

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND AVERY C. ALEXANDER, STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE FROM LOUISIANA

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to rise for a moment of personal privilege on behalf of myself and Senator JOHN BREAUX to note with great sadness the passing of a leading citizen of my hometown, New Orleans, LA, our State representative, Rev. Avery C. Alexander, a community and civil rights leader for many decades who passed away in New Orleans last Friday at the age of 88.

Reverend Alexander, or "the Rev," as he was referred to by all of his many, many, many friends, was the son of a sharecropper from Houma, LA, and rose to prominence in the 1960s civil rights struggle. From the streets of New Orleans where he "shouted out" for the voiceless, to the halls of Baton Rouge where he fought for better schools, civil rights, and a more inclusive economy, "the Rev" stood tall.

When I was considering running for the legislature many, many years ago at the ripe old age of 23, my father rightfully advised me to meet with a small group of leaders to ask for their input and their ideas and their counsel.

The first person to show up at our home on that day was "the Rev." Once I was elected to the legislature, he helped me understand the political process from the inside as well as the outside. I will always be grateful for his early advice and counsel, and so will the thousands of others who have benefited from his encouraging words, his fighting spirit and determination to make this world a better place for all.

Reverend Alexander was a person who always managed somehow to rise above the man-made limitations placed on him, and he succeeded triumphantly.

It was Margaret Mead who said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world." In fact, she said, it has never been done any other way. "The Rev" knew that and lived that until the day he passed. Many times, he alone was that small group, and he did, in fact, change our world for the better.

He worked as a laborer and a longshoreman—before he was a member of the legislature—while continuing his education at night. When he witnessed the unfair treatment of dock workers, he became active in the labor movement on the waterfront in New Orleans.

As a lifelong member of the NAACP, he championed the cause of anti-discrimination, voter registration, and citizen review of police brutality and misconduct.

He participated in the now famous march from Selma to Montgomery alongside the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1956, Reverend Alexander was arrested and dragged up the steps from the basement of city hall while attempting to integrate the public cafeteria in that building.

In 1992, he established a non-denominational ministry founded on the principle of "helping all people." Reverend Alexander was elected to the House of Representatives in 1975 and remained an active and effective member until his recent death.

As dedicated as he was to advocating civil rights for African Americans, he was equally dedicated to standing up for the rights of women. His words of encouragement throughout the years were in no small part responsible for helping me become the first elected woman Senator from Louisiana.

As a strong believer in higher education, he continued his own personal education at Xavier University, Southern University, Tulane University and the Union Theological Seminary and the University of New Orleans. Reverend Alexander also served as chaplain for many, many years of the Louisiana legislative black caucus, on the National Board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and was a delegate on three separate occasions to the National Democratic Convention.

Mr. President, the citizens of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana have lost a dear friend. Many young leaders in our State and throughout the country have lost a great mentor, and the American people have lost a great civil rights leader. He will be missed. God bless his family, especially his daughter Cheryl, his brother Lymon and all the grandchildren and great grandchildren. We today commend him to you, dear Lord, in your eternal care.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield back the remainder of my time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 617 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, I come to the floor today because I believe that the time has come for a thoughtful and critical re-examination of United States policy towards the People's Republic of China.

There had been encouraging developments in China in the past two years. China has begun tackling the staggering job of reforming an antiquated command economy and opening it to private enterprise; and have begun to move the military out of the private sector. They've taken this difficult

step even though they know it will result in the displacement and unemployment of literally millions of people. In addition, the government has greatly increased the number of democratic elections taking place at the village level throughout China. And Beijing has, for the most part, avoided interfering in Hong Kong affairs now that it is again a part of the PRC.

But Mr. President, despite these improvements, I cannot ignore the fact that for every step China has taken forward, it appears to have also taken one or two back. And a bilateral relationship that 10 months ago looked as though it were showing improvement is instead, I believe, headed down a rocky road.

FOR EXAMPLE: NUCLEAR AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Recent press reports have indicated that over the span of the last several years there have been damaging leaks to the Chinese of sensitive United States nuclear technology which has enabled them to advance their own nuclear program. The exact facts of the case are still unclear, and I am sure will be the subject of intense Congressional scrutiny in the months ahead, but what is clear to me is that there is a credible foundation for the accusations and that they are not, as the Chinese would have us believe, the figment of some supposed "anti-China" media bias. My examination of the Cox report leads me to the identical conclusion with regards to the transfer and acquisition of satellite technology.

Now it would naive to deny that espionage is a fact of geopolitical life, or that countries act in their own best interests; we should neither be shocked nor appalled that it goes on. But still, China's willingness to systematically circumvent our laws and acquire over the last several years—by stealth or otherwise—nuclear and computer technology is troubling to me, and demonstrates a willingness to take advantage of our relationship when possible.

TAIWAN

After a long-standing chill in relations across the Taiwan Straits, during which the two sides failed to carry on even basic dialog, things had begun looking up lately. The two sides resumed direct meetings last year, and the head of the Taiwanese department that oversees cross-straits affairs visited Beijing a few months ago; his PRC counterpart, Wang Daohan, has agreed to a return visit to Taipei in the near future.

Recently though, there have been some signs that things might turn chilly again. In the last several months, the PRC has relocated a number of its missiles from the interior of the country to Fujian, Zhejiang, and Guangdong Provinces—the three provinces directly across the Straits from Taiwan. Moving so many missiles into these coastal provinces is clearly meant, and understood, to send one signal to Taiwan. Remember, Mr. President, that it was from these provinces