

recognized when he received the Mobilian of the Year Award. In 2008, the following year, he was named the Rhodes College Alumnus of the Year, and in 2012, he received the distinguished honor of being named the Mobile Area Veteran of the Year.

When I think of Robert's great accomplishments, of all of those that we have talked about and listed, he will tell you that his greatest honor was marrying the love of his life, Patricia, in 1962 and having son Sherard, daughter Virginia, and a granddaughter, Courtney. With all that Robert was involved in, he was first and foremost a family man.

I have been blessed to have Robert and Pat Edington as great and dear friends for many, many years. Together, we have toiled in the vineyards of Alabama politics for longer than we can all remember. Robert, at one time, even had his eyes on the U.S. Senate seat. But as devoted as Robert was to the Democratic Party, he was also a man committed to the greater good, to working with anyone to make Mobile, AL, make the State of Alabama, and make America a better place for everyone, leaving a legacy of dedication and commitment to love of God, love of country, love of community, and love of family that is an extraordinary example for others to follow.

Our world, especially in today's climate, needs more Robert Edingtons.

RACISM

Madam President, 57 years ago today, a bomb exploded outside a church in Birmingham, AL. A bomb was placed underneath the steps that led to the sanctuary of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Four young girls were killed in that blast: Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Denise McNair, and Carole Robertson—killed senselessly simply because of the color of their skin. It was a tough time in America; it was a tough time in Alabama.

I am not going to recount all of what happened at that time. Many of you have heard me speak on it before because it was in 2001 and 2002 that we put the final two perpetrators into prison.

What I have spoken about this summer, though, is how 1963 and 2020 seem to align. The year 1963 in Birmingham started off with police brutality, where peaceful demonstrators who were simply trying to get civil rights for African-American people in this country were accosted with fire hoses and dogs set upon them by the police commissioner "Bull" Connor.

People took notice. People took notice when George Wallace stood at the schoolhouse door in June of 1963. People took notice when Medgar Evers was killed that same night. People took notice when Martin Luther King stood on the Mall in Washington, DC, and said he had a dream—he had a dream that one day we would all live in peace and harmony together. It was a dream of hope at that time. It was about a

month later when that bomb exploded and destroyed the dream for so many people, but at the same time, that bomb woke the conscience of America. The horrors of Jim Crow and segregation came home to roost, came down to television sets across this country, and people stood up and made their voices known and said enough is enough—not just for Birmingham in the South, but enough is enough in this country.

We have to make the changes. It woke that conscience of this country, but it also woke a conscience of a President who began to work on the Civil Rights Act. It woke the conscience of a Congress that later passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964. The conscience was aroused again in 1965 when our friend John Lewis was beaten at the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

The similarities between that and today are striking. We cannot overlook the historic moment we are in today, when once again our conscience is getting the best of us, and we see the images of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and Jacob Blake.

We also see something else. We see the images of violence. We see looting. We see the images of two police officers in Los Angeles who were brutally—brutally—attacked while just sitting in their car.

What we are seeing is really something that America is not about. It is incumbent upon us all to do something about it—to stand together, to have the discussion, to have the dialogue, to have the frank discussions about what we know is going on in law enforcement but also the violence we see in the streets. It has to stop. We have to make sure that we talk to each other, to have these dialogues.

I have talked about this before, and I will not go on and on tonight, but it is weighing heavily on everyone in this country. I know it. You know it. It is weighing on everyone. For everyone in this country, as we approach the election, it weighs heavier and heavier. Unfortunately, it gets into political discussions and partisan divides on both sides of the aisle. We cannot let that happen.

We have to come together. We have to do what John Lewis talked about and make sure that love conquers hate, however we can do it.

In that regard, I want to display this photograph. It was taken on the morning of the bombing in Birmingham. It is of an incredible stained glass window in the church. If you look closely, you will see that the most significant damage is the face of Christ that was blown out.

That picture had such an emotional impact on people in Birmingham and around the world. To this day, when people see it, it has an emotional impact because it is as if God simply cannot look at what his children are doing to his children.

We need to remember our faith. We need to remember who we are as a

country. We need to remember an image like this. No matter what faith you might believe or even if you don't have a faith, you need to remember this photograph where this stained glass window—the image of Christ—cannot bear to see what is going on. I suspect that in today's world, that image may be replicated somewhere beyond what we can touch.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, earlier today at the White House, President Trump hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Foreign Ministers from the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to sign the Abraham Accords.

These historic agreements began the process of normalizing relationships between the two Gulf countries and the Jewish state. After seven decades of isolation in the region, the Abraham Accords signify Israel's existence is finally being accepted by Arab countries, opening new prospects for greater economic, security, and cultural cooperation that will benefit all—those in the region and all of us around the world.

I commend President Trump, Secretary Pompeo, and many others in this administration for facilitating this historic agreement and advancing the cause of peace and prosperity in the region. This came to many of us as a surprise, but it is a welcome surprise. I am very pleased at this development.

Over the past several years, the President and Secretary have cultivated relationships in Jerusalem, Abu Dhabi, and Manama. And for longer than that, Israel and Arab countries have cooperated on important matters but behind closed doors. Capitalizing on a changing Middle East, President Trump and his administration helped shepherd these relationships into the open.

Today's signing is just a beginning for the three countries and the region as a whole. More work, obviously, is to be done, and no agreement can be easily accomplished. But my hope is that more Arab countries will follow the path of publicly recognizing Israel. Eighteen Arab states have yet to make this move, preventing relationships that can benefit the entire region.

Israel's right to exist is unquestionable, and to refuse to recognize this is to deny reality. I, along with so many other Members of this Chamber, have worked to ensure Israel's security and prosperity. With more days like today, we can hope for a region that is secure and prosperous as well for all.

I use this opportunity to commend this accomplishment, and I hope that we are able to bring more peace and stability to this region and to the rest of the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.