

favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:58 a.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 10:59 a.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ISAKSON).

RECOGNIZING SENATOR SALAZAR'S READING OF WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I take a moment to recognize Senator SALAZAR, who just read Washington's Farewell Address to the people of the United States. This is an honor that is bestowed alternately between Republicans and Democrats on alternate years. By his selection to deliver Washington's Farewell Address, we are all very proud. We feel, by honoring him, you honor the people of Colorado. We thank the leadership in the Congress for bestowing that honor on my colleague from Colorado, as well as the people of Colorado.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes each.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Colorado.

ESSAY OF AIR FORCE CADET

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I received a letter from the director, legislative liaison of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, on behalf of the Air Force Chief of Staff. He called to my attention an essay that was written by a fourth class cadet at the U.S. Air Force Academy. His name is Joseph R. Tomczak. I was moved by this essay to the point that I want to take my time this morning to read it to Members of the Senate because it articulates, in a very succinct way, why our young people today look to the Armed Forces as a career, and why they make the decisions they do to fight for freedom and to fight for this country.

We all greatly respect all people who take the time to serve in our Armed Forces, whether it is during a short enlistment period or they make it their lifetime career. This essay is well stated, and I think not only does it speak as to why a cadet would decide to serve in one of our academies—in this case, it happens to be the Air Force Acad-

emy—but it gives us insight as to why people would pick the Armed Forces to serve in during part of their adult lifetime or why they would dedicate their entire life to a career in the U.S. Armed Forces.

So here is the essay. It is titled, "Winter Break."

So after our sunburns have faded and the memories of our winter break have been reduced to pictures we've pinned on our desk boards, and once again we've exchanged t-shirts and swim suits for flight suits and camouflage, there still remains the question that every cadet at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs has asked themselves at some point: Why did we come back? Why, after spending two weeks with our family would we return to one of the most demanding lifestyles in the country? After listening to our friends who are home from State or Ivy League schools chock full of wisdom about how our war in Iraq is unjust and unworlly, why would we return? And after watching the news and reading the papers which only seem to condemn the military's every mistake and shadow every victory, why would we continue to think it is worth the sacrifice of a normal college life?

Is it because the institution to which we belong is tuition-free? Anyone who claims this has forgotten that we will, by the time we graduate, repay the U.S. taxpayer many times over. In blood, sweat, and tears. Is it because the schooling we are receiving is one of the best undergraduate educations in the country? While the quality of the education is second to none, anyone who provides this as a main reason has lost sight of the awesome responsibility that awaits those who are tough enough to graduate and become commissioned officers in the U.S. Air Force.

I come back to the academy because I want to have the training necessary so that one day I'll have the incredible responsibility of leading the sons and daughters of America in combat. These men and women will never ask about my academy grade point average, their only concern will be that I have the ability to lead them expertly—I will be humbled to earn their respect.

I come back to the academy because I want to be the commander who saves lives by negotiating with Arab leaders . . . in their own language. I come back to the academy because, if called upon, I want to be the pilot who flies half way around the world with 3 mid-air refuelings to send a bomb from 30,000 feet into a basement housing the enemy . . . through a ventilation shaft 2 feet wide. For becoming an officer in today's modern Air Force is so much more than just command; it is being a diplomat, a strategist, a communicator, a moral compass, but always a warrior first.

I come back to the Air Force Academy because right now the U.S. is fighting a global war that is an away game in Iraq—taking the fight to the terrorists. And whether or not we think the terrorists were in Iraq before our invasion, they are unquestionably there now. And if there is any doubt as to whether this is a global war, just ask the people in Amman, in London, in Madrid, in Casablanca, in Riyadh, and in Bali. This war must remain an away game because we have seen what happens when it becomes a home game. . . I come back to the academy because I want to be a part of that fight. I come back to the academy because I don't want my vacationing family to board a bus in Paris that gets blown away by someone who thinks that it would be a good idea to convert the Western world to Islam. I come back to the academy because I don't want the woman I love to be the one who dials her

frantic cell phone call while huddled in the back of an airliner with 100 other people seconds away from slamming into the Capitol building. I come back to the academy because during my freshman year of high school I sat in a geometry class and watched nineteen terrorists change the course of history live on television. For the first time, every class currently at a U.S. Service Academy made the decision to join after the 2001 terror attacks. Some have said that the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan only created more terrorists. . . I say that the attacks of September 11th, 2001 created an untold number of American soldiers; I go to school with 4,000 of them.—And that's worth missing more than a few frat parties.

That essay has been submitted by Joseph R. Tomczak, cadet fourth class, U.S. Air Force Academy.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT WILLIAM A. ALLERS, III

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to reflect on the tremendous dedication and sacrifice that our country's soldiers exhibit every day. In particular, I want to call to my colleagues' attention a personal portrait of a young man who laid down his life defending freedom—a freedom this country has known for centuries, and that the people of Iraq have recently embraced.

While words cannot soothe the anguish of those who knew and loved him, they can help explain the heroism of his sacrifice, and so we pause today to remember and celebrate the life of SSG William A. Allers, III.

Sergeant Allers was accustomed to combat situations, as the battle-hardened veteran of more than 150 combat patrols and 50 security escorts while serving in Iraq. In fact, Sergeant Allers served valiantly in more than 25 combat engagements in his time there.

On Tuesday, September 20, 2005, a Kentucky National Guard armored Humvee ran over an improvised explosive device on a dusty road near Al Khalis, Iraq—a dangerous city located within the Sunni Triangle, known as the hideout of killers and criminals who kidnap innocents for ransom. The Guard unit was patrolling the streets of this city, located about 40 miles north of Baghdad, when they were attacked. Three soldiers from the distinguished 617th Military Police Company were in the Humvee. Of the three, two were injured, and Sergeant Allers was killed. He was 28 years old.

For his service to a grateful Nation, Sergeant Allers was awarded the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Combat Action Badge. He had also received the Army Commendation Medal

and the Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal. His commanding officer, Captain Todd Lindner, made clear to all that the 617th Military Police Company had lost an outstanding soldier. "Bill worked hard to keep high morale in his team," Capt. Lindner said, "and was a catalyst for the morale in our entire company."

To fully appreciate the impact Bill Allers had on those around him, however, it helps to know something about how he grew up. Billy, as he was known as a kid, was an adventurer. His father, William Allers II, has said that if there was a puddle of water, you would find Billy playing in it. A neighborhood friend of Bill's added, "if you [went] to look for Billy, you found him up in a tree."

Through this sense of adventure, Billy earned his childhood nickname. One day when Billy was about 4 or 5, his dad brought home a truckload of mushroom soil for the vegetable garden. Out of pure luck, this pile was deposited at the end of the long driveway of the Allers' home—and to Billy and his best friend, it had all the makings of a great jump ramp.

Before Mr. Allers had time to finish a glass of ice water inside the house, the two boys lined up their Big Wheels, sped down the blacktop and launched themselves nearly six feet into the air. Ever since that intrepid stunt, whenever they were seen together, the two were called the "Dukes of Hazzard" Boys. Billy's father jokes that this experience taught him that his son was a true "country boy."

Growing up, Bill Allers impressed people not only with his daredevil Big Wheel jumps, but also with his big heart and ability to lead others. During Bill's 4 years on the Fallston High School track team, in Fallston, MD, where he grew up, his strength of character began to shine through. His high school track coach put it this way: "As we went through the 4 years, he molded into a leader, and he wanted to be part of the team, and he wanted the team to do as well as possible, and [he] would always encourage the younger participants when he became one of the seniors."

Coach Greg Thompson went on to say, "He was selfless. He just was for everyone else and he wanted to see everybody else excel. And he wasn't worried about himself."

A truly gifted athlete, Bill mastered the high jump. He was also the "anchor" of the two-twenty and four-forty relay teams, meaning he was the one to carry the baton for the final stretch toward the finish line. If the relay team was behind, they trusted Bill to make up the ground and win the race.

Bill took pride in his team and his role on it, and he worked very hard to become the best competitor he could be. Evidently, he mastered that too, because Bill's relay team won medals at the Maryland High School State Championships in 1994.

When he was not running track, Bill worked part-time for a local land-

scaping and nursery company in Fallston. Part-time might not be a fair description, however, since it was all his parents could do to keep him from working 40 hours a week. Bill loved digging his hands into the soil and working to improve the environment that surrounded him.

In Iraq, that urge to build and create gave Bill his greatest joy—the gratitude the Iraqis had for the work he and his squad were doing to restore their country. A few months before Sergeant Allers reached his final resting place in Arlington National Cemetery, on a peaceful slope in a section reserved for those honored soldiers who have fallen in Iraq, he told his family about the work he was doing to restore that desert nation.

Bill's father said that Bill took great comfort from the gratitude the children of Baghdad showed to the American soldiers. His younger brother, Dave Allers, added, "He told us the kids over there really adored seeing soldiers out there. The soldiers handed out stationery, candy and gum. It opened up a whole new world to them. [Bill] was ecstatic that he was doing something good."

Sergeant Allers's love of the great outdoors also explains his affinity for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Bill may have grown up in Maryland, but he was first exposed to the Bluegrass State when he was assigned to Fort Knox, KY, to learn the tradecraft of the cavalry scout.

After serving a tour of duty that took him around the world and back, Bill decided to leave active-duty Army life and make Leitchfield, KY, his home. He was captivated by our rolling hills, champion horses, and friendly people. Wanting to continue his service to our country, he also decided to join the Kentucky National Guard, where he served with distinction until his final sacrifice.

Mr. President, in just these few short words I think I've made clear that this was a young man who gave so much of himself to better the lives of those around him. Now he is gone. We wish we could ease the grief of his family: his father, William, his brother, Dave, and his grandmother, Virginia, who have joined us today in the gallery, and his 9-year-old son, Gregory.

I hope their heartache is tempered by the knowledge that America will forever celebrate Sergeant Allers's heroism, and his sacrifice. As will the Iraqi children he safeguarded. And his courage, his bonds of love and friendship, and his spirit will not be forgotten.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 525. I further ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate then return to legislative session.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

Reginald I. Lloyd, of South Carolina, to be United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina for the term of four years, vice J. Strom Thurmond, Jr., resigned.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I should first propound an inquiry of the Chair: What is the situation? What is the order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period of morning business, and Senators may speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator has 9 minutes remaining.

WIRETAPPING OF AMERICAN CITIZENS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, in his radio address on December 17, 2005, President Bush disclosed that after September 11, 2001, he authorized the National Security Agency, NSA, to undertake wiretapping of American citizens to try to prevent terrorist attacks. The President argued that his actions were, in his words, "fully consistent" with his constitutional responsibilities.

The President wrongly asserted—Mr. President, the President wrongly asserted—that his authority to order warrantless electronic surveillance of U.S. citizens on American soil is supported by his inherent Presidential powers and the joint congressional resolution that authorized the use of force after September 11.

A huge swath—a huge swath—of America, including many expert legal minds, does not—I say, does not—agree