

It is outrageous that the Libyan Government would so blatantly disregard the suffering the families have endured for more than two decades. S. Res. 253 demands the Government of Libya apologize for the gross homecoming celebration of al-Megrahi.

This resolution does three important things: First, it condemns the August 20, 2009, release from prison in Scotland of Abdel Baset al-Megrahi, the lone person convicted in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people; second, it condemns the lavish welcome home ceremony held in Tripoli to celebrate the release of al-Megrahi; and third, it calls on the Government of Libya to apologize for the public celebration of al-Megrahi's release.

Al-Megrahi only served 8 years in jail. He committed one of the most dastardly terrorist attacks that has been known in the last 100 years. Eight years later, the families haven't recuperated. They live with their losses every day, every minute. There is a hole in their hearts that will never heal. To release al-Megrahi is terrible; to celebrate the release of this awful terrorist is even worse. And for the world to remain silent, the U.N. not to condemn but to greet Qaddafi—strike three. It is an awful situation.

I call on the Senate to support S. Res. 253 condemning the release and the vile welcome home celebration. I hope all Senators will join us in co-sponsoring the resolution. Murder and terrorism are not forgivable offenses, and refuge should never be offered to those determined to terrorize and murder the innocent. If we do so, we are encouraging future terrorists to repeat these awful crimes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

COMMENDING SENATOR MEL MARTINEZ

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I was deeply saddened by the recent announcement of the distinguished Senator from Florida, Mel Martinez, that he had decided to resign from the Senate. Although he had served in the Senate for a relatively short period of time—since January 4, 2005—he had become a very important influence in this body.

As the first Cuban American to serve in the Senate, he shared with us his personal experiences and insights into his early life in Cuba, including his separation from his parents at a young age as he traveled to Florida to embark upon a very successful new life of learning and leadership in the United States. He earned undergraduate and law degrees from Florida State University. He served as a member of the Orlando Utilities Commission and was elected Mayor of Orange County. President George W. Bush selected him to serve as a member of his Cabinet, as

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. He was elected a United States Senator in 2004 and quickly established himself as an effective advocate for his State in the Senate.

Mel Martinez quickly became an active and influential member of the Armed Services Committee as well as the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, and the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. His constituents benefitted in particular from his service as ranking member of the Senate's Special Committee on Aging.

Mr. President I congratulate my friend from Florida on his very successful service and important contributions through his dedicated public service in Florida and in our Nation's Capital. I have enjoyed serving with him, and I wish him all the best in the years ahead.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2996, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2996) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Carper amendment No. 2456, to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study on black carbon emissions.

Collins amendment No. 2498, to provide that no funds may be used for the administrative expenses of any official identified by the President to serve in a position without express statutory authorization and which is responsible for the interagency development or coordination of any rule, regulation, or policy unless the President certifies to Congress that such official will respond to all reasonable requests to testify before, or provide information to, any congressional committee with jurisdiction over such matters, and such official submits certain reports bi-annually to Congress.

Isakson modified amendment No. 2504, to encourage the participation of the Smithsonian Institution in activities preserving the papers and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., under the Civil Rights History Project Act of 2009.

Vitter motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions to report the same back to the Senate forthwith with Vitter amendment No. 2508 (to the instructions on Vitter motion to commit the bill), to prohibit the use of funds to delay the implementation of the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program 2010–2015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, the floor is now open for amendments to the Interior bill. I hope Senators will come to the floor if they have an amendment. The filing deadline is 1 o'clock this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I say to the Senator from California that I join her in urging our colleagues to come to the floor and offer their amendments so we can move on through the bill. There is an opportunity to offer them and to debate them.

Mr. President, if someone comes to the floor I will finish quickly so they can take the floor and we can move on with the bill, but while we are waiting for that, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, with great respect to the President of the United States, I am still shaking my head a little bit in disbelief at his speech yesterday on climate change at the Climate Change Summit in New York. Here we had 100 leaders from around the world in our country to talk about climate change and the President said what he has said before, which is that we need to stop putting so much carbon in the air because carbon is the principal greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change, in the opinion of most scientists.

But in saying that, the President did not mention the one way we have to create a lot of low-cost electricity without putting any carbon in the air, and that is nuclear power—a process that the United States invented; a process that the United States operates more efficiently than any other country in the world. It produces 19 percent of our electricity, and our plants operate 90 percent of the time. Even France, which gets 80 percent of its electricity from nuclear power, only operates its plants 80 percent of the time. He failed to mention nuclear power even though it produces 70 percent of our carbon-free electricity, and even though every one of the other top five carbon emitting nations in the world are committed to a full-scale construction program for nuclear power.

This is what the President said:

The developed nations that caused much of the damage to the climate over the last century have the responsibility to lead—and that includes the United States.

Well, according to the Wall Street Journal on Monday, September 21, in its news pages, we know who produces the carbon: China is No. 1—6 million metric tons; the United States is No. 2—nearly 6 million metric tons. So we produce about the same. Russia is next—1.7 million; India is next; Japan is next. Those are the top five carbon emitting nations.