

must take comfort in knowing that the final act of their beloved was a noble one—that of remembering those martyrs whom Stalin and his henchmen sought to erase from Poland and, indeed, from history.

As Stanislaw Kot, Poland's wartime Ambassador to Moscow, said, "People are not like steam; they cannot evaporate." He was right and it is written, "Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!" In a haunting twist of fate, a hungry wolf in the Russian winter would scratch at the snow and uncover the hastily buried bones of Poland's best and brightest. And the truth about this unspeakable crime would one day be known.

We have come a long way—a very long way—from the time when this atrocity was falsely presented as a Nazi crime and from the time when the names of the dead could only be circulated in communist Poland in the form of samizdat publications and whispered around kitchen tables.

Nevertheless, there is still more that must be done to set the record straight. This involves insuring that all the evidence relating to the execution sites, the executioners' identities, the motives for the crime, and the fate of so many Polish families who vanished on the Siberian steppe are publicly available. We must ensure that the fullness of the truth is uncovered and shared for its own sake and for closure. To that end, I welcome recent news of the Kremlin's release of still more documents relating to the massacre.

Further, I believe that finally coming to terms with Katyn is a necessary precondition for a durable Polish-Russian rapprochement, which is itself good insurance for maintaining a Europe, whole, free, and at peace.

Next week Presidents Komorowski and Medvedev will meet before the mass graves at Katyn and, I trust, will continue a dialogue of healing between two great nations that have suffered so much from the elevation of an ideology over a people. I wish them well in their talks and ongoing mission of reconciliation and believe that the only lasting balm for this wound lies in the heart and not in a courtroom or even a legislature.

This is not to say that charges or claims should not be pursued, but to recognize that, in many cases, such actions will fall short and offer little by way of consolation.

It would be most unfortunate for the memory of Katyn to be debased by ideologues of any ilk who would usurp this sacred memory for partisan projects. For too long the truth about Katyn was denied by those on the left who turned a blind eye to the reality of communism and many on the right seemed to view Katyn as just another issue to be exploited in the struggle of ideologies. People and their memory are an end, in and of themselves, and must never be used as a means to advance even a just cause. The only de-

cent relationship to them is that of love and remembrance—our dignity and theirs demands nothing less.

My sincere hope is that Poland and Russia can do better than some countries that have fought bitter diplomatic battles and enacted laws to force or deny recognition of historic crimes. By honestly evaluating a shared past of suffering, Poles and Russians have a real opportunity to build a shared future of friendship and prosperity.

Poland is now free and her traditions support the forgiveness that offers a path out of the valley of this shadow of death. In so many ways, Poland is, and must remain, a light to those nearby who still live in the darkness of oppression and lies.

As we continue to ponder the devastation of last year's catastrophe, I would like to close by putting a couple faces on our sadness; those of Mariusz Handzlik and Andrzej Przewoznik, who both died in last year's crash.

Mariusz was a diplomat and father of three. He was well known and well liked in Washington from the years he spent assigned to the Embassy of Poland. In 2000, he played a fateful game of chess with Polish war hero and Righteous Gentile Jan Karski who narrowly escaped "liquidation" at Katyn. Karski would die in a Washington hospital and Handzlik in a gloomy Russian forest.

Andrzej was a historian, a husband, and father of two. He was the principle organizer behind the conference I cohosted as Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission last year at the Library of Congress to mark the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Forest Massacre. Andrzej hoped to spend time at our National Archives sifting through the papers of the Madden Committee and other relevant U.S. Government documents on Katyn.

The memories of Mariusz, Andrzej, and so many other truly exceptional people on that doomed flight offer much by way of virtue and accomplishment that will inspire Poles for generations to come. Let us take comfort in the truth that is, at last, known and bask in the warmth of heroic memories and do this together with our Polish friends who are second to no one in their love of freedom.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE CHAHINIAN

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the good works of a member of my staff who is leaving. Michael Chahinian has served with the Alabama congressional delegation for over 7 years. The first 5 were with Congressman ADERHOLT, and the past 2 have been on my staff.

Michael graduated from Cornell University several years ago with a degree in government and East Asian studies. While at Cornell he learned how to speak Mandarin Chinese. While on my staff, he learned to speak Southern English. During his time on Capitol Hill he enrolled in the Naval War Col-

lege's master's degree program. Michael graduated last year with a master's in national security and strategic studies with highest distinction. His master's program helped revive a childhood dream to become a naval officer. After making application to enter Officer Candidate School, Michael learned late last year he was accepted and will report for duty in a few weeks.

Michael has worked hard on banking, finance, small business and commerce issues while a member of my staff. Most recently he was instrumental in working on the details and negotiations over our Sessions-McCaskill amendment, which would have imposed multiyear spending caps on the Federal budget. The amendment was carefully crafted to get maximum bipartisan support, and with 59 votes, it received more support than any serious budget reform in the past decade.

Michael has also been instrumental on my behalf in supporting domestic manufacturing through his active role working on trade policy in my office. While on my staff, he has helped the domestic sleeping bag industry deal with unfair competition from a loophole in one of our trade laws, known as GSP. On Congressman ADERHOLT's staff, he became known for his good work on behalf of the local sock industry, dominant in the northeastern part of our State.

In each of these situations, Michael demonstrated hard work and a dogged tenacity. Though we hate to lose him, I am confident our loss will be the Navy's gain. I wish him Godspeed.

TRIBUTE TO LAURA CAPASSO

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Laura Capasso for her hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Laura is a native of Wyoming and graduated from Kelly Walsh High School. She currently attends the University of Wyoming/Casper College Center where she is majoring in psychology. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the time she has been with us.

I thank Laura for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.

TRIBUTE TO LAURA CURRAN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Laura Curran for her hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.