

MCCAIN to Iraq and Afghanistan. I witnessed her world knowledge and authoritative approach to foreign policy. I have seen her tireless work ethic and intelligence up close, as well as her ability to engage with colleagues across the aisle to get the job done and to meet the needs of the American people.

I will always remember one meeting in particular that we had together in Afghanistan. Senator CLINTON and I broke off from the group to go meet with a group of Afghan women from all walks of life. I was so impressed with Senator CLINTON's engagement with these women, with her genuine interest and the details of their lives, whether it was their access to health care or the education for their children. She was very engaged in the conversations despite the fact that we had traveled all night and were extremely tired.

Her caring, her compassion came across in her conversations with these women. I know these qualities—her caring, her compassion, her commitment, her extraordinary preparation and intelligence—will serve her well and will serve our country well as Secretary of State.

Today our Nation faces many pressing challenges abroad. The challenges are many, not only in Afghanistan and Iraq but security in the Middle East and the safety of the people of Israel, and the dangerous situation in Pakistan. I am encouraged by Senator CLINTON's commitment to a foreign policy and a national security strategy that is built on bipartisan consensus and executed with nonpartisan commitment and confidence. She has promised a foreign policy based on principles and pragmatism, not rigid ideology; facts and evidence, not emotion or prejudice.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of her confirmation, and I echo the suggestion of Senator MCCAIN that we get on with this as she is an extraordinary nominee and deserves our support.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Arizona and the Senator from Maine for their important comments, with which I agree. I understand the Senate is under a prior order to actually recess.

I ask unanimous consent that we allow one more speaker, the Senator from South Carolina, at which time the Senate would recess for the caucus lunches and return, I believe, at 2:15.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. KERRY. I would be happy to yield for a question.

Mr. MCCAIN. Do you think it is possible, if we can get it cleared, to perhaps have this unanimous consent vote before breaking for lunch?

Mr. KERRY. I think it is possible if the Senator can persuade three members of his caucus that they do not need to speak on this issue. If that can happen in the next 5 minutes, I believe it is possible for us to move forward.

I think the Senator's cloakroom has those names and, obviously, to protect their right to be able to speak, we need to check with them. But that is the only thing standing between our ability to confirm the nomination before the recess.

Mr. MCCAIN. I will follow up with another question for my colleague; that is, if we are unable to do it in the next few minutes, perhaps we could, for sure, during the lunch break, be ready to go at the conclusion of the lunch break.

Mr. KERRY. I think that would be terrific. Again, if all three Senators would raise this issue at the caucus, at their caucus luncheon, we ought to be able to come back and expedite the confirmation. We are prepared to vote now. We were prepared to vote yesterday. I might add, Senator LUGAR was encouraging our moving by unanimous consent yesterday. So we are a day overdue, and we are ready to proceed.

With that, I would yield such time as the Senator from South Carolina might consume.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the request is agreed to.

The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I thank the committee chairman. I want to recognize the work the committee did. I thought the hearings were very important for the country. They were well done. They were timely held. Any concerns about conflicts of interest, there will be a process in the future, if that happens to be a concern, to go through the committee. I have a lot of confidence in the committee to provide oversight.

But having said that, I have a lot of confidence in Senator CLINTON to be a good Secretary of State. We have a new President. We had a tough campaign. The campaign is over, but the wars are not. The challenges facing the country are enormous, domestically and internationally.

I think this new President deserves to have his team in place. I could not think of a better choice for Secretary of State, and he has many to choose from. So he has made his choice; the committee has acted. I do hope the Senate can act expeditiously after lunch. Everyone deserves to have their say. I respect the chairman preserving the ability of Senators to have their say.

I intend to vote for Senator CLINTON. I have had the pleasure of serving with her, traveling throughout the world. I know she understands the world; people understand her. There is no place in the world that she cannot go that people do not have, I think, a very favorable impression of her. She will help execute a foreign policy that is going to be difficult. I want it to be bipartisan where it can.

If we can get this done today, it will be good for the country. She will do an outstanding job. I have a lot of con-

fidence in the committee to make sure that any potential conflict of interests are fairly dealt with.

With that, I hope this afternoon we can do it by voice vote. But let's get it done. This country needs a Secretary of State right now, this minute, engaging the world because we have young men and women throughout the world in harm's way, and they need an advocate on the world stage.

There is no better advocate I can think of than Senator HILLARY CLINTON. She can do an outstanding job. I appreciate the chairman allowing me to speak on her behalf, and I enthusiastically will support her.

COMMUNICATION FROM SENATOR KEN SALAZAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair lays before the Senate the following communication, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 20, 2009.

Hon. JOE BIDEN,

Vice President of the United States, President of the Senate, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN: I hereby resign as United States Senator for the State of Colorado immediately, in order to undertake the responsibilities of United States Secretary of the Interior. Enclosed is a letter to the Governor of Colorado concerning the same.

Sincerely,

KEN SALAZAR,
U.S. Senator.

RECESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:52 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CARDIN.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON TO BE SEC- RETARY OF STATE—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. May I ask how much time remains with respect to the Clinton nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 57 minutes on the majority and 76 minutes on the Republican side.

Mr. KERRY. It is my understanding the Senator from South Carolina wishes to speak.

We have had some discussion with a few of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I understand there are two or three folks who want to speak, at which point I am prepared to move forward immediately to a vote on this nomination. That is our current plan, unless somebody else had a reason they wanted to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, the Senator is correct. I believe there are a few Republicans who wish to make comments, and I believe everyone is agreeable to move directly to the vote.

Senator CLINTON is uniquely and highly qualified for the job of Secretary of State. She has been very open and forthright in her answers to questions at the committee hearings and to my questions asked in private conversations and in the dozens of questions I submitted to her for written response. I believe she honestly wants what is best for the Nation. I will do my best to support her in that endeavor.

As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I voted to send her nomination to the full Senate because I believe she has earned the right to an up-or-down vote. Senator CLINTON will be confirmed today. There is not much doubt about that. She will be sworn in and, when she is, she will have my prayers for her success. At the committee level, I said she not only had the potential to be a good Secretary of State but a great Secretary of State. But her success will be determined by more than just her considerable intellect and experience. It will also be determined by the policies she pursues. This is one area that concerns me.

Based on her testimony, her answers to questions and her public statements, I believe she will take our foreign policy in a direction that erodes our national independence and surrenders sovereignty to international powers. I am deeply concerned that she will take aim at decades-old policies intended to protect the sanctity of life. These policies ensure that our foreign assistance dollars do not fund abortion and are not used to lobby foreign nations to repeal laws that protect unborn children. The United States is certainly an economic, political, and military superpower. But we have also strived to be more, to be a moral superpower. Our unwavering adherence to principles of freedom and human dignity are what truly set us apart. These pro-life regulations contribute to that moral leadership.

Some will argue that we should expect these policies from Senator CLINTON, given that President Obama has very strong views supporting unrestricted abortion. I understand that. To some degree, I believe he should be allowed to surround himself with individuals who share his views, even when they are misguided. Within reason, I may even support a nominee who has certain views I disagree with. I do not plan to slow up this nomination, but I find it difficult to support a nominee who I know will pursue policies so contrary to American sovereignty and the dignity of the human person. I will continue to try to persuade Secretary of State CLINTON and President Obama to modify their positions. That obvi-

ously will not happen before the vote today.

One matter I had hoped would be resolved before the vote today is the Clinton Foundation and its initiatives. I urged Senator CLINTON at the hearing, as others did, to do whatever she could to eliminate any doubt about the foundation's fundraising and a potential conflict of interest with foreign nations. I believe this problem can be very easily fixed, if the foundation agrees to refuse all foreign donations and fully discloses all contributions on line immediately, as long as Senator CLINTON is Secretary of State. To date, Senator CLINTON has not agreed.

Let's be clear. Senator CLINTON does not have to provide this disclosure to be confirmed. She already has the votes. As far as I know, the law does not require this disclosure. In fairness, the foundation plans to provide disclosure far beyond what is required legally, but we are in new waters today, the first time the spouse of a former President is stepping into such an important role. In a world where bribes, kickbacks, and pay-to-play are too often the normal way of doing business, the United States must stand apart. As President Obama said yesterday, those of us who manage the public's dollar will be held to account. We must do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government. That is why I believe additional steps should be taken to eliminate this potential conflict. This will help Senator CLINTON be a Secretary of State who is above reproach. It is essential that our Secretary be seen as treating nations fairly, and I have every belief that Senator CLINTON can be a fair Secretary of State. But it is not enough that we treat other nations fairly. They must know that they are being treated fairly. If there is suspicion that certain nations or international players are gaining advantage by virtue of contributions to the Clinton Foundation or its initiatives, that will compromise our new Secretary's effectiveness. This is why I believe only full and immediate public disclosure and refusal of all foreign donations is the only solution.

The memorandum of understanding signed by the foundation leaves a lot of discretion to Senator CLINTON. During her confirmation hearings, Senator LUGAR presented a request for more acceptable disclosures, and Senator KERRY, as chairman, supported these recommendations. Unfortunately, Senator CLINTON has not agreed to follow even these modest recommendations. For these reasons, I will be voting against the nomination today. But I will do so with nothing but sincere hope and goodwill toward our new Secretary of State and prayer for her success, as she takes the helm of the State Department.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his comments and for the concerns he has expressed which I think I have addressed earlier in my opening comments and which Senator LUGAR also has addressed.

