

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

The distinguished Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

SENATOR JIM EXON

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to Senator JAMES EXON, who is completing his third term in the Senate and has unfortunately, decided to retire. His retirement caps a long and distinguished career of public service unique to his home State of Nebraska. JIM EXON and I have served together on the Armed Services Committee, and I have admired his strong support of our national defense. At the same time, as a conservative, and as ranking member on the Senate Budget Committee, Senator EXON has had a practical, direct, moderate temperament which has put him in tune with national sentiment on the need to control spending. He has been a leader of efforts to balance the budget, and that includes a need to reduce defense spending where possible, given the end of the cold war, and particularly in tempering the tendency to throw too much money on expensive new hardware systems.

JIM EXON is against waste and he has put his legislative shoulders behind that effort. He would agree with William Shakespeare, who wrote in King Henry V:

I can get no remedy
against this consumption of
the purse: borrowing only
lingers and lingers it out,
but the disease is incurable.

JIM EXON will be missed here. I shall miss his candid style, his no-nonsense temperament, and his refreshing directness, all of which are mixed with a down-home sense of humor. As a Senator, JIM EXON has always retained a modest sense of himself, never succumbing to the inflation of ego, which is a constant temptation in a body so much in the national limelight.

Senator EXON's success as a three-term Senator follows a string of other successes. After graduating from the University of Omaha in 1942, he volunteered for the U.S. Army Signal Corps and served in the Pacific theater in New Guinea, in the Philippines, and, finally, in Japan, and was honorably discharged as a master sergeant in December of 1945. He returned from the war to start a business career and developed a very successful office equipment company.

At the same time, he followed in his family's political footsteps. His grandfather served as a county judge in South Dakota, and JIM's early grassroots experience came in campaigning for his grandfather there. JIM started in politics by becoming a prominent leader of the Nebraska Democratic Party, serving as State vice chairman and National Committeeman.

JIM came to the Senate in 1978 after having served as the Governor of Ne-

braska for two terms from 1970-1978, longer than any other person in that State's history. The experience served him well. He was rewarded by the people of Nebraska when he achieved the unique accomplishment of having been elected directly to the United States Senate.

JIM EXON comes from the heartland of America and is an admirable reflection of the values, the solid citizenship, and the loyalty that characterize our heartland. He reflects the basic American values that honor family, fiscal responsibility, and national security.

Last year in the context of landmark telecommunications reform legislation, he was the author of a provision intending to protect children from computer pornography by making it illegal to send indecent material to a child or display it on computer screens where children can access it.

He has been, as well, a leader in protecting American businesses from takeovers by foreign firms in the area of national security. Known as the Exon-Florio law, passed in 1988, this act gave the President authority to investigate and stop foreign takeovers of American companies in the case where the takeover would threaten U.S. national security.

JIM EXON is rock solid. This year he and his wife, Patricia, will have celebrated their 53rd wedding anniversary, which goes to show that you can still stay married to your first wife a long, long time. He returns to Nebraska to join his three children, Steve, Pam, and Candy, along with his eight grandchildren, a very wealthy man he is indeed—eight grandchildren.

In citing his reasons for retirement, JIM EXON laments recent trends in American politics, such as the "vicious polarization of the electorate," the erosion of the art of honest compromise as the essence of the Democratic process, and the negative attack ads dominating current political campaigns. As he departs, I hope that he will be a continuing force against these trends and that he, at least, will help inculcate in the new men and women who are entering politics in Nebraska the same values of fairness; good humor; practical, independent sense—common sense—and honest achievement that have so clearly emphasized and characterized his own career.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The absence of a quorum has been suggested. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR DAVID PRYOR

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this morning to pay

tribute to my distinguished retiring colleague, DAVID PRYOR.

When I think about Congress suffering—and I use the term "suffering" advisedly—the largest number of retirees in 100 years, I have a tendency to wax eloquent about my own personal beliefs as to why that is happening. There are 13 Senators who have chosen to leave voluntarily this year. Among them are some of the very best.

