

women, the exploitation of children or crimes against humanity or asking the Mexican Congress to ratify the Statute of Rome creating the International Criminal Court; and an agreement for the establishment of a regional delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Mexico. But they are also, first and foremost, actions that seek to guarantee that international surveillance on these issues will strengthen democracy and human rights at home.

Ladies and Gentlemen: By overcoming authoritarian rule, Mexico is leaving behind its former defensive attitude and reaching out to the world in search for a new identity, just as Spain did more than 25 years ago. But while the similarities between the Spanish and the Mexican transitions are significant, the differences are equally revealing.

Whereas Spaniards were able to come to terms with their authoritarian past, Mexicans have yet to achieve reconciliation and a common sense of purpose of its real and longstanding democratic institutions by addressing the grievances of recent past history. Whereas the Spanish people immediately experienced the tangible benefits afforded by EEC membership, through infrastructure and cohesion funds aimed at overcoming backwardness and establishing a level playing field within the Community, Mexican society has yet to fully realize the enormous advantages to be gained by establishing similar mechanisms to boost economic and social development in Mexico and by embracing the idea of a North American community. Whereas Spain was able to anchor its democratic transition in an existing European Community, Mexico must strive to build the institutions of true North American Community. And whereas Spain's entry in the EEC impinged upon Spanish sovereignty, as indeed it affected the sovereignty of all other EEC members, NAFTA, a truly Anglo-Saxon institution, left domestic politics and social policy, two fundamental attributes of sovereignty, largely untouched.

This latter point is crucial. Mexico, today, as Spain purposefully did back in the eighties, seeks supranational rules and regulations that bind and ensure its democratic transition and enhance its prosperity and ensure its democratic stability. This seems to me a more than fair trade off.

The jury is still out on Mexico's democratic consolidation. If we are to succeed, the leaders of all major political parties in Mexico must have the courage to put some of their differences aside and work together for a common purpose. But our North American partners must also show themselves willing to take on the challenge of developing a new vision for our region, one that can radically change for the better the lives of millions of people throughout Mexico, the U.S. and Canada.

If there has been a clear and consistent trait throughout the world in recent decades, it is the tendency towards integration, which in turn has resulted in stronger democratic institutions and the adherence to basic universal standards of behavior. This is not a spontaneous or natural process, even though there may be historical forces at play. Rather, it must be complemented by deliberate action. This is exactly what the government of President Fox has set out to achieve: to use foreign policy as a crowbar to open up our country and help consolidate democracy and change human rights in Mexico. Succeeding in this endeavor is not only critical for Mexico; it is an issue of central importance to the future of North America, to our hemisphere and to the rest of the international community.

Let me conclude by quoting the Spanish-British historian Charles Powell, who ends his splendid work on the history of Spain after Franco by stating—not without some

British reserve and understatement—that “it would be unfair not to acknowledge that what was achieved [by this transition] undoubtedly constitutes a cause for collective pride”.

I sincerely hope that, 26 years from now, a future historian of Mexico can express similar feelings about our transition to democracy. It is this hope that spurs many of us in government, and throughout society at large, to do everything we can to ensure that our country lives up to its present challenge. And I am sure that all of you will understand why we in Mexico wholeheartedly believe that it is a cause that our partners should also embrace.

Thank you.

THE PENSION SECURITY ACT OF 2002

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, the spectacular collapse of the Enron Corporation has broken lives, shattered dreams and shaken confidence in our financial markets and in several professions. From what we know so far, it appears that the fall of Enron involves malfeasance, misfeasance and nonfeasance on the part of very many people. There may ultimately be criminal prosecutions, civil fines, and partial restitution. It may take years to sort out all of the problems and for Congress to enact appropriate solutions.

Although the Enron investigations and lawsuits are ongoing, we have learned several lessons in the area of employee retirement security that can be addressed swiftly and responsibly. I am pleased to join my colleagues Senators TIM HUTCHINSON and TRENT LOTT in introducing the Pension Security Act of 2002. This legislation creates important new protections and rights for working Americans that give them the tools to enhance their own retirement planning and security.

The measure includes new safeguards and options to help workers preserve and enhance their retirement security, and insists on greater accountability from companies and senior corporate executives during “blackout” periods when rank-and-file workers are unable to make changes to their retirement accounts.

Under the Pension Security Act, workers would have more freedom to diversify their investments, much greater access to high quality investment advice, advance notice before blackout periods, more information about their pensions, and other tools they can use to maximize the potential of their 401(k) plans and ensure a secure retirement future.

The bill also clarifies that employers have a fiduciary responsibility for the security of workers' investments during “blackout” periods and bars senior corporate executives from selling their own stock at times when rank-and-file workers cannot make changes to their 401(k) accounts.

The bill strikes an important balance between preserving employee free choice and opportunity in the voluntary retirement savings system and protecting individuals from the wrongful acts of others. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to

join with us in enacting these important reforms.

SENATOR TED KENNEDY'S 70TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I am most honored to express my congratulations to my dear friend, Senator TED KENNEDY, as he celebrates his 70th birthday. He and I joined the Senate chamber 40 years ago, and it has been my privilege to serve alongside this great man over the years.

Senator KENNEDY has championed health insurance and education reform, defended the rights of the elderly and workers, strengthened civil rights, and protected our natural resources. He has proudly and ably carried on his family's legacy of public service.

I wish to thank Senator KENNEDY for his outstanding service to his home State of Massachusetts and to our Nation. I extend my best wishes to him for many more years of good health, memorable experiences, and continued success.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to join my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who have taken to the Senate floor to offer heartfelt tributes and best wishes to our esteemed colleague and friend, the senior Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) as he celebrates his 70th birthday. While prior commitments precluded my participation in yesterday's bipartisan tribute, I wanted to take a moment to offer my congratulations to Senator KENNEDY.

For 40 of his 70 years, TED KENNEDY has worked for the people of Massachusetts and America in the United States Senate. During that time, through hard work, consensus building and perseverance, with great wit and charm, and, on many memorable occasions, passionate oratory, TED KENNEDY has established himself as one of the most effective legislators of the 20th century and a champion for equality, opportunity, and justice for all Americans.

When I was appointed to the Senate in 1990, we were considering the Americans With Disabilities Act, one of the many landmark civil rights bills that TED KENNEDY has helped to inspire and craft, guide through Congress, and become law. For as long as I have been in public service, TED KENNEDY has been a powerful voice and an advocate for those who are most vulnerable in our Nation. On issues ranging from civil rights, voting rights, equal rights for women, equal protection for all Americans regardless gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation, Americans with disabilities, access to health care, quality education for all children, workers' rights, patients' rights, a decent minimum wage, food stamps, or equal justice for all Americans, TED KENNEDY has been at the forefront of the battles for equal opportunity for all Americans, for fairness, for justice.

In 1963, speaking on civil rights for African Americans, President Kennedy