It is my understanding that there was one other Senator who wished to speak.

I suggest the absence of a quorum, with the understanding, as before, that time will be charged against both sides equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, Senator VITTER wanted to speak. I know he was scheduled for later, but it would be great if he was able to get down here. We have no other Members on our side who want to speak, so we could proceed to an immediate vote and hopefully do it by consent which would expedite matters here and make it simpler for colleagues. I hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will cooperate with us.

In the meantime, I yield such time as the Senator from New York may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank Senator KERRY for his leadership on this issue. We look forward to continued leadership on many different issues from Senator KERRY.

I rise in favor of HILLARY CLINTON's nomination to be Secretary of State. It has been said: HILLARY CLINTON is the ideal candidate, particularly during these troubled times, for Secretary of State. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the cooperation we are getting so that we can move this resolution quickly. These are difficult times. Yesterday our country entered a new era in its relationship with the rest of the world. President Obama laid out a daunting task to return the United States to its historic role as a moral leader of the international community and HILLARY CLINTON is exactly the right person for the job. She has studied the issues of foreign policy over the years. She has outstanding relationships with the leaders of the world. She also has that internal gyroscope that will lead her to balance the very legitimate security needs of the United States along with the need to be a moral leader. That is not easy to do. But HILLARY CLINTON has shown her ability to synthesize different parts of a difficult problem in a way that produces real results.

The country and the world need a new U.S. foreign policy, one championed by a strong and consultative leader. HILLARY CLINTON is exactly the

right person for the job. Her abilities as a prudent and effective policymaker have been proven in the dual crucibles of national scrutiny and international pressure. And through all of this time, she has demonstrated a steadiness of character, a soundness of judgment and strength that will make her an exceptional leader.

We can't wait too long. I would have hoped that we could have unanimously supported this nomination and moved it yesterday. But colleagues have the right to delay only for a short period of time. I am glad that delay is about to end. As a country, as a world, we need HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON as Secretary of State, given her intelligence, her strength, her compass, and her ability to get things done.

I urge my colleagues to move quickly. I don't want to delay this further. I remind them of her vast international experience, negotiating aid packages in Asia, pushing democratic reforms in the Soviet Bloc, promoting peace plans in Northern Ireland and Serbia. But HILLARY CLINTON will combine a fresh look at our foreign policy with lots of experience and the know-how to get it done.

I can tell my colleagues from serving with HILLARY for 8 years as Senator—and I will regret that our partnership as Senator is ending—there is no one better to do this job. We should move the nomination quickly. We should then all get behind Senator CLINTON and President Obama, and there will be a great foreign policy team.

In all of her many roles as a public servant, HILLARY has always shown the insight to see to the heart of a problem, the courage to tackle it, and the talent to solve it.

In her years as First Lady, Senator CLINTON was one of the country's most important and best-loved ambassadors.

She traveled to over 80 countries, meeting with heads of state from the Czech Republic to Nepal.

She served as a representative to the United Nations, addressing forums around the world.

She has negotiated aid packages in Asia, pushed democratic reforms in the former Soviet Bloc, and promoted peace plans in Northern Ireland and Serbia.

But HILLARY didn't just meet with world leaders. She has met with the private citizens around the world whose lives are shaped by international decisions.

She has met survivors of the Rwandan genocide, with advocates for social justice and women's rights in Pakistan, with the families of children kidnapped in Uganda.

And after serving her country 8 years as First Lady, when most people retire, HILLARY stepped up and has served as a vital and powerful advocate on behalf of the people of New York.

Going from the White House to White Plains, HILLARY has continued to show just as much acumen in her dealings with national and global leaders, as she

shows empathy and interest in the needs of private individuals around New York.

From her time 30 years ago with the Children's Defense Fund, to her commitment while in the White House to improving women's rights at home and abroad, to her indefatigable efforts in the Senate to fight poverty and disease in the developing world, HILLARY has dedicated her career to improving the lives of the country's and the world's least fortunate people.

I cannot think of anyone who, as Secretary of State, could do as much as good for the people of the world, or as much to restore the world's faith in our leadership.

Senator CLINTON has important work waiting for her in Foggy Bottom, and the country and the world cannot afford to wait for her leadership any longer.

I am sad to see HILLARY leave the Senate, but I am confident that she will be a brilliant Secretary of State.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the nomination of Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON to be Secretary of State. I would like to make a few brief points why I think her nomination is important and why I think she will do an outstanding job in this very important position. I want to begin, though, by saying something about President Clinton's charitable efforts and what they have meant to our State and to our region and what I think they have meant to the world at large.

We have seen in our own lifetime many Presidents come and go from the Oval Office. Many of them leave and you do not hear much from them. Some of them spend their time in very worthy causes. But, to my mind, no past President has taken on such an ambitious agenda as President Bill Clinton to help ease the suffering and pain in this world. He could have spent his time doing many things, but he has challenged himself and his contacts around the world—businessmen, philanthropists, women engaged in social organizational work around the world—to make this a better community. He has done it masterfully and with the strength and networking capabilities that perhaps only a President of this Nation has.

In the State of Louisiana, which I represent, we have seen firsthand the

benefit of that work, as he has raised private dollars, foundation dollars to come to the aid of Katrina and Rita survivors: \$130 million in funding to the gulf coast region, which was devastated by not two storms but actually four counting Ike and Gustav; and not just for Louisiana and Mississippi but for the State of Texas, where JOHN CORNYN hails from, which has been particularly helped by the efforts not just of the Clinton Foundation but the Clinton-Bush foundation or the Bush-Clinton foundation that raised \$130 million for tremendously helpful causes.

Just a few notes: Mr. President, \$30 million was awarded to 38 higher education institutions to keep those doors open, when homes were destroyed, jobs were lost, and families were scattered to States all over America; \$40 million went to nonprofit groups working on reconstruction efforts; \$25 million was awarded to rebuild over 1,000 houses; and \$35 million was given to general nonprofits.

As of January 16, 2009, another one of President Clinton's funds—the Bush-Clinton Gulf Coast Fund—has raised over \$2 million for additional help to towns and neighborhoods.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Ike—the fourth of the storms that have struck our coast in these 3 years—the Clinton Climate Initiative helped to catalyze a cooperative effort between the public and private sector to transport 4.5 million gross cubic yards of green waste to 9 sites in order for it to be composted as opposed to dumped into landfills.

The Clinton Foundation, via the Clinton Global Initiative, has received commitments valued at over \$103 million to work on climate protection initiatives and health technology initiatives in the State of Texas, as well as to enhance the quality of life of Texas-Mexico border residents.

As a Senator who represents the storm survivors of Louisiana, I am incredibly grateful for President Clinton's hard work for our communities.

Not only has Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON herself been one of the first Senators on the ground to the gulf coast, sharing her expertise, her knowledge, and her passion for recovery, but President Clinton himself.

Mr. President, I know I have only been given 3 minutes. I ask unanimous consent for an additional 1 minute because I would like to add, I say to Senator KERRY, if I could, that I hear so many people from the other side coming down and expressing their philosophy that they are just appalled that Democrats sometimes rely on Government to do it all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Well, here is an example of a former President who is not relying on Government to do it all, who realizes the combined treasures of all the governments in the world cannot stop, perhaps, the AIDS crisis or lift women out of poverty or educate

girls who have not been educated in centuries. So he has taken it upon himself to raise private dollars and foundations. Yet the same group who complains that Government cannot do it all—when somebody tries to leverage the strength of the private sector, they have to clobber him anyway. I think part of it is not so much the words they say, but perhaps this gives them an ability to do some fundraising they may have to do for the coming elections, which is really very disturbing based on the passionate comments of President Obama yesterday about how he would like to get past this partisan era we have been in.

Just a word about Senator CLINTON herself. Not only on the international front is she an expert, and our President needs a very smooth transition on the international front given the two wars we are facing, the crisis in the Mideast, and the economic crisis at home, but I want to spend my last minute saying how personally proud I am of the work she has done in this country and abroad helping women and children, particularly orphans, particularly children who find themselves, because of war or famine or disease or other terrible causes, separated from their families and in this country left for years in limbo in foster care or in a foster care system that is broken and is still yet to be fixed. Senator CLINTON herself has been a champion for these children, both foster care children and orphans around the world. I think as the Secretary of State, although she is going to be busy with many great issues of the world, her heart is big enough to find a space and to keep a space for orphans and other children. As far as I am concerned, they may be an afterthought to many big policy leaders today, but I would like to paraphrase a quote that says: Children may be an afterthought today, but they are 100 percent of our future, and paying a little attention to them will help this world keep a steady course.

As First Lady, Senator CLINTON led numerous efforts to increase awareness about and support for youth aging out of foster care, and to increase the number of children who are adopted out of foster care. She partnered with the late John Chafee and JAY ROCKEFELLER to develop and pass the Adoption and Safe Families Act in 1997. This law is credited for fundamentally shifting the U.S. foster care system away from the archaic notions that trapped children in foster care for years to child-focused policies that resulted in children finding safe, loving, and permanent homes. After the passage of that legislation, foster adoptions increased 64 percent nationwide—from 31,030 the year the law passed to 51,000 last year.

