in Kansas; stop the spread of slavery in the territories.'' Finally, Kansas was birthed a free state in 1861. Her motto, Ad Astra Per Aspera—To the Stars Through Difficulty, is an historic truth, reflecting a people whose freedom had been won through unusual hardship and conflict. This is the extraordinary heritage of Kansas, and it is linked with John Brown.

His actions in Kansas, followed by his attempt to incite a slave insurrection at Harper's Ferry, Virginia on October 16, 1859 forced a renewed examination of the institution of slavery and strengthened the resolve of the North to resist further expansion. President Abraham Lincoln, condemned the tactics of John Brown at the time of his death as we all do now and did not object to his execution on December 2, 1859 for treason against the state. Nevertheless, Lincoln told an Atchison, Kansas audience that Brown had ''shown great courage, rare unselfishness'' and ''agreed with us in thinking slavery wrong.'' On that December day of his execution, his words rang prophetically true, foretelling the coming Civil War, when he stated, ''I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done.''

Those were his words on the way to the gallows.

In this fight for which he had sacrificed everything, John Brown's excesses were as extreme as his hatred of slavery. His willingness to shed blood is wrong, should not be romanticized, nor justified, no matter the cruelty of the circumstances. Yet we should remember the sacrifices that he, and others like him, both black and white, made to procure the freedom of an entire people. A contemporary, Franklin Sanborn, summarized this best: ''We saw this lonely and obscure old man choosing poverty before wealth, renouncing the ties of affection, throwing away his ease, his reputation, and his life for the sake of a despised race and for zeal in the defense of his country's ancient liberties.''

Therefore, let us remember this 200th anniversary of John Brown and the crooked path we walked as a nation towards freedom for all.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. LEWIS, CIVIL ENGINEER CORPS, U.S. NAVY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize the exemplary service and career of an outstanding naval officer, Captain William H. Lewis, upon his retirement from the Navy at the conclusion of more than 27 years of commissioned service. Throughout his distinguished career, Captain Lewis has truly epitomized the Navy core values of honor, courage, and commitment. It is my privilege to commend him for a superb career of service he has provided the Navy and our great Nation.

Captain Lewis is a native of Newburgh, New York. He studied civil engineering at the Ohio State University on a Naval Reserve Officer Training Command scholarship. He also received his Master's degree in Civil Engineering at Ohio State on an Environmental Protection Agency Fellowship before being commissioned as a Navy Civil Engineer Corps officer in 1973. Captain Lewis later attended L'Universita di Perugia, Italy, and the Executive Program at the University of Michigan.

His first tour of duty was at Naval Station Treasure Island as the Assistant Public Works Officer. He became Treasure Island's first Staff Civil Engineer with the commissioning of Public Works Center San Francisco Bay. He also had tours as an Assistant Resident Officer in Charge of Construction (ROICC), ROICC San Francisco Bay Area, with Western Division (WESTDIV), Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), San Bruno, California; an instructor at the Civil Engineer Corps Officers School at Port Hueneme, California; and as the Flag Aide to the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command and Chief of Civil Engineers.

In 1980, he served with the Seabees as the Alfa Company commander for U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) SIXTY-TWO homeported in my great State of Mississippi. The MINUTEMEN were deployed to Rota, Spain where they won the Battle E and Peltier Award as the best Seabee battalion in the Atlantic Fleet and entire fleet respectively. NMCB–62 also served in Roosevelt Roads where they redeployed to build a Cuban-Haitian refugee camp at Fort Allen and was the last full battalion deployed to Diego Garcia. In 1982, he returned to WESTDIV as the Assistant Head of the Acquisition Department. In that capacity, he served as the Air Force Program Coordinator for the Space Shuttle facilities for the military Space Transportation System program and the design of the $220 million David Grant Medical Center at Travis Air Force Base, Fairfield, California. In 1985, he was selected to be the Deputy Officer in Charge of Construction at Travis AFB on the largest firm fixed price construction contract awarded by NAVFAC that year. In 1986, he became the Staff Civil Engineer for Commander, Fleet Air Mediterranean in Naples, Italy responsible for the Navy's NATO Infrastructure Program and Project PRONTO. In 1989, he returned to Navy Public Works Center San Francisco Bay as the Production Officer and participated in the disaster recovery operations from the Loma Prieta earthquake. In 1992, he became Vice Commander at the Western Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, San Bruno, California. In 1994 he became the Commanding Officer, Engineering Field Activity, Mediterranean, Naples, Italy in support of the Fifth and Sixth Fleets and the Department of Defense's largest overseas construction program, including the Naples Improvement initiative, the bed down of the 31Tactical Fighter Wing at Aviano, Italy, and the force protection efforts at Bahrain. In 1997, he reported onboard as the Executive Officer, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division (SOUTHDIV), Charleston, South Carolina. On May 14, 1998, he became the 27th Commanding Officer at SOUTHDIV.

