

on individuals in Venezuela responsible for human rights violations. To date the administration has imposed visa bans on some of these individuals, but they have not taken the next step of economic sanctions on the people responsible for these human rights violations.

A few weeks ago I wrote the President a letter asking him, please begin to use this tool against those who are violating the human rights of the people of Venezuela. He has yet to do so. So I once again renew that call: Please impose these sanctions on the human rights violators in Venezuela.

I hope I can use these moments to describe to people what I am hearing from people inside Venezuela and the expat community in Florida. They feel as though no one is paying attention. They feel as though they have been abandoned. They feel as though they are alone. Every single day the news leads off with all these things happening around the world—and they are worried about these things, too—but they feel as though no one is speaking out for them. They feel abandoned by all the other nations in the region.

Where are all the governments of the Western Hemisphere? Where are all the other countries that are neighbors to Venezuela? Where is the Organization of American States? What is the point of even having that organization if it can't serve as an institution and a forum for condemning this sort of activity? Where are all the democracies of Latin America and the Western Hemisphere? Why are they not speaking out and condemning what is happening here?

It is interesting, we sent a couple of Guantanamo detainees to Uruguay and the Uruguayan Government says they are asylum seekers, that they are refugees—basically implying they are refugees to American oppression. They have no qualms whatsoever about speaking out against the United States for putting in jail enemy combatants and terrorists responsible for the murder of Americans, responsible for acts of terrorism, responsible for supporting the Taliban. They have no problem condemning us, claiming that the people we released to them—which we should never have done—are refugees and asylum seekers, but they are silent and say nothing when it comes to what is happening in Venezuela. The hypocrisy of it is unbelievable.

I challenge the heads of state of the countries of Latin America to speak out. The only problem is they are going to turn back around and say, Where is your head of state? Why isn't your President speaking out about it? The answer is, I don't know. I am grateful that he signed that bill. It is time to put it in effect. It is time to begin to use the tools in those sanctions to go after these individuals, but I wish the White House and the President would more forcefully and more consistently speak out against these human rights violations that are occurring.

When you think about it, why are the people of Venezuela feeling abandoned? They look to us. They see America as the beacon of hope. We are supposed to be the premier defender of human rights and freedom and democracy on the planet; and instead, from the White House and the President, there is silence. There is silence.

We cannot lose that aspect of our foreign policy. I understand that reality has a significant role to play in foreign policy, the balancing of different considerations; but morality and human rights must always be a key cornerstone of where we stand on issues of global affairs. If we lose that, if we lose the moral authority of this Nation, we lose our standing as a beacon of hope and freedom to people all over the world.

I know sometimes we read newspaper articles and these leaders criticize us. But I hope it is understood that although people may talk badly about America, even in places where there might be some resentment about America, at its core people admire America. They admire us because they know someone from there who came here and was able to achieve things they never could have done in their own homeland. They admire us because every time there is an earthquake, Americans are the first ones there. Every time there is a flood, Americans are the first ones to respond. Every time there is hunger or suffering, it is American charities and the American Government first on the scene. They remember that and they admire it and they admire us for it.

They admire our freedoms. They admire our democracy. They admire the fact that I am able to stand here on the floor today and criticize the President of the United States and there isn't some police officer outside that door ready to handcuff me and take me to jail.

Meanwhile, in Venezuela, just this week a member of their legislative branch was ousted. Do you know why they kicked him out? So he could lose his legislative immunity and they could arrest him. Two weeks ago armed agents stormed the office of a mayor, fired shots in the air to disperse crowds and arrested by force a member of the opposition party—a mayor. This is happening in our own hemisphere and this is happening in the 21st century. It was just two decades ago that the Western Hemisphere was full of dictators, right-wing and leftwing, strong men who controlled and oppressed their people. We paid a terrible price for that in this hemisphere and in this country. Then there was this opening of democratic progress in the region. Now it is starting to erode and we are standing by and saying nothing about it, as if it doesn't even exist.

You see it eroding in Nicaragua where the Sandinistas are back in charge. They won an election and then they used that power to erode democracy. You see it in Bolivia, you see it

in Ecuador. You even see hints of it in Argentina. And you really see it in Venezuela.

