

the majority leader indicated he was satisfied with the status of this bill and ready to move to the floor. It is my hope we can adopt this legislation, that we can bring it here, that we can debate it, and we can move it forward. If we do so, we will be providing an opportunity for disabled Americans all across this country to use their talents for their own benefit and to contribute to the communities and to this Nation. That, I think, is the essence of why we are here—for wise legislative policies that allow Americans to use their talents to benefit themselves and this country.

I hope we adopt this very quickly. That means, of course, we schedule this legislation; that we will, in fact, bring to the floor the Work Incentives Improvement Act for a vote. If we do so, we will be doing the work we were sent here to do by our constituents.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOMENICI. Senator REID is on his way.

Mr. President and fellow Senators, the ranking member and I have decided that it won't do us any good to remain any longer on the energy and water appropriations bill, because we are now in the process of working out a number of amendments and apparently there is one that may have to be voted on; we just got it, and participants would not be ready this evening in any event. Everyone understood that they needed some time at the earliest convenience tomorrow, or when we can get back on the bill.

Let me say to the Senator from Nevada, the ranking member, we are ready to get off the bill tonight and wait our turn as early as possible in the process tomorrow. We are working on a number of amendments. There is probably one that is going to require a vote tomorrow. But they won't be ready this evening in any event. We knew that.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I only say to my friend, the manager of this bill, that the amendments are now in. We, together with our staff, have worked very hard to see what we can do to accept amendments. Some of them are just not acceptable. We have tried every way possible. But some of them are not authorized, and there are various other reasons we can't accept a number of the amendments. I hope peo-

ple will understand that some of these we can't accept. There may be votes required on them.

Frankly, with all the work we have done on the bill, I suggest it would be very hard to get some of these amendments agreed to that we haven't been able to work out with their staff, our staff, and the two managers of the bill.

We have worked very hard on this for the last couple of weeks. I hope that, with the two leaders, we can find some time so we can wrap this up. I think we can do it in a couple of hours at the most.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to morning business with statements allowed by each Senator for up to 5 minutes.

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

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL DENNIS J. REIMER

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the service, sacrifices, and numerous contributions to the security of our nation that United States Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis J. Reimer has made throughout his career as a soldier and a leader.

As have many of our nation's greatest warriors, General Reimer began his Army career as a Cadet at the United States Military Academy. Leaving his hometown of Medford, Oklahoma and arriving on the banks of the Hudson River on what must certainly have been a hot day in July of 1958, I suspect that the last thought that crossed the mind of a young Dennis Reimer was that he would one day hold the highest job a soldier in the United States Army can hold. Yet that is just what destiny had in store for this tall, unassuming, and plain speaking westerner.

In 1962, when Dennis Reimer graduated from West Point and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery, we were well into the "Cold War", the French had lost their war in Indochina, and the United States had not yet established a large military presence in South Vietnam. As events unfolded and a policy to contain communism was established, it was not long before we did begin to commit troops to Southeast Asia. Among the hundreds of thousands of soldiers to eventually serve in Vietnam was Dennis Reimer, who spent two combat tours in Vietnam, one as an advisor to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and the second as an executive officer for an artillery battalion in the 9th Infantry Division. The American military experience in Vietnam unquestionably influenced the professional and personal outlooks of anyone who served in that theater, and the lessons learned in Vietnam would serve Dennis Reimer, the Army, and that nation well in the following years.

One can assess the career of a soldier very quickly by looking at his or her uniform, and General Reimer's "Class A's" reveal that he is a soldier's soldier, someone who never shied away from a challenge, and an officer who believed in leading by example. He wears the coveted "Ranger" tab on his left shoulder, a mark of a man who has proven himself to be a tough, resourceful, and diligent soldier. The 9th Infantry Division patch on his right shoulder tells people he went to war with this unit. The Combat Infantryman's Badge he wears on his left chest indicates that he participated in combat operations; the Purple Heart that he was wounded in action; and, the Bronze Star with "V" for Valor Device and the Distinguished Flying Cross both stand as testament to the fact that he is a hero. He has also earned some of the nation's most respected decorations including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, and five additional Bronze Stars.

