

The war in Europe ended just a few weeks later on May 8, 1945. Second Lieutenant Dole came back to a Topeka hospital and eventually back to Russell. When he went to Europe, he weighed a muscular 200 pounds and was a football, basketball and track star at the State University of Kansas. When he came home after the war, he was on a stretcher and weighed 120 pounds. At one point, his temperature reached 108.7 degrees.

Faced with this terrible situation and the unanimously gloomy opinion of his doctors, many people, even most people, would have become disheartened and simply given up. But Bob Dole persevered, through more than three years of arduous recovery and through a lifetime of difficulty and hardship which he handled with this customary humor and grace. No one ever worked harder, complained less or laughed more than Bob Dole. And no one ever loved his country more or had a better appreciation of the honor and sacrifice of military service.

From the terrible trauma of his injuries, Bob Dole fought back and won elective office as county attorney, US Congressman, US Senator and Senate Majority Leader. He has been his party's nominee for Vice President and President. He even makes a pretty good VISA commercial! (Although his credit is not very good in that financial mega center—Russell.)

Also, no hero does it alone, and Janet and I also want to pay tribute to a lady of grace, charm and accomplishment who is Bob's partner, friend and wife—Elizabeth Dole. Elizabeth, thank you for your service to America.

I had the privilege of serving with Bob Dole in the legislative trenches of the U.S. Senate for 18 years. And I can tell you he remained a warrior eager to take on a new battle every day. He is and always will be an American Hero of the highest order.

Thanks to people like Bob Dole who have worked for a strong national defense, we are privileged to live in largely peaceful times where the sons of Bangor, Maine or Russell, Kansas are not being sent to fight and die on distant battlefields. The privilege of these peaceful times is made possible by the sacrifice of many thousands who have given their bodies and their lives in the cause of liberty.

We do not pause often enough to give tribute to the silent white gravestones which dot the hills of Arlington National Cemetery or give thanks to the heroes who are still among us. Today, as Secretary of Defense, it makes me extremely proud for our Department and our nation to pay tribute to a modest man of immodest talent—a person who has defined heroism and courage for millions of Americans.

The great American writer John Steinbeck once wrote that the best measure of one's time on this earth is the contribution each of us makes to the world around us. "There is," Steinbeck wrote, "no other story. A man, after he has brushed off the dust and chips of his life, will have left only the hard clean questions: Was it good or was it evil? Have I done well—or ill?"

For Second Lieutenant Bob Dole—Army Serial #17179287—Steinbeck's question is not a hard one. He has done well—he has served his nation with the highest distinction—he has remained a man with fire in his heart. And it is my highest privilege to award our highest civilian honor, the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service, to Bob Dole.

OREGON SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, I would like to take a brief mo-

ment to express my condolences to the families of the students killed and wounded during the tragic shooting yesterday at the Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon.

The thoughts and prayers of all Americans today are with the families of Springfield. It is yet another community where lives have been shattered forever by children with easy access to firearms.

This attack was the fourth killing in a high school in the last six months by a youth under the age of 16. Mr. President, this killing must stop.

Last year, approximately 50% of all serious violent crimes were committed by teens against teens. Our nation's overall firearm-related death rate among children was nearly 12 times higher than among children in the other 25 industrialized countries combined.

This is an outrage. Mr. President, these horrific crimes amply demonstrate that we have a responsibility to oppose the proliferation of violence and to stand fast against any effort to make firearms more freely available. Does anyone still believe that it is possible to raise children in a society where guns are so easily obtained? We cannot continue to protect our children in such a world.

We must come together as a society and recommit ourselves to keeping firearms out of the hands of children and to guaranteeing that only those people who know how to use guns responsibly have access to them. We must expand programs to train gunowners in the proper use and storage of their weapons.

Responsible gunowners have nothing to fear from reasonable gun laws. We must have reasonable gun laws that will prevent tragedies like the one that happened yesterday in that small community in Oregon from ever happening again. The second amendment was never intended as a subterfuge for domestic carnage. Our living constitution can respond to changes in our society which jeopardize our freedom from fear and random violence by children. I think it is appropriate for us to have that debate, given the importance to our children, to their safety, to our liberty and freedom and safety in our communities.

JUDGE JOE ANDERSON'S REDEDICATION OF THE EDGEFIELD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, the very foundation of our Nation lies in the rule of law, and there is perhaps no symbol more closely associated with the process of justice than the courthouse. Not only is the courthouse where justice is dispensed, but it is a reminder to all citizens that the judiciary is the third branch of our system of government.

Recently, the Edgefield County Courthouse was rededicated, and Judge Joe Anderson, of the South Carolina

District Court, was the keynote speaker at the ceremony. His remarks were very well received by the crowd and helped to make the event a great success. Though I was unable to attend this event, I heard from a number of friends who did that Judge Anderson's remarks were truly excellent. After requesting a copy of his speech, I came to the very same conclusion and thought that my peers in the Senate would enjoy reading them as much as I did.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of this speech be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

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

Judge Keesley, Members of the County Council, other distinguished guests, and friends:

What a joy, what an honor, to have the privilege of being a part of this ceremony. I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to come home, and to show my appreciation. I promise not to afflict you with many words.

As one who spends all of my working hours in a courthouse building, I am honored to say a few brief words in rededication of this historic structure and what it has come to symbolize for our community.

Winston Churchill once said that the best measure of the quality of a society is the quality of its justice. America is distinguished from other countries by the quality of its law and how it is used by its people to expand liberty and opportunity. Our law represents our national dreams, our system of justice towards one another.

The assumptions that we make every day, the security we take for granted, the social compact that allows us to live together peacefully . . . these are the result of law. In rededicating this building we rededicate ourselves to the rule of law.

Courthouse buildings, of course, represent a symbol of permanence and the place where our laws are administered. It is here that our citizens are summoned to become actively involved in the public administration of justice—a privilege that citizens of most other countries do not enjoy. It is here that the cogs and gears of liberty function on a daily basis.

I have always thought that the rather nondescript term we use to describe these buildings—"courthouse"—does not adequately convey the importance of the work that goes on inside. The French use a more inspirational name: "Palace of Justice."

Regardless of the name by which it is called, no one can deny the role that our courthouse, our "Palace of Justice" has played in the development of our county. We are all indebted to Chairman Monroe Kneze and the members of our county council Betty Buter, Sam Speight, Daniel Bishop and Norman Dorn and County Administrator Wayne Adams for their foresight in recognizing the renovations and improvements that were needed. Their vision and hard work have brought this historic structure up to standards that will allow it to serve in the next millennium and beyond, while at the same time preserving all the charm and history that makes this building special for all of us. This ceremony is, in part, a tribute to their stewardship of one of the real crown jewels of our county. On occasions such as this, we ask God's blessing on their endeavors.

Today is one of those moments when we can pause, take a look at where we've been, where we are, and where we might be headed.