

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR BOB  
KERREY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last January we were told that Senator BOB KERREY was going to retire from the Senate this year. I remember saying to him that I wished it were not so, but knowing BOB as well as I did, I understood the reasons.

BOB KERREY has been an invaluable Member of this body. He has advocated for improvements in education. He has worked in a bipartisan way to reform Medicare and has been willing to speak up about the things necessary to reform it. He has helped to improve the lives of farmers in Nebraska. And he has been a forceful voice on America's role throughout the world.

But I understand and respect his desire to fulfill those spiritual needs that are often ignored in politics and to focus more on his personal and family life. As a proud father and grandfather, I, too, want to spend time with family. So we can all respect and appreciate his decision, though we are going to miss his candor, his wit, and his strong advocacy for families and children in the Senate. I will miss one who was willing to stand up on the most explosive issues of our time and speak out forthrightly, whether popular or not.

He served this country well as a member of the elite Navy Seals in Vietnam, was Governor of Nebraska, and a U.S. Senator for two terms.

I once heard him refer to it modestly as "whatever," but the "whatever" was the Congressional Medal of Honor he earned for service in Vietnam. It is a testament to his strength in the face of adversity and intense love he has for this country. It is a call he brought with him to the Senate.

A photograph I took once sticks in my mind. It was of BOB KERREY at the Inaugural, standing—suit, tie, overcoat, hat—and around his neck was something that very few Americans ever got to wear, the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is not something about which any of us ever heard BOB brag. But it has been my experience that people who win the Congressional Medal of Honor are really never the people who do brag.

I thought that here, in these extraordinary times of our Nation's history, every 4 years the Inauguration of a President, what BOB was saying was: I am standing up as an American saying how proud we are of this democracy as we go forward with our form of government—a government and a country he risked his life to defend.

What has he accomplished at this short time? Vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence where he protected and defended our national security interests and fought for issues from encryption to better intelligence. As cochairman of the IRS restructuring committee, BOB spearheaded reform legislation designed to improve the relationships between taxpayers and the IRS, something that affects every single American. On the

Agriculture Committee, he and I fought hard to protect family farmers in our Nation. Even if we had regional differences which might divide us, his advocacy was always so strong, you had to listen.

His next move is north, actually getting a little closer to my home, where he is going to become president of the New School University in New York. The New School has a reputation for intellectual freedom and innovation, the belief that education can be used as a tool to produce positive changes in society. There cannot be a better leader for the New School. This really is a case where the Senate's loss is the New School's gain.

I first met BOB KERREY when he was running for the Senate and I went out to Nebraska as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee to campaign for him along with the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. Jim Exon. When we went out—BOB KERREY probably won't mind me mentioning this—we were using Willie Nelson's airplane. BOB KERREY was the former Governor of Nebraska, extremely popular, well known, running for the U.S. Senate; Jim Exon, then the senior Senator of Nebraska, former Governor; and of course in farm country, I was there wearing my hat as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

We flew up to a small town in Nebraska in Willie Nelson's airplane. The tail insignia was well known. When we got off that airplane, a huge crowd was gathered. We thought: Boy, this is it: Former Governor KERREY, Senator Jim Exon, Chairman PATRICK LEAHY. Man, no wonder they turned out.

As we got off the plane, they kept looking and kept looking, until finally it was obvious we were all off the plane. There was a look of disappointment in the crowd. Finally, somebody expressed the disappointment: Where's Willie Nelson? I thought you guys had Willie Nelson with you.

But, notwithstanding the fact that I was partially responsible for disappointing the crowd, BOB KERREY's abilities and brilliance were so well known in Nebraska that he survived my campaigning for him and he won that seat resoundingly and served his second term. We have been friends ever since.

I admire him as I have admired few people in my public career. I hate to see him go.

As I said, I was saddened to learn that BOB KERREY was retiring from the Senate this year. BOB KERREY has been an invaluable Member of this body, advocating for improvements in education, working to reform Medicare, and helping to improve the lives of farmers in Nebraska. But I understand and respect his desire to fulfill spiritual needs that are often ignored in politics and to focus more on his personal and family life. As a proud father and grandfather, I know what it's like to long to spend time with family. We can all respect and appreciate his deci-

sion, though we will miss his candor, his wit, and his strong advocacy for families and children in the Senate.

