

points. The factors that have led to more filibusters than usual this week have been the actions of the administration and Senate Republicans.

These matters need not be contentious. The process starts with the President. If this administration would work with us, we could avoid these situations. We have and will continue to work with the administration. We would like to be more helpful in the President's identification of nominees and advising him on the selection of consensus nominees so that we can join together in adding those confirmations to the 145 so far achieved.

#### GEORGE J. MITCHELL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND U.S.-IRISH RELATIONS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, yesterday's New York Times carried a very interesting article about a new scholarship program created three years ago to encourage young Americans to pursue graduate study in Ireland and learn more about that country and its long-standing ties of history and heritage to the United States.

The program is called the George J. Mitchell Scholarship Program. The name honors our former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, who is especially admired in Ireland and among Irish Americans and even in Great Britain for his leading role in recent years in advancing the peace process in Northern Ireland as Special Advisor to President Clinton on Ireland.

The Scholarships were created by the U.S.-Ireland Alliance, a non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in 1998 by my former foreign policy adviser, Trina Vargo, who is well known to many of us in Congress for her outstanding work in Irish issues. As many of our colleagues in the Senate and the House know, the Alliance has worked closely with both Republicans and Democrats to strengthen the ties between the United States and Ireland.

The twelve Mitchell Scholars selected each year are outstanding young American students who are gifted academically, and who show promise for future leadership in the public or private sectors in maintaining close ties between the United States and Ireland. I commend Ms. Vargo and the U.S.-Ireland Alliance for the prestige and popularity the scholarships have earned so quickly, and I ask unanimous consent that the New York Times article may be printed in the RECORD.

[From the New York Times, July 30, 2003]

#### MITCHELL SCHOLARS DELVE INTO IRISH CULTURE, TOO

(By Brian Lavery)

DUBLIN, July 29.—When Emily Mark arrived in Dublin to study art history at Trinity College, she postponed worrying about classes until she found a traditional musician to teach her the Irish style of playing five-string claw-hammer banjo.

This month, Ms. Mark completed a Mitchell Scholarship, a program that often sounds more like a cultural immersion course than

the pursuit of a master's degree. Named in honor of former Senator George J. Mitchell for his role in the Northern Irish peace process, the scholarship's explicit objective is to instill an appreciation for Ireland in a generation of up-and-coming Americans.

To that end, Irish-American applicants have no advantage in the competition for the 12 places, said the program's founder, Trina Vargo, and the Mitchells are financed by groups that may stand to benefit from the warm feelings of Americans. In 1998, the Irish government gave more than \$4 million for an initial endowment, while sponsors include the British government and some of the largest corporations in Ireland. (Nine major Irish universities provide room and board and waive tuition for Mitchell recipients.)

Those donations provide for a \$12,000 stipend and trans-Atlantic airfare.

Mitchell recipients understand that the foundation behind the program, the U.S.-Ireland Alliance, which is based in Washington, wants them to become good-will ambassadors for Ireland. Rather than balk at the responsibility, they say that emotional and intellectual links are exactly what they expect to gain from their year here.

"I didn't feel pressure that I ultimately need to do some great work for Ireland," said Jeannie Huh, a West Point graduate who studied public health at Trinity College. "But I definitely do feel that over the course of the year I have built a spot in my heart for the country and the people. I think that's just inevitable."

Most Mitchell scholars try to blend into Irish society by complementing their studies with internships, part-time jobs and community work. In the last few years, three Mitchell recipients withdrew from the running for Rhodes Scholarships, and that multidisciplinary approach is one reason.

"It was more than just an academic program; it has that cultural element," said Georgia Miller Mjartan, who was a Rhodes semifinalist from Arkansas when she won a Mitchell Scholarship. She said that she realized at her Mitchell interview that she would accept the scholarship if it was offered.

"I knew that, as far as prestige, it would be good for me to go through with the Rhodes process, even if I didn't take it," she said. But Ms. Mjartan, who is 23 and lived in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland, over the last year, withdrew her application after learning that her place, if she won, would not be awarded to an alternate candidate if she declined the scholarship. "That wouldn't be right, because I would be taking it away from someone else," she said.

The application process is intended to be friendly, with one short essay and interviews that focus on identity and personality instead of academic detail, Ms. Vargo said. Those who are accepted are encouraged to wait until they hear from other scholarship programs before deciding which to choose.

"You want them to have a reason to be here, and a really good understanding of why they're here," Ms. Vargo said.

Ms. Vargo, a former foreign policy adviser to Senator Edward M. Kennedy, knows Irish business and political circles well, and Mitchell scholars often use her network of connections. Last year, she introduced Mark Tosso to the top official in the prime minister's office, who found him a job conducting a review of communications systems for employees throughout the Irish government. "They had this project which was puttering along, and they needed someone to take charge of it," Mr. Tosso said.

