INAGURAL CEREMONY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Inaugural Ceremony proceedings be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, at its conclusion.

INAGURAL CEREMONY

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January 20, 2009, 11:30 a.m.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff assembled on the President’s platform.

The President-elect of the United States, Mr. Barack H. Obama, Jr., accompanied by House Chief Administrator, Mr. John Boehner; the House Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Steny Hoyer; the Senate Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Russell D. Monger; the House Majority Leader, Mr. Steny Hoyer; the Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Harry Reid; the House Republican Leader, Mr. John Boehner; and Secretary for the Majority, Ms. Mary Schiappa, assembled on the President’s platform.

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The Diplomatic Corps assembled on the President’s platform.

The Governor of the United States and its territories, and the Mayor of the District of Columbia, assembled on the President’s platform.

The Members of the 111th House of Representatives of the United States, led by majority whips James E. Clyburn and Republican whip Eric Cantor, assembled on the President’s platform.

The Members of the Senate of the United States assembled on the President’s platform.

Former Speakers of the House of Representatives, Thomas Foley and Newt Gingrich, accompanied by Mrs. Foley and Ms. Gingrich, assembled on the President’s platform.

Former Vice Presidents Walter Mondale, Dan Quayle, and Al Gore, accompanied by Mrs. Mondale, Mrs. Quayle, and Mrs. Gore, assembled on the President’s platform.

Mr. Pelosi, Ms. Pritzker, Mr. John W. Rogers, Jr., Mr. Patrick G. Ryan, and Ms. Julianna Smoot, cochairs of the 56th Presidential Inaugural Committee; and Mr. Emmett S. Beliveau, executive director of the 56th Presidential Inaugural Committee, assembled on the President’s platform.

The President-elect’s Cabinet and agency designees assembled on the President’s platform.

The Chief Justice of the United States, the Honorable John Roberts, Jr., and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States assembled on the President’s platform.

The 39th President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter assembled on the President’s platform.

The 41st President of the United States, George H.W. Bush, and Mrs. Barbara Bush assembled on the President’s platform.

The 42nd President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, and Senator Hillary Clinton assembled on the President’s platform.

The children of the Vice President-elect, CPT Beau Biden, Hunter Biden, and Ashley Biden, accompanied by House Chief Administrator, Representative Dan Beard, assembled on the President’s platform.
Court of the United States John Paul Stevens, who will administer the oath of office to the Vice President-elect. Will you all please stand.

As the Chief Justice JOHN PAUL STEVENS administered the Vice Presidential oath to the Vice President-elect, the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, which he repeated, as follows:

"I, JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN, JR. do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, so help me God."

(Shouting and applause.)

Mr. Feinstei. It is my pleasure to introduce a unique musical performance: Mr. Itzhak Perlman, violinist; Anthony McGill, clarinet; Yo-Yo Ma, cellist; and Gabriela Montero, pianist, performing "Air and Simple Gifts." a composition arranged for this occasion by John Williams. (Performance by Mr. Yo-Yo Ma, Mr. Anthony Gill, Gabriela Montero, and Itzhak Perlman.)

Mrs. Feinstei. It is my distinct honor to present the Chief Justice of the United States, John G. Roberts, Jr., who will administer the Presidential oath of office. Everyone, please stand.

The President. This is the Supreme Court, JOHN G. ROBERTS, JR., administered to the President-elect the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, which he repeated, as follows:

"I, BARACK HUSSEIN OBAMA, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. So help me God."

(Shouting and applause.)

Mr. Feinstei. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great personal honor to present the 44th President of these United States, Barack Obama.

(Shouting and applause.)

The President. Thank you. Thank you. My fellow citizens, I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our forebears. I thank John and Cindy McCain for their service to our Nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.

For we are Americans who have taken the Presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often, the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and surging waters of worry. Yet, every so often, the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and surging waters of worry. Even the mostingersome moments give way to the light of the sun—aillestingly hopeful moment. For us, they fought and died in places like Concord and Gettysburg, Normandy and Khe Sahn.

Time and again, these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked until their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip, and plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died in places like Concord and Gettysburg, Normandy and Khe Sahn.

This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful Nation on Earth. Our workers are no less productive now than all the differences of birth or wealth or race.

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In the year of America’s birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying camp fires on the shores of an icy river; the capital was abandoned, the enemy was near, the snow was stained with blood; at a moment when the outcome of our Revolution was most in doubt, the Father of our Nation ordered these words be read to the people of every State, and every Valley, and hold to meet [it].

America, in the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us re-member these words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the ices and currents and endure what storms may come. Let it be said by our children’s children that when we tested, we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back, nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God’s grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.

Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I have the distinct pleasure of introducing an American poet, Elizabeth Alexander.

Ms. ALEXANDER. “Praise Song for the Day.”

Each day we go about our business, walking past each other, catching each other’s eyes or not, about to speak or speak no more.

All about us is noise. All about us is noise and bramble, thorn and din, each one of our ancestors on our tongues.

Someone is stitching up a hem, ironing a pillow, sewing a boot, reparing the things in need or repair.

A woman and her son wait for the bus. A father considers the changing sky. A teacher says, “Take out your pencils. Begin.”

