

A SALUTE TO A BUNCH OF LIVE DEMOCRATS

A member of the Loyal Opposition — meaning those who don't agree with anything I say, which includes about half of the inhabited earth — confided to a friend that, "the only Democrats Dick Yarbrough likes are dead Democrats." Not true. There are a lot of live Democrats I like.

Take Zell Miller, for example. I like him. He says what is on his mind. He always has. The media has a major case of the tut-tuts because he isn't saying what they want to hear. As if Zell Miller gives a quart of mule spit what the media thinks. I like that.

Sam Nunn is my favorite Democrat of all time. Numero Uno. He is smart as a whip and was a pleasure to work with. He brought great credit to our state. We have had some great senators from Georgia, but none better than Sam Nunn.

I like former Gov. Joe Frank Harris. We were fraternity brothers at the University of Georgia. He was a good guy then and he is a good guy now. Harris has as little ego as any elected official who ever lived. I like George Busbee, a hard-working governor with a great sense of humor. I like Carl Sanders and Ernest Vandiver. Both came along at just the right time, when Georgia was struggling with civil rights issues, and they got us through that tough period in better shape than Alabama or Mississippi. I like Roy Barnes. He lost an election he should have won, but he has been graceful in defeat. I particularly like the fact that he spent six months doing legal aid work before resuming his law practice.

I like Terry Coleman, the Democratic speaker of the House, and DuBose Porter, the speaker pro tem. I like former Majority Leader Larry Walker. I'm sorry he has retired from politics. Same for former Lt. Gov. Pierre Howard. I like Secretary of State Cathy Cox and her predecessor, Lewis Massey, and I wish Massey would run for public office again.

Nationally, I like Sens. John Breaux of Louisiana and Joe Lieberman of Connecticut. I particularly like Daniel Inouye, of Hawaii, because he won the Medal of Honor in World War II and didn't throw his medals away like one Democratic senator I could name.

Now, here are some live Democrats I don't like. I don't like Jimmy Carter's perpetual grandstanding. He was out of his league during his one-term presidency, yet former presidents didn't publicly undercut him as he has President Bush. One thing Carter's apologists don't mention is the mean-spirited gubernatorial campaign he ran against Carl Sanders in 1970, when he tried to out-Wallace George Wallace. Don't believe me? Look it up. Jimmy Carter either didn't mean what he said during that campaign, or he didn't have the courage of his convictions when he was elected. Either way, I don't like that.

Democrat Max Cleland had an unfortunate accident in Viet Nam when somebody dropped a grenade and he lost both legs and an arm. He has put his life back together and I greatly admire him for that. I didn't admire him as a senator. He spent more time cuddling up to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party than he did representing the people of Georgia. When Cleland was Georgia's secretary of state, he always spoke to me. When he was elected senator, he acted as if he didn't know who I was. I didn't like that.

I don't like Ted Kennedy, because he caused the death of an innocent young woman and then was a coward about admitting what he had done. Today, he waddles into the Senate and sits in moral judgment of other people. God will get him for that. I don't like former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, because he always looks as though he is about to come unhinged. I don't like people who scare me.

I could go on, but I think you get the point. There are a whole bunch of live Democrats that I like and some that I don't. I hope this revelation totally befuddles the Loyal Opposition. I would like that.