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Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, September 25, 1995)

The Senate met at 9 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by a guest Chaplain, the Reverend Dr. George Gray Toole, Towson Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, MD.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, the Reverend Dr. George Gray Toole, offered the following prayer:

O God, You who have created the nations and so richly blessed our Nation and its people, we acknowledge Your presence and ask for Your guidance for the U.S. Senate. As it meets under the pressure of time and with so many crucial issues before it, we ask You to minister to its Members and support staff. Where weariness prevails, give them strength. Where matters become complex, give them discernment. When hard choices are to be made, give them integrity. Cause them to work in such a way that, when all of this is past, they may be content with the work they have accomplished. We do not ask that all of them be of one opinion, but that they be of one heart in their commitment to the people and principles of this Nation and to the way You have set before each and all of us. That this may be done, we come to You now, that You may lead them first before they seek to lead the people of this Nation. Use their gifts and talents, which are great in number and variety, and have them serve in a manner that will cause the citizens of this Nation to honor them. And in all things, let all that they do praise You. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader, Senator DOLE, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, there will be a period of morning business until 9:15. At 9:15, as I understand—and we do not have staff around—there will be four votes. There will be a vote in relation to the amendment offered by the Senator from West Virginia, Senator ROCKEFELLER; one vote on an amendment offered by the Senator from Montana, Senator BAUCUS; and on one amendment offered by the Senator from Maryland, Senator SARBANES.

Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to morning business, which shall not extend beyond 10 minutes, under the control of the Senator from Alabama [Mr. HEFLIN].

The able Senator from Alabama [Mr. HEFLIN] is recognized.

A BRIGHT STAR IN AMERICA'S CONSTELLATION OF RESTAURANTS

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, whenever I have the pleasure of traveling in north Alabama, I try to visit Bessemer, AL, about a 15-minute drive from the city of Birmingham. One of the many attractions in Bessemer is the Bright Star, one of our Nation's very best family-owned restaurants. Its reputation has been built over the course of this century, with fresh seafood transported from the gulf coast daily, the finest cuts of meat available, and the freshest vegetables and produce.

Actually, I have dined at many fine restaurants during my lifetime, but I consider the Bright Star one of the world's very best. It is certainly on a par with the finest restaurants in New Orleans, San Francisco, Washington, New York, Paris, London, Athens, Vienna, Rome, Budapest, and Copenhagen. At one time, it had Alabama rivals in Montgomery's Elite Cafe and Mobile's Constantine's, but these are unfortunately no longer in existence.

The Bright Star is well-known for its many specialties, but its Greek-style red snapper is truly one of the most superb seafood dishes I have ever tasted. There are also a variety of steaks featured, and the beef tenderloin—which is marinated in special herbs that the Greeks know how to combine and cook in a Mediterranean style—is simply delicious. There is a variety of broiled and fried fish to choose from, as well as giant seafood platters. One of the specialties is a combination lobster and crab meat au-gratin. The broiled seafood platter is widely considered one of the very best to be found anywhere.

One can also enjoy Italian dishes at the Bright Star, such as spaghetti and other types of pasta. Their appetizers are most unique and some of the best include shrimp remoulade, shrimp arnaud, the crab claw platter, and the seafood gumbo. They offer many varieties of salads, but their Greek salad—with or without anchovies—is magnificent. They also have many standard American dishes. Fried chicken and the veal cutlet with spaghetti are popular items on the menu. The chefs have acquired a real knack for preparing vegetables southern-style. They serve everything from turnip greens to black-eyed peas. The desserts include all varieties, ranging from Greek pastries to homemade southern pies, like coconut cream and banana nut.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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For a hungry person, there is a truly impressive variety of food to choose from at the Bright Star. The Texas special—consisting of the Greek-style snapper, tenderloin of beef Greek-style, and the lobster and crab meat au-gratin—is an entree that does not escape the memory for years to come.

Sunday lunch at the Bright Star is one of its busiest times. After church services, worshipers will flock from miles around, and sometimes delay their Sunday lunch until 2:30 or 3 p.m. in the afternoon, in order to avoid the overflow crowd.

After a University of Alabama football game in Birmingham, fans who have come up from Tuscaloosa will stop by on the way back after the game. In years past, it was not uncommon to see legendary Alabama football figures like Coach Bear Bryant, Hank Crisp, and Frank Thomas. At the Bright Star, political figures are frequent guests. On one occasion, I ran into Senator SHELBY and former Congressman Claude Harris at separate tables.

The history of the Bright Star is rich and quintessentially American. In 1907, Greek immigrant Tom Bonduris established the Bright Star. When its doors opened, it was only a small cafe with a horseshoe-shaped bar, but it soon outgrew three locations, moving to its present site in 1915. Bill Koikos and his brother, Peter, joined in the enterprise when they emigrated from Greece in 1920. Customers were introduced to a new dining atmosphere, complete with ceiling fans, tile floors, mirrored and marbled walls, and murals painted by a European artist traveling through the area, all creating a pleasing effect reflective of that era. While major alterations have occurred since, the same early 20th-century-style atmosphere has been largely preserved.

The Bright Star's reputation and success are easily measured simply by the satisfaction of its clientele. A place like home was the kind of climate fostered by Tom Bonduris in 1907 and kept alive today by the Koikos brothers and their descendants—Bill's wife, Anastasia, and children, Helen, Jimmy, and Nicholas.

As immigrants, Tom Bonduris and Bill and Peter Koikos knew little of the English language and had few possessions when they arrived in this country, but they worked hard and learned to please their customers. By establishing the Bright Star restaurant as a place of "philotimo"—a place of hospitality from the heart—the Koikos and Bonduris families drew upon the culture and traditions of their ancestors, striking a resounding chord of acceptance with the public which has never faded. They brought with them certain recipes from Greece, and the Koikos family has continued to use these and secret blends of herbs and spices ever since those early days to make their food unique.

Today, the Bright Star is wholly owned and run by the sons of Bill

Koikos, Nick, and Jimmy. Nick oversees the general operations of the restaurant, including the kitchen, and Jimmy serves as the greeter of their patrons and as the front man. Their sister, Helen, also plays an active role, working as the cashier on Fridays and Sundays and generally helping out whenever she is needed. The Koikos family has maintained a high level of commitment to hard work over the lifetime of their restaurant.

The employees of the Bright Star are an integral part of the family there, and many of them have been with the restaurant for many years. I ask unanimous consent that a list of the employees who have been with the Bright Star for 10 years or more be printed in the RECORD following my remarks. Among these are Gwendolyn Atkinson, an employee for 32 years; Mary Sherrod, 46 years; Fannie Wright, 33 years; Walter Hoskins, 28 years; and Nita Ray, 27 years.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, the long, dedicated, and loyal service of these employees is evidence of the type of employers the Koikos brothers are and the type of family atmosphere they foster in their restaurant.

As American citizens, business owners, and participants in the democratic process, this family has developed and maintained a reputation envied by all those who look to our shores for a new start in life. Today, Koikos family members are among the best to be found in Bessemer—or anywhere, for that matter—and Alabama has an establishment in which it can take great pride. Likewise, the United States of America is a better nation because of the outstanding contributions of those from other lands like the Koikos family, whose mission has been to contribute, and whose members believe that the American dream can still be realized if one has the courage and determination to work toward that dream.

I congratulate all the members of the Koikos family on the tremendous success of the Bright Star, and I personally look forward to enjoying many more dining experiences there in the future. There are still many items on the menu which I have not yet tried, but hope to sample soon.

EXHIBIT 1

BRIGHT STAR EMPLOYEES OF 10 YEARS OR MORE

Gwendolyn Atkinson—32 years.
Betty Bailey—22 years.
Wanda Little—11 years.
Mary Sherrod—46 years.
Robert Moore—11 years.
Dorothy Patton—19 years.
Felisa Tolbert—16 years.
Carl Thomas—18 years.
Fannie Wright—33 years.
Aareen Tolbert—16 years.
Angela Sellers—13 years.
Marlon Tanksley—13 years.
Walter Hoskins—28 years.
Brenda Adams—12 years.

Fumiko Adams—19 years.
Elizabeth Gardner—19 years.
Nita Ray—27 years.
Rita Weems—12 years.
Anne Mull—15 years.
Marie Jackson—20 years.
Sarah Marshall—10 years.
Anthony Ross—10 years.
Faye Kelley—12 years.
Dale Ware—10 years.
Jerome Walker—10 years.

TRIBUTE TO LOU WHITAKER AND ALAN TRAMMELL

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to two outstanding athletes from my home State of Michigan. They deserve our respect not only for their athletic achievements, which are considerable, but for their professional conduct and dedication to their community.

In an age when professional athletes move from city to city, it is refreshing to talk about these two men. Lou Whitaker and Alan Trammell have been the second baseman and shortstop, respectively, for the Detroit Tigers for 19 years. They have played in more than 1,915 games together. That is more than any other set of teammates in the history of the American League.

We can, and should, admire their achievements on the field. Alan Trammell has won four Golden Glove Awards, been selected for the All-Star game six times, and was voted the Most Valuable Player in the 1984 World Series. Lou Whitaker was voted American League Rookie of the Year in 1978, has won three Golden Glove Awards, and has played on four All-Star teams. More uniquely, he is one of only two second basemen in history to have played in 2,000 games, had over 2,000 hits, and over 200 home runs. I expect that Alan Trammell and Lou Whitaker will one day be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame for these achievements.

Even more though, we should admire their dedication and loyalty to a team and a town—attributes that seem increasingly scarce today. Since 1976, they have been a part of Detroit. I have seen many games where Tram and Lou have turned the double play that has become their hallmark. The amazing thing to consider is the millions of fans in Michigan and across the country that have seen that same feat.

Alan Trammell and Lou Whitaker, through their consistent performance and grace, have given something special to the people of our State. For that they deserve our admiration and our thanks. They will always have a special place in the hearts of millions who have cheered their feats on and off the field.

A RESPONSE TO ABC NEWS' VIEWS OF THE EARLY ROMAN SENATE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, modern-day life expectancy now tops seventy