

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

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 8, 2019]

JOHN DINGELL: MY LAST WORDS FOR AMERICA

(By John D. Dingell)

John D. Dingell, a Michigan Democrat who served in the U.S. House from 1955 to 2015, was the longest-serving member of Congress in American history. He dictated these reflections to his wife, Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.), at their home in Dearborn, on Feb. 7, the day he died.

One of the advantages to knowing that your demise is imminent, and that reports of it will not be greatly exaggerated, is that you have a few moments to compose some parting thoughts.

In our modern political age, the presidential bully pulpit seems dedicated to sowing division and denigrating, often in the most irrelevant and infantile personal terms, the political opposition.

And much as I have found Twitter to be a useful means of expression, some occasions merit more than 280 characters.

My personal and political character was formed in a different era that was kinder, if not necessarily gentler. We observed modicum of respect even as we fought, often bitterly and savagely, over issues that were literally life and death to a degree that—fortunately—we see much less of today.

Think about it:

Impoverishment of the elderly because of medical expenses was a common and often accepted occurrence. Opponents of the Medicare program that saved the elderly from that cruel fate called it “socialized medicine.” Remember that slander if there’s a sustained revival of silly red-baiting today.

Not five decades ago, much of the largest group of freshwater lakes on Earth—our own Great Lakes—were closed to swimming and fishing and other recreational pursuits because of chemical and bacteriological contamination from untreated industrial and wastewater disposal. Today, the Great Lakes are so hospitable to marine life that one of our biggest challenges is controlling the invasive species that have made them their new home.

We regularly used and consumed foods, drugs, chemicals and other things (cigarettes) that were legal, promoted and actively harmful. Hazardous wastes were dumped on empty plots in the dead of night. There were few if any restrictions on industrial emissions. We had only the barest scientific knowledge of the long-term consequences of any of this.

And there was a great stain on America, in the form of our legacy of racial discrimination. There were good people of all colors who banded together, risking and even losing their lives to erase the legal and other barriers that held Americans down. In their time, they were often demonized and tar-

geted, much like other vulnerable men and women today.

Please note: All of these challenges were addressed by Congress. Maybe not as fast as we wanted, or as perfectly as hoped. The work is certainly not finished. But we’ve made progress—and in every case, from the passage of Medicare through the passage of civil rights, we did it with the support of Democrats and Republicans who considered themselves first and foremost to be Americans.

I’m immensely proud, and eternally grateful, for having had the opportunity to play a part in all of these efforts during my service in Congress. And it’s simply not possible for me to adequately repay the love that my friends, neighbors and family have given me and shown me during my public service and retirement.

But I would be remiss in not acknowledging the forgiveness and sweetness of the woman who has essentially supported me for almost 40 years: my wife, Deborah. And it is a source of great satisfaction to know that she is among the largest group of women to have ever served in the Congress (as she busily recruits more).

In my life and career, I have often heard it said that so-and-so has real power—as in, “the powerful Wile E. Coyote, chairman of the Capture the Road Runner Committee.”

It’s an expression that has always grated on me. In democratic government, elected officials do not have power. They hold power—in trust for the people who elected them. If they misuse or abuse that public trust, it is quite properly revoked (the quicker the better).

I never forgot the people who gave me the privilege of representing them. It was a lesson learned at home from my father and mother, and one I have tried to impart to the people I’ve served with and employed over the years.

As I prepare to leave this all behind, I now leave you in control of the greatest nation of mankind and pray God gives you the wisdom to understand the responsibility you hold in your hands.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

Mr. CARPER. I will close with this. I went to the funeral. I couldn’t stay the whole time. It was here in DC. I missed STENY HOYER, the Democratic majority leader, and his comments. I was told he was terrific, as were others, as well. But I did get to hear just about everything Bill Clinton said. I was inspired and amused by that. He was funny. He really caught the character of John and his foibles, his strengths, and brilliance.

Before I went to the funeral, I went to a breakfast. A friend at the breakfast was kind enough to share his words with the rest of us. He actually

worked for John Dingell at one time. In an off-the-cuff riff about John Dingell, he shared some of the things he worked on. Later on, I said: Would you share that with me? He was kind enough to do that.

I wish I could say these are my words, but that would be plagiarism. I give him the credit, at least in a left-handed sort of way. This is what my friend gave to me. I just want to close with these words from my friend about John Dingell:

This morning as I was reading the obituaries detailing Congressman DINGELL’s life and accomplishments, I started thinking of all the aspects of daily life that he had a direct and meaningful impact on for almost 60 years.

He went on to say what some of them were.

The air we breathe, the water we drink. The health of rivers and lakes. The wildlife that exists and depends upon those spaces. The food we eat. The pills we take. The products we use. The electricity that powers our economy. The efficiency of almost every product that uses electricity. The phones we use. The health insurance we count on in a medical crisis. The regulation and cleanup of hazardous waste. The cars we drive, of course! And a host of other things.

On this Valentine’s Day—when we give thanks for our loved ones, our families, and those who are special in our lives—I also give thanks for John and the many blessings that he has left us and this country.

With that, I will say I appreciate the opportunity to share these words.

God bless.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 7 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 7 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:29 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 15, 2019, at 7 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 14, 2019:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WILLIAM PELHAM BARR, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ATTORNEY GENERAL.