As a Senator she has continued to push for legislation that benefits children in foster care. Under her leadership, the 110th Congress took up and passed legislation that provides Federal support for family members who take on the responsibility of caring for

children who would otherwise continue to live in foster care. She worked tirelessly to enhance efforts to incentivize States to continue their success in finding families for older children, children with special needs, and large sibling groups.

I have no doubt that she will carry these passions with her to her new assignment as Secretary of State and that the orphans of the world will be better for it.

President Obama took the oath of office with the U.S. fighting two wars, a simmering crisis in the Middle East and the need for a seamless transition to address the threats and challenges to the United States.

He needs his national security team confirmed and ready to work immediately.

The outgoing Bush administration understood the importance of a smooth national security transition and worked closely with the Obama administration towards that goal. Republicans in the Senate should do no less.

Yesterday, President Obama spoke eloquently about—and the American people responded so vigorously to—the need to set aside partisan posturing in these challenging times and come together to advance our collective interests. It is a shame that the President's call is being ignored at this critical time.

Any delay for partisan political purposes denies the President of the team that he needs to preserve and protect our national security.

I look forward to Senator CLINTON becoming our new Secretary of State.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article from Politico dated January 15, 2009, about President Clinton's charity work helping Senator VITTER's home State—our State of Louisiana that we represent—be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Politico, Jan. 15, 2009]

BILL'S CHARITY WORK HELPED VITTER'S STATE

(BY GLENN THRUSH)

There's a small, but biting irony in David Vitter's solo "no" vote against Hillary, which was based on conflicts-of-interest concerns about Bill Clinton's foundation.

It just so happens that the ex-president's charitable efforts have been more focused on Vitter's home state of Louisiana than just about any other place in America, with \$130.6 million in funding flowing to the Gulf region through the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, according to records.

A partial breakdown: About \$30 million was awarded to 38 higher education institutions; \$40 million went to non-profits working on reconstruction in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi; \$25 million was awarded to 1,151 houses of worship and organizations assisting the faith community; and \$35.6 million was given to 42 other non-profits for various services.

Some noteworthy BCKF Louisiana grants: \$550,000 to the storm-damaged Delgado Community College in New Orleans and \$1.89 million to Xavier University, also in NOLA.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Massachusetts for giving me the opportunity to speak in this series of speakers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Louisiana for her personal and important observations. I know they will be much appreciated by her colleague and our friend, Senator CLINTON.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, could I ask, how much time is there still divided?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority has 39 minutes, the Republicans have 64 minutes.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is such a pleasure to be here, and I want to say to my chairman, Senator KERRY, how much I wish him the best in his new position.

I am a very proud member of the Foreign Relations Committee, and I want to talk a little bit about HILLARY CLINTON and her qualifications to be Secretary of State and, more than that, our need to see her confirmed as swiftly as possible this afternoon.

Many of my constituents are visiting for the great inaugural celebration we witnessed yesterday. They played a role in it. Many of them have talked to me and asked: Well, why hasn't HILLARY CLINTON been confirmed already? Why has there been any delay? She is obviously so well qualified.

I answered: Well, several of my colleagues on the other side had some issues with disclosure of Clinton Foundation donations. And I believe we will deal with that.

I think it is important to point out that President Clinton has agreed to disclose so much regarding his foundation. Other Presidents do not disclose anything. I think if there is any problem, we will have transparency and we will know.

What my constituents are saying to me is this: Look, we need a strong and respected Secretary of State who is knowledgeable on day one. They basically say there are two reasons for that, and I agree with them. The first reason is, there are so many hot spots in the world and so many complicated issues out there for the next Secretary

of State. HILLARY CLINTON—having run for President, having been a United States Senator, having served on the Armed Services Committee—is supremely ready for these challenges. Whether it is winding down the war in Iraq, which our President says he will do responsibly and soon; whether it is making sure we don't lose Afghanistan to the Taliban and set that nation back; whether it is the terrible crisis between Israel and the Palestinians; whether it is turmoil in Africa, genocide in Darfur, the war on terror in general, or the need to win over the hearts and minds of people around the globe, all of these things are out there for our new President, President Obama, to address. He needs someone to help him shoulder that burden. He is going to count on HILLARY CLINTON to do that. He is going to count on Senator KERRY in his new position, all of us on the committee and all of us in the Senate, as well as House leaders to do that.

HILLARY CLINTON understands all of these hot spots. She also understands the fact that there is one President and she will work with him and for him and for the American people. After all, she was in the White House and she knows the President sets foreign policy. She understands that. So she is supremely ready.

The other reason my friends from California have stated is this: We need someone with that prestige, with that recognition, with that charisma because we have so many problems at home to which our President has to attend. And HILLARY CLINTON has that sense of, frankly, star quality, the ability to gain attention and respect. President Obama couldn't do the work himself. If he had to fly all over the world, he couldn't take the time he needs to fight this deepening recession.

President Obama is inheriting massive problems. These problems didn't happen in a day; they happened over the last 8 years. It is going to take time to get out of some of the mess. President Bush had a surplus; he has put us deeply in debt. Pay as you go is gone. Our new President has to deal with that.

President Bush made no progress on health care. Our new President has to deal with it. On the environment, we have gone backwards. I know the chairman understands this. He serves on the committee on which I am privileged to serve as well, the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. So where are we? We have this string of problems, and our new President has to focus on getting people back to work, on making sure that Social Security and Medicare are strong, that our kids are educated, and that global warming is addressed in the right way. That is just the partial list. We also want to make sure our small

businesses thrive. President Obama is inheriting that list of problems: debt, deficit, unemployment, the worst economy since the Great Depression. He needs someone such as HILLARY CLINTON to help shoulder the burden on foreign policy.

So I hope we get a tremendous vote for HILLARY CLINTON. She deserves it. I wish to thank my chairman again for yielding me the time.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from California. I appreciate it very much.

It is my understanding the Senator from Tennessee wishes to speak, but he wishes to speak in morning business. On the other hand, we don't want to delay the march of the clock. So I ask unanimous consent that the time used by the Senator from Tennessee be charged to the other side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise to speak as in morning business, and I thank the chairman for allowing me to do so. If someone comes in to speak on the subject matter, I will defer.

As is the Senator from California, I am very concerned about our economy. I know there is going to be a stimulus package forthcoming. I am very concerned about that. I am afraid what we are doing right now as a country is addressing the recession—a severe recession—in the standard way people like to respond to recessions. I think we are potentially doing that without addressing the real issue, which is the credit markets in our country.

I know over the last 6 months we have wrestled with ways of dealing with the credit markets in our country. I wish to tell my colleagues it is my belief the boards of banks throughout our country are in boardrooms today and are in conversations throughout the country talking about the fact that their banks are actually insolvent. They know they are insolvent, but because of the way gap financing accrues to banks who make whole loans, they are able to actually meter those losses out over quarters into the future, knowing that today they are insolvent.

What we have done through TARP funding is put money through capital injection into these banks. In their intelligent self-interests they have hoarded that money because they know they have losses coming in the future that would cause their banks to be insolvent if they recognized those losses today.

What concerns me is our country is quickly getting to the point where our resources are limited more than they have ever been, where we are borrowing huge amounts of money—and certainly we have been doing that for some time—and we are getting to a point in time where there is not a lot of power

left for us to solve problems. So what I hope will happen over this next 30 days as we wrestle with this issue—which is serious and which is affecting people throughout this country; which is harming households and people who are just trying to work for a living—is that we will solve the root cause of this problem, which is our credit problem.

It is my belief we have trillions of dollars that are going to be lost in the credit market. Much of that is being driven by housing. These two issues have to be dealt with together. I fear we are going to look at a spending package that candidly isn't going to make its way into the economy until long after many predict this may be over. In the interim, what we are going to do is create a zombie banking system where, in essence, banks are just there metering out losses but not doing the productive things that need to occur.

It is my belief we have a number of banks in this country—large banks, banks that we know and respect—that need to be seized, that right now need to get down to a base level where normal investors would be willing to invest in these banks. The longer we put this off, the longer we are going to be away from actually solving the root cause of this problem.

This President is inheriting these problems. I in no way assess these problems to him. Many Presidents—most Presidents—deal with issues they had no idea they were going to deal with. I know this President is looking at a spending package. Candidly, there may be some need for capital investment in infrastructure. However, if we do not deal with the root issue—and that is the fact that much of our banking system is insolvent and recognize that as adults—and cause the assets to be written down to their real level as we do with derivatives, but we do not do that on whole loans—we give banks a break, if you will. We let them meter those out. If we do not deal with that, everything we do here to deal with our economy, in my opinion, will be for naught. It will be a total waste.

What concerns me is we are quickly getting to the point again where we are going to have fewer and fewer resources available to deal with that. The United Kingdom just recently realized that the policies they were putting in place were causing their currency to devalue rapidly.

I realize we are not there yet today as a country. I hope what we will do as a body—and as a country—is tell the American people we realize many of our financial institutions are insolvent. We realize the problem could be trillions of dollars, and until that issue is dealt with in a serious and real way, anything else we do for the economy is for naught.

