

United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees—it is fitting that we give careful pause to remember that the responsibility attached to Lincoln's words does not end at our shores.

Across the world, refugees need our assistance and our support. They look to America's voice and leadership to champion their plight—from the dusty plains of northern Kenya to the mountainous confines of Burma, Nepal and Southwest Asia.

As we look around the world, there are, sadly, numerous refugee crises. In many cases, refugees exchange one set of dangerous conditions for overcrowded, unsanitary and even violent camps. Instability in Somalia is swelling the ranks of the world's largest refugee complex in Dadaab, Kenya, home to nearly 500,000 people. In the Sahel, more than 150,000 Malians have fled the conflict to neighboring countries, joining host communities that are already suffering from drought and hunger. To them, daily survival is a gamble.

We also know that refugees and displaced populations can be the spark for large-scale violence, and today we face that very threat from the millions displaced from homes across the Middle East. Unspeakable violence in Syria has uprooted an estimated 500,000 people inside the country and driven tens of thousands more to Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq. Human security in Iraq continues to be a pressing concern, as our partners support hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries and over one million internally displaced persons.

Of course, there are glimmers of hope. As Burma slowly and steadily opens its political system, we will look to the government to provide space for humanitarian action to assist those displaced by years of conflict. Have a thought for the Burmese refugee in limbo along the border with Thailand or the young ethnic Rohingya who is denied even the basic identity papers that connote official personhood. They, too, deserve our attention, compassion and support.

In South Asia, more than 5.7 million Afghan refugees have returned home in the past decade, one of the UN's most successful voluntary repatriation operations. We must celebrate this achievement, even as we renew efforts to find durable solutions for the nearly 3 million Afghan refugees scattered across the region. In Colombia, where conflict has displaced an estimated 4 million people, our partners are helping the government to provide reparations and land restitution to affected individuals and families. We also continue to support the UN Relief and Works Agency in its efforts to provide assistance to millions of Palestinian refugees in the Palestinian territories and throughout the region.

Above all, we must remember that these aren't just statistics. The plight of the world's refugee and displaced populations is a challenge to the humanity of every single one of us. Chil-

dren who need proper nutrients and access to education, women who are at great risk of falling victim to gender-based violence, individuals with psycho-social needs after witnessing devastation—these realities prick our conscience from half a world away.

Mr. President: Lincoln used to say that he “tried to pluck a thistle and plant a flower wherever the flower would grow” Despite our trying times, we should remember all those who have planted the seeds of hope and opportunity where thistles would otherwise grow, from the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and its partners in the UN to international, faith-based and non-governmental organizations in the field. Let us also recognize the efforts of the organizations that provide guidance and services to give refugees resettled in the United States the opportunity to rebuild their lives here—and thank the communities across the country, including in my State of Massachusetts, who welcome them to their adoptive homes. Their legacy is ours, too. And the next chapter is waiting to be written.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JOSEPH A. LESNIEWSKI

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to commemorate a great Pennsylvanian who passed away on May 23, 2012. Those who worked alongside this high-spirited citizen of Erie, PA knew him as a hard worker, those who served alongside him in World War II knew him as a selfless soldier, while others who worked with him at the United States Post Office knew him as a devoted civil servant; still, many more around the world knew this great Pennsylvanian as World War II veteran Private Lesniewski, of the 101st Airborne Division, immortalized in the book and HBO series “Band of Brothers.” Today I would like to commemorate and take stock of this remarkable life: Joseph A. Lesniewski, an influential and inspirational citizen of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Joseph A. Lesniewski passed away at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center at the age of 91; he was survived by his wife of 38 years, Phyllis Schindley Lesniewski; and his four daughters, two sons, two sisters, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. From Mr. Lesniewski's work with General Electric, to his service in World War II, to his 37 years serving our country at the Erie Post Office, Mr. Lesniewski embodied the American spirit of dedication to country and unyielding resolve during several of our country's most trying times.

After graduating from Erie Technical High School in 1940 and faced with a battered world economy, Mr. Lesniewski joined the Civilian Conservation Corps, a New Deal Program

that helped weather the Great Depression and achieve the skills necessary for a position as a tool and die maker in General Electric's Erie, PA factory. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Mr. Lesniewski enlisted in the United States Army in 1942, where he served in the storied 101st Airborne Division during the momentous Battle of Normandy, Operation Market Garden, and the Battle of the Bulge. Mr. Lesniewski and his comrades were later immortalized in historian Stephen E. Ambrose's book, *Band of Brothers*, which illustrated the common acts of heroism displayed in World War II by our soldiers. Ambrose wrote that Lesniewski took German-grenade shrapnel to his neck while alerting his fellow comrades to take cover after he discovered a machine gun nest and an entire company of SS soldiers just yards away. Lesniewski's selfless actions led to the capture of both the machine gun nest and the company of SS soldiers. In another incident, Private Lesniewski disregarded his own safety during a German artillery barrage and marked the spot where an unexploded German shell had burrowed itself into the ground. This action helped to ensure the safety of his fellow soldiers.

After helping to keep others alive on numerous occasions, and serving as a source of strength and inspiration to the soldiers around him, Mr. Lesniewski re-entered the civilian workforce in 1945 and served for 37 years at the United States Post Office in Erie, PA. A historian and close friend of Mr. Lesniewski once said:

Over the years I saw a thousand acts of random kindness come from him. He had a heart of gold. He never stopped giving, as he was proudly involved in numerous charitable causes in his community.

As a testament to his heroism, Senator JOHN KERRY invited Mr. Lesniewski to join him at the 2004 dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC.

