

We have a lot to do. It is not simply a question of what we do on a series of commonsense gun measures, it is also a question of what we are going to do to help our law enforcement and to work as hard as we can in a bipartisan way to debate and vote on measures that will keep our country safe and protect our homeland.

Unfortunately, we are seeing more and more of a rise in these individuals who are, as I mentioned before, self-radicalized and sometimes categorized as a lone wolf. We have to make sure we are doing everything possible to identify them, apprehend them, and make sure we are thwarting these plots ahead of time. It may not work in every instance, but we have to take every measure possible. I think part of that is doing what I hope we can do as a matter of preventive steps. If someone is engaging in hate and taking action against others, even if it only rises to the level of a misdemeanor, they shouldn't have access to a firearm. We want to nip this in the bud, stop it long before that hate continues and develops into the kind of hate that leads to a much greater and more lethal attack on Americans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### REMEMBERING ROLAND "KEN" TOWERY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I would like to pay tribute to a great American veteran, public servant, leader, and Texan, Mr. Roland "Ken" Towery. Ken passed away on May 4, 2016, at the age of 93. Ken personified integrity, sacrifice, and hard work as a member of the Greatest Generation. He will be sorely missed by the family he leaves behind, those whose lives he touched, and a grateful Nation.

Ken was born in 1923 in Smithville, MS, but quickly moved to Texas a year later. Ken grew up on his family's farm in Willacy County. When Ken was 14, they moved to farm land on the Medina River near San Antonio. The day Ken turned 18, he enlisted in the Army. He was later asked about why he enlisted, and he said, "I wanted to see the world and signed up asking for service as far away from home as the Army could

send me." A few short months later, Ken sailed to the Philippines on the USS *Republic*. He received basic and advanced individual training on Corregidor Island in Manila Bay; he served as a crew member for the 75mm anti-aircraft guns with Battery C, 60th Coast Artillery.

In the initial months of America's involvement in World War II, the 60th Coast Artillery joined with the 59th Coast Artillery to defend the Bataan Peninsula, blocking the Japanese Navy from Manila Bay. Ken and his fellow soldiers fought gallantly; many, including Ken, were awarded the Purple Heart for injuries received in defense of the island. In May of 1942, the island fell to the Japanese, and Ken was captured.

For the duration of World War II, Ken was a prisoner of war in Manchuria. As a POW, he worked in the MKK factory making equipment to be exported. Ken eventually acquired an extra duty serving prisoners their meals, more commonly referred to as "slop," filling a role referred to as the "chow dipper." Serving as a chow dipper was often a short-lived and precarious position because they were subject to fights and disagreements from prisoners who were unhappy about their meager rations. This changed when Ken became the chow dipper. He employed the lesson that his parents taught him to "do unto others." He remedied disagreements by first filling his own bowl and placing it beside the serving bucket. Any man who was unsatisfied with his serving was invited to replace his serving with Ken's. This small action demonstrated Ken's dedication to fairness and firmly established his role as a leader amongst his fellow prisoners.

In 1945, Ken returned home, where he faced a steep recovery from multiple parasitic diseases common amongst former prisoners of war. Additionally, Ken returned with a serious case of tuberculosis, which forced him to spend the bulk of the next decade in isolation wards of TB sanitariums. As he battled TB, Ken studied at Southwest Texas Junior College and was later admitted to Texas A&M University to study soil biology. It was during this time that Ken met his future wife, Louise Ida Cook, from Knippa, TX.

After their wedding, Ken continued college until another bout with tuberculosis occurred and ended his formal education. After his hospitalization, Ken cleaned poultry houses to make a living. In 1950, the *Cuero Record*, Ken's local newspaper, announced they were looking for a reporter. Ken applied for the position but lacked one critical skill: the ability to use a typewriter. Louise taught Ken to type, helping him to land the job.

Ken's hard work led him to investigate allegations regarding businessmen who were abusing the State's veteran's land program and State officials who chose to ignore the issue. This later became known as the Veteran's

Land Scandal. As a result of his research and reporting, 20 people were indicted, and the Texas land commissioner was removed from office and imprisoned. In 1955, Ken was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his work.

Soon after, Ken, Louise, and their two children moved to Austin, where Ken worked as a political reporter for the *Austin American Statesman*. His insight into politics was noticed by recently elected U.S. Senator John Tower, who asked Ken to serve as his press secretary. He quickly climbed the ladder and became Senator Tower's chief of staff.

After leaving Tower's staff, Ken remained influential in Republican politics for more than 20 years, during which time he managed several reelection campaigns, including Richard Nixon's 1968 campaign in Texas.

Ken's political impacts extended beyond the United States. He also served the U.S. Information Agency as deputy director and assistant director. While there, he played a major behind-the-scenes role in the fight against communism and the demise of the Soviet Union. He said the years spent at USIA "were among the most gratifying 'employed' years of my life . . . I could go home at night feeling like I had struck a blow for liberty, for mankind . . . There was the feeling that our labors were directed towards the interest of the nation as a whole."

Ken then returned to Texas, where he started a political consulting business in 1976. In 1981, President Regan appointed him to the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and he served as the elected chairman of the board twice. Ken eventually returned to the newspaper business in the 1990s when he purchased three small town publications: The Floyd County *Hesperian*, the Lockney *Beacon*, and the Crosby County *News-Chronicle*.

Of all his many accomplishments, this humble man will rest in the Texas State Cemetery beneath the headstone that reads "The Chow Dipper." Ken Towery's story of perseverance, work ethic, and fortitude should inspire us all. I offer my thanks and appreciation to this great and humble man who epitomizes the American spirit.

#### HOUSE PASSAGE OF S. 337, THE FOIA IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Freedom of Information Act, our Nation's premier transparency law, is on the eve of its 50th anniversary, July 4, 2016. It is fitting that FOIA shares its birthday with our Republic itself. Our democracy is built upon the principle that a government of, by, and for the people cannot be one that is hidden from them. Today we recommit ourselves to this ideal by sending to the President the FOIA Improvement Act. This bill, which I coauthored with Senator CORNYN, ushers in the most significant reforms to FOIA since its enactment 50