It takes a functioning financial system for every small business—for every barbershop, beauty salon, for every large business—for all of us to get our payroll checks processed; it takes that

for this economy to function. In order for our financial markets to stabilize, we have to deal with the issue of housing, which we have not yet done. It is my hope this body will take up this serious business.

I have to say, in deference to the chairman who has been on the floor talking about our new Secretary of State, I listened to his comments today in the Finance Committee and I thought his comments were dead on. I know he referred to some editorials that were written over the weekend that said exactly the kinds of things we are talking about right now. I talk to investors on Wall Street who are involved in these institutions in major ways. They know they are insolvent. They know we are just pushing this down the road.

I think we owe this to these young people up front whose last day is tomorrow. We owe this to Americans across this country who depend upon us to do mature and adult-like things. We owe this to the country, to face up to the realities of these major losses, these major insolvencies, its effect on the economy for years to come, and do something about that first before we deal with things that will possibly stimulate the economy if, in fact, we actually had a functioning financial system. We all know of small businesses all across this country that are being denied loans. We know of businesses that are actually doing the right things, but banks are calling letters of credit and other things because they want the money in so they can again meter out the losses.

So I thank my colleague for allowing me to speak as in morning business. I know we have important business at hand. I look forward to supporting Secretary of State-designate CLINTON later today. I thank my colleague for his courtesy, and I yield the floor.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, the next administration will be faced with the difficult task of building a smarter U.S. foreign policy that restores America's image abroad and security at home. Senator HILLARY CLINTON's distinguished record and testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee demonstrate that she is the right person to lead this effort. Her experience, intelligence and thoughtfulness make her an excellent choice to be our most senior diplomat and to lead a stronger and more effective State Department.

I do share some of the concerns that have been expressed about the potential for a conflict of interest between her work as our incoming Secretary of State and the Clinton Foundation. I hope that Senator CLINTON will make every effort to avoid even the appearance of such a conflict of interest, if confirmed.

Senator CLINTON brings many strengths to this position, and I am pleased to support her nomination. It has been a pleasure working with Senator CLINTON as a Senate colleague,

and I look forward to working closely with her in a new capacity.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, today I rise in support of the nomination of our colleague, the junior Senator from New York, Mrs. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, as our next Secretary of State.

It is a position to which I am confident she will be confirmed shortly—and in which I know she will serve extraordinarily well.

Before I speak about the qualifications that Senator CLINTON brings to this most important position at such a crucial juncture in our history, I want say a few words about the spirit of openness and cooperation that she demonstrated throughout the confirmation process.

As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for more than a quarter century—having closely reviewed her nomination—Senator CLINTON and her husband have taken unprecedented steps and gone above and beyond what we have asked of them. That she has speaks not only to Senator CLINTON's personal integrity, but to her commitment to the office of Secretary of State.

Senator CLINTON will serve during a period crucial to restoring America's moral authority—making clear to the world our virtue, our noble intentions and—as we were reminded by our new President, Barack Obama, yesterday—all that we still represent to so many around the globe.

As we all know, Senator CLINTON has a history of redefining roles and inspiring people around the world. Certainly, she did when she first rose to the national stage as First Lady, taking on issues previously unfamiliar to that position, often in new ways—children's issues, healthcare, women's rights.

To those who had known her, none of that was surprising. Indeed, long before she became First Lady or Senator, she had been a tenacious legal advocate for children and families, fostering hope in a wide cross-section of the American people. Little wonder, then, that she gained that following of passionate supporters that we saw on the campaign trail last year.

For the last 8 years, Senator CLINTON has represented the State of New York and has given her constituents a daring and tenacious advocate in Washington, putting a special focus on improving her State's economy—specifically that of upstate New York which is not only hit harder by recessions but often remains a bystander during times of economic expansion.

That she so naturally became this kind of advocate speaks volumes about her affinity for the less fortunate—her beliefs about the nature of public service and the kind of priorities she will bring as Secretary of State.

I have said that it also is a testament to President Obama that he nominated his one-time rival to such a critical post. But perhaps it says more about the nominee herself—about her commitment to bringing change to this country.

I have been privileged to serve alongside Senator CLINTON. In assuming the position of Secretary of State, Senator CLINTON assumes a responsibility—that of being our representative to friends and enemies alike. Her judgment and temperament will be critical to restoring international relationships which have been so badly tarnished in recent years.

So, let me join my colleagues in saying thank you to the junior Senator from New York. I know her tenacity and talent will serve our country extraordinarily well in the coming years, as it has throughout her lifetime. I urge my colleagues to confirm her and I wish her the best of luck.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON to serve as Secretary of State.

HILLARY CLINTON is a tireless and fearless public servant.

She is a woman of strength and compassion with a powerful voice.

And I look very much forward to confirming her as our next Secretary of State.

I have known HILLARY for 16 years—since the time when she was First Lady.

I was delighted to see HILLARY CLINTON sworn into our small but ever-growing cadre of female Senators in January 2001, and I have greatly admired her work here in the Senate.

Senator CLINTON has rolled up her sleeves and worked forcefully to represent the people of New York during the past 8 years.

She worked side-by-side with her Empire State colleagues to shepherd New Yorkers through the challenges of recovering from the tragedies of the attacks of September 11.

She has been an active and diligent member of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, doing her homework and asking the tough questions.

In 2004, she was asked by the Department of Defense to join the Transformation Advisory Group to the Joint Forces Command—the only Senator to serve in that capacity.

I know that Senator HILLARY CLINTON will leave behind a large void when she leaves the Halls of this Chamber.

But her next role—as Secretary of State—presents tremendous challenges and opportunities.

The new Obama administration will usher in a new era of American foreign policy, and help rebuild our image around the world.

HILLARY CLINTON understands the value, and very great need for, a foreign policy that is guided by smart, robust diplomacy—rather than belligerent threats.

She has already visited more than 80 countries, and has formed important relationships with a number of world leaders.

I am confident that she will ably continue to represent the values and interests of our great country in the capitals of the world as Secretary of State.

There is no doubt that the foreign policy challenges we face as a nation and global community are great: the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the great need to transition our forces; a resurgent Iran; the long-simmering Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which boiled over in recent weeks with tragic consequences; threats of nuclear proliferation and terrorism; ongoing instability in Southeast Asia; the need to confront climate change; the terrible atrocities in Darfur and the Congo; millions of global citizens who face a grim reality of hunger, thirst, poverty, and sickness; and the need to improve the plight of women around the world.

As HILLARY remarked during a press conference when her nomination was formally announced on December 1, 2008:

America cannot solve these crises without the world, and the world cannot solve them without America.

I am confident that HILLARY CLINTON will rise to the occasion—and work hand-in-hand with President Obama and his national security team to help address these tremendous challenges.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my strong support for the confirmation of my highly esteemed colleague and good friend, Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, as the next Secretary of State.

When Senator CLINTON arrived in the U.S. Senate in 2001, she had very large shoes to fill—those of the late and admired Senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan—but filled them she did and with tremendous distinction and accolades from both sides of the aisle. And over time, our colleague was rightly lauded and recognized for her unwavering work ethic, her expansive and detailed command of the issues, and her care for her constituents. And in 2007, Senator CLINTON began what would become a historic, Presidential campaign that was an inspiration to many and especially women. The fact is, throughout her remarkable trajectory of public service, HILLARY CLINTON has encountered immense challenges with intelligence, resilience, and resolve—traits that will stand our colleague in great stead as our Nation's 67th Secretary of State.

Indeed, the international environment facing our next chief diplomat is daunting. The world today is rife with crises that, if inadequately addressed, could lead to geopolitical instability and human suffering that spans both the globe and generations. Continuing nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran threaten the very existence of some of our closest allies and undermine decades of nonproliferation efforts. A maelstrom of conflicts as bloody as it is complex stretches across the heart of Africa, compounding heartbreaking poverty with unspeakable acts of violence. And inaction on global climate change has stymied a long-overdue coordinated international response, imperiling every coastline, crop and country on the planet.

Tackling these desperate problems will be a difficult, and, at times, thankless job. But if there is a Senator within this body who is equal to that task, it is certainly Senator CLINTON. In her work on the Senate Committee on Armed Services, she has demonstrated an exhaustive understanding of the global security environment confronting the United States and its allies. As a fellow founding member of the Senate Women's Caucus on Burma and in her tireless support for legislation urging intensive diplomatic efforts to halt the genocide in Darfur, Senator CLINTON has demonstrated not merely a deep-seated humanity, but a visceral and personal commitment to speak for the oppressed and fight for the defenseless.

On a personal note, today's vote is indeed a bittersweet moment—when we will offer our consent to President of the United States—also a former colleague, to tap another extraordinary Member to help guide our country and the free world at a perilous time. Senator CLINTON's counsel and exceptional commitment to public service will be sorely missed in this august Chamber. Yet we take heart and no small measure of pride in knowing that her indefatigable intellect is being called into service beyond these walls to the benefit of not just an administration, or one country, but an entire community of nations seeking peace and prosperity for their citizens.

