

Third, there is no reason in the world for the taxpayers' money and court resources to be wasted by allowing the review of any convicted felons' application to get their guns back. It made no sense for ATF to take agents away from their important law enforcement work, and it makes even less sense for the courts, which have no experience or expertise in this area, to be burdened with this unnecessary job. Let me make this point perfectly clear: It was never our intent, nor is it now, for the courts to review a convicted felon's application for firearm privilege restoration.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank the Senator for clearly laying out the facts. As the coauthor of this provision, I share his interest and concern about this issue. I agree with his analysis completely and intend to closely follow this situation in the coming year to see if any further legislation is necessary to clarify our intent. I would also like to take this opportunity to let my colleague know how much I enjoyed working on this issue with him as well as so many other matters. I want to ensure him that although he will not be here next year to continue his work in the Senate on this matter, I fully intend to carry on the fight for us both.

FLEXIBILITY FOR TELECOMMUTING CENTERS

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, in an effort to meet the changing needs of the Federal work force, I rise in support of a provision contained in the Treasury postal appropriations bill which authorizes the General Services Administration to begin work on a series of flexiplace work telecommuting centers.

Currently, many Federal employees from both the legislative and executive branches are enjoying the convenience and efficiency of six completed telecommuting centers located throughout the Metropolitan Washington, DC area.

While Federal employees enjoy the advantages of working at these telecommuting centers, their employer, the Federal Government, reaps the benefits of increased productivity and improved work quality.

As the Senate accepts the important responsibility to reign in Federal spending and control our Federal debt, we surely realize that these telecommuting centers must be economically self-supporting or they will not succeed.

For that reason, I, along with my friend in the House of Representatives, Congressman FRANK WOLF, have asked our respective Appropriations Committees to insert language granting much needed flexibility to the General Services Administration in regard to telecommuting centers.

In order to maintain these centers as self-sufficient entities, the Congress must allow non-Federal employees to fill any vacant slots in the telecommuting centers. Currently, Federal employees cannot fill all of the slots all of the time, so it only makes sense to allow non-Federal employees utilize

these facilities and increase the revenue going to these important centers.

This legislation also permits the Administrator of General Services Administration to transfer control of any or all of the telecommuting centers to State, local, or nonprofit organizations. This step will further ensure the economic viability of these telecommuting centers.

While maintaining the necessary commitments to our Federal work force, this language will provide the necessary flexibility to let these telecommuting centers thrive and prosper without Federal micromanagement and increased Government spending.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 2 minutes each.

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

U.S. FOREIGN OIL CONSUMPTION: HERE IS WEEKLY BOX SCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending September 6, the United States imported 7,400,000 barrels of oil each day, 1,300,000 less than the 8,700,000 imported during the same week a year ago.

Nevertheless, Americans relied on foreign oil for 53 percent of their needs last week, and there are no signs that the upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian Gulf war, the United States obtained about 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970's, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Anybody else interested in restoring domestic production of oil—by U.S. producers using American workers? Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity sure to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the United States—now 7,400,000 barrels a day.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, September 10, the Federal debt stood at \$5,217,211,394,956.03.

Five years ago, September 10, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,617,377,000,000.

Ten years ago, September 10, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,103,341,000,000.

Fifteen years ago, September 10, 1981, the Federal debt stood at \$979,625,000,000.

Twenty-five years ago, September 10, 1971, the Federal debt stood at \$415,728,000,000. This reflects an in-

crease of more than \$4 trillion (\$4,801,483,394,956.03) during the 25 years from 1971 to 1996.

ZION NO. 1, MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH 126TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, on Sunday, August 11, 1996, the Zion No. 1, Missionary Baptist Church celebrated its 126th anniversary. Zion No. 1 was formed in 1870, only a few miles from its present location in Barton, AL. It is one of the oldest in the State of Alabama.