By the way, let me point out one more thing. Today, even as I speak to you, Cuban agents are here negotiating. I say Cuban agents. They dress as diplomats and act as diplomats, but in fact they are spies. In fact, the chief negotiator for the Cubans in these talks they are having with the State Department, Josefina Vidal, was asked to leave this country with her husband because her husband was an intelligence officer and she is known to be one as well. But these Cuban spies are here to negotiate with the State Department. They send spies. We send diplomats.

Let's not forget who has taught the Venezuelan Government these tactics of oppression, these violent tactics, these ways to crack down on society. Let's not forget who has coached them. Let's not forget there are thousands of Cuban agents working in the Government of Venezuela right now. Let's not forget there are thousands of Cuban agents infiltrated in the Armed Forces—not infiltrated, they are openly in the Armed Forces of Venezuela right now.

Let's not forget that in Venezuela, Maduro, and before him Chavez, ousted the sovereignty of Venezuela to the Castros. Let's not forget who the source of all of this in Venezuela truly was—who coached them, who taught them, who supported them, who provided personnel for them to carry this out. It is Cuba, a nation that is a global sponsor of terrorism, because they harbor fugitives from American justice, because they helped North Korea evade U.N. sanctions openly and nothing happened. Now the State Department is thinking about removing them from the list of sponsors of terrorism—one concession after another.

But, anyway, on the issue of Venezuela, I hope we will pay more attention to it, because there are people right now suffering—not just economically but politically and physically at the hands of a brutal regime. They are looking to America and its leaders to speak clearly that we are on their side, that we will speak out for them, that we will stand for them, and we will use the power of this government to go after and punish those who are committing these crimes against them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate is waiting for House action on

the DHS funding issue, and while that is occurring, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:10 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 8:19 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

MORNING BUSINESS

IMMIGRATION POLICY MEMORANDA ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, the actions the Senate took today to fund the Department of Homeland Security should not be construed to accept, endorse, affirm or acquiesce in the memoranda issued by the Department related to immigration policy. A majority of the Senate has voted repeatedly over the last few weeks to advance legislation that would, if enacted, prohibit the Department from implementing the policies reflected in those memoranda. I and my colleagues in the majority who voted to fund the Department today did so to avoid a shutdown of its operations, many of which are necessary to safeguard our Nation. In voting to fund the Department, we were also mindful of the fact that the policies and directives that are embodied in these memoranda, and to which we object, are the subject of a preliminary injunction issued by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, which is preventing the Department from implementing them.

TRIBUTE TO ARLENE AND ALAN ALDA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, Marcelle and I met Arlene and Alan Alda on a trip with Senator Lloyd Bentsen. We had dinner together but I had a chance to talk to Alan Alda about our mutual Italian heritage. Later I told my Italian-American mother how nice a couple they were. She said, basically, what would I expect? With an Italian background, they would have to be nice.

The New York Times recently ran an article about this remarkable couple, focusing on her prolific writing, and his acting and writing, but especially their ability to maintain a wonderful marriage and a sense of life. I wanted to make sure my fellow Senators and anybody else who reads the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD would read this profile. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the article from the New York Times entitled "There's Always Room for Rum Cake."

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Feb. 13, 2015]

THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR RUM CAKE

(By Lois Smith Brady)

Arlene Alda, 81, and her husband, the actor Alan Alda, 79, say that one secret to a long-lasting marriage (theirs has been going for almost 58 years) is forgetfulness, which comes naturally to them at this point.

The Aldas, who discussed their decades together by telephone, with Ms. Alda also weighing in later by email, haven't had a serious argument for the last 20 years, she said, primarily because they can no longer remember for very long whether they are angry with each other or why.

"I have a short memory, and so does he," Ms. Alda said. "Was that always true? I don't recall."

Both emanate warmth and thoughtfulness in the way of beloved English professors or concerned therapists. Mr. Alda, whose career in television and theater has been as remarkably durable as his marriage, and Ms. Alda, a writer and photographer, possess laughs that are like old jeans: comfortable and well used.

Ms. Alda said that laughter is "the real glue that keeps us happily and willingly stuck together." They are definitely not the kind of couple who sit silently across the table from each other. "We're both loud laughers," she said. "Guffawing ones."

He said: "I have a very highfalutin notion about laughter. I think when you laugh you make yourself momentarily vulnerable. Your defenses are not up, and if you can stay in a playful mood, where you are susceptible to laughter, your chances of being antagonistic with each other are lower."

In general, they do not seem to act their ages. She described a recent afternoon: "I have a blurb to write for someone's book. I have soup I want to cook. I have a good chicken I want to roast. I have a book I'm reading that I want to finish. I have email correspondence. I have Facebook posts."

