

today is a month-long national tribute to the tremendous historical contributions of African Americans from all walks of life and professions.

I am so very proud of the rich and vibrant African-American heritage in my home State of North Carolina. Our history is full of trailblazers, including Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil, Ezell Blair, Jr., and David Richmond, known as the Greensboro Four because of their February 1960 sit-ins at a Woolworth Store counter in Greensboro, NC. Their sit-ins were the first significant event of this type, quickly gaining momentum and attention. In less than a week, the four North Carolina A&T freshmen had been joined by 1,000 other students from local high schools and universities. As the Greensboro News & Record stated earlier this month, the Greensboro sit-in "gave new life to the nation's civil rights movement and helped pave the way for its triumphs later in the decade." These individuals truly laid the foundation for the America we strive to be, where all people are given opportunity and treated fairly, regardless of their skin color.

North Carolina, with its long and proud military history, also produced 21 of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. Trained in Tuskegee, AL, these brave men made up the first African-American military flying unit in World War II. I am proud to cosponsor recently introduced legislation that authorizes the President to award a gold medal on behalf of Congress to the Tuskegee Airmen. These brave soldiers truly left their mark on history not just in battle—their great success helped pave the way for the integration of our Armed Forces in 1948.

North Carolina also has made great strides in higher education. We have 11 historically Black colleges and universities, including Shaw University in Raleigh, founded in 1865 and the oldest HBCU in the South. I was honored to give the commencement address and receive an honorary degree several years ago from Livingstone College, another outstanding historically Black college in my hometown of Salisbury. I also am so very proud that my husband Bob is serving as chairman of a \$50 million fundraising campaign at Bennett College in Greensboro, one of only two historically Black women's colleges in America. Bennett College President Dr. Johnnetta Cole is a pioneer in her own right, having received 50 honorary degrees during an impressive career in academia that includes being the first African-American woman to serve as president of Spelman College. And in May 2004, Dr. Cole became the first African-American to serve as chair of the Board of United Way of America.

A short time ago Congress debated legislation to make the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a national holiday. The floor leader for that legislation was a fellow named Bob Dole. During the final debate, I had the privilege of sitting in the gallery with Coretta Scott King, as we heard Bob

deliver these words: "A nation defines itself in many ways; in the promises it makes and the programs it enacts, the dreams it enshrines, or the doors it slams shut. Thanks to Dr. King, America wrote new laws to strike down old barriers. She built bridges instead of walls . . . there is nothing partisan about justice. It is conservative as the Constitution, as liberal as Lincoln, as radical as Jefferson's sweeping assertion that all of God's creation is equal in His eyes." I could not agree more.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise again, as I have earlier this month, to honor February as Black History Month. Each February since 1926, we have recognized the contributions of Black Americans to the Nation.

This is no accident; February is a significant month in Black American history. Abolitionist Frederick Douglass, President Abraham Lincoln, and scholar and civil rights leader W.E.B. DuBois were born in the month of February. The 15th amendment to the Constitution was ratified 132 years ago this month, preventing race discrimination in the right to vote. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in February in New York City. February 1 was the 45th anniversary of the Greensboro Four's historic sit-in. And on February 25, 1870, this body welcomed its first Black senator, Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi.

In this important month, I have wanted to celebrate some of the contributions made by Black Americans in my home State of Oregon. Since Marcus Lopez, who sailed with Captain Robert Gray in 1788, became the first person of African descent known to set foot in Oregon, a great many Black Americans have helped shape the history of my State. Throughout this month, I have come to the floor to highlight some of their stories. Today, on the last day of Black History Month, I have come to honor one more.

Louis A. Southworth was a blacksmith, fiddler, and farmer. Though a combination of his contagious personality, appealing fiddle playing, and an unwavering devotion to civic duty, he became one of Oregon's most respected and well-liked citizens of his time.

Born into slavery in Tennessee in 1830, he later moved with his family to Oregon in 1851. Although slavery was officially banned in Oregon, it was still practiced with some frequency. While working in the gold mines, Southworth soon found that people greatly enjoyed his musical talents. He was able to parlay his talents on a fiddle into an extra source of income, and at age 28, bought his freedom for \$1,000. The phrase "fiddling for freedom" soon caught on, and Louis Southworth become some what of a local hero.

