

to political prisoners and their families, other dissidents, independent libraries, youth organizations, workers rights activists, agricultural cooperatives, associations of the self-employed, journalists, economists, and medical doctors.

This has been cleared by our side. I believe that the other side, the Democrats, will have an opportunity to show solidarity with the Cuban people. We will try to clear this bill through the Senate when we reconvene.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if I might be allowed to comment as well, as the Senator from Tennessee, the majority leader, describes the bill, it sounds as if it is one that I gladly and wholeheartedly would support. I know Senator MARTINEZ has a special interest in this issue, having been born in Cuba and then coming to the United States and still with the great love for the land where he was born.

I have spoken to him for the last several days while there apparently is a transition of power in place there. And I know how important this is to him personally and to so many other people of Cuban dissent who live in the United States.

I am sorry that it cannot be cleared, but there are some on this side of the aisle who have expressed some reservation or objection at this point. But I personally hope that we can do this as quickly as possible so that the people of Cuba can appreciate and enjoy freedom as soon as we can give them a helping hand.

RETIREMENT OF MARTY BERMAN

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, the Senate community is losing a longtime and valued employee. After 18 years of loyal and distinguished service, Marty Berman is retiring from the Senate Recording Studio. Marty played an integral part in the television broadcast of the Senate's proceedings and in helping facilitate the audio and video needs of Senators and their staffs.

His service to his country really started 45 years ago. Marty served faithfully, enlisting twice in a military career that began when he was 17 and lasted 6 years, from 1961 to 1967. Before leaving the military, he was a communications specialist with duty in Vietnam.

Marty brought extensive television experience to his job at SRS. In the private sector he worked at Satellite News Network, CNN, and finally at CBS. His work for Charles Kuralt and "CBS Sunday Morning" was nominated for an Emmy. A 13-minute long story he had photographed was aired, which is the television equivalent of a long book.

His career at the recording studio began in 1988 where he quickly came to specialize in audio operations. However, his contributions were not only technical. He also had just the right personal touch with Senators. It isn't always easy to get up in front of TV cameras and lights to speak, even for

Senators, but Marty had the ability to put any Senator at ease. When floor directing, he spoke to each Senator easily and with warmth, and they trusted him. He was never intimidated, but he was always respectful.

Marty can be a bit feisty, but his bark is much worse than his bite. To those who have gotten to know him, he is warm and caring, too.

Marty ended where he had started, working the Senate television shift. In 18 years he braved many long days and late nights through the Senate's always unpredictable schedule. Throughout his time at the studio, Marty could always be counted on to be at his post. That included his work as chief STV audio operator where for most days during his shift he started up in the audio booth, assuring that the Senators could always be heard in the Chamber and on television.

Marty is the father of 3 grown children: Tracy, Eric, and Alex. The 3 have been the pride of his life and have become responsible and caring adults. He is also the proud grandfather of two. His marriage to Darlene has brought him much happiness. Both share the same three hobbies: antique collecting, antique collecting, and more antique collecting. Their home is a somewhat cluttered but fascinating museum of American Western and American Indian artifacts, pottery, Big Little Books, and just about anything else you can think of. Last, but not least, there are four others who hold a place in his heart. They are Hoover the yellow lab, Clarence the basset hound, Crystal, the cat, and Birdie the cockatiel. Birdie likes to lay back and listen to the blues with Marty and Darlene and can even whistle Colonel Bogey's March from "Bridge on the River Kwai."

Marty's unique personality, loyalty, and dedication will be missed. We all join to wish Marty the best as he begins this next adventure in his life and know he will enjoy the newfound time for family, friends, pets, and antique collecting.

160TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ELECTION TO THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Leo Tolstoy said of Abraham Lincoln that "His example is universal and will last thousands of years . . . He was bigger than his country—bigger than all the Presidents together . . . and as a great character he will live as long as the world lives."

Abraham Lincoln has been known and admired through the generations—and around the world. But Abraham Lincoln is known primarily for his presidency and his leadership of the United States through the dark days of the Civil War. We recall his unwavering commitment to the "American experiment" in democracy and his refusal to allow the national Union to fail, regardless of the odds against him.

Few people remember, though, that Abraham Lincoln was also a Member of Congress at one time. Today, August 3, in fact, marks the 160th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's election to a single term in the U.S. House of Representatives. I also had the privilege of representing the 20th Congressional District of Illinois as a member of the House for 14 years.

There is a reason few people remember Lincoln's service in Congress. Frankly, his one term, in the 30th Congress, which sat from December 1847 to March of 1849, was rather unremarkable. He was a young country lawyer who served with the likes of John Quincy Adams in the House and Daniel Webster and John Calhoun in the Senate. Most of his colleagues viewed him as a Westerner of average talent.

He was a conscientious and hard-working Member, though, which isn't particularly surprising. He served on various committees, he voted on the floor of the House in nearly all of the rollcall votes during his term, and he corresponded faithfully with his constituents.

His most famous contribution to the political and policy debates of his term—criticism of President James Polk for the Nation's involvement in the Mexican war—earned him scorn and disfavor back in Illinois where the war had been popular. Illinois Democrats called Lincoln, himself a Whig at the time, a disgrace.

Lincoln left Congress and returned to his legal practice, arguing cases in country courthouses of Illinois' Eighth Judicial Circuit, and thinking he had no future in politics.

On the contrary, Lincoln's time walking the Halls of this building introduced him to the issues on the national political stage. The Congress in which he served debated the Wilmot Proviso, which would have prevented the spread of slavery into territories newly acquired from Mexico. Those debates exposed Lincoln to the divisiveness and explosiveness of the issue that severely tried his presidency a decade and a half later and nearly destroyed the country. His time in Congress also produced personal and political connections that served him years later as President and Commander-in-Chief.

Today, we mark the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's election to the House of Representatives as the beginning of this great man's ascent on the national political stage. In February 2009, the Nation will mark the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Congress established the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to help our Nation mark this milestone. I am privileged to cochair the Commission along with Congressman RAY LAHOOD and Lincoln Scholar Harold Holzer—we like to call ourselves "a team of rivals." We have been working diligently to ensure