

School, in Mankato, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements.

The Youth Service Learning class at Mankato West High School is truly a model of educational success. As part of its fall curriculum, the class embraced Project Homecoming, a statewide effort to raise money to help pay for the cost of bus transportation from Camp Shelby, MS, to Minnesota, for 400 Minnesota National Guard soldiers. The soldiers had been training at Camp Shelby for deployment to Iraq in early 2006. Although they were given 10 days leave for the holidays, no funding was available through the military or National Guard to provide round-trip transportation to Minnesota and back.

The Youth Service Learning class, which focuses on volunteerism and the functioning of nonprofits in the community, gained some real life experience by helping Project Homecoming raise \$75,000 in just under 4 weeks. The students learned how to establish a tax-exempt fundraising effort, engage the media in an event, and raise significant money for a cause they considered extremely important to their communities. In less than 3 days, the students raised over \$1,500 from their schoolmates, made telephone calls to potential donors, and asked their own employers to help in the effort. With the students' help, Project Homecoming reached its \$75,000 goal.

Much of the credit for the Youth Service Learning class's success belongs to Mr. Bruce Borchers, Mankato West principal; Mr. Tim Walz, Youth Service Learning teacher; and Mr. Pat Griffiths, Project Homecoming coordinator. The students and staff who participated in the class understand that in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for a lifetime of success. All of the faculty, staff, and students should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Youth Service Learning class at Mankato West High School in Mankato, MN, for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION DELIVERED TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS ON JANUARY 31, 2006—PM 35

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to lie on the table:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Mr. Speaker, Vice President CHENEY, Members of Congress, Members of the Supreme Court and diplomatic corps, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens:

Today our Nation lost a beloved, graceful, courageous woman who called America to its founding ideals and carried on a noble dream. Tonight we are comforted by the hope of a glad reunion with the husband who was taken from her so long ago, and we are grateful for the good life of Coretta Scott King.

Each time I am invited to this rostrum, I am humbled by the privilege, and mindful of the history we have seen together. We have gathered under this Capitol dome in moments of national mourning and national achievement. We have served America through one of the most consequential periods of our history and it has been my honor to serve with you.

In a system of two parties, two chambers, and two elected branches, there will always be differences and debate. But even tough debates can be conducted in a civil tone, and our differences cannot be allowed to harden into anger. To confront the great issues before us, we must act in a spirit of goodwill and respect for one another—and I will do my part. Tonight the state of our Union is strong—and together we will make it stronger.

In this decisive year, you and I will make choices that determine both the future and the character of our country. We will choose to act confidently in pursuing the enemies of freedom—or retreat from our duties in the hope of an easier life. We will choose to build our prosperity by leading the world economy—or shut ourselves off from trade and opportunity. In a complex and challenging time, the road of isolationism and protectionism may seem broad and inviting—yet it ends in danger and decline. The only way to protect our people . . . the only way to secure the peace . . . the only way to control our destiny is by our leadership—so the United States of America will continue to lead.

Abroad, our Nation is committed to an historic, long-term goal—we seek the end of tyranny in our world. Some dismiss that goal as misguided idealism. In reality, the future security of America depends on it. On September 11, 2001, we found that problems originating in a failed and oppressive state seven thousand miles away could bring murder and destruction to our country. Dictatorships shelter terrorists, feed

resentment and radicalism, and seek weapons of mass destruction. Democracies replace resentment with hope, respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, and join the fight against terror. Every step toward freedom in the world makes our country safer, and so we will act boldly in freedom's cause.

Far from being a hopeless dream, the advance of freedom is the great story of our time. In 1945, there were about two dozen lonely democracies on Earth. Today, there are 122. And we are writing a new chapter in the story of self-government—with women lining up to vote in Afghanistan . . . and millions of Iraqis marking their liberty with purple ink . . . and men and women from Lebanon to Egypt debating the rights of individuals and the necessity of freedom. At the start of 2006, more than half the people of our world live in democratic nations. And we do not forget the other half—in places like Syria, Burma, Zimbabwe, North Korea, and Iran—because the demands of justice, and the peace of this world, require their freedom as well.

No one can deny the success of freedom, but some men rage and fight against it. And one of the main sources of reaction and opposition is radical Islam—the perversion by a few of a noble faith into an ideology of terror and death. Terrorists like bin Laden are serious about mass murder—and all of us must take their declared intentions seriously. They seek to impose a heartless system of totalitarian control throughout the Middle East, and arm themselves with weapons of mass murder. Their aim is to seize power in Iraq, and use it as a safe haven to launch attacks against America and the world. Lacking the military strength to challenge us directly, the terrorists have chosen the weapon of fear. When they murder children at a school in Beslan . . . or blow up commuters in London . . . or behead a bound captive . . . the terrorists hope these horrors will break our will, allowing the violent to inherit the Earth. But they have miscalculated: We love our freedom, and we will fight to keep it.

In a time of testing, we cannot find security by abandoning our commitments and retreating within our borders. If we were to leave these vicious attackers alone, they would not leave us alone. They would simply move the battlefield to our own shores. There is no peace in retreat. And there is no honor in retreat. By allowing radical Islam to work its will—by leaving an assaulted world to fend for itself—we would signal to all that we no longer believe in our own ideals, or even in our own courage. But our enemies and our friends can be certain: The United States will not retreat from the world, and we will never surrender to evil.

America rejects the false comfort of isolationism. We are the Nation that saved liberty in Europe, and liberated