In 1879, he moved with his wife and adopted son to the south bank of the Alsea River. Southworth, with his family and his fiddle, soon won over this small community. He worked as a farmer, and ferried cargo and passengers across the bay to town.

As more people began to move into the community, he donated some of his land to build a local school house and later served as chair of the school board. Along with his new life came a renewed sense of civic duty. Southworth became a dedicated political activist. During the elections of 1890, a strong storm ravaged his small town. Unafraid of the weather, Louis Southworth rigged two oil drums to his boat for buoyancy and rowed across the bay to the polling place. As it turns out, he was the only person to cast a vote in Waldport that day.

Despite the chaotic times in which he lived, Louis Southworth was embraced by his community. Before he died in 1917, his neighbors raised the \$300 needed to pay off his mortgage in Corvallis, OR.

Louis Southworth provides one example of a man triumphing over seemingly insurmountable odds. As a Black man living in troubled times, his personality, compassion, work ethic, talents, generosity, and devotion to the community service allowed him to become a respected leader. He was accepted by many of his peers, of all races, religions, and ethnic backgrounds, long before this was common or expected. His legacy of service and kindness is one that lives on today, and one that should be remembered for years to come. On this last day of Black History Month, I believe it is only right to celebrate an Oregonian like Louis Southworth, whose contributions to race relations in Oregon, while great, have not yet received the attention they deserve.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL MATTHEW REED SMITH, USMC

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I rise to speak on the recent passing of Corporal Matthew Reed Smith of the United States Marine Corps. Corporal Smith was a native of West Valley City, UT, who died in a helicopter crash near the town of Rutbah, Iraq. Corporal Smith was one of 29 Marines and one Navy sailor who lost their lives in that fateful accident. Today, I know the Senate will join me in honoring their memory as heroes who died in performance of their duty. The sacrifice of these brave servicemen will be remembered forever.

Corporal Smith, during his younger years, often dreamed of being in the Armed Forces. I have been told that as a child he would play make-believe with his brothers on the hill in front of their home and that he always insisted on being the "Marine." Nicknamed the "Three Musketeers" by their mother, Corporal Smith and his two brothers grew up doing the things they loved most, camping, hunting, wrestling, and riding their motorbikes in the mountains.

Corporal Smith joined the Marines because "they were the first ones in there." As a Marine, he fought bravely to expel the insurgents from the city of

Fallujah. There were times during the fighting when he could hear the bullets whistling past his head. His best friend lost an arm and a leg in the Battle for Fallujah.

Being unable to obtain leave in order to attend the wedding of his brother last March, members of his family made a life-size cutout of Corporal Smith and moved it around the dance floor as the night progressed. On learning of Corporal Smith's death, his family placed the cutout in the living room of their home. That silhouette of Corporal Smith, dressed sharply in his Marine uniform, today remains in our hearts as a symbol that he served his country with honor and courage.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit a website created to honor him. I was struck by the number of comments and sentiments that clearly showed that Corporal Smith was a true friend and loved by all who knew him. In one particularly moving tribute, a fellow mourner wrote that he could not imagine Corporal Smith departing this life "in any other way than selflessly serving others."

Mr. President, it is a privilege to learn about the extraordinary life of such a man.

SUSPENSION OF RUSSIA FROM THE G8

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my good friend Senator MCCAIN, to speak about a resolution that is of great importance to the cause of democracy which we have devoted America to advance at home and around the world. In November 2003 Senator MCCAIN and I were moved by Russia's failure to adhere to democratic principles to submit a resolution to hold Russia accountable for the commitments Moscow made when first invited to participate in what became known as the G8. Since then, the situation in Russia has deteriorated. I am particularly pleased that Senators BAYH, BURNS, CHAMBLISS, SMITH, and DURBIN have joined as original co-sponsors of this resolution indicating the increasing Senatorial concern over the accelerating erosion of democratic and economic freedom in Russia. As President Bush returns from his meeting with President Putin at the summit in Bratislava, we call once again on the President of the United States and the Secretary of State to work with our partners in the G7 to condition Russia's continued participation in the G8 on Russia's compliance with basic standards of democracy and rule of law.