Captain Lewis' awards include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (third gold star), Navy Commendation Medal (second gold star), Air Force Commendation Medal and Navy Achievement Medal (gold star). He is a member of the Society of American Military Engineers and Tau Beta Pi and is a registered Professional Engineer in the state of California. Captain Lewis is Seabee Combat Warfare qualified, a member of the Acquisition Professional Community and holds a Level III (unlimited) NAVFAC Contracting warrant as well as a Level III (unlimited) Real Estate Contracting Warrant.

Captain Lewis' visionary leadership, exceptionally creative problem solving skills and uncommon dedication have created a legacy of achievement and excellence. The Great State of Mississippi has benefitted immensely from Captain Lewis' engineering leadership, both during his time as a junior officer serving with the Seabees in Gulfport, Mississippi and in his present capacity as commanding officer of SOUTHDIV. As Commander, Southern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Captain Lewis was instrumental in completing projects throughout the Great State of Mississippi, to include critical waterfront projects at Naval Station Pascagoula; planning and design of a future Warfighting Center at Stennis, Mississippi, and a major Navy Family Housing complex in Gulfport.

Captain Lewis will retire on May 12, 2000 after 27 years of dedicated commissioned service. On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I wish Captain Lewis fair winds and following seas. Congratulations on completion of an outstanding and successful career.

MYRA LEONARD—A LEGENDARY LADY

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, this is an occasion when I wish to attempt, with a heavy heart, to pay my respects to a dear lady who last week passed away. Myra Leonard was a leader of the Polish-American community and the long-

time Executive Director of the Washington Office of the Polish American Congress.

For nearly 20 years Myra was a respected and tireless advocate of the ties that bind the United States and Poland. During the 1980s, when Poland's Solidarity movement struggled under martial law, Myra generated great support for the movement by soliciting humanitarian support to Poland.

She coordinated the ''Solidarity Express''—a train of some 22 railroad cars loaded with relief goods. At her suggestion, on the first-year anniversary of Solidarity, a Solidarity Convoy produced thirty-two container trucks bearing relief cargo.

Myra's initiatives contributed literally millions of dollars of humanitarian support to the Polish people during that difficult decade, but more recently, Myra played a pivotal role in the effort to transform the Polish-American relationship from one of partnership to that of allies. One cannot overestimate the energy and momentum she and her husband, Casimir, brought to the effort to bring Poland into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. For her efforts, Myra and her husband were both honored by the Polish Government with the Commanders' Cross.

This year, Poland and the United States will, together, launch the Polish American Freedom Foundation. Myra's invaluable counsel and political judgment ensured that this initiative successfully navigated the difficult path of transforming a grand concept into a real foundation that will on a daily basis reaffirm the commitment of the United States and Poland to democracy and freedom.

So, we are deeply saddened by Myra's passing and we use this occasion to express to her husband, Casimir Leonard, and to the other members of her family, how much we will miss her. Our memory of Myra will be a lady of tireless energy and warmth who brought to Washington a genuine devotion to the ties binding Poland and America.

REUNITING AMERICAN CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, throughout the dispute over Elian Gonzalez, I have argued that he should be reunited with his father Juan Miguel, I have made this argument because I believe that children belong with their parents, barring evidence of unfitness. I also made this argument because I was concerned about how American parents are being treated internationally.