It has been a long road that Dennis Reimer has traveled from West Point's Trophy Point where he entered the Corps of Cadets, to the "E" Ring of the Pentagon where he now commands every single soldier in the United States Army. His journey has taken him to many different assignments in many different places, all of which helped to prepare him for his job as Chief of Staff of the Army. In the field, he served as a commander at the company, battalion, and division levels; and, he was the Chief of Staff, Combined Field Army and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Training, Republic of Korea/United States Combined Forces Command. His assignments to the Pentagon were also invaluable as he benefitted from firsthand exposure to how the Department of the Army works as an institution. Clearly he has drawn on his experiences as the aide-de-camp to Chief of Staff of the Army General Creighton Abrams, and he no doubt learned many lessons at the side of this impressive soldier and mentor. In short, General Dennis Reimer was probably one of the best prepared individuals to have served as Chief of Staff of the Army and the legacy he leaves is one that is impressive and noteworthy.

The past four-years have been busy ones for General Reimer as he discharged his duties as the Army's head soldier and worked to represent the interests of his people and service in the halls of Congress. During his watch, he has helped to define just what the post-Cold War Army will look like, what its missions will be, and how it will fight and win on the battlefields of the future. General Reimer has been a tireless advocate for the modernization of the Army by championing new weapons systems that will continue to give our troops the tactical and technological advantage they require to overwhelm any and all potential enemies. An expert in efficiencies, he has dedicated

himself to finding ways to doing more with less, an important objective in an era when sadly there are fewer and fewer dollars for defense. He committed himself to effectively integrating Reserve and National Guard elements into the total force, and General Reamer's efforts have gone a long way toward creating what is truly a "Total Army". Finally, when his former superior, General Abrams said that "The Army is not made up of people, the Army is people," General Reimer was listening. As Chief of Staff, he was always watching out for his soldiers, never forgetting that "Soldiers are our credentials," and our nation's greatest asset. Without well trained, motivated, and intelligent soldiers, our tanks, guns, weapons, and aircraft are all worthless.

On June 21, 1999, General Dennis J. Reimer will retire from the United States Army, having fulfilled the prediction of an anonymous editor of the *Howitzer* who said in 1962 that "... we're sure Denny will make it to the top." He has certainly done that and more, proving beyond a doubt that he is truly a "Can Do" soldier, leader, and American. I have no doubt that General Reimer is far from finished in finding ways to serve and make a difference, and I am confident that his future will be as bright and successful as his past has been. General Reimer, I salute you for your service, your sacrifices, and your patriotism and I wish you and your wife health and happiness in the years to come.

SESSQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE MACON BEACON

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, today, I want to pay tribute to The Macon Beacon, a newspaper in Macon, MS, on the occasion of its sesquicentennial celebration.

This is a special event for Mississippi and for the city of Macon. Media exists to report what actually happens locally, nationally and globally. For 150 years, the Beacon has been reporting facts relevant to the lives of Noxubee County residents. The Beacon reached the Sesquicentennial milestone because it is a reliable source of information for its community.

I want to tell my colleagues a brief history of this historic yet vibrant newspaper. The Macon Beacon paper was founded in July 1849, for the people of Noxubee County, Mississippi. The county was established only 16 years before in 1833. The Beacon is the third oldest newspaper in Mississippi. It even has the distinction of being Noxubee County's oldest continuous business. This demonstrates the Macon Beacon's continued importance to the people of Noxubee County.

E.W. and Henry C. Ferris founded The Macon Beacon in 1849 and it remained in the Ferris family for the next 123 years. Its editorship passed down through the Ferris family from Henry to his son, Phillip, and then to

his son Douglas. Douglas recruited a cousin, Brooke Ferris, to continue the family's leadership in the business. This is an amazing and honorable family legacy.

In 1972, upon Mr. Brooke Ferris's retirement, Mr. Jim Robbins purchased The Macon Beacon. The Robbins family of Macon, Mississippi, continued to publish the newspaper until 1993. Then Mr. Scott Boyd bought it and he continues to publish The Macon Beacon today.