And so, as we look ahead to the future success of our good friend, I wish her Godspeed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I recognize the Senator from Mississippi for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to support the nomination of Senator HILLARY CLINTON to be Secretary of State. Her service as the Senator from New York for the past 8 years has been proof of her impressive ability to effectively and thoughtfully contribute to the governance of our Nation. I have enjoyed working with her in the Senate, and I look forward to continuing that relationship in her role as Secretary of State.

Our Nation is confronted with serious global challenges, and it is imperative that we work to develop comprehensive strategies and expand our diplomatic efforts in search of peace. President Obama has a tremendous task before him. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, stabilizing the Middle East, securing nuclear material from terrorists are all critical to our own national security. Senator CLINTON's experience as First Lady of the United States, her record in the Senate, and her commitment to the people of this Nation have demonstrated her capabilities to lead our Nation's foreign policy and diplomatic agenda.

I urge the Senate to approve her nomination. I thank the Senator, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the distinguished Senator from Mississippi, who has been here a long time and is a good judge of these issues and of character, and we appreciate his comments very much.

Mr. President, we are awaiting Senator SPECTER, who I understand wants to speak. So I ask unanimous consent that the time—since there is more of it now on the other side, without speakers—the time of the quorum call now be charged to the other side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished assistant majority leader, the Senator from Illinois, and I ask unanimous consent that following his comments the subsequent quorum call be charged to the other side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and I appreciate this opportunity to say a few words about the nomination of HILLARY CLINTON to be Secretary of State to our new President, Barack Obama.

It has been my good fortune to serve with Senator CLINTON for many years in the Senate, to have known her when she was our First Lady, and to have worked with her on many issues. There is no question of her competence, no question of her skill. As someone who supported our current President in the last Presidential campaign and witnessed the spirited contest between Senator CLINTON and then-Senator Obama, there is obviously no lack of determination or commitment when it comes to Senator CLINTON and the task that she assumes. So when President Obama made the decision to ask her to serve as Secretary of State, I felt it was a decision which would bring to this country a leader who could make a real difference.

I can recall a telephone conversation where I spoke to her and reminded her that there were many things she had said as First Lady and Senator which she would be able to follow through on as Secretary of State. She was one of the first I heard articulate a premise which I have come to accept as basic

gospel when it comes to analyzing global issues. Senator CLINTON said, after returning from a trip overseas, she felt you could measure the likelihood that a country would be able to meet the challenges it faced economically and socially based on one question, and the question was very straightforward: How do you treat your women? I have found, as I have traveled around the world, that standard is valid. If women are treated like chattel or slaves, if they have no voice in the government and little voice in the family or the village, most of the time the men will make a mess of it, and that has been the case. I told her she had a chance, as Secretary of State, to not only deal with global issues of peace around the world but also to deal with those issues at the local level that make a dramatic difference in the lives of poor people.

I also know of her passion for so many other issues that are timely. When I spoke to her on the floor last week, as she cast her last vote as a Senator, I wished her well because I felt she would be confirmed as our next Secretary of State, and she said it is unfortunate that we come to this moment in history when there are so many things unresolved in the world, but she looked forward to those moments where she would be able to meet with the President of the United States and the Vice President, who has his own resume when it comes to global issues.

A Member on the Republican side has asked for us to consider this nomination today and to have a little debate and perhaps a vote. I don't know if it will come to a vote, but other nominations went through without controversy and without debate yesterday. These are now men and women going to work immediately for the new administration—no time wasted—so they can tackle the real timely issues that face America. One of the issues raised earlier on the Republican side was former President Bill Clinton's foundation. It was an effort, after he left the Presidency, to gather the resources to make a difference around the world in a variety of different challenges, not the least of which was the global AIDS epidemic.

It is true former President Clinton has been very adept at raising the funds to help the poorest people in the world, and I think that is a good thing. But questions were raised: Would that present a conflict if his wife, Senator HILLARY CLINTON, became Secretary of State? At that point, the former President made full disclosure of all contributions and contributors and made it clear that he would go out of his way to avoid conflicts and continue this disclosure and transparency.

I can recall in Senator KERRY's committee Senator LUGAR of Indiana asked questions about this to try to make sure there would be clarity and transparency. And that is good. We don't want any embarrassment coming to ei-

ther former President Clinton or Senator CLINTON when she is Secretary of State and certainly not to the Obama administration. That kind of disclosure is the way to reach that goal.

So I will be voting for her nomination today with the belief that HILLARY CLINTON will bring that skill set and those values to this most important job for the future of our country. She understands the safety and security of America begins, of course, with a strong military but, as President Obama has said, to try to avoid using that military so we don't engage in unnecessary wars and wars that have no end; to use the skills of diplomacy to solve the world's problems. I can't think of a better person to carry that message and that responsibility than Senator HILLARY CLINTON, and I am hopeful this afternoon this Senate will rise quickly to support her nomination, send her down to Foggy Bottom, where the Department of State is located, so she can begin her new role in representing the United States around the world.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time, and I yield the floor.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to comment briefly on the nomination of Senator HILLARY CLINTON to be Secretary of State. I believe Senator CLINTON brings extraordinary talent and an extraordinary record to this very important position. Her educational and professional background are sterling. I have a little parochial pride at the fact that she is a graduate of the Yale Law School and has carried forward that school's tradition for public service.

I got to know Mrs. CLINTON first when she was First Lady. Shortly after I had brain surgery, in 1993, I bumped into her at the carriage entrance, coming into the Senate Chamber, and we talked a little bit about my medical experience. She invited me to visit with her in the White House, which I did—as I recollect, on the second floor of the West Wing. I told her of the personal experience I had and also my ideas from serving on the subcommittee of Labor, Health, Human Services and Education for the 13 years that I had been in the Senate.

As First Lady, Mrs. CLINTON was an activist. The record speaks for itself on all that she undertook. Then, to maintain candidacy for the Senate in New York was very courageous, gutsy, reminiscent of Robert Kennedy leaving the Attorney General's job, going to a State not his home State to seek election to this body.

In the Senate she has had an extraordinary record. She was very accomplished here. I had the good fortune to cosponsor a number of matters with her and to work on other matters with her. We most notably, perhaps, cosponsored the legislation of our Public Service Academy; that is, to have an academy such as West Point or Annapolis or the Air Force Academy, where young people interested in public service would go for training in those arts.

Then we all know of the phenomenal race she carried on for the Presidency of the United States, coming as close as she did in the historic year we just saw, 2008, with the election of an African American and the ascendancy of a woman into the finals of the Presidential contest.

When she was talked about for Secretary of State, I thought it was a 10-strike. I did something that was a first for me, that I had never done before. When I read in the newspaper that she was equivocating as to whether to take the job, I called her with some unsolicited advice. I cannot recall having done that before. If somebody asks for advice, OK, but I called her and urged her to take the job. I urged her to do so because I thought she was an extraordinary fit for it.

I think of all of the positions available at the moment—there are some very important positions. I have been delayed coming to the floor where we were having an executive session of the Judiciary Committee on the nomination of Attorney General-designate Holder, a very important position. But no position, aside from the Presidency, is more important than Secretary of State. Perhaps the Attorney General is close, with the heavy responsibilities for national security in the fight against terrorism, the balance with civil liberties, and the very important questions facing the economy with so many fraud cases looming with people misrepresenting balance sheets. But Secretary of State poses the big issues.

I have traveled extensively in my term in the Senate in connection with my duties on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of Appropriations and the chairmanship of the Intelligence Committee, which I held in the 104th Congress. I believe there are tremendous opportunities today for an activist U.S. policy on the hot spots around the world.

I have visited Syria on many occasions, have gotten to know President Bashar al Asad and more extensively his father before he died in the year 2000, President Hafez Asad. I believe that Syria is the key to peace in the Middle East. There have been very extensive negotiations there. The parties, Israel and Syria, came very close in 1995 when Rabin was Prime Minister, on negotiations brokered by then-President Clinton, and again in the year 2000, when Ehud Barak was Prime Minister—very close. Turkey, for the last 18 months to 2 years, has been brokering for a long while behind the scenes, negotiations.

What Syria is looking for is the return of the Golan Heights and only Israel can decide whether it is in Israel's security interests to give up the Golan. But it is a very different world today from what it was in 1967 on the strategic interests and strategic value of the Golan Heights. If a deal can be struck, I think there is great advantage for Israel and for the region. I think that would induce Syria to stop aid to Hamas or funneling aid from Iran to Hamas; stopping them from aiding Hezbollah; stopping Syria from any activities to destabilize Lebanon. So an activist policy is a matter of the first magnitude.

With respect to Iran, there again I think dialog has some hope. Can it solve the problem? I don't know. But I do know the problems with Iran cannot be solved without dialog.

I asked questions of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates before the Appropriations Committee on the undertaking of dialog and negotiations. I asked Secretary Rice how it was realistic to ask Iran to stop enriching uranium as a precondition of talks when the object of the talks was to get them to stop enriching uranium. How do you do that? It seems to me a major failure of U.S. foreign policy for decades has been a lack of civility and dignity and respect that we damn Yankees—we ugly Americans—don't accord other people, as a matter of basic dignity and respect.

I have had an opportunity to talk to the last three Iranian Ambassadors to the United Nations. They are very rational people to whom you can talk.

