

Commission on the Status of Women, and the Human Rights Commission. It seemed logical that Hadassah would gain this status, routinely given to many organizations, given its leadership for 90 years in medicine, education, welfare, and women's rights abroad. Hadassah, however, had to fight a long battle with the anti-Semitism present in the United Nations in order to gain this status.

I salute Hadassah for its 90 years of charity and leadership as a humanitarian organization both in America and Israel and look forward to continue to working closely with its membership.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, a wonderful organization that exemplifies a spirit of volunteerism and commitment to others is celebrating their 90th anniversary. With more than 300,000 members nationwide, Hadassah is one of the largest women's and the largest Jewish membership organization in America.

Hadassah was founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold as a group of women "interested in the promotion of Jewish institutions and enterprises in Palestine." What began as an attempt to provide health and social services to both Jews and Arabs in Palestine has grown into myriad undertakings.

Today, Hadassah's major activities in Israel and in the United States span the arenas of health, education, social services, and environmental preservation. For instance, the Hadassah Medical Organization supplies quality medical care to individuals in the Middle East, regardless of race, religion, or nationality. The Youth Aliya Program provides housing and support for disadvantaged and immigrant youth in Israel.

Additionally, the Jewish National Fund helps to build parks and preserve Israel's natural resources, while Young Judea helps U.S. teenagers build connections to Israel and Jewish life. In all of its endeavors, Hadassah has fulfilled its mission to promote a peaceful and prosperous Israel, ensure Jewish continuity, pursue social justice, and provide for the health, education, and well-being of individuals both in Israel and in America.

Over its 90 years of existence, Hadassah has touched the lives of millions of individuals in a tangible manner. In a time when the Middle East remains embroiled in controversy and violence, it is comforting to find a group whose commitment has not changed over time. Even today, Hadassah provides lessons that we can all learn from. I am proud my home state of California boasts more than 25,000 members, people devoted to improving the world around them. As a lifetime member, I would like to thank Hadassah for its efforts, and look forward to celebrating future milestones with them.

RETIREMENT OF MARIE E. MULLIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as chairman of the Select Committee on Ethics, it is my privilege to give public notice and honorable mention to the outstanding service that Marie Mullis has provided the committee and the Senate for the past 31 years.

Marie began her Senate career in 1971 as an employee of the predecessor to the Select Committee on Ethics. In 1977 she joined the staff of the Ethics Committee where she advanced from support staff, to executive assistant, to professional staff member. As a professional staff member for the past 14 years she has drawn from a reserve of institutional knowledge, experience, and wisdom to advise Senate staff about the Senate Code of Official Conduct. The committee commends her commitment to its work and is honored to have been the beneficiary of her loyal service over the years.

Despite the impact of her resignation, we—the committee members and committee staff who regard her highly—are pleased to see Marie move forward into retirement and receive reward for her faithful service to the United States Senate.

Thank you, Marie, for your hard work.

READ ACROSS AMERICA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, since 1998, Americans have celebrated "Read Across America" in March to honor Dr. Seuss' birthday. Millions of Americans take part in this nationwide effort to promote reading among our children while paying tribute to Dr. Seuss' great legacy.

It is hard to imagine our childhoods without the delightful books of Dr. Seuss. Such classics as "The Cat in the Hat and Green Eggs and Ham" taught us life lessons we will never forget. My personal favorite is "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" because it encourages children to reach for their dreams. I loved reading the book to my children, and now read it to my grandson. I also enjoy reading it to students while visiting schools in California.

Schools throughout the Nation hold special events to celebrate "Read Across America." This year, schools plan to have breakfasts of green eggs and ham, reading relays, birthday parties for Dr. Seuss, choral readings and museum exhibits. Celebrities and elected officials will join in the fun by reading books to children.

"Read Across America" is a day to celebrate the joy of reading and a return to our childhood, but it also provides an opportunity to address a very important issue: children's literacy in the United States. It has been proven that if children read more at home, they will do better at school. "Read Across America" can help prepare our children for success.

I take great pride in celebrating the fifth anniversary of the National Edu-

cation Association's "Read Across America." Books introduce children to a wealth of knowledge and a world of imagination. Last year, celebrations took place in every State in the Nation, involving more than 35 million people. This year, NEA expects an even bigger turnout.

I extend my best wishes to participating schools, and encourage all Americans to get involved in this wonderful celebration of reading.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of last year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred October 28, 1993 in Watsonville, CA. Four men with a rifle threatened a gay man and kicked in his apartment door. The attackers, Miguel Lopez, 23, Israel Lopez, 18, Cesar Fuentes, 18, and a 16-year-old were arrested in connection with the incident.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

SUPPORT FOR U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS SERVING IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the greatest source of strength of our military forces engaged in the war on terrorism—the support they receive from the American people. Over Thanksgiving, Senator WARNER and I traveled to Central Asia to visit with our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines serving in Operation Enduring Freedom. Nothing lifted our spirits more than sharing Thanksgiving with these wonderful troops. Nothing lifted their spirits more than our message that the American people totally support their mission and are deeply grateful for their service.

We have seen that support on display in countless ways in recent months. Americans from every corner of our country have reached into their hearts and reached out to our men and women in uniform, especially over the holidays. One particular story came to my attention that I think captures the American spirit at this time in history.

Just before Thanksgiving, Kasi Brannan of Covington, LA, decided to send a simple holiday card to her son, AT3 Eric Lepkowski, who was serving on the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in the Arabian Sea. When