

have to do something about increasing the supply of natural gas as well as home heating oils through the refining capacity as well as doing something to affect the supply.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Iowa.

HONORING A. ERNEST FITZGERALD

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, a patriotic civil servant is going home. Mr. A. Ernest Fitzgerald has finally called it quits. His 42-year career, including Navy service in World War II, came to a close on Friday, March 3. He has walked out of the Pentagon for the last time. He has retired.

Although Mr. Fitzgerald's first name is Arthur, most of us know him fondly under the name of Ernie. Ernie is probably the most famous whistleblower of all time, and I think of him as the father of all whistleblowers, the chief whistleblower. He set an example for all of the whistleblowers who have followed in his footsteps.

Ernie is a man of great courage and integrity.

I dreamed for a long time that someday some duly certified whistleblower would be honored by a President, even this President, at a Rose Garden ceremony. Ernie is a perfect candidate for such a Rose Garden ceremony, but I don't think that he is going to get that honor. It may never happen. At least it may not happen in my lifetime. But of course I believe it should happen because that would be the right thing to do, to send a signal from the highest levels of Government all the way to the bowels of the bureaucracy that patriotic people who are willing to blow the whistle on something that is wrong in Government would be honored for being that patriotic person.

Courageous souls such as Ernie Fitzgerald make our Nation and our Government stronger and better. They help to strengthen and keep the public trust. They help to make the Government transparent and accountable, and that is exactly what the citizens of this country want and what the citizens of this country ought to expect.

That is why we must always help whistleblowers such as Ernie Fitzgerald. Being a whistleblower is a tough business. They need our constant

support and protection because within the bureaucracy they are treated like a skunk at a picnic. Those, such as Ernie, who have stepped forward and put their careers and reputations on the line in the defense of truth in Government deserve the highest honor.

Ernie did not make it to the Rose Garden, but he got pretty close. He got the next best thing. He left the Pentagon with his dignity and honor intact.

In a moment I want to explain how that happened. But first I wish to speak briefly about what Ernie did because he was always a source of inspiration to this Senator. Early in my Senate career, I heard about Ernie Fitzgerald. His work convinced me that I needed to get involved in oversight, generally, and at that time specifically oversight of the Defense Department, oversight of the Pentagon. Ernie's work, along with that of a person by the name of Chuck Spinney, was a huge contribution. They were the inspiration behind my historic amendment to freeze the Defense budget that was approved by the Senate in May of 1985. Ernie was the inspiration behind my efforts to put the brakes on the spare parts overpricing.

Ernie was also the inspiration behind my efforts to expose and clean up the Department of Defense books of account and broken accounting practices. Ernie was the inspiration behind so many whistleblower protection laws that are now on the books.

Ernie's unwavering devotion to saving the taxpayers' money has always been an inspiration to this Senator. Ernie never lost sight of this lofty and honorable goal, not for one second. And he would pursue it to the end of the Earth, if that is where it took him. To Ernie, saving the taxpayers' money was never just a goal. It was much more than that. It was more like a calling to him. It was a matter of faith to him, keeping faith with the taxpayers, stopping waste of taxpayers' money was a religion to Ernie Fitzgerald.

Ernie had fellowship with the taxpayers.

He did everything in his power each day to ensure that not a penny was wasted and every cent was properly accounted for.

Ernie followed his calling in a place called the Pentagon—not exactly what I would call a taxpayer-friendly environment. That is the place that the world's most powerful generals and admirals call home. And the generals and admirals never looked kindly on the likes of a whistleblower named Ernie Fitzgerald. But that didn't phase Ernie one bit.

The Pentagon brass is praising him today as he leaves the Pentagon for good, but they hammered him relentlessly for what he was and for what he did. The Pentagon is the place where Ernie dug in his heels, took his stand, and kept the faith.

The most fateful day in the life of Ernie Fitzgerald was November 13, 1968.

That was the day Ernie appeared before Senator Proxmire's Joint Economic Committee to testify on the C-5 transport aircraft program. He was an official witness of the U.S. Air Force. And Ernie did the unthinkable—he "committed truth." He told the Congress about a \$12 billion C-5 cost overrun. Back then, \$2 billion was real money.

Ernie's truthful testimony about the C-5 cost overrun created a firestorm of controversy, and that is what caused President Nixon to issue his famous order caught on those famous tapes. The quote was: "Get rid of that SOB." For speaking the truth, Ernie paid the ultimate price: He got fired, he got blackballed, and he was put on the official hit list. His career was over. And that was November 13, 1968. For speaking the truth—that is what it was all about, just speak the truth—about a \$2 billion cost overrun on an airplane that somehow people wanted to cover up. As most of us know, though, Ernie got his job back, but it took him 12 years to get his job back. That is how much whistleblowers are appreciated in the bureaucracy at the Pentagon, or anyplace else. And when he did get it back, it was not given back willingly; it had to be taken back. It took a court order signed by U.S. District Judge William B. Bryant on June 15, 1982. That is 14 years after he appeared to talk about the C-5 \$2 billion cost overrun.

Judge Bryant's order made Ernie the Management Systems Deputy of the Air Force. It was a high-sounding title with far-reaching responsibilities. On paper, it looked like a perfect fit. Unfortunately, Ernie was never given the authority to perform the job specified in the court order. The "over-dogs," as Ernie Fitzgerald called them, effectively isolated him then and the 25 years since. As far as I know, the only time Ernie was able to do his job was when he was officially detailed to my staff for short periods of time.

The last such project was 1997-1998 when Ernie worked with my staff on what we called the Joint Review of Internal Controls at the Defense Department. He and my staff examined several hundred invoices from an office in the Pentagon where fraud had occurred. They followed those invoices step by step through the entire cycle of transactions from purchase order to payment by the Treasury. They found overpayments, underpayments, erroneous payments, and even potentially fraudulent payments. No one payment had been done correctly.

One of the biggest problems uncovered had to do with "remit" addresses. Remit addresses are so important because that is where the money goes. The staff found people who were handling invoices and paying bills also had authority to put addresses on checks going out the door. That was a major violation of the separation-of-duties principle. It left the door wide open to fraud.

Ernie helped us close that door.

Despite constant bureaucratic roadblocks, Ernie went to his cubbyhole-