Arthur Barton, a white landowner, donated the land for this church as a gift to its organizers, who had a phenomenal zeal for worshipping God. The church they built stood for many years. A second building, home of the Pine Grove Methodist Episcopal Church, located on a hill just off Highway 72 in west Colbert County, was purchased from the Methodist Conference by the small Zion No. 1 congregation in 1891 for \$300.

This church building was held together by wooden pegs. It is reported that there are no nails in the building. Kerosene or coal oil lamps were used for light. Two enormous pillars were visible in the center of the sanctuary running from the floor to the ceiling. These are still in place today.

During the Civil War, the Pine Grove Methodist Episcopal Church building had been used as a temporary hospital for wounded soldiers. It is said that two cannon balls were found in the walls as a result of a battle which took place between the town of Barton and the Tennessee River. There were blood stains on the floor and on portions of its baseboards and gunshot holes were visible in the walls. The basic structure which exists today remains largely as it was when it was constructed before the Civil War. Subsequent renovations have hidden evidence that it was once a hospital and church for wounded Confederate soldiers.

In 1969, brick was added, as well as new fixtures, carpeting, and a public address system. In 1977, a new roof was added, carpeting was laid in the educational annex, and folding doors were added.

The years between 1978 and 1986 were a time of rapid growth for Zion No. 1, Missionary Baptist Church. The congregation purchased three acres of land to expand the cemetery, and the central heating system was installed. A second educational annex, which includes a baptismal pool, was constructed. Previously, the Tennessee River had been used for baptizing new members.

The Reverend Wayne S. Bracy became the 16th and current pastor on February 8, 1992. He has brought a fervent spiritual atmosphere and a commitment to teaching and training to Zion No. 1.

I am pleased to congratulate the Zion No. 1, Missionary Baptist Church on the occasion of its 126th anniversary.

Its rich heritage and dedicated leaders and members are testaments to the tremendous role religion continues to play in America's culture and development.

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF JOHN L. ALDRIDGE

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, my longtime friend, Sheriff John L. Aldridge, is one of the giants of law enforcement in the State of Alabama. He has spent over 30 years in law enforcement and is presently serving his sixth term as sheriff of Colbert County, AL, having first been elected in 1975. He was the commissioner of public safety for the city of Tuscumbia from 1960 through 1969. He is a loyal and dedicated public servant whose service and commitment to law enforcement in general and his community in particular have been impeccable.

Sheriff Aldridge received his bachelor of science degree in law enforcement from the University of North Alabama. He is a past president of the Alabama Sheriff's Association and is a member of the board of trustees of the Alabama Sheriff's Boys-Girls Ranches. He has received many honors and awards, including County Officer of the Year from the Sheffield Elks' Lodge and the Colbert County American Legion. He is a past State Officer of the Year and Officer of the Year for Colbert, Lauderdale, and Franklin Counties. In 1977, he received the Liberty Bell Award from the Colbert County Bar Association. Under former Governor George Wallace, he served on the executive board of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency.

He is also a past president of the Lions Club and past commander of American Legion Post 31. He is a Mason and first vice president of the Sheffield, Alabama Kiwanis Club, as well as a former member of the Tuscumbia Utility Board and of the Colbert County Hospital Board. He served for a time as a board member of the Colbert-Lauderdale Attention Home for Delinquent Boys and Girls.

He is a loyal Democrat whose enthusiasm for the party has never wavered. In 1992, he served on the Steering Committee for the Clinton-Gore Campaign. He strongly endorsed the ticket that year and, although the Democrats did not carry Alabama, campaigned tirelessly for his party's candidates.

Sheriff Aldridge's leadership and service have gone far beyond what we traditionally think of as law enforcement duties. He initiated a rape counseling program for the Muscle Shoals Mental Health Center to assure victims of rape were interviewed by a female professional counselor rather than a male. When the program was begun, there were no female officers in law enforcement in Colbert County. Sheriff Aldridge made a firm commitment to change this. He received an award from the Muscle Shoals Mental Health Center for initiating this program.

Under his tenure as chairman of the Sheffield Kiwanis Club Major Emphasis Program on "Safeguard Against Crime," the club received the Silver Bell Award for his work in organizing a county-wide program aimed at reducing crime and spurring public interest in law enforcement.