We have a real stake in Russia's adherence to democratic norms because our commitment to Russia's transition toward democracy is critical to secure a peaceful future with Russia. The G7 nations are highly industrialized countries bound together by fundamental principles of democracy, rule of law, a free market system, and respect for human rights.

The actions of President Putin over the past few years have raised serious concerns about Russia's commitment to these principles. There is a long list of well-documented antidemocratic developments in Russia. The Putin administration has limited freedom of expression in Russia by seizing independent media organizations and suppressing the activities of independent journalists, religious organizations, and nongovernmental organizations that are all integral components of a healthy civil society. The Russian government's dismantling of Yukos and the arrest of its founder Mikhail Khodorkovsky 16 months ago raised serious doubts about Russia's commitment to free market principles and rule of law as well as respect for property and shareholder rights. The Federal Security Services, FSB, play a strong role in Russia's power structures in a manner reminiscent of the KGB in the old regime. President Putin's support for the first fraudulent results in the Ukrainian presidential elections last year exhibited disregard for basic democratic principles. Fortunately, a democratic outcome prevailed in a new vote and Yushchenko's victory—a very positive development for Ukraine's and Russia's democrats.

We were all moved by the horrific attack on the schoolchildren and families of Beslan school last September. There can be no justification for such brutal acts and we condemn them with every fiber of our soul. Our hearts and sympathy go out to the families of these victims as they continue to cope with the loss of their loved ones. The United States condemns terrorism in all forms. But the tragedy of the Beslan school should not be used by President Putin to retreat from democratic reforms. In the wake of the Beslan crisis, President Putin abolished the popular election of regional governors in favor of presidential appointees. These changes to the Russian political system enhance the power of the executive branch, while reducing the checks and balances that make democracies work. As former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "We understand the need to fight against terrorism . . . but in an attempt to go after terrorists I think one has to strike a proper balance to make sure that you don't move in a direction that takes you away from the democratic reforms or the democratic process."

Allowing Russia to continue its involvement in the G8 and to host the 2006 G8 Summit while continuing to undermine democracy makes mockery of the very principles that bind the G8 countries together. This resolution is not anti-Russian; it is a strong show of support for Russia's democrats who have long urged the United States to not turn a blind eye to undemocratic developments in Russia. Sharing a deeply personal moment from his time in Soviet Gulag, Natan Sharansky recently told a group of Senators how deeply supported he felt when Presi-

dent Reagan gave his famous "evil empire" speech that honestly addressed the oppression of the Soviet system. Since then Russia has come a long way, but we must speak openly in the face of the backsliding we are seeing.

As Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently said, "The real deepening of our relations can only take place on the basis of common values." To do otherwise would be to shirk our responsibilities as a leader of the democratic world. And as President Bush said so eloquently in his inaugural and State of the Union addresses, America's security is advanced by the advancement of freedom. This resolution puts those sentiments into concrete action and I urge my fellow Senators to support it.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

In December of 2004, a gay man was attacked outside of his Kansas City home by two unknown assailants. Floyd Elliot reported to authorities that two men held him down, cut him with a knife, and used the knife to burn letters into his skin. It looks as if the assailants were attempting to "brand" a homosexual slur onto the victim's chest. The attack is being investigated as a hate crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HARRY T. CORBETT

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today I would like to commend Mr. Harry T. Corbett, Postmaster of the Wentzville Post Office, for his 38-year tenure with the United States Postal Service. Mr. Corbett will retire from the U.S. Postal Service on March 3, 2005. Mr. Corbett began his career with the Postal Service in March of 1967 as a substitute city carrier for the Saint Ann, Missouri Post Office. In 1980, he was named Postmaster of the Wentzville Post Office.

In the 38 years between being a substitute city carrier and Postmaster, Mr. Corbett held several positions within the postal system. In 1968, he