Ahmadinejad? A real problem, when he talks about wiping Israel off the face of the Earth. But he is not going to be President of Iran forever. I think there are forces besides President Ahmadinejad who have different views in Iran.

If you take a look at Muammar Qaddafi, there you have an example of someone who is arguably the world's worst terrorist in history—except, perhaps, for bin Laden and what al-Qaida has done. But Qaddafi and Libya blew up Pan Am 103, bombed the Berlin discotheque, killed Americans—and through negotiations, Qaddafi stopped developing a nuclear weapon, made reparations to the victims in Pan Am 103 and those who were victims in the bombing of the Berlin discotheque.

I had an opportunity to visit Muammar Qaddafi, about 30 months ago, with Congressman Tom Lantos. When you went to see Qaddafi, you would go to the desert. He lives in a tent and he meets you in plastic chairs. But you can talk to him and the talking has paid results.

With that success, I think it is an indicator, a precedent for talking to anybody. Nothing may come of it, but the dialog is an indispensable first step. We know with the difficulties in North Korea—and there have been plenty—an agreement was made in the early 1990s.

They breached that in 1993. We are back on track there.

But I think it takes bilateral talks. It takes representatives of the United States to stand up and be willing to talk to other people on an equal footing, with courtesy, with civility, and with dignity.

In August of 2005, I had a chance to meet President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela. The relationship between the United States and Venezuela has been very rocky for what President Chavez has undertaken. At that time the United States Ambassador was trying to meet with the Venezuelan Secretary of the Interior over the drug issue, where there were common interests between the United States and Venezuela. I believe it is accurate to say that as a result of the conversations which I had with Chavez, the Ambassador and the Minister of the Interior met.

It was kind of a rocky day because at the same time I had the meeting with President Chavez, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was in Peru, and he commented in a condemnatory way about Chavez. Gratuitous insults do not advance the pace or the cause of dialog. So I would say, even with President Chavez, we ought to make the effort.

President Obama had some comments about President Chavez on a Sunday news show last week, which have started some mild fireworks. Chavez, according to the press, retaliated that he had not thrown the first stone. It is my hope, even with Chavez, that we can engage in direct, civil, courteous dialog to see if there are some areas where we can find common cause.

I know, though, the occasions I have had to talk to Fidel Castro that there were issues on sea lanes and other air lanes where the United States could have cooperated on the interdiction of drugs. I have introduced legislation which passed the Senate on two occasions and was stymied in the House of Representatives. But I mentioned this as illustrative of where I think we can go with an activist, engaged Secretary of State. It is my projection that Senator CLINTON, soon to be Secretary of State CLINTON, will undertake those matters.

There is one additional comment I have to make, and that is on the potential conflict of interest between contributions which were made to former President Clinton's Foundation and the activities of Secretary of State CLINTON, if, as, and when she is confirmed. I think Senator LUGAR was exactly on target in the comments he made in the Foreign Relations Committee about what ought to be undertaken.

There has already been a memorandum of agreement that has been entered into on the subject of some substantial import. There is a memorandum of understanding which related to this issue which was signed on December 16 of last year, right after Senator CLINTON was in the running for this position.

It would be my hope that Secretary of State CLINTON would rethink some of the additional requests which Senator LUGAR made. I do not think they are disqualifiers, but I do believe it is a matter of concern if, for example, some foreign government makes a contribution to the Clinton Foundation, then there are interests which that foreign government has, I think we would understand and trust Secretary of State HILLARY CLINTON that, in the eyes of many, especially those in the Arab world, they may be suspicious of what would appear to them to be a potential conflict of interest.

But I trust HILLARY CLINTON's good judgment, and I think she will work through the issues and the memorandum of understanding which was executed on December 16 of last year, and the additions she has made go a long way, and it would be my hope that she would rethink what Senator LUGAR has suggested. She is a very ethical person and a wise person. I think she can undertake to handle this issue satisfactorily.

So for these reasons I am pleased to speak on her behalf, and I think the temper of this body is to give her an overwhelming vote of confidence so she can carry out the very important responsibilities of Secretary of State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee from Massachusetts. It is interesting, this is the first day after the inauguration of President Barack Obama—my ninth inauguration, by far the most impressive—and I have the great pleasure to speak in support of the confirmation of my friend and colleague, HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, to be our next Secretary of State.

Secretary-designee CLINTON's stature, intellect, her experience make her uniquely qualified to take on this role, a role which comes at a critical time in our history.

As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds the State Department and our foreign assistance programs, I look forward to working closely with her and President Obama as they embark on the critical task of restoring America's leadership and image abroad.

I appreciate the conversations I have had with both of them in this regard. Some 8 years ago, President Bush inherited a balanced Federal budget. We were actually paying down the national debt. We had the biggest surplus in history. The U.S. economy was strong, and the country was at peace.

Now, 8 years later, his successor, President Obama, has inherited from him the largest deficit in our Nation's

history, an economic crisis and unemployment rate unlike any this country has experienced since the Great Depression, a budget deficit greater than any nation on Earth has ever had, Osama bin Laden has yet to be captured, more than 180,000 U.S. troops are fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Middle East peace process is in shambles, the country is more dependent than ever on foreign oil, and the country's international reputation has been badly damaged as a result of policies that were contemptuous of the values of which this Nation was founded. That is the good news for the new President and the Secretary of State-designee.

I do not envy President Obama for the multitude of misguided policies and problems he has inherited, but all the more reason he needs the best men and women to work with him. Secretary of State-designee CLINTON is going to serve him and the country well as they take on these challenges.

During the election, I remember saying to President Obama that we needed him to reintroduce America to the rest of the world. I have, in conversations with Senator CLINTON, told her, what better person to go around the world than HILLARY CLINTON as Secretary of State to reintroduce America and the great core values of this Nation. What better person to do it than HILLARY CLINTON?

In her confirmation before the Foreign Relations Committee last week, she discussed the need to use "smart power," including "the full range of tools at our disposal."

I am glad to see her support for foreign assistance reform. We need that, and we have learned over the past several years we cannot take for granted the unwavering allegiance of any country in the world. We have to work at keeping those relationships. It is not amateur hour, and I appreciate Secretary-designee CLINTON's recognition of the value and experience of dedicated international affairs public servants and her plans to support and enhance that capacity.

She is going to become immersed in the immensely difficult problems that were ignored or badly mishandled by the outgoing administration: the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan, Mexico, Somalia and central Africa. All these pose particularly vexing challenges which she has to confront immediately, and the sooner she is there, the better.

I will mention a couple of other items. The Federal law prohibiting U.S. assistance to units of foreign security forces that violate human rights was first enacted a dozen years ago. The State Department is still struggling with implementing it, particularly with regard to the monitoring of military equipment provided to foreign governments.

This law, known as the Leahy amendment, has been applied unevenly depending on the country, and I urge

Secretary-designee CLINTON to review the Leahy amendment to ensure its vigorous and consistent implementation.

Ten years ago this March, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction came into force. Today, there are 156 countries that have signed this treaty. The most powerful Nation on Earth, the United States, has not.

The U.S. military has not used the types of antipersonnel landmines prohibited by the treaty since 1991, and it has no plans to do so. I would urge her to go back to that.

Mr. President, like President Obama, Secretary-designee CLINTON recognizes the need for strong United States leadership in an increasingly complex, dangerous, and interdependent world. She understands that most global and regional problems cannot be solved by the U.S. alone, that we need to act boldly and change the status quo when it no longer serves our interests or reflects our values, strengthen and expand our alliances, help the poorest countries develop effective and accountable institutions, and pursue policies that enhance our image abroad.

Today, as we leave the troubled policies of the past 8 years behind us, the American people should feel fortunate, as I do, that HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON will be our new Secretary of State.

I commend the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts. I will be joining with him proudly to vote for the confirmation of HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON to be our next Secretary of State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont for his clear summary of the task ahead, and those challenges are enormous. Indeed, as we all know, I particularly thank him as an old friend. And as the chairman of the appropriations subcommittee, we work in close partnership, and I am grateful that his values are where they are because it empowers us to put the muscle, the money, support, and the implementation of the policies that committee struggles to formulate. So we really appreciate the relationship. I thank him for his comments very much.

Mr. President, how much time remains on both sides? We are about to propound a unanimous consent request. I think we are going to be able to have a vote around 4 o'clock, hopefully. I want to allow for the majority leader to get back to make a couple of comments himself. But I would like to get a sense of the time that remains.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts controls 19 minutes, the Republicans control 27 minutes.

Mr. KERRY. Obviously, we intend to yield back on both sides. I thank the Chair. I know the distinguished Senator from Maryland has been waiting

patiently. He would like to add a few thoughts. I yield him 4 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me thank our distinguished chairman for yielding me this time.

My colleagues have talked frequently about how our colleague, Senator CLINTON, is the right person at the right time to be the Secretary of State. We have talked a great deal about her experience. As First Lady of this Nation, she traveled frequently around the world. She knows firsthand the problems that America confronts internationally. With experience as the Senator for New York, serving on the Armed Services Committee, she understands the critical role the State Department plays in our national security. With her service on the Helsinki Commission, she knows firsthand the importance that the Department of State can play in human rights issues around the world. For all of those reasons, she is truly the right person to represent our Nation as Secretary of State. She is an iconic figure for American values and for hope for people around the world.

