

ask that the transcript from this chat be printed in the RECORD as testimony of the wonders of Internet technology and, more important, of our Nation's youth.

I also want to thank Shannon Roland, the teacher at Granville, for her work in preparing these exceptional students. She should be commended for bringing their education outside of and beyond the walls of a one-room schoolhouse.

The transcript follows:

ONEROOM 1. Glad to be here. I am now surrounded by 17 beautiful first through fourth graders, aged 7 to 10. AP and Channel 22 are also here. Hello Senator.

PATRICK L. I wish I could be there with you in person but we are all excited in Washington to be doing this.

ONEROOM 1. We are too. Jack has a question for you. Have you ever seen a land mine?

PATRICK L. I am not the world's best typist so I apologize if I make some mistakes.

ONEROOM 1. That's fine. We're learning too.

PATRICK L. I have seen landmines all over the world and have two deactivated ones on my desk. They are horrible weapons that should all be banned. They kill mostly children and innocent civilians.

ONEROOM 1. Brian wonders if you've ever seen the Granville School web page.

PATRICK L. Love the picture of the school on the front. Who is the student?

ONEROOM 1. That's a picture of Benny. He's going to be a bug scientist. Dylan asks, where do you live?

PATRICK L. I live on a tree farm that belonged to my parents in Middlesex, Vermont. I drive down route 100 often.

PATRICK L. I also have a house in the Washington area where I live when the Senate is in session.

ONEROOM 1. Brooke wonders if you might stop by our school sometime.

PATRICK L. I would like to drop by sometime. Unfortunately we are often in session while you are in school and you are out when I get home to Vermont for the weekend. After seeing your web page I am especially eager to drop by.

ONEROOM 1. We'll be going to school on Memorial Day if you're around. We've had lots of snowdays. Harlie wonders if you know any of the children who were killed by landmines.

PATRICK L. I have visited a lot of hospitals around the world where we use the Leahy War Victims Fund. My wife is a registered nurse and I have watched her help with some of the children who have been injured. It is a real tragedy and it has to stop.

ONEROOM 1. We agree. Benny (the boy in the picture) wonders what you do in your free time.

PATRICK L. Benny I try to cross country ski around my farm during the winter and hike there during the summer when I am home. I am also an avid photographer and bring a camera with me almost everywhere I go even to meetings at the White House.

PATRICK L. Benny you look great in the photo!

ONEROOM 1. We like to cross country ski. In fact, we had lessons here all winter. Sammi wonders if you have ever been to a one room schoolhouse. We think you would like to meet our teacher because she's really nice. [Picture].

PATRICK L. I think you are very fortunate to have Shannon as your teacher. I have not been in a one room schoolhouse since I was a child but it seems to me you are getting a better education than a lot of very large schoolhouses.

ONEROOM 1. We think so too. We're going to Boston to the museum and the aquarium for our school field trip. Jasmine wonders when you started being a senator.

PATRICK L. The field trip sounds great. I did one like that when I was 12 and still remember it. Jasmine I became a Senator when I was 34. That was in 1975.

ONEROOM 1. Erica asks, have you ever lost a law you wanted?

PATRICK L. Many times, Erica, I will push for legislation that doesn't pass the first time around but we keep working until it does. One example is the Northeast Dairy Compact. At first it failed but finally passed and will help the dairy farmers in Vermont.

ONEROOM 1. Christopher is also concerned about landmines. He wonders where most of them are.

PATRICK L. Most of the landmines, Christopher, are in Africa.

ONEROOM 1. Dylan says that it scared him too. Brooke says her favorite book is "Anne of Green Gables." Sammi wonders if you can make a link from your site to our web page.

ONEROOM 1. Brian wonders if that's your wife skating with you in the picture on your web page.

PATRICK L. Sammi we will link it with the transcript and a couple drawing. Dylan I know what you mean and Brooke I liked that one too and read it to my children when they were young.

ONEROOM 1. All of the children say thank you for taking the time to do this. This is cool to talk back and forth like this. And it's neat the way we can send questions and have you answer them. Thank you very much. We have to go to recess now.

PATRICK L. Brian that is my wife Marcelle with me and it was taken on one of the fields at our farm in Middlesex—just a ways up route 100.