I have confessed on occasion when I didn't think it would hurt me politically to the fact that I am not a terribly effective legislator because I have a very difficult time compromising. I have strong beliefs, and sometimes compromise is just out of the question for me. And, yet, we all know that 535 Members of the Congress cannot each have his or her own way on every issue.

But the people who are retiring are essentially people who are very good legislators because they understand the art of politics; the necessity for compromise. And I call them "bridge builders"—because they don't let stand between them differences in philosophies and personalities. As the U.S. Senate has become more ideological and more entrenched in hard core ideas, where name calling somehow or other has become the substitute for ideas, we need bridge builders.

DAVID PRYOR was born in Camden, Ouachita County, AR, in 1934 to very devoted parents. All of DAVID's life manifest in his personality and character is the unexcelled upbringing he enjoyed.

He graduated from the University of Arkansas Law School in 1964 with an LLB degree, went home to his native Camden and established a newspaper called the Ouachita Citizen that he operated for 4 years. During that period of time he was also elected to the Arkansas State legislature, to the House of Representatives, for three terms—1960, 1962, and 1964.

I remember—I guess it was 1966—when DAVID was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. It was in 1968 that I met him for the first time, and that was just one of those typical political handshakes. The Democratic Party was having a forum in Little Rock. I had the itch to run for Governor in 1968. Luckily for me I chose not to do it that year. But DAVID PRYOR spoke at this meeting in Little Rock in 1968. And I was absolutely awe-stricken—he was good looking, articulate, and had some very good ideas. And I thought how wonderful it must be to serve in the House of Representatives and be able to come here and say these things for this giant crowd here this evening. And it only piqued my interest in running for office that much more.

So besides my father, who actually encouraged me to go into politics when I was a child, DAVID was my next inspiration because of that evening in Little Rock in 1968.

After losing a race for the Senate in 1972, he came back in 1974 and ran for Governor and won handily, and served

our State for 4 years. That was two terms, then, 2-year terms. He served our State admirably.

He became then, and has remained ever since, the most popular politician in Arkansas by far. I said the other evening, and I have said it many times, it pains me to say that. The thing that makes it bearable is I know it is true. Everybody in our State, virtually everybody, loves DAVID PRYOR, as does virtually every Member of the U.S. Senate.

In all of the years that DAVID has been in politics, and certainly all the years he has been in Congress, I have never heard anybody accuse him of having Potomac fever, and the reason he is easily the most popular politician in Arkansas is because he has never lost that common touch of letting people know that he is concerned about them. He never looks past you to see who is next in line. You get his undivided attention, no matter how crazy the idea might be. DAVID PRYOR has always been a listener.

I read a book one time called, "Lee, The Last Years." It is the story of Robert E. Lee after the war, written by a man named Charles Bracelen Flood. And the most poignant part of the book was a description of Lee after he surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. He then got on his horse Traveller and, with a small entourage of Confederate officers and men, started on roughly a 5-day trek from Appomattox Courthouse to Richmond, where a home had been prepared for him.

As they went through various southern villages and communities, huge crowds lined the streets awaiting for hours the arrival of Lee and his entourage—rebel yells, unbelievable cheers, of people for this losing General.

About the third day of this trek toward Richmond, Lee stopped at a point where a battle had been fought and there were still rotting corpses on the battlefield. He got off his horse and he waved his arm toward the battlefield and he said, "This could have been avoided." And the rest of what he said I paraphrase, but it was essentially this: At the time when this Nation needed men of courage and vision and restraint, we had politicians who saw that it was to their advantage to foment the flames of war. And this is the result.

James Fallows has written a book called "Breaking the News: How the Media Undermines American Democracy." It is a very interesting and almost unassailable hypothesis, in this book. But I can tell you, democracy always hangs by a thread. And here we have a man like DAVID PRYOR, who has all the qualities that Robert E. Lee described, and more: tenacious, determined on what he believes, intellect, the character to stick with his ideas in a totally honest way, and vision about where the country ought to be heading. These are remarkable traits to be wrapped up in one man, and rare and unusual in the U.S. Congress. So, at a

time when democracy perhaps hangs by a more slender thread than ever, losing a man like DAVID PRYOR, who possesses those qualities, is just short of disastrous for the country and certainly, to me, as a friend and colleague.