We encounter each other in words, words spiny or smooth, whispered or declaimed, words to consider, reconsider.

We cross dirt roads and highways that mark where the world and the wilderness meet.

We hear the soaring bird. We hear the calling of the night.

We stand on the cusp of a new era of peace. A new era of respect. To those leaders around the world who have maintained the peace—those brave Americans who at this very hour stand by their posts, we say we can no longer afford indifference. We say we will do all we can to help spread the peace to every corner of the globe.

Let it be told to the future world . . . that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive . . . that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came together to meet [it].

January 20, 2009

S669

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE
MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the President Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 349

At the request of Ms. Stabenow, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. Menendez) was added as a co-sponsor of S. 349, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to qualify formerly homeless youth who are students for purposes of low income tax credit.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Reid. Mr. President, I express my appreciation to my Republican colleagues for the unanimous-consent request I am going to offer at this time, which has been approved, as I understand it, by the Republican leader and the other Senators.

Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that tomorrow, January 21, at the hour of 12 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Hillary Clinton to be Secretary of State; that there be 3 hours of debate, with the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination of Senator Clinton; that upon confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that no other motions be in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess for our usual party luncheons, and that the recess begin, if it is appropriate with the distinguished Republican leader, at 12:45 p.m., rather than at 12:30, so some debate can move forward.

Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, if the majority leader would yield for a question?

Mr. Reid. Mr. President, I would be happy to.

Mr. McConnell. Is the Senator suggesting that the time on Senator Clinton’s nomination run through the luncheons?

Mr. Reid. Well, what I would like to do: We would stop at a quarter to 1 and come back at 2:15 to complete that debate at that time.

Mr. McConnell. That is fine.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THANKING SENATOR ALEXANDER

Mr. Reid. Mr. President, I express my appreciation to the distinguished Senator from Tennessee for his usual courtesies. He had to wait for me to get here, and I appreciate his withholding until the Republican leader and I got here. The Senator from Tennessee is always a gentleman, and even though he and I do not agree once in a while on political issues, we always agree he is a gentleman.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. Alexander. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his remarks. Unless the Republican leader has some remarks, I would like to say a couple things.

AMERICA: A REMARKABLE COUNTRY

Mr. Alexander. Mr. President, in August 1963, I was a law student and a summer intern in the U.S. Department of Justice here in Washington. I was standing at the back of a huge crowd on a hot day when Dr. King spoke of his dream that one day his children would be judged not “by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

The inauguration of our former colleague, Barack Obama, the day after Dr. King’s birthday, symbolizes both remarkable progress on America’s most intractable problem—race—and a reaffirmation of our country’s most unique characteristic—a fervent belief that anything is possible.

I thought about this in the same way 4 years ago at almost this time. I formed a speech in my head that I wanted to make, but I did not make it. Senator Obama, they had a speech because they had an unexpressed thought. I have said many things I wish I had not said, but this is one time I wish I had said, 4 years ago, what I was thinking. So I wish to say it today, right after President Obama’s inauguration. And I am especially delighted Senator Martinez happens to be here too.

What I was thinking 4 years ago as the new Senators were sworn in was that here were three Members of the new class who had especially unique characteristics. One had a distinguished career here now. On that day 4 years ago, his mother was in the gallery.

Senator Martinez was sworn in 4 years ago as a new Member of the Senate, in this case from Florida. His story, which he has just published in a remarkably good book which I have given to many of my friends, is the story of a young boy growing up very happily in Cuba whose parents took him to the airport one day, after having bought him a new suit, when he was 14 years of age, and put him on an airplane to Miami, not knowing if they would ever see him again. He was in a foreign home there, then moved to Orlando. The story is all in the book. He went to Florida State, met his wife Kitty, became the mayor of Orlando, then became a member of President Bush’s Cabinet, then a Member of the U.S. Senate. A very remarkable story. His mother, who put him on the airplane in Cuba, was here that day.

These same 4 years ago when we swore in these new Members of the Senate, we also had the Senator from Illinois. We all know the story very well: a father from Kenya, a mother from Kansas. I don’t need to repeat that extraordinary story, about which he has written so well in his autobiography. But what struck me was that his grandmother was in the gallery that day. It was either his grandmother or his grandfather, but I believe it was his grandmother. His father’s parent was in the gallery that day. The first trip, I believe, from Africa to this country to see the son of an immigrant sworn into the U.S. Senate.

So I thought 4 years ago, and I think again today on this day on which we swear in Barack Obama as President, what a remarkable country this is. Here in this Senate 4 years ago, the 14th-generation American Ken Salazar is now going into President Obama’s Cabinet as Secretary of the Interior. Mel Martinez, having had a long career in public life as mayor in Orlando, as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, as U.S. Senator, is going on to other things in his life. Former Senator Obama, oh, of course, is now the President of the United States. But what was remarkable was 4 years ago they came to this Senate, and in that gallery were their parents—and in one case a grandfather—reaffirming what I think Barack Obama’s inauguration represents for us today.

It was historic in the sense that it helped us symbolize the overcoming of one of our most intractable problems, the problem of race. But just as