At the Judiciary Committee hearing held on the Elian Gonzalez case on March 1, I also urged that we consider the potential impact of that case on those of U.S. parents fighting to gain custody of their children in other countries. In fact, at that hearing I made sure to invite a U.S. parent who has struggled for years just for the right to see his children in Japan, and who believes, as do other American parents in similar circumstances, that to preserve American credibility we must practice what we preach and reunite Elian Gonzalez and his father.

I worked for months on such a case of an American child who was taken abroad by an estranged parent. Had it not been for the active intervention of the Government of Egypt, the child would not have been reunited with his American mother. Reuniting Elian and his father was the best thing for Elian and also the best way to advance American interests—and the interests of American parents whose children have been taken abroad without their consent.

At the March 1 hearing, I quoted Mary Ryan, the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, who had testified in the federal court case regarding Elian Gonzalez that a failure to enforce the INS' decision that Elian Gonzalez should be reunited with his father would ''be inconsistent with the principles we advocate on behalf of the United States and could have potentially lasting negative implications for left-behind parents in the United States and for U.S. citizen children taken to foreign countries.''

I believe that the American government should stand behind that principle and seek to bring children and their parents back together. I am proud that the government has reunited Elian and his father, and I think the pictures of the two of them together have proven beyond a doubt that this was the right result.

But I am deeply concerned that the energy and effectiveness that our government showed in reuniting Elian and his father does not always seem to apply to its attempts to reunite American children and their parents. Indeed, recent articles in the Washington Post indicate that our State Department should take a far more active role in helping American parents who—in violation of international law—are being deprived of custody of their children.

The Washington Post tells the story of Joseph Cooke, a New York man whose then-wife took their two young children to Germany and, without Mr. Cooke's consent, turned the children over to the state because she felt unable to care for them. For a year and a half, Mr. Cooke was unable to find out what had happened to his children, as his wife refused even to tell him where they were. When he finally was able to locate them, he sought custody of them in both American and German courts. Although he obtained a custody order from an American court, which under the Hague Convention is binding upon Germany since the children had resided in the United States for all of their young lives, the German courts have refused to grant him custody. Instead, they have ruled that the children should stay with their foster parents, in part because during the drawn-out German legal process, the children learned German, went to German schools, and grew attached to their foster parents. The court felt that reuniting these children with their father would result in ''severe psychological loss.''

The State Department's reaction to this case hardly befits the importance of the issue involved. Despite Germany's obligations under the Hague Convention, a State Department spokeswoman told the Washington Post, ''We're not the courts. It's up to the courts to make those kinds of decisions.'' The very point of the Hague Convention is to provide countries with a diplomatic opportunity to question the rulings of courts outside the country were the children habitually reside. The Convention is rendered meaningless if our State Department is not willing to act as a strong advocate for American parents. As the Post reported, only 80 out of the 369 children—22 percent—who were the subject of Hague applications from American parents from 1990 to 1998 have come back to the United States, and that number includes those children who were voluntarily returned. Meanwhile, U.S. courts have returned 90 percent of children who were the subject of Hague applications in other countries.

In other words, while America obeys its treaty obligations, it has failed to enforce our own treaty rights. This is not a minor problem, either. The State Department says that it has 1,148 open international custody cases, and there are surely far more cases that have not been reported to the government. The State Department should be doing everything within its power to help American parents. I implore our government to pay more attention to this issue, and I ask our allies to abide by their own duties under the Hague Convention.

I ask unanimous consent to enter an editorial on this matter from today's Washington Post into the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, May 9, 2000]

STOLEN CHILDREN

When Congress was considering legislation that would have kept Elian Gonzalez in this country, State Department officials argued that such a precedent could disrupt their efforts to intervene in cases where American parents have had children abducted abroad. A sound argument, with one big problem: It turns out that in many of the 1,100 open cases in which American parents are fighting to get their children back from recalcitrant court systems in other countries, the State Department isn't making much effort on the parents' behalf. The heartwrenching story of Joseph Cooke and his children, told Sunday in this newspaper by Post reporters Cindy Loose and William Drozdiak, highlights an unusually egregious problem with German-American custody battles in particular: In at least 30 cases, advocates say, German judges have flouted basic tenets of the 1980 Hague treaty on international abductions, to which their country is a signatory, and kept children from parents who had overwhelming claims to them. But the Cooke story also reveals an almost incomprehensibly lackadaisical U.S. Government response to the