

March 21, 1991

at the University of Nebraska, she began preparation for her new career which was to run a demonstration kitchen for the Grandmother's Restaurants. Unfortunately, that was not to be because she was stricken with a myotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as the Lou Gehrig's Disease and, within months after that diagnosis and after her retirement from the university, she became wheelchair bound and within less than a year she died from the disease. Eleanor Kerrey was an activist in the true sense of the word. She acted on her beliefs. She did not burn bras in protest of discrimination against women but rather she assumed she had a rightful place in the community and in the working world and she took it. She did not march in protest of social inequities but rather she opened her home to those friends of her children who were abused and neglected and had no place safe to be. She didn't rant and rave about the poor jobs prisons were doing in rehabilitating those who had committed crimes against our society, but rather she became a friend and an advocate for someone who was making the transition from the prison to the outside world. She did not preach from the Bible or talk about Christianity, she lived it every day as she expended grace and love to everyone around her. We did not know how strong her faith was until she faced death and then it became obvious. She did not argue with her children or with the people around her about her right to die in the way she wanted to. She just quietly denied any extraordinary efforts for life support and died and left this existence with great dignity. I thank Eleanor Kerrey for all that she accomplished but, more importantly, what she taught those around her. Most importantly, she shared that it is not the perceptions of other people that restrict us but our own perceptions of ourself that become the prisoners on our minds. She did not let the perceptions of other people about what women can and should be doing guide what she did, rather it was her own sense of self and her worth that told her what she should do. So today I salute my friend, my mentor and my mother, Eleanor Kerrey. And if I can do and be half of what she was, my existence will have been significant. And, by the way, Mom, I thank you for a couple of weeks for standing by me when I was wallowing around in the horse manure. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Rasmussen. Roll call.

CLERK: Quorum present, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BAACK: Any corrections to the Journal?