I am proud to commend and congratulate Sheriff John Aldridge for his many years of outstanding leadership in terms of law enforcement and community service. I look forward to seeing more of the fruits of his labors first-hand when I return home to Colbert County next year.

GREATER RECOGNITION FOR TAIWAN

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, on July 17, the European Parliament passed a resolution urging that Taiwan be granted greater recognition in international organizations, and calling for a study of the issues surrounding Taiwan's participation in the United Nations.

I find this resolution both impressive and appropriate, Mr. President, and I fully agree that Taiwan deserves a greater role in international organizations. The Republic of China is a full democracy, with a remarkably successful economy. Furthermore, Taiwan plays an important role in world affairs.

It is high time that Taiwan be accorded its well-deserved stature in international organizations.

Mr. President, I find it gratifying that Taiwan has won this recognition aforementioned from the European Parliament, and I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

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

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Having regard to Article J.7 of the Treaty on European Union.

A. Satisfied with the current state of Taiwan's democracy and Taiwan's respect for the principles of justice, human rights, and fundamental freedom,

B. welcoming the fact that the elections in Taiwan were conducted democratically and peacefully despite the overt aggression and provocation by the People's Republic of China,

C. having regard to Taiwan's wish to participate in international aid to developing countries,

D. having regard to the significance of developments in the political situation in Taiwan for the whole of East Asia at the geopolitical and economic level and in terms of a policy of stability, security and peace in the Western Pacific region,

E. welcoming the attitude of reconciliation displayed by President Lee Teng-hui towards the People's Republic of China and looking forward to a dialogue spanning both sides of the Taiwan Straits,

F. convinced that the people of Taiwan ought to be better represented in international organizations than they are at

present, which would benefit both Taiwan and the whole of the international community,

G. whereas neither the European Union nor any of its Member States have diplomatic relations with the Government of Taiwan, recognizing only the People's Republic of China,

H. whereas Taiwan is very important to the European Union and its Member States as a trade partner,

I. whereas it is important for the European Union and its Member States to develop their relations with the governments of both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan in an amicable and constructive spirit,

J. urging the governments of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan to intensify their cooperation,

K. stressing that participation by Taiwan in certain international organizations can assist with finding common ground between China and Taiwan and facilitate reconciliation between the two sides,

L. regretting the fact that Taiwan at present is prevented from making a full contribution to the United Nations and its agencies, and stressing that, for the efficiency of the UN, Taiwan's participation would be desirable and valuable.

1. Urges:

(a) the Council and Member States to support Taiwan's attempts to secure better representation than it currently enjoys in international organizations in the fields of human and labour rights, economic affairs, the environment and development cooperation following the precedent of certain cases, known to international law, of countries recognized as independent and sovereign even though the nature of their diplomatic connections and the person of then head of state did not display the full symbolic panoply of complete sovereignty (e.g. Her Britannic Majesty's Dominions, American Samoa, or, until recently the Ukraine and Belarus);

(b) the Council and Member States to ask the United Nations to investigate the possibility of setting up a UN working group to study the scopes for Taiwan to participate in the activities of bodies answerable to the UN General Assembly;

(c) the Council and Member States to encourage the governments of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan to intensify their cooperation in a constructive and peaceful spirit;

(d) the Council to Urge the Commission to adopt measures with a view to opening a European Union information office in Taipei;

2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and to the Commission.

CAM NEELY

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to recognize the achievements and contributions of one of Massachusetts' most beloved sports personalities, Mr. Cam Neely of the Boston Bruins.

Last week, Cam announced his retirement from the Boston Bruins after 5 years of struggle and pain caused by nagging injuries. He had played 13 years in the National Hockey League, 3 with the Vancouver Canucks and the last 10 seasons with the Bruins. Through his decade with the Bruins, Cam has become the prototype NHL power forward by combining bone-crushing power with overwhelming talent and grace.

In addition to his presence on the ice, he has made a continuing contribution