

country and yet maintains and tries to get us back through the immigration system into a nation of laws and not situations where they are just thrown to the side.

Our current system is such, with the complexity and the time waits in it that a person may come here legally but their spouse can't be here legally for 7 to 10 years. So frequently the spouses decide, let's get there any way we can. Or you will find an agricultural worker in a system saying that it is just so complicated that we are going to go around the system to the point that half to three-fourths of our agricultural workers, foreign-born agricultural workers, are undocumented illegals. Yet without them you don't run the agricultural system. You could say that is a bad place to be in, and it is. But I think it also tells us the path to change that we have to get to be able to make a legal system that does work and that can get most people into it. We need to do so to be compassionate and a nation of laws.

It will be a tremendous debate. It is an important one for the country. It is an important one for the Republican Party, for us to have a good, full debate about this topic and how we move forward with it. I think we are going to have it, and it is going to be one of the most dignified and important moments in debates for this Senate during this term of Congress.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO ERMA ORA BYRD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want the record to reflect that my dear friend, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER, is unable to be on the floor tonight because of a medical condition. It is nothing that won't be resolved quickly, but he is unable to be here today. He asked me to read, verbatim, a statement he would give if he were here tonight.

Mr. President, this is a floor statement on the passing of Erma Ora Byrd, read by HARRY REID, as written by JAY ROCKEFELLER:

My dear friend and revered colleague of more than two decades has suffered a grievous loss, and I ask my colleagues to join Sharon and me in mourning the passage of Erma Ora Byrd, the wife and soul mate of West Virginia Senator, Robert C. Byrd.

Before Robert Byrd was a Senator, before he was an attorney, before the West Virginia Legislature named him the West Virginian of the 20th Century, Erma recognized something extraordinary in this son of the Winding Gulf coalfields. What we see today, she saw then in the gas station attendant and welder and butcher's apprentice who became her husband. Those of us who had the privi-

lege of knowing Erma, also know that this was hardly the last time her vision proved extraordinary. Throughout her life, her intelligence and common sense made her a close partner to one of America's most influential men. As Senator Byrd once said: "She is not only my wife, but also my best counselor."

Yet, as sharp as Erma was in finding her husband, Senator Byrd was equally astute. Not only was Erma a wise counselor, but she was also a constant source of support. A proud coal miner's daughter from Stotesbury, WV, she gave unhesitatingly and without reserve. She was the support system that got him from Capitol Hill to law school at the end of a hard day, and to the many meetings and appearances his job required. Always the model of grace and dignity, she was an extraordinary mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She made Robert C. Byrd a better father, a better Senator, and a better man. In many ways, Erma Byrd was the quintessential West Virginia woman, teaching her family to work hard and care deeply, all the while giving unceasingly to those around her.

Their marriage was not some practical partnership—it was a love-match. After nearly 69 years of marriage, Senator Byrd still radiated, in the words of John Cheever, the deep and indisguisable joy of someone who has just fallen in love. Together, they shared the triumphs and setbacks of political life, always celebrating not elective office but the opportunity to help people in their home State, for which they cared so deeply.

Together, they knew tragedy as well, with the devastating and untimely death of a beloved grandson. For a time, Senator Byrd even gave up playing his fiddle as the music became too much to bear. But they found solace in each other, in family, and in their truly extraordinary faith in God.

During one of my last visits with Erma, I was sitting on my couch being charmed, as everyone always was, by her warmth and wit as we talked about everything in the world except the United States Senate. She was a welcome reminder that life existed outside our work and that delight was best discovered in mountain flowers and close family and old friends.

Just a few weeks ago at my home, Senator Byrd spoke lovingly and movingly about what we now know to be Erma's final days. Even as Erma's mind and body failed her, he felt profoundly that their hearts are forever linked and their souls will recognize each other always. You could see that as she suffered, he suffered, as she endured, he endured.

All the while Senator Byrd maintained a daunting Senate schedule, as she had wanted him to do, and every evening he returned home to his one true love.

As Erma's hardship is over now and she is in the loving arms of the Lord, Senator Byrd will have the complete support of West Virginia and his Senate family as he bears the new hardship of this loss, but with the added grace of Mrs. Byrd watching over him.