BOB KERREY has served his country well as a member of the elite Navy SEALs in Vietnam, as Governor of Nebraska, and as a United States Senator for two terms. Though I once heard him refer to it modestly as "whatever," the Congressional Medal of Honor he earned for service in Vietnam is a testament to his strength in the face of adversity and an intense love for this country, qualities he has brought with him to the Senate.

In this body, he has accomplished a great deal in a short time. As the vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, BOB continued to protect and defend our national security interests, fighting for strong encryption measures. As a co-chairman of the IRS Restructuring Committee, BOB spearheaded reform legislation designed to improve the relationship between taxpayers and the IRS. On the Agriculture Committee, BOB and I fought hard together to protect family farmers in our Nation. Though regional differences sometimes divided us, I respected BOB's strong advocacy for farmers in Nebraska.

BOB's next move is north, where he will plan to become president of New School University in New York. The New School has a reputation for intellectual freedom, innovation and the belief that education can be used as a tool to produce positive changes in society. I could not think of a better leader for the New School. The Senate's loss is their gain.

SENATOR CHUCK ROBB

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier today Senator CHUCK ROBB of Virginia spoke on this floor. I worked with him. I have admired him since he came to the Senate over 12 years ago. I talked with this former marine at the time my own son joined the Marine Corps and was touched that he always asked for progress reports on his career in the Marines.

He is only the fourth person from the State of Virginia to serve as both Governor and U.S. Senator, and he came to Washington ready to build on a distinguished career in public service. In 1961, he joined the Marines as an infantry company commander in Vietnam, saw combat, and was in harm's way time and time again. He demonstrated the kind of determination and stamina that would characterize his political career. In Vietnam, people depended on his leadership for their life, literally. He then served Virginia as Lieutenant Governor and Governor before being elected to the U.S. Senate. In fact, it is fair to say his tenure as Governor laid the basis for Virginia to become such a leader today in the high-tech industry.

During his time here in Washington, he has shown his dedication and concern for our men and women in the military, fighting for a strong defense

while advocating fiscal responsibility. He has been a proponent for improvement in our Nation's public schools, fighting for more teachers, increased school construction, and school safety. He has also been a champion against discrimination. He led the fight to end injustice to African American farmers who faced discrimination by the Agriculture Department and voted against moves to end affirmative action programs by the Federal Government. In all these things, he showed the same dedication to his country in a legislative position that he had shown to his State in his executive position as Governor, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, Foreign Relations and Finance Committees, and the Joint Economic Committee and Select Committee on Intelligence. He served this body, the Senate, so well, and in turn our whole Nation.

I think of the tough political battles he has faced. I think of the difficult votes during his time in office, how he had to balance the interests of his State with the well-being of the Nation. But I can remember so many times on this floor when a vote would come up where, politically, CHUCK ROBB could have ducked and ran and voted a different way. He did not, any more than he would have when he was in combat in Vietnam. He would stay on the floor, he would state his position, and you would see the marine; you would see the character; you would see the steel. He would stand up and do what his conscience told him was the right thing.

Mr. President, I pay tribute to a man I have worked with and admired since he came to the Senate over twelve years ago. As only the fourth person from the state of Virginia to serve as both Governor and U.S. Senator CHUCK ROBB came to Washington ready to build on a distinguished career in public service. Beginning in 1961 when he joined the Marines, and through his days as an infantry company commander in Vietnam, CHUCK ROBB demonstrated the kind of determination and stamina that would characterize his political career. He later served Virginia as Lieutenant Governor and Governor before being elected to the United States Senate.

During his time here in Washington he has shown his dedication and concern for our men and women in the military, fighting for a strong defense while advocating fiscal responsibility. He has been a proponent for improving our nation's public schools, fighting for more teachers, increased school construction and school safety. He has also been a champion in the battle to end discrimination. He led the fight to bring justice to African American farmers who had faced discrimination by the Agriculture Department, and he voted against a move to end affirmative action programs by the federal government. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, Foreign Relations, Finance Committee, the

Joint Economic Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence he has served the Senate well.