As we commemorate the valiant life of Joseph Lesniewski, we should not forget that our country has survived seemingly insurmountable challenges in our history. We survived these dire times due to the dedication to country and unyielding resolve found uniquely in our citizenry, symbolized so clearly through the life of Joseph A. Lesniewski. Let us not forget the words of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.” So then, with reflection on the life of Mr. Lesniewski, who so nobly advanced our country in both military and civilian roles, let us continue our dedication to the unfinished work before us: the work of building a better country and ensuring that the lives of our children can and will be better than that of our own.●

REMEMBERING PATRICIA RAE
MCCOY ROHLEDER

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Patricia Rae McCoy Rohleder. An Idaho native, Pat has been an integral part of the Idaho agriculture community for many years.

Pat had a remarkable 40-year career as a newspaper reporter that included many years of covering agricultural issues through the Capital Press. The value she placed on agricultural production was evident in her activity in this field. She was involved in many related efforts, including the Julia Davis Ag Pavilion project, Idaho Food Producers legislative meetings, and work on the Ag Pavilion Committee. The long list of awards and honors she received for her work includes three Conservation Writer of the Year honors from the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts; two media awards from the Idaho Grain Producers Association; an Idaho Farm Bureau award for outstanding reporting of agriculture; an honorary life membership received in 2009 from the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association; and a special award for dedication and service to Idaho's agricultural industry received at the 2010 A. Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit.

In addition to her writing, Pat had many other talents and interests including sewing, needle arts, playing the piano, and genealogy, and I understand her favorite title was "Grandma." She was also an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Pat's action reflected her values. She always lived her life the way a person ought to and served as a great example to many. I extend my condolences to Pat's husband, Erwin Ralph Rohleder, her mother, Edna L. McCoy, and her many other family members and friends. Pat will be greatly missed.●

REMEMBERING PERRY SWISHER

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Joseph "Perry" Swisher. A third-generation Idahoan, Perry committed much of his life to service to our State and Idahoans.

Perry was born in Bruneau, IA, and educated at Pocatello High School, University of Idaho Southern Branch and Idaho State University. He had an extensive career as a journalist and in elected office. This included his work as the Pocatello News Bureau manager for the Salt Lake Tribune, editor and publisher of the Intermountain, and assistant managing editor for the Lewiston Morning Tribune. In the late 1960s through mid 1970s, Perry owned The Book Arcade in Pocatello. For 7 years, he served as director of special services at Idaho State University and was involved in helping low-income and minority students succeed in college. He also served as a member and president

of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, as Idaho State representative of Bannock County, Idaho State senator for Bannock County, and as a member of the Pocatello City Council. Perry received many awards and honors for his work and served on a number of boards and commissions.

His immense experience in many aspects of the communities he lived in and the State contributed to his deep understanding of Idaho and Idahoans. Perry was known for his ability to simplify complex issues and make them understandable. He was sharp and inquisitive and had a propensity for debate and thought-provoking discussions. Perry had a comprehensive knowledge and sense of Idaho history, which he was willing to share if asked. Although his political partisan affiliations were famously known to shift according to the cyclical vagaries of political thought, his own view of the world remained consistent. His view of current events, always stated in the context of Idaho history, was of enormous value to many, including to those in my office. He also had an innate kindness and fabulous sense of humor that made the lessons he delivered particularly enjoyable.

I extend my heartfelt condolences to Perry's wife of 64 years, Nicky Swisher, his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many other family members and friends. Perry was truly exceptional. His steadfast determination and efforts in support of and to better our state will always be remembered.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL D. LEE

• Mr. LEE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the career of Police Chief Michael D. Lee, who is retiring after 34 years with the Kaysville Police Department.

Chief Lee was the eighth officer hired by Kaysville City in 1977. He started as the first school resource officer for Kaysville and rose through the ranks becoming a detective sergeant in 1988. He was subsequently promoted to lieutenant over the Patrol Services Division, and in 2007 he became the captain of the Investigative Services Division. In 2008, he was named chief of police for Kaysville City and has served the citizens honorably.

During his time at the Kaysville Police Department, Lee has helped to oversee the force's evolution into the 21st century. As new technologies have become available, Lee has pushed the department to continue to modernize, acquiring equipment ranging from advanced speed radar systems to laptops for patrol cars.

Passing the tradition of public service from one generation to another, Lee's son, Jason, has entered into his own law enforcement career. He protects the public as a patrol sergeant for the Morgan County Sheriff's office.

I join Kaysville Mayor Steve Hiatt and the local community in congratulating

Michael D. Lee for his many years of dedicated service. I want to personally thank him for protecting and serving so many Utahns and bringing honor to a name that we share. His career is a testament to the accomplishments of hardworking police officers everywhere, and I congratulate him on his many achievements and 34 years of excellence.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:23 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 404. An act to modify a land grant patent issued by the Secretary of the Interior.

S. 684. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain parcels of land to the town of Alta, Utah.

S. 997. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to extend a water contract between the United States and the East Bench Irrigation District.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1272. An act to provide for the use and distribution of the funds awarded to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, et al., by the United States Court of Federal Claims in Docket Numbers 19 and 188, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1556. An act to amend the Omnibus Indian Advancement Act to allow certain land to be used to generate income to provide funding for academic programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3668. An act to prevent trafficking in counterfeit drugs.

H.R. 4027. An act to clarify authority granted under the Act entitled "An Act to define the exterior boundary of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation in the State of Utah, and for other purposes".

At 2:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4310. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe