

we have a great President, and it is going to be a great campaign, but we should not bring it to this floor and hold up the nomination of the Surgeon General because everyone is going after some block of voters to prove that they can be more antichoice than the next candidate. That is wrong. A woman has a right to choose in this country.

The fact is we have a Surgeon General nominee who has the greatest record in stopping teen pregnancy.

Mr. President, there are those who say: What does the Surgeon General do anyway? I am going to go through a little of this, and if my time runs out, I will be back tomorrow. I am going to be back every day, every day, asking where is this nomination. It is not the American way to keep a kind and decent man waiting like this since February. We have had Surgeon Generals who have done some incredibly important things in terms of the fight against smoking, syphilis, AIDS—it goes on. I will save that for another time.

So in my remaining moments here, Mr. President, I will summarize in this way. There is no reason not to schedule this vote. This man passed out of the committee on a 9-to-7 vote. He is fully qualified. He has met every test. And, yes, he is an OB-GYN. And I say to my friends, it is about time we had someone with that kind of experience of bringing babies into the world and taking care of women's health in the position of Surgeon General.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. MURRAY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, is recognized for 7 minutes.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Chair.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I, too, today rise to urge the majority leader to bring the nomination of Dr. Henry Foster, Jr., for U.S. Surgeon General to the Senate floor for a vote.

I am very excited about the nomination of Dr. Foster to be U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Foster is an OB-GYN, and I appreciate the importance of his practice area to families and children. For far too long in this Nation, women's health concerns have been neglected by our Government. One example tells a whole story.

A National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute study of 22,000 physicians begun in 1981 found that men who took aspirin every other day reduced their incidence of heart attacks. The Institute claimed that women were not included in the study because to do so would have increased the cost. As a result, today we do not know whether this prevention strategy would help women, harm them, or have no effect.

Gender equity in medical research has received increased attention over the past few years. We no longer will tolerate a Government-funded heart disease study which includes 22,000 men

and excludes women altogether. Given that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, we expect women to be included in clinical trials.

We still have a long way to go. Women are the fastest growing demographic group among those diagnosed with HIV. We suffer from clinical depression at rates twice that of men. And we frequently are the victims of domestic violence.

It is imperative that the leading public health official in our Nation be a forceful spokesperson on these issues.

Everyone agrees we need to reduce teen pregnancy because it is a national priority. We need a Surgeon General who understands the link between sexual abuse, adolescent pregnancy, and building self-esteem among at-risk youth.

Dr. Foster has experience in reducing teen pregnancy. His "I Have a Future" program was named a "Point of Light" by President Bush because of its pioneering work. Dr. Foster has successfully demonstrated his ideas about public health strategies that can greatly benefit our Nation. He has focused not only on preventing teen pregnancy but on preventing drug abuse, reducing infant mortality and ending smoking by children. He is a physician with vision, and he is a caring and honorable man.

When I first met with him a few months ago, he mentioned the opening lecture he gives to medical students. He spoke passionately about the importance of obstetrics and gynecology. He told me he reminds new OB-GYN's that without their work there would be no art or architecture; without healthy women and children there would be nothing.

Some politicians would have the Senate exclude Dr. Foster from consideration because he has performed abortions. I disagree. Abortion should not be the determining factor in the selection of a Surgeon General. Let us not tolerate the disqualification of this candidate because of his basic practice area. Dr. Foster has dedicated his life to women's health, the welfare of children, and the well-being of families.

Meanwhile, the clock is ticking. Dr. Joycelyn Elders resigned her post, as was stated, on December 9, 1994. This nomination was sent to the Senate on February 2, the nomination papers were filed February 28, and the committee voted this out on May 26, 1995. Our Nation has now gone 6 months without a Surgeon General, and the clock is ticking.

Every 15 seconds a woman is battered. And that is not all. Let me share with my colleagues that the clock is ticking and every 59 seconds a baby is born to a teen mother. Every year, alcohol causes the death of nearly 20,000 Americans. Every 17 minutes, AIDS takes another American life. Every year, over 144,000 Americans will suffer a stroke. We need a national public health spokesperson, and we need a Surgeon General.

This year alone, 95,400 men will die of lung cancer; 62,000 women will die of

lung cancer; 51,000 Americans will die of AIDS; 46,000 women will die of breast cancer; 40,000 men will die of prostate cancer; and 14,500 women will die of ovarian cancer.

Mr. President, we need a national public health spokesperson. We need a Surgeon General, and we need a vote in the Chamber of the Senate on the nomination of Surgeon General.

I, too, will be back on this floor reminding my colleagues it has been 6 months and the clock keeps ticking. We want a vote.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO W.W. "SON" WEATHERFORD

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, we were greatly saddened on May 24 by the death of W.W. Weatherford. At 81 years of age, "Son," as he was widely known, had lived a life in which he devoted much of his time and energy to his local community.

Son Weatherford served others just by carrying out the activities of his day-to-day life. He ran the family business—the Weatherford Store, in Vina, AL, and was a member of the First Baptist Church of Russellville, serving as both a deacon and a Sunday School teacher.

Son improved his community through the offices he held and the organizations to which he belonged. He was probate judge for Franklin County, eventually becoming president of the Alabama Probate Judges Association. He was the chairman of the Franklin County, Commission, president of the Alabama Association of County Commissioners, and served as State director of the State Mental Health Board. He fought for his country in World War II and became a member of the American Veterans Association and the Red Bay American Legion. Son was also a Mason and a charter member of the Bear Creek Watershed Association. He was president of the Russellville Chamber of Commerce and was once recognized by that community as its Outstanding Citizen of the Year.

W.W. "Son" Weatherford will be sorely missed by the people of the town to which he devoted so much of his energy, the family that he leaves behind, and all those fortunate enough to have known him over the years. I offer my condolences to his wife, Iva Jo, and their entire family in the wake of this tremendous loss.

TRIBUTE TO COMDR. ROBERT MEISSNER, USN

MR. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the dedication, public service, and patriotism of Comdr. Robert M. Meissner, U.S. Navy, on the occasion of his retirement after 20 years of faithful service to our Nation.

Today Commander Meissner, a 1975 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, is

serving his last day of a 12-month assignment as the Director of Senate Affairs for the Secretary of Defense. During this and previous assignments over the past decade in the legislative affairs offices of the Department of the Navy and the Office of the Secretary of Defense [OSD] and in Senator GRAMM's office, many of us have come to know Bob Meissner well and he has earned the admiration and respect of Members on both sides of the aisle.

Legislative liaison is often a thankless job. Interpreting the Pentagon to the Congress and the Congress to the Pentagon is certainly no easy task. There is a well-known tendency in Washington to shoot messengers of bad tidings. Commander Meissner has had to convey bad news both to Members of Congress and to senior Department of Defense officials on many occasions. The fact that he has survived to his retirement, and not only survived, but thrived and continually advanced in responsibility, is testament to his grace, skill, honesty, and strong commitment to excellence in carrying out his duties.

Commander Meissner also brought a keen sense of humor to the job, which is probably an essential qualification for any legislative liaison officer. I am sure that many of my colleagues would join me in saying that Commander Bob Meissner represents the epitome of the Pentagon legislative liaison officer and we will miss his contributions to our joint effort with the Pentagon to advance our Nation's security.

Let me briefly now summarize Commander Meissner's career as a Naval officer.

Commander Meissner holds a master's degree in government with distinction, from Georgetown University, and is a graduate of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government's Senior Officials in National Security Program. His military experience includes four operational carrier deployments, two with an air antisubmarine squadron and two as a strike operations officer with the ship's company, a staff assignment as aide and executive assistant, post graduate studies, and several joint duty staff assignments. He is an antisubmarine warfare mission commander in the S-3A aircraft and qualified as an underway command duty officer.

In October 1983, as the U.S. task force's only on-scene strike operations officer, Commander Meissner singularly scheduled and planned the weapons for all Navy tactical combat air missions during the first 5 days of the successful Grenada Operation Urgent Fury. Two months later he was cited for his extraordinary contribution in the successful execution of the December 1983 retaliatory air strike over Beirut and the Bekaa Valley. In March 1985, Commander Meissner reported to the Navy's Office of Legislative Affairs as a Senate liaison officer, where he assisted the Office of the Secretary of the Navy on political and leg-

islative issues before the U.S. Senate. In early 1987, he was selected to serve on the Secretary of Defense's Legislative Affairs staff as an Assistant, responsible for weapon systems' procurement legislation.

After the U.S.S. *Stark* was attacked in the Persian Gulf in May 1987, Commander Meissner became Secretary of Defense Weinberger's legislative point of contact to Congress on the Kuwaiti reflagging and escort issue. Within 9 months, he coordinated over 50 congressional briefings and hearings, made 10 trips to the region with 28 Members of Congress, and was cited by Congressmen, U.S. State Department officials, and Middle East foreign leaders for his efforts in promoting the administration's successful Persian Gulf policy. He assisted in writing a section of the Persian Gulf chapter of former Secretary of Defense Weinberger's book, *Fighting for Peace*.

In March 1988, he was selected by the Secretary of Navy as the first naval officer to receive a LEGIS congressional fellowship. He was assigned to the personal staff of Senator PHIL GRAMM, then the ranking member on the Armed Services Defense Industry and Technology Subcommittee, and served as his senior defense advisor and National Security Affairs legislative assistant. Upon completion of his fellowship, Commander Meissner returned to OSD [Legislative Affairs], where he assumed the responsibilities of the assistant for research, development, test and evaluation.

In June 1990, he was promoted to Director for House Affairs, where he provided direct liaison between the Secretary of Defense and the U.S. House of Representatives. In early 1991, Commander Meissner left the OSD staff and reported to the President's General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament as its Executive Director. Commander Meissner returned to OSD [Legislative Affairs] in January 1993 and assumed responsibility for the Research and Technology legislative portfolio with particular emphasis on representing the Advanced Research Projects Agency [ARPA] and the administration's dual-use and technology reinvestment programs.

In May 1994, Commander Meissner assumed his current position as the Director of Senate Affairs for the Department of Defense. Commander Meissner has lectured at the Naval Postgraduate School and the Defense System's Management College on civil-military affairs and congressional relations.

His military awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal [fourth award], and several unit commendations, expeditionary, and service ribbons. Bob is married and resides with his wife, Denise, in Falls Church, VA.

Our Nation, the U.S. Navy, the Department of Defense as a whole, and especially his wife, Denise, can truly be

proud of Commander Meissner's many accomplishments. A man of his extraordinary talent and integrity is rare indeed. While his honorable service will be genuinely missed in the Department of Defense and here in the Senate, it gives me great pleasure to recognize Comdr. Bob Meissner before my colleagues and send him all of our best wishes in his new and exciting career.

WAS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the skyrocketing Federal debt, which long ago soared into the stratosphere, is in a category like the weather—everybody talks about it but scarcely anybody had undertaken the responsibility of trying to do anything about it. That is, not until immediately following the elections last November.

When the 104th Congress convened in January, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a balanced budget amendment. In the Senate only one of the Senate's 54 Republicans opposed the balanced budget amendment; only 13 Democrats supported it. Thus, the balanced budget amendment failed by just one vote. There'll be another vote later this year or next year.

As of the close of business yesterday, Monday, June 13, the Federal debt stood—down to the penny—at exactly \$4,901,416,297,287.27 or \$18,605.86 for every man, woman, and child on a per capita basis.

COL. THOMAS W. SHUBERT

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Col. Thomas W. Shubert, a man many of us know through his duties working in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Legislative Liaison, Congressional Inquiry Division.

During his tour in the Congressional Inquiry Division, Colonel Shubert established a reputation for dependability and professionalism, and was firmly committed to helping us resolve issues involving our constituents and the Air Force. Additionally, Colonel Shubert lent support to many Members of both Houses on fact finding trips throughout the world.

Mr. President, Colonel Shubert is an individual who reflects the highest standards of the Air Force and I am confident that he will distinguish himself in his new post as the Senior Military Advisor and Air Attache to Denmark.

COL. MICHAEL V. HARPER

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the career and accomplishments of Col. Michael V. Harper, who is retiring after 26 years of distinguished service to the Army and the Nation.

Colonel Harper began his career as a Distinguished Military Graduate when