

Not only could CICIG go a long way in fulfilling the government's commitment under the peace accords to combat illegal armed groups, it could also help to uncover the full extent of these groups and dismantle their underlying structure. Most importantly, it would be an unprecedented step in ending the impunity that has been the greatest impediment to establishing the rule of law in Guatemala.

At this point, the future of CICIG is in the hands of the Guatemalan Congress, and with new elections approaching time is running out. It would be a terrible waste of years of hard work by the Guatemalan Government and the United Nations if the CICIG is not approved. Whether for prospective foreign investors or the surviving families of victims of political violence, nothing is more important than knowing the truth and seeing that justice is finally possible.

On June 28, the Senate Appropriations Committee, like the House of Representatives last month, unanimously reported the fiscal year 2008 foreign aid appropriations bill. That legislation would authorize the resumption of assistance for the Guatemalan Air Force, Navy and Army Corps of Engineers, if they are respecting human rights and the Guatemalan Congress ratifies the CICIG agreement.

I urge the Guatemalan Congress to seize this historic opportunity. The alternative, which is almost unthinkable, of rejecting this essential step to uphold the rule of law, would send a chilling message that it is the forces of crime and violence who will determine Guatemala's future. That is not an outcome that Guatemala or its people can afford.

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#### TRIBUTE TO BOB VAN HEUVELEN

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my chief of staff upon his retirement from the U.S. Senate. Robert Van Heuvelen is recognized not only by me, but also by his colleagues and other Members, as a highly respected, effective, and engaging public servant.

Mr. Van Heuvelen has had a remarkable career in the Federal Government, spanning over 32 years. Bob first came to Capitol Hill in 1975 to work as a legislative assistant for the Honorable Quentin Burdick in the Senate. Following that, he served as assistant counsel for the Environment and Public Works Committee for the Honorable Edmund Muskie. He remained in Washington and went on to work as a Federal prosecutor at the U.S. Department of Justice, rising to the position of deputy and acting chief of the Department of Justice's environmental enforcement section, and eventually to director of the Office of Regulatory Enforcement at the Environmental Protection Agency.

For the past 10 years, I have been privileged to have Bob serve on my staff, first as policy director and then

as chief of staff. He brought with him extensive experience in Government and his lifelong dedication to our home State of North Dakota.

During his tenure in my office, some of his most notable accomplishments include coordinating disaster relief for the devastating 1997 flood of Grand Forks, spearheading the work of a tobacco task force to formulate a strong public health response to the tobacco settlements, fighting for a fair Medicare distribution formula and estate tax reform. He also made great strides in developing strong working relations with both his Democratic and Republican colleagues. Bob has helped organize monthly breakfasts, dinners, and policy meetings for chiefs of staff of both parties, fostering a sense of bipartisanship, an accomplishment which is truly praiseworthy.

Bob is a native of Bismarck, ND. He earned his bachelor's degree at Macalester College in Minnesota. Following that, he attended the University of Minnesota, where he received his master's degree in public policy, and George Washington University, where he received his juris doctor. Today, Bob and his wife of 30 years, Jane Sherburne, live in Bethesda, MD. They have three wonderful children—Ben, Elizabeth, and Will.

As Bob goes forward in his life and on to other endeavors, I hope that he proudly looks back at his time here on Capitol Hill and realizes the tremendous difference he has made for North Dakota, our Nation, and in the lives of so many people. I am honored to have had the pleasure to work with him and look forward to our ongoing friendship. We have had great fun doing the Nation's business, and I will miss him. I commend Bob for his many achievements and superior service and wish him the very best.

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#### IN RECOGNITION OF VASILIKI CHRISTOPOULOS

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, today I wish to express Kathy's and my greatest admiration and thanks for a person who over the past 14 years has been the heart and soul of my Washington staff. Vasiliki Alexopoulos Christopoulos has served as my administrative assistant since February 2001 and before that as my legislative director, director of appropriations and as a legislative assistant. From her first days when she began working with us during our 1992 Senate campaign, Kathy and I knew Vas was an extraordinary person.

To describe Vas simply as AA does not do her justice—although that job is at the center of a well-run and effective Washington office and is critical to the success of a Senator. She, rather, has been the heartbeat of the office. Her caring, warm, and always positive personality calms the stormy times and has given all of us a shot of energy when we needed a lift. Vas understands that running an office is more than assigning tasks. Under her leadership, it

has been about building an exceptional team. She always makes sure that when there is a task to be done, it is not left to one person; rather, everyone jumps in with Vas leading the way.

Whether it is counseling interns through separation anxieties, interviewing people to join the office, or assisting Kathy, me, and our children in making sense out of this chaotic lifestyle, Vas has always organized, planned, and followed through in a manner that has led to a successful end in a positive way.

Walking with Vas to get a cup of coffee is like taking a field trip. This is no police officer, no maintenance staff, no congressional staff who does not know Vas and want to share a story. One quickly learns that everyone in Washington is Greek.

Vas could do about anything she wishes, including probably be mayor of Nashua, but she has chosen a different course. She is moving from the friendly confines of Washington and Nashua to the cold, barren land of Grand Rapids, MI. Michigan, where the summer occurs on July 4, will be the better for this. She will bring her sunny personality which will inevitably warm even the chill climate of Michigan.

As Vas and her terrific husband Jimmy embark on this new career path and challenge, seeking all things Greek, Kathy joins me in thanking her for all her years of dedication to the Gregg family, our office staff, and all the people of New Hampshire. We have all greatly benefited from her commitment and love. She has been and will remain a part of our family and although she will be a bit further away, we wish her only the best and say thank you.

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#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

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##### HONORING REYNOLDS, NORTH DAKOTA

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I recognize a community in North Dakota that will be celebrating its anniversary. On July 27–29, the residents of Reynolds will gather to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Reynolds is a vibrant community located in eastern North Dakota. Founded in 1880, years before North Dakota was granted statehood, Reynolds was named for Dr. Henry A. Reynolds, who served as a surgeon in the Civil War and had recently migrated to the area from Maine. Reynolds, like many other North Dakota communities, was originally incorporated with the arrival of the railroad.

Reynolds is now, and always has been, a very unique community. The city itself has two churches, two elevators, and is separated by two counties. The number two is very important to the residents of Reynolds, and celebrating its quasiquicentennial 2 years late is, as the community says, kind of a "Reynoldsism."