The First Amendment to the Constitution indicates the importance of a free and vigilant press to our democratic republic. The Macon Beacon has lived up to these expectations by faithfully reporting community events for 150 years. The Macon Beacon has survived and flourished through three major wars, including the War Between the States, and the Great Depression. Each edition of The Beacon is eagerly awaited by the newspaper's 3,100 subscribers, more than a fourth of the county's population.

In the words of its founding editor, Mr. Henry C. Ferris, The Macon Beacon is "a semi-public institution dedicated to the service of the people." I want to congratulate The Macon Beacon on the celebration of 150 years of dedicated service to Noxubee County.

THANKS TO SENATE PAGES

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would like to say farewell to a wonderful group of young men and women who have served as Senate pages over the last five months, and thank them for the contributions they make to the day-to-day operations of the Senate.

This particular group of pages has served with distinction and has done a marvelous job of balancing their responsibilities to their studies and to this body.

Page life is not easy. I suspect few people understand the rigorous nature of the page's work. On a typical day, pages rise early and are in school by 6:15 a.m. After several hours in school each morning, pages then report to the Capitol to prepare the Senate Chamber for the day's session. Throughout the day, pages are called upon to perform a wide array of tasks—from obtaining copies of documents and reports for Senators to use during debate, to running errands between the Capitol and the Senate office buildings, to lending a hand at our weekly conference lunches.

Once we finish our business here for the day—no matter what time—the pages return to the dorm and prepare for the next day's classes and Senate session and, we hope, get some much-needed sleep. Even with all of this, they continually discharge their tasks efficiently and cheerfully.

Aside from their normal day-to-day duties, this class in particular has had some extraordinary experiences as they witnessed firsthand the democratic process with all of its strengths and its

imperfections. On their first day as Senate pages, they were thrown into the middle of the impeachment debate. As their semester here progressed, they witnessed several historic debates such as whether to send our country's armed forces into an international conflict far from home. And they watched our country struggle through the aftermath of tragedies such as Littleton, Colorado and the Senate's efforts to pass meaningful gun control legislation.

I hope every person in this page class gained some insight into the need for individuals to become involved in community and civic activities. By living and working together, they have gained knowledge about the political process that they could not obtain from a textbook alone. The future of our nation strongly depends on the generations who will follow us in this august body. I look forward to the possibility that one or more of this fine group of young people will return as a member of the U.S. Senate.

Mr. President, with your permission, I would like to insert in the RECORD the names and states of each of the Senate pages to whom we are saying goodbye. They are: Derek Alsup, New Hampshire; Devin Barta, Wisconsin; Halicia Burns, Michigan; Richard Carroll, Delaware; Micah Cermele, Alabama; Cathryn Cone, Missouri; Clay Crockett, Michigan; Danielle Driscoll, California; Mark Hadley, Virginia; Patrick Hallahan, New Jersey; Jessica Lipschultz, Idaho; Jennifer Machacek, Iowa; Brendan McCann, Virginia; Mark Nexon, Vermont; Chandra Obie, Montana; Stephanie Stahl, South Dakota; Marian Thorpe, West Virginia; Stephanie Valencia, New Mexico; and George Vana IV, Vermont.

I'm sure all my colleagues join me in thanking these fine young men and women, and wishing them well in the future.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that 30 years of federal deficits have taken their toll on the federal budget.

Likewise, two budget "surpluses," although a step in the right direction, will scarcely make a dent on the actual federal debt oppressing both the government and the people. In fact, it does very little, but constrict the actual increase of the federal debt.

Even if the projected estimates from the Office of Management and Budget are correct, a surplus for 11 consecutive years will go hand-in-hand with a "gross federal debt" that will inch closer and closer to a 6 trillion dollar figure!—Now that, Mr. President, is a couple I do not particularly like to envision. But that is where we are. We are in a quagmire of debts.

I have heard comments that we—the Congress and this Administration—have taken steps to cut the federal deficit, but what is not being said is that