PATRICK L. Thanks—wish I could go to recess with you but instead will head to the Senate floor. I am very proud of all of you and thank you!•

AVOID FURTHER BLOODSHED, NEGOTIATE PEACE IN ZAIRE

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, Zaire must seize the current moment to avoid further bloodshed and negotiate a peaceful resolution to its current crisis. A tentative agreement for a meeting on Friday between President Mobutu Sese Seko and rebel Alliance leader Laurent Kabila has been reached. This meeting is critical to avoid further loss of human life in Zaire. I applaud Ambassador Richardson's presence in Zaire and fully support his important and courageous efforts to facilitate a peaceful settlement to the current political turmoil.

The current crisis in Zaire has reached a critical fork in the road. In one direction lies the peaceful path of democracy and economic reform. In the other, the well-worn road of violence, bloodshed, and political instability. President Mobutu Sese Seko and rebel Alliance leader Laurent Kabila at this moment hold the fate of their country in their hands.

I strongly encourage President Mobutu and Mr. Kabila to earnestly engage in a critical dialog on the future of Zaire. I urge them to put the interests of Zaire and their countrymen first, and resolve the current political crisis without further unnecessary loss of life.

I have been deeply troubled by recent reports of wide-spread human rights abuses and mass killings of refugees and displaced persons in rebel-controlled Zaire. There are numerous accounts of desperately ill and malnourished women and children being indiscriminately slaughtered and maimed.

Recently 55,000 refugees have inexplicably disappeared from a refugee camp outside Kisangani. Of these refugees, some 9,000, including 2,500 severely malnourished children, had only days earlier been deemed medically unfit to travel by visiting relief workers.

After a week of repeatedly denying the United Nations to care for and repatriate refugees in rebel-controlled territory, today's news reports indicate the rebel Alliance is once again allowing the United Nations to care for the sick and the dying. Refusal to have given access to the United Nations over the past week, resulting in the maltreatment of refugees and displaced persons has been nothing short of deplorable.

I call upon Mr. Kabila to put a permanent end to the bloodletting of innocents in Eastern Zaire. All impediments to humanitarian relief efforts in Zaire must be permanently removed.

The United Nations must be permitted continued full access to these refugees and allowed to repatriate them to Rwanda without interference. Furthermore, the slaughter of those refugees suspected of responsibility for the 1994 Rwandan genocide must cease, as it is neither justifiable nor defensible. These people must be returned to Rwanda where they can stand trial in an appropriate court of law and rightly be held accountable for their crimes.

It is time for President Mobutu and Mr. Kabila to signal their willingness to set Zaire on the path to peace and democracy. Zaire is a country of enormous potential that has suffered untold tragedies. Failure to seize this critical opportunity to negotiate peace in Zaire will only set that country woefully back.

The fighting in Zaire must stop. The crisis in the country cannot be resolved by force. Replacement of the Mobutu regime with yet another authoritarian regime is a recipe of further political instability. I strongly urge both President Mobutu and Mr. Kabila to seize the current opportunity to avoid further bloodshed and choose the constructive path of peace and democracy in Zaire.•

AMENDING TITLES XVIII AND XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 968, and further that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 968) to amend title XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to permit a waiver of the prohibition of offering nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in certain nursing facilities.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 968) was deemed read the third time and passed.

EXTENDING THE TERM OF APPOINTMENT OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT ASSESSMENT COMMISSION AND THE PHYSICIAN PAYMENT REVIEW COMMISSION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 1001, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1001) to extend the term of appointment of certain members of the Prospective Payment Assessment Commission and the Physician Payment Review Commission.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be placed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1001) was deemed read the third time and passed.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1997

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until the hour of 10:30 a.m., on Thursday, May 1. I further ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, immediately following the prayer, the routine requests through the morning hour be granted, and the Senate then immediately begin consideration of S. 543, the Volunteer Protection Act.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, tomorrow morning the Senate will begin consideration of the bill, S. 543, the Volunteer Protection Act. It is the understanding of the majority leader that there are a few amendments which are expected to be offered to this bill. Therefore, Senators can anticipate votes throughout Thursday's session of the Senate.

Mr. President, it is the hope of the majority leader that the Senate will be able to complete action on this important legislation tomorrow. Also, there is the possibility that the Senate could consider items on the Executive Calendar. Therefore, additional votes could occur other than votes on the Volunteer Protection Act during tomorrow's session.

In addition, if the Appropriations Committee completes action on the supplemental appropriations bill tomorrow, it is the intention of the majority leader that the Senate proceed to consideration of the supplemental on Monday.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:42 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, May 1, 1997, at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 30, 1997:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

ALEXIS M. HERMAN, OF ALABAMA, TO BE SECRETARY OF LABOR.

THE ABOVE NOMINATION WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEE'S COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.