In the years I have served with DAVID, almost 18 years, now, I have never seen him duck a tough vote, though there have been plenty of opportunities. He has always been able and willing to take the heat in order to cast those votes.

When DAVID came to the Senate he had been Governor 4 years, but we really did not know each other. We knew each other politically, and we would see each other at political events, and we were friends. But it was only after he came to the Senate that we developed a friendship in the truest meaning of the word. So, I have been close to him in a lot of his travail. I can tell you, I do not know of very many people who have suffered in their personal life as much as DAVID—really, terribly traumatic things. Despite all of that, including the current trauma, I have never seen him down. I have never seen him look for sympathy or indicate that he was looking for sympathy.

I remember when my wife, Betty—and I do not mind saying this now, because it was about 15 years ago—was diagnosed with cancer. It was a dicey situation. She was going to be operated on at Georgetown at 8:30 in the morning. I got there at 8, and DAVID was already there. I guess that morning was the sealing of this, what will now be a lifelong friendship.

During his entire adult life since he graduated law school, he and Barbara have undergone these traumatic experiences together. She has been by his side. I have watched her. I have watched her strength. I have watched her values sustain her and DAVID both. And in all fairness, she has never been shy about expressing her thoughts and ideas with her beloved husband, DAVID.

Then, of course, it has been a love affair. I know that DAVID never loved anybody else from the day he set eyes on Barbara Lunsford and they have both been tremendous parents to three very fine sons—they are so proud of them, and justifiably.

While I am senior by 4 years to DAVID PRYOR in the U.S. Senate, he has been my mentor, my consultant, and my best friend. I will miss him and I wish him Godspeed and good luck.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I had the pleasure earlier today of listening to

the distinguished Senator from Connecticut talk about the Family Leave Act. He talked in very laudatory terms of the many positive changes that it has brought about.

Mr. President, I also want to voice a positive response to the fact that employers do provide family leave, a time to be with their family and loved ones at a time that is important, during medical emergencies. But, Mr. President, I think it would be a shame to allow the subject to pass without observing what the real issue was.

The real issue in the Family and Medical Leave Act was not that people should have time with their families. Of course they should. Many employers provided that before the act was in place. Certainly I believe, within the possibilities of jobs—not all jobs have flexibility—but within the possibilities of the jobs involved, that certainly should be the case in terms of company policy.

But, Mr. President, with all due respect to the distinguished Senator from Connecticut, he just doesn't get it. One of the tragedies, I think, of our system as it developed is that our legislative bodies are populated by people who have not had the experience of real work in the private sector. They have not had an opportunity to be involved in business and understand what is involved when you have an essential function that has to be done and someone is not there.

Perhaps most of all, Mr. President, many, unfortunately, do not understand what they have done to our country in the last few years by flooding it, inundating it with regulations and rules and laws.

I think of it in terms of the company that I used to work for. When I was corporate counsel, it was myself and a part-time assistant secretary. Right now, that same function, with similar responsibilities, is composed of four full-time attorneys, three legal assistants, and a backup division of more than 120 people. Do they do a better job than I did? Yes; I suspect they do.

But, Mr. President, what has happened is an explosion of regulation. The problem is not whether or not people should have family medical leave. The problem is whether or not the Federal Government ought to dictate the minute details of how jobs are run in this country, how things operate in this country.

The question is not whether or not we have an economy that is flexible and variable or whether or not we divert the resources of this country to micromanage things from the top; the question, with all due respect to those who worked so hard on that piece of legislation, is not whether or not you have family or medical leave. Of course you ought to have it. The question is whether or not you have a Government, a Federal Government, that sees its responsibility as one of centralizing control of the Nation, one of mandating and dictating the details of how we live our daily lives.