Senator ROBB has faced several tough political battles and cast many difficult votes during his time in office—all the while he has been determined to balance the interests of his state with the well-being of the nation.

It has been an honor and privilege to work with him over the last years. I know he is going to be sorely missed by our colleagues in the Senate.

I will miss having the chance to get advice and encouragement from him on the Senate floor, but I know I will still have that available to me throughout the remaining years of my Senate career.

Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation now, as we go down to these waning hours and we hear the choral group downstairs practicing Christmas carols?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I would like to advise the Senator from Vermont that earlier the Senate had been conducting morning business. That order has expired.

Mr. LEAHY. Is my understanding correct, though, that I am still able to maintain the floor without slowing down the vital business of the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. LEAHY. Am I also correct there is no particular vital business pending at the moment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At the moment, the Senator is correct.

#### WRAPPING UP THE SESSION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, you know I think the world of all my colleagues. The distinguished Chair right now is one of my best friends in the Senate and one who deserves congratulations on—actually, they didn't have to have an election in his State; he wins by so much. I love being with him, as I do my dear friend from Nevada, the deputy Democratic whip. But I hope that neither of my colleagues takes it at all personally when I say I would probably rather be at home with my family at this time of the year. But then I suspect they would, too. I hope this means we are soon to wrap things up, possibly this evening or Sunday or Monday or sometime. We seem to be in a situation where wrapping up the session is like wrapping up the Presidential election this year. I am beginning to feel a little bit like a hanging chad of some sort.

I thought of some of the other terms that have been used, but I am afraid sometime somebody might pull that out of context and I will be reminded that I will not be forgiven for what I may say because of my Irish nature.

Let us hope we can wrap it up. I say that also for the sake of the President-elect and the leadership, both Republican and Democrat, in the Senate. All of us have a lot of work to do before January 3 when the Senate comes back

into session with a number of new Senators and in a unique situation of a 50-50 Senate.

Governor Bush and former Secretary Cheney need time to work with the Republicans in the Senate and the House as they put together their administration. Of course, I hope and expect they will also be in contact with those of us on this side of the aisle. There is a lot facing this Nation, and we have to work on that.

#### VISIT TO IRELAND

I was privileged this week to spend 48 hours out of the country with some other Members of the Senate and the House accompanying President Clinton on a visit to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It was remarkable to see how people reacted to the President. He was accompanied by one of our Senators-elect, in this case the Senator-elect from New York, HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, although I think she was there more in her capacity as First Lady.

It was interesting to see the reaction of the people in Ireland, both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, both in the Catholic community and the Protestant community. The President was greeted as he should be, as a hero in Ireland because more than any President perhaps since John Fitzgerald Kennedy, he has shown a real interest in Ireland.

He has become personally and intimately involved in trying to stop the sectarian damage, carnage, killings, and murders in Northern Ireland. He sent our distinguished former colleague and former majority leader of the Senate, George Mitchell, on countless trips to Northern Ireland helping to broker the peace agreement which became known as the Good Friday accords.

Whether it was standing in the small town on the northern border of the Republic of Ireland, bordering Northern Ireland, a town of just a few thousand people but where 50,000 to 60,000 people from the whole area came and stood in the cold, the rain, and the fog for hour after hour waiting for the President and those accompanying him to arrive, and then giving him a hero's welcome and not wanting him to leave.

I saw the faces of those people. I saw the children who looked out to him with hope in their eyes. I saw the older people who said he sought to bring prosperity to this area because he helped us stop the fighting that goes back and forth across the border. He has brought hope for our children and grandchildren.

I saw the same thing in Northern Ireland in Belfast the next day where those who had been sworn enemies a few years ago were joining in meetings with the President, encouraging him to stay involved and asking him to please come back even after his Presidency. It had to be an emotional time for President Clinton, but it was very much for the people there.

I talked with several who again told me he brought hope for them and