Her 19th book, "Just Kids From the Bronx," a collection of vignettes about 65 noteworthy people who grew up in rough Bronx neighborhoods and escaped in their own idiosyncratic ways, is to be published next month.

Ms. Alda, who grew up in the Bronx herself and is a Hunter College graduate, met Mr. Alda in 1956 while he was attending Fordham University. They connected at a dinner party on the Upper West Side when a rum cake accidentally fell onto the kitchen floor and they were the only two guests who did not hesitate to eat it.

"He was a kindred spirit who was also funny, so there was this great chemistry," she said. "It sure was fun and delightful to be with him that night. Boys from Manhattan didn't date girls from the Bronx. That was a given. It was too long of a trip. He took me home to the Bronx. Unheard of."

Eleven months later, they were married in a modest ceremony (18 guests watched) that reflected their humble goals at the time. They mainly wanted to be able to pay the rent and not suffer as their parents had.

"There was a lot of unhappiness in my parents' marriage partly because my mother was psychotic," Mr. Alda said. "We were already ahead of the game in that neither of us were seriously mentally ill."

Her parents had struggled financially and had no time for luxuries like dinner parties or showing affection for each other. "I wanted something different," she said. "I wanted something without stress."

So they filled their marriage with affection, music, dinner parties with artists and actors and celebrations of every paycheck.

"The first job I got was with a traveling children's company where we had to lug our

own scenery," Mr. Alda said. "I got \$10 a performance, and we were so glad, we went out to get pizza to celebrate." To this day, whenever he gets a new acting job, they celebrate by sharing a pizza.

Early on, they lived in Cleveland, where Eve, their first child, was born. He often read poetry and short stories aloud in the evenings. "I'd be stirring a pot of soup, and the baby would be sleeping, and he'd be reading to me," Ms. Alda said. "It was a warmth that's hard to describe."

They eventually had two more daughters, moved to Leonia, N.J., and discovered they had very different parenting styles. "I was the drill sergeant, and he liked to play with the kids," she said. "These were disagreements we had to work out. How important is it for the kids to go to bed on time?"

She added, "We would talk a lot and talk angrily. When you look back, you think, 'Why did I have to be angry?'"

From 1972 to 1983, Mr. Alda commuted from New Jersey to Los Angeles to play the part of Dr. Hawkeye Pierce in the iconic television series "M*A*S*H." Ms. Alda suddenly found herself juggling raising their girls with trying to spend time with a husband who was increasingly busy, famous and out of town.

"I was not a good juggler," she said. "It all took energy, and I found that I had spurts of energy. Not sustained at all."

Not wanting to become "just an audience" for her husband, Ms. Alda worked harder on her own photography and writing projects. "I had my own drive," she said. "One challenge of marriage is how to keep your sense of self yet be able to meld and blend with the other person." She said that being married to a celebrity "diminishes you, unless you feel really secure in yourself."

"I like basking in someone else's glow," she said, "but not as a daily diet."

Today, they live in an Upper West Side apartment and are practically inseparable. On Facebook, she mentions Mr. Alda in almost every post, and they seem to be always headed out to a concert, play, lecture or reading. They even work on their separate writing projects together.

Mr. Alda, who has written two memoirs, writes in the living room, while Ms. Alda works in the study. They keep all the doors open so they can talk back and forth, bounce ideas off each other or call out when it's time to break for a meal.

"Most likely one of us will die first," she said. "I can't even contemplate what that might be for either of us. Meanwhile, we're doing what we should be doing. Living."

Like many of the people profiled in "Just Kids From the Bronx," Ms. Alda believes that success in life—and in marriage—is mostly a matter of luck. "Luck is in neon lights," she said, adding that there is no way a couple can predict their future on their wedding day.

Both Aldas said it was especially lucky that they have never grown bored of each other and that they didn't remain penniless forever. "I really do believe that scraping by can damage a person and can damage a relationship," he said. "We have a lot of advantages. We know how lucky we are. I don't think anybody can tell you how happy we'd be if we were still scraping by."

They have a house in the Hamptons and drink really good wine, but otherwise they don't live particularly large. Both dress in the comfortable baggy clothes of struggling writers and have remained frugal and reluctant to waste anything.

"That's never changed," she said. "We are definitely still those two people who would eat the cake off the floor."

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, because I was helping a family member