The circle has been broken. But we take strength from the sure knowledge that, in years to come, a better home awaits all of us, and for Senator Byrd his life will be complete again.

Mr. President, that ends the statement of JAY ROCKEFELLER.

Speaking for myself as the Democratic leader and as someone who has learned so much about the Senate from ROBERT C. BYRD, I recognize that at 7:20 p.m. on this past Saturday night, Erma Byrd, the wife of our own Senator ROBERT BYRD, passed away. Mrs.

Byrd had been struggling with illness for quite some time. But after years of pain and discomfort, she has found peace.

On behalf of the Senate, I offer our condolences to this good man, Senator BYRD, his daughters Mona and Marjorie, and to his dozens of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It is our prayer that they, too, find peace and comfort during these difficult days.

This is a sad time for the Senate family. Erma's passing is a loss for all of us. She was a special person and will be missed. She touched the lives of everyone she met. She touched my life. My colleague from West Virginia, Senator ROCKEFELLER, had the privilege of knowing Erma better than most, and that has been certainly addressed in the statement I read for Senator ROCKEFELLER.

As I indicated, he is not able to be here today because he is recovering from back surgery, but he asked that I read this tribute to Erma, which I was so happy to do.

We are recognizing the loss of Erma Byrd, and in so doing, we have to mention the greatness of Senator BYRD, running for his ninth term for the Senate—ninth term. It has never happened before. I marvel at what I have learned from Senator BYRD. I can remember as though it were yesterday when he decided he was no longer going to be the Democratic leader. Senator Dole wanted to do a luncheon in recognition of Senator BYRD over in the Russell Building. It was a wonderful occasion. We learned about Senator BYRD more than we had known. We thought we knew him well. But he told us that day that we would learn some things we didn't know, and we did.

What a marvelous man. He could leave his home in Virginia for his home in West Virginia and back, 4 hours one way, 4 hours back, recite poetry over and back and never recite the same poem twice. He is a man with a mind that I have never seen before. He is an expert in Shakespeare. This man is so brilliant that he gave lectures here dealing with the line-item veto where he based his 10 lectures on the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. He could recite from memory every ruler that Rome had. His lectures were so dynamic that at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, a professor taught classes to his graduate students based only on Senator BYRD's lectures.

I can remember going to a parliamentary exchange in West Virginia where we exchanged with British Parliamentarians. Senator BYRD stood and recited from memory the reign of the British monarchs, their names, how they spelled their names, the years they were in power, and what they had done. Unbelievable.

The reason I mention this is that Senator BYRD did not get there alone. He was supported—and that is an understatement—by Mrs. Byrd. His greatness suggests her greatness. I had the

good fortune to travel with the Byrds when her health was better. Their relationship is just as JAY ROCKEFELLER said—people married for nearly 60 years who were like teenagers—teenagers in love.

I know Senator BYRD is a better person because of the person he chose to be his wife, but as a result of that, all of us are better people because of the influence Erma Byrd had on ROBERT C. BYRD.

My thoughts go to ROBERT BYRD. I spoke with him yesterday. He was strong, resilient, saying this is what Erma would want, for him to be strong. I haven't heard his voice as powerful as it was yesterday, at 2 or so in the afternoon, for a number of years because he suffered the pain his wife suffered. We all felt that. Her pain is past. Senator BYRD's pain is past.

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. 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.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF WINSTON CHURCHILL'S IRON CURTAIN SPEECH AND HONORING SENATOR BAKER

Mr. FRIST. March 2006 marks the 60th anniversary of what is regarded as one of the most influential speeches of the 20th century. March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill gave his famous "Iron Curtain" speech at Westminster College, in Fulton, MO. Historians date the beginning of the cold war to this speech.

In this speech Mr. Churchill introduced to the world the phrase "Iron Curtain" to describe the division between Western powers and the area controlled by the Soviet Union. This speech not only marked the onset of the cold war but drew attention to the unique relationship between the United States and Great Britain. This special relationship spans three eras from Winston Churchill and FDR to Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and now to George W. Bush and Tony Blair.

In celebration of this historic event and the special relationship between our Nation and Great Britain, the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy at the University of Tennessee and the Churchill Archives Centre at Cambridge University, the United Kingdom, have come together for a stellar international conference and to honor one of America's greatest statesmen and one of Tennessee's greatest sons, the Honorable Howard H. Baker, Jr.

This premier occasion has brought together two great universities and two great centers, each dedicated to preserving and presenting their complementary historical resources. This coming together has formed a new

partnership for the 21st century and will support an ongoing, trans-Atlantic and international educational alliance.

Here are excerpts from the Iron Curtain speech:

The United States stands at this time at the pinnacle of world power. It is a solemn moment for the American democracy. For with this primacy in power is also joined an awe-inspiring accountability to the future. As you look around you, you must feel not only the sense of duty done, but also you must feel anxiety lest you fall below the level of achievement. Opportunity is here now, clear and shining, for both our countries. To reject it or ignore it or fritter it away will bring upon us all the long reproaches of the aftertime.

From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe.

The safety of the world requires a new unity in Europe, from which no nation should be permanently outcast. It is from the quarrels of the strong parent races in Europe that the world wars we have witnessed, or which occurred in former times, have sprung.

Fraternal association requires not only the growing friendship and mutual understanding between our two vast but kindred systems of society, but the continuance of the intimate relationship . . .

Beware, I say; time may be short. Do not let us take the course of allowing events to drift along until it is too late. If there is to be a fraternal association of the kind I have described, with all the extra strength and security which both our countries can derive from it, let us make sure that that great fact is known to the world, and that it plays its part in steadying and stabilizing the foundations of peace. There is the path of wisdom. Prevention is better than cure.

LOCAL RADIO BROADCAST EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, I joined Senator SNOWE and Senator BAUCUS in introducing S. 2418, a bill to preserve local radio broadcast emergency and other services and to require the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a rulemaking for that purpose.

Growing up in my home town of Pascagoula, MS, I had my own radio show. Through local radio, I had the opportunity to have a voice in my community. Local radio keeps communities informed about what is going on in their back yards, and gives local leaders an opportunity to communicate with their supporters.

Over the years, I have been actively voicing my concerns on the issue of media ownership. I believe that the problem of the pervasiveness of indecency in broadcasting is related to my concerns about media ownership. When media conglomerates become too large, they are less responsive to the concerns of the American viewing public and less accountable to local communities. Media companies which use publicly owned airwaves must become more responsive to public needs, respectful of local values and reflective of community standards which seem to

be constantly ignored by executives in east and west coast high-rise office buildings.

In order to ensure that radio remains an independent source of information for local communities, I am pleased to introduce a bill to preserve local radio broadcast emergency and other services and to require the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a rulemaking for that purpose.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

A COLORADO LEADER: MONTE PASCOE

• Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a good and decent man, who left an indelible mark on Colorado, but who sadly left us suddenly and too soon.

Monte Pascoe of Denver died unexpectedly on March 2, at age 71, leaving behind his wonderful wife Pat, children Sarah, Ted and Will, a brother Patrick, and a legacy as a "servant leader," a model we would all do well to follow.

Monte was a friend and mentor to me. He was a lawyer who worked on water and natural resource issues, helping protect the natural heritage of our great State of Colorado. He served as the executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, a post I held in later years. He was a longtime member of the Denver Board of Water Commissioners; member of the Colorado School of Mines board; president of the Iliff School of Theology; and chairman of the Colorado Water Quality Commission.

Monte led the Colorado Democratic Party as its chairman during the early and mid 1970s, when Colorado elected such illustrious public servants as Gary Hart, Pat Schroeder and Tim Wirth to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives; Dick Lamm to the Governor's mansion; and my good friend Ruben Valdez as the first Hispanic Speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives.

In 1969, Monte ran for the Denver Board of Education, losing in a campaign defined by the issue of the segregation of public schools. Monte fought the good fight, standing firm for equality in access to public schools. Even though he lost that election, he helped organize the legal effort which eventually led to the desegregation of Denver schools.

In 1983, Monte ran for mayor of Denver among a crowded field that included the eventual winner, former U.S. Secretary of Energy and Transportation, Federico Peña.

Monte stood beside his wife Pat during her own distinguished career in the Colorado State Senate.

Monte was a community leader in the best sense of the word, active in his church, Montview Presbyterian Church, and numerous nonprofit and community organizations.

Up until his death, Monte, along with his friend of over 30 years, Ed Benton,