I wanted to comment about how President and Mrs. CLINTON have provided disclosure. It is unprecedented the amount of the financial information they have opened to the public.

I particularly want to thank our former President, Bill Clinton, for his humanitarian work. We all know that Government cannot do it alone. Yet he has been able to deal with the international humanitarian needs through the use of foundations and getting other people involved. But I particularly want to thank the former President and the foundation for which he is responsible for the unprecedented disclosures that they are making. We will know all the contributors. They have agreed that before new contributions are made it will be cleared through the Government ethics bureau to make sure there is not even the appearance of a conflict. So they are doing good things for our country. The foundation is doing good things for humanitarian needs. We know that.

The Clintons have taken extraordinary steps to do the right thing for this country in the disclosure and the work they do. It is now time for us to do the right thing and confirm HILLARY CLINTON as the next Secretary of State for our Nation.

I thank the Chair for yielding me the time. I would yield back the remainder of my time to the chairman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW.) The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, for the sake of colleagues I reiterate, in about 15 minutes, after the majority leader has returned and had a chance to speak on this nomination, we will proceed to a vote.

It is my understanding—I was going to ask for unanimous consent—there is

a request by someone on the other side to have a rollcall vote. So there will be a rollcall vote at that time.

We are going to be making that request in a few minutes. Let me speak for the couple of minutes we have left to share a couple of quick thoughts, if I may.

This is the beginning of the 25th year that I have had the privilege of serving on the Foreign Relations Committee. I have seen the ups and downs, the waves of opportunities and lost opportunities that we have lived through in the course of that time, the heady years of the 1980s, when arms control was the centerpiece of our focus and analysis, and we were in the middle of the Cold War. The committee contributed significantly to the dialog at that time about MX missile deployments and nuclear warheads, tactical, conventional weapons, how to count. Fundamentally, that was altered through the significant daring of President Reagan to meet with President Gorbachev in Reykjavik and negotiate a pretty remarkable reduction in nuclear warheads at that time. It was against the conventional wisdom, and it is proof of the opportunities we face today, many of which run against the conventional wisdom.

I am convinced President Obama and Secretary-to-be CLINTON—with the input and cooperation of the Congress and our committee—stand on the threshold of a new moment of those kinds of opportunities. If Richard Nixon had not dared to send his then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to China to meet with Mao Tse Tung and, indeed, even to cross the barrier to go to Red China, as we knew it, against the wishes of many of the people in his own party and the wing of his party which found it heresy, we would not have opened China and begun a process of that relationship. There is an opportunity at this moment for an even greater relationship with China. I don't think we have begun to forge the kind of cooperative effort that is available to us, if we will engage on a much more regular and intensive basis and look for the places of commonality and agreement of interest.

There are many, frankly. Most people who analyze and think about China come to the conclusion that there is a greater opportunity for a cooperative, respectful partnership than there ought to be any kind of fears of hegemony or other kinds of expansive desires on China's part. Most people interpret the current modernization of China's military as being a fairly normative modernization process within the scale of things and not something that should be translated by the United States or others into a new arms race. I am convinced there is a great deal more to be achieved with China, provided we are disciplined and thoughtful about the setting of priorities and that we have a clear set of priorities.

One thing is clear. In the management of our relationships with China

or with Russia or some other countries, we can't do everything all at the same time. That is a bit of the way our diplomacy has been managed over these past years. For instance, even with Russia, if we are more thoughtful about the missile shield and more thoughtful about NATO expansion and if we engage in a greater dialog about the mutuality of interest in those regions, we can avoid significant misinterpretations and counterreactions that come as a consequence of not talking and not understanding the motives, intentions of another country.

Even as a child, when I was the son of a foreign service officer, I always heard people talking around me about how Americans are very good at seeing the rest of the world through their own lens but not particularly adept at looking at another country's aspirations, fears, threats, hopes through their eyes. The more we can foster a foreign service that is historically, culturally, linguistically, and otherwise immersed in the full culture of a particular country, the better we are, frankly, going to do in terms of determining our own foreign policy future and decisions. President Obama and HILLARY CLINTON clearly understand the imperative of changing how we have made some of those decisions.

When I became a member of the Arms Control Observer Group in the Senate, something now defunct but something we might wish to think about enhancing in the context of proliferation issues, one of the things that always struck me was the degree to which from the time we used the bomb at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the only nation that, incidentally, has ever exploded an atomic weapon against another people, from that moment forward, almost every weapon transition, with the exception of two—it was either the long-range bomber and/or the silent submarine—almost every weapon advancement in the course of the entire Cold War, we were first in the development of the new, more technologically advanced weapon, whatever it was. Almost without exception, our principal opponents at the time, the Soviet Union, came as quick as they could afterward and met that challenge. So we always ratcheted up, up until the point that we were at something like 30,000 warheads. Today we are somewhere in the vicinity of 5,000-plus warheads.

It is my firm belief that in this next year, we have an opportunity to negotiate an agreement with Russia, where we actually ratchet down to about 1,000 warheads, which would be the lowest we have had in the course of that period of time, since the beginning, and still be safe; in fact, be safer. Because if you have the kinds of controls with verification, inspection that get you to that level, then you begin to send a message to the rest of the world that you are serious about nonproliferation, and you begin to send a message that says to the world: The United States is

taking the lead, and we will live by the standards we try to foist on other people. Most importantly, we make the world safer because we reduce the capacity for fissile material to fall into the wrong hands.

I will continue to press this thousand-warhead concept. My hope is it will become a centerpiece of the START talks and where we proceed. It is interesting because, even as we have these now 5,000-plus or so warheads—and that, incidentally, depends on accounting rules because we don't count the same weapons all the time—the fact is that China, according to public estimates, nothing classified but public estimates, has about 23 warheads. They may ratchet that up because of our lack of having moved from where we are and other reasons. The fact is, they have been pretty content to feel secure with 23. Most rational people, thinking about the use of warheads, understand the implications of using only a few.

One of the things I learned at nuclear, chemical and biological warfare school, when I served in the Navy, was the full implication of just one or two or three weapons. So when you think in terms of thousands and so forth, in today's world, where the principal conflict is religious extremism and terrorism associated with it, you have to put a huge question mark over the theories that continue to spend the amounts of money that we do and create the kinds of insecurity that we do as a consequence.

This is a moment of rather remarkable opportunity. I recently was in Pakistan and Afghanistan, India. India and Pakistan are still engaged in literally old-fashioned, mostly Cold War, old, bad-habit confrontation. In fact, both sides know the concept of war would be absurd, when the real threat to both of them comes internally from people who are disgruntled and disenfranchised and otherwise seduced into believing that by adopting one religious ideology or another or none, that they are somehow advantaging themselves. This is an opportunity to forge a new relationship across the world, as the President did yesterday. I thought one of the most important phrases he uttered in his speech was his outreach, his holding his hand out to the Muslim world to ask people to come together. One of the things that most struck me in these last years is the degree to which religious, fanatical, violent extremists have actually been able to isolate the United States within that world rather than us being able, together with modern Islam, to isolate them.

That is one of the things President Obama and this administration offers us, an opportunity to have a completely different kind of interfaith, global dialog that begins to empower modern Islam to take back the legitimacy of their religion. It is my hope and prayer that will be a centerpiece of this administration's foreign policy.

There is much to do. Obviously, Somalia and East Congo, the trouble of

Darfur that remains, populations in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and elsewhere that grow at an astonishing rate so that perhaps 60 percent of Saudi Arabia and Egypt are under the age of 21, 50 percent under the age of 18, it is a stunning growth of young people who need a future. If that future is reduced to madrasas and to the distortion of the opportunities of life, we all pay a price. Our children in the future will pay a price. So these choices that President Obama and Secretary CLINTON will face, together with the Congress, are significant.

Then, of course, there is one issue many people don't always think of as a national security/foreign policy issue. That is global climate change. I have attended almost every major conference since the Rio conference of 1992. I remember going down there with then-Senator Al Gore, and Senator Gore and I and a few others had held the first hearings on global climate change in 1988. I have watched the progression of all these years as all the warnings of 1988 have come true and more. Now our scientists are revising their latest predictions. Only a year ago, 2 years ago, they were saying we could sustain 550 parts per million of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Now they have revised that, not just down to 450, but they are beginning to talk about 350 parts per million as being the acceptable level.

The latest science, regrettably, shows that Mother Earth is giving us feedback at a rate that is coming at us faster and in a greater degree than any of those scientific reports offered. The result is that challenge grows greater, not smaller. I regret to say we are emitting greenhouse gases at a rate that is four times faster than it was in the 1990s. We are not doing the job. No other country is either entirely, but we are the worst because we, regrettably, are 25 percent of the world's global greenhouse gas emissions. Almost every country I have talked to in the last years, as we discuss how we are going to deal with this, looks back at us and says: We are waiting for your leadership.

I have communicated this to President Obama. He has indicated he intends to be serious about it. But the latest modeling shows that if you take every single current proposal of every country in the world that has a proposal—and that is not many—and you extend the curve out in the modeling to take all the input of today from the science and measure it against those current plans, we fall woefully short of what we need to do in order to meet this challenge. We will see an increase of somewhere between 600 and 900 parts per million which is insupportable with respect to life as we know it. We will see a degree of temperature increase of somewhere from 3.5 to 6 degrees centigrade. We have seen exactly what that means in terms of the migration of forests, the destruction of ocean currents, the increase of violent storms, the de-

struction of property, the movement of whole populations who will live with new drought, new water problems, and other issues.

So, Madam President, I think we are running out of time. I am sort of stalling here waiting for the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator's time has expired. Mr. KERRY. That is what I figured.

Well, on that inauspicious note, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed now until he comes. Then I will put in a quorum call in a few moments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. To finish that thought, the ice sheets in the Arctic are melting. We anticipate now, according to the science, we are going to have an ice-free arctic in the summer in about 10 years. The problem with that is that as more ice disappears, more water is evident, is available, and the water, unlike the ice sheet, which acts as a reflector for the Sun's rays, acts to absorb the Sun's rays. So the more the ice melts, the warmer the ocean becomes and the faster it begins to continue the rest of the melting.

The result is, we begin to change the entire ecosystem in ways that scientists cannot predict completely, but it has a profound impact on the ecosystem. Moreover, it adds to the melting of the Greenland ice sheet. The Greenland ice sheet, unlike the arctic ice sheet, which floats, and, therefore, does not change the displacement—the Greenland ice sheet is on rock.

Right now, you can go up there. The Senator from California went up there last summer with a group. You can stare down a hole 100 feet deep, and you can see a torrent of a river running down off that ice into the ocean. Scientists are worried that the water layer underneath the ice actually creates a potential that a huge block of ice may slide off and fall into the ocean.

The rest of it continues to melt. The implication of the Greenland ice sheet melting is that is where you get your 16 to 23 feet of sea level rise.

Now, all I can tell you is, all of these impacts are irreversible—irreversible—so we are staring at an abyss of irreversibility. The best choice for people in positions of high responsibility like us and public people who make these choices is the whole precautionary principle. If we are told we can avoid it by doing X, Y, and Z, and the implications of not avoiding it are disaster, we have a responsibility to try to avoid it.

Now, we have to do this. It means a fundamental, profound change in our economy. That means shifting our energy grid, moving toward solar and renewables. People sort of scratch their heads and say: Well, is that kind of dreamy, goo-goo, crazy thinking? The answer is no. I had a venture capitalist in my office last week who wants to

build a 600-megawatt solar powerplant in the Southwest of our country and they cannot get the financing right now.

So this economic crisis is, in fact, an economic opportunity that also has profound national security implications because to the degree we lead in our responsibilities to go to Copenhagen—where we have an international meeting next December, where we have an opportunity to fix the Kyoto treaty with a new agreement, which will have a huge impact on people all across the planet—that is one of the major challenges before the Obama administration.

I know the President is very committed to trying to move forward on this issue. But he and Secretary of State CLINTON are going to have a huge challenge to persuade countries to do difficult things, to persuade Americans to change some of our habits and do difficult things.

I am told by experts that you could produce six times the electricity needs of the entire United States of America—six times—from either concentrated solar photovoltaics or solar thermal in Utah, Colorado, California, New Mexico, and Arizona, and I think that is the heart of it. Those approximately six States or so could wind up providing us with the base from which we could provide that. I am confident the technology will move forward.

So I wholeheartedly support, as I have said in the committee, and as I have said earlier in my opening comments, the nominee. I believe Senator CLINTON is in a position to provide a historical shift in American foreign policy where we reach out to the world with the best of our values and the best of our thinking and the best of our hopes and intentions. I think this can be a moment where we renew America's proud role as a global leader, where we touch the hearts and minds of people all across the planet, and where we have an opportunity to say to future generations, we met our responsibility.

Having said that, the distinguished majority leader is here and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I appreciate the leadership of the chair of our Foreign Relations Committee, Senator KERRY. In the short time he has assumed the responsibilities of that most important committee, he has done a remarkably good job, and the best is yet to come. He mentioned here briefly some of the things he wants to do dealing with the scourge we find ourselves in with global warming, and it is going to be remarkable, the work he does.

Madam President, we are moving forward on the vote on the nomination of Senator HILLARY CLINTON to be Secretary of State.

Senator CLINTON is uniquely capable and profoundly prepared to lead our

State Department at a time of unprecedented global challenges, and at a time when quick confirmation of President Obama's national security team is critical to protect us here at home.

We face two wars abroad, a complex and unpredictable crisis in the Middle East, the nuclear ambitions of a volatile Iranian regime, together with the complexities of dealing with North Korea.

Senator CLINTON has earned the admiration and respect of the global community with her understanding that our international power must be both strong and smart, that the true measure of our influence is not just the size and strength of our military, but also how we use other tools, including diplomacy and foreign assistance, to make the world safer and more free.

Senator CLINTON's exemplary qualifications and wise world view were demonstrated in her confirmation hearings, where she showed a tremendous breadth and depth of knowledge on the major foreign policy issues we face in the world today.

We all remember HILLARY CLINTON's arrival in the Senate a few short years ago—8 years ago. Some wondered—and some out loud—whether a former First Lady who had become a favored target of the rightwing could forge the relationships necessary to be an effective Senator for the people of New York State. She answered that loud, and she answered it very clear.

Some questioned whether a person of such national and international acclaim would put in the time to get to know the inner workings of the Senate and the nitty-gritty of the legislative process. She answered that big time.

It took no time for Senator CLINTON to make believers from those doubters. She became an instant favorite of Democrats and Republicans alike, a forceful advocate for both smart foreign policies and domestic policies, and a remarkably effective student of bipartisanship.

In her time as First Lady of our country, serving as an American emissary to the world, and then in the Senate as a member of the Armed Services Committee, HILLARY CLINTON built the diplomatic skills and breadth of knowledge one needs to be our next Secretary of State. She has the full package.

All but one member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to approve this outstanding nominee. Democrats and Republicans alike stand in support of our friend and colleague, Senator CLINTON.

I want spread on the RECORD my appreciation for JOHN MCCAIN coming to the floor and saying: Let's approve her now. He tried to do that earlier today.

I ask all my colleagues to join me in sending the world a clear message that we stand behind President Obama and our new Secretary of State as they proceed together to the task of rebuilding our foreign policy to be stronger, smarter, and more able to effectively

lead the world with moral strength once again.

Madam President, first, we yield back all time on both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now vote on confirmation of the nomination of Senator CLINTON to be Secretary of State, with the remaining provisions of the previous unanimous consent agreement in effect.

I would also say this: For all the new Senators and those who may have forgotten, we are starting this vote a little earlier, so we will be lenient here and not tie down the 15-minute rule. But in the future, we are going to start this Congress as we ended the last one. We are going to have 15-minute votes. There will be a 5-minute time period for people who are late getting here. But at the end of 20 minutes, the votes are going to be closed. This will be hard on Democrats and hard on Republicans, but it is a lot harder on everybody waiting around here for these people to come to vote. So some people are going to miss some votes, and I am sorry about that, but it is better for the body if we have votes that end when they are supposed to.

As soon as this matter is completed relating to the confirmation of HILLARY CLINTON, we are going to go back to Ledbetter. We would hope that the Kay Bailey Hutchison amendment in the form of a substitute, which has been offered, can be debated today and that we can vote on that this evening.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the majority leader's request?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, of New York, to be Secretary of State?

Mr. KERRY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll. (Disturbance in the Visitors' Galleries)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I would ask that there not be responses from the gallery. Thank you.

The clerk will continue with the call of the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 6 Ex.]

YEAS—94

Akaka	Barrasso	Bayh
Alexander	Baucus	Begich

Bennett	Grassley	Murkowski
Bingaman	Gregg	Murray
Bond	Hagan	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Brown	Hatch	Pryor
Brownback	Hutchison	Reed
Bunning	Inhofe	Reid
Burr	Inouye	Risch
Burris	Isakson	Roberts
Byrd	Johanns	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Johnson	Sanders
Cardin	Kaufman	Schumer
Carper	Kerry	Sessions
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Chambliss	Kohl	Shelby
Coburn	Kyl	Snowe
Cochran	Landrieu	Specter
Collins	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Conrad	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Levin	Thune
Cornyn	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Lincoln	Udall (NM)
Dodd	Lugar	Voinovich
Dorgan	Martinez	Warner
Durbin	McCain	Webb
Ensign	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Feingold	Menendez	Wyden
Feinstein	Merkley	
Graham	Mikulski	

NAYS—2

DeMint Vitter

NOT VOTING—2

Clinton Kennedy

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

Under the previous order, the President will immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

Several Senators Addressed the Chair.

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I am prepared to offer my amendment to the Ledbetter Act, the Mikulski bill. To proceed, I need to know if that is the order of business.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I was seeking recognition when the quorum call was put in. I am still seeking recognition. Obviously—well, I would just note that, that I was—

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I had been working with Senator MIKULSKI and the majority leader about moving to Senator MIKULSKI's bill and my amendment, which is pending, and I had offered to allow Senator VOINOVICH to speak on that. If the Senator has something to intervene, I would be happy to try to accommodate, but this is the pending business.