In the same way, Ms. Mark, the banjo player, met a Dublin lawyer who hired her to help set up a new fund-raising arm for Amnesty International. "Everyone just bowls

themselves over to help you," she said. "As soon as you express an interest in something, the opportunity is there."

The scholars also improvised when they found Irish culture less familiar with the idea of internships or entrepreneurial volunteer work. With her professor at Trinity College, Ms. Huh approach a charity based in Dublin and ended up in Bangladesh for five weeks, doing research on malnutrition. Mariyam Cementwala, from Bakerfield, Calif., organized a conference on human rights for 120 people at the National University of Ireland at Galway.

With an allowance from an Irish travel company, the latest group of Mitchell scholars went on impromptu road trips around the country, visiting one another at their universities almost once a month, and some traveled together to Scotland. Also through Ms. Vargo, they went on a hiking trip in the Wicklow Mountains guided by a Dublin businessman, and they celebrated Thanksgiving together at a lawyer's Dublin home.

To use their own term, they bonded. They share an easy rapport—Ms. Mark called the group "the world's perfect dinner party"—whether milling about at the program's closing ceremonies with political leaders like Senator Mitchell and Sinn Féin's president, Gerry Adams, or holding up the bar at the Europa Hotel.

The program's sponsors seem to feel that even that bar tab is money well spent. Gerry McCrory, 40, heads a venture capital fund in Dublin called Cross Atlantic Capital Partners that gives about \$30,000 a year to the Mitchell program. He said he looked forward to when the Mitchell Scholars would positively influence the relationship between the United States and Ireland.

"It's going to be at least another 20 or 30 years until they're in a position to make those decisions," he said, "but I think it's the right thing to do. It's a long-term investment."

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

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### INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for their outstanding work in reviewing the intelligence community's activities related to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The report, which was issued jointly last week by two committees, is the culmination of the hard work of the committees and their staff to inform the American people of the weaknesses in our intelligence community that need to be strengthened to prevent this type of event from occurring again.

One issue that I find particularly interesting is the focus of the Intelligence Committees' report on how the lack of employees with foreign language skills hampered the intelligence community's efforts to meet its mission. Finding Six of the report states:

Prior to September 11, the Intelligence Community was not prepared to handle the challenge it faced in translating the volumes of foreign language counterterrorism intelligence it collected. Agencies within the Intelligence Community experienced backlogs in material awaiting translation, a shortage of language specialists and language-qualified field officers, and a readiness level of only 30 percent in the most critical terrorism-related languages used by terrorists.

This finding is not surprising. Shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, FBI Director Robert Mueller made a public plea for speakers of Arabic and Farsi to help the FBI and national security agencies translate documents that were in U.S. possession but which were left untranslated due to a shortage of employees with proficiency in those languages. The committees' report states that prior to September 11, the Bureau's Arabic translators could not keep up with the workload. As a result, 35 percent of Arabic language materials derived from Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA, collection was not reviewed or translated. If the number of Arabic speakers employed by the Bureau remained at the same level, the projected backlog would rise to 41 percent this year.

Unfortunately, the U.S. faces a critical shortage of language proficient professionals throughout Federal agencies. As the General Accounting Office reports, Federal agencies have shortages in translators and interpreters and an overall shortfall in the language proficiency levels needed to carry out agency missions. Further, Director of the CIA Language School has testified before the Intelligence Committees that, given the CIA's language requirements, the CIA Directorate of Operations is not fully prepared to fight a world-wide war on terrorism and at the same time carry out its traditional agent recruitment and intelligence collection mission. The Director also added that there is no strategic plan in place with regard to linguistic skills at the Agency.

The inability of law enforcement officers, intelligence officers, scientists, military personnel, and other Federal employees to decipher and interpret information from foreign sources, as well as interact with foreign nations, presents a threat to their mission and to the well-being of our Nation. It is crucial that we work to strengthen the language capabilities and in turn the security, of the United States. Both the GAO review and the Intelligence Committees' report demonstrate that action is needed to help Federal agencies more effectively recruit and retain highly skilled individuals for national security positions.

Congress has long been aware of the Federal Government's lack of skilled personnel with language proficiency. In 1958, the National Defense Education Act, NDEA, was passed in response to the Soviet Union's first space launch. We were determined to win the space race and make certain that the United States never came up short again in the areas of math, science, technology, or foreign languages. The act provided loans and fellowships to students, and funds to universities to enhance their programs and purchase necessary equipment. After the NDEA expired in the early 1960s, Congress passed the National Security Education Act in 1991, which created the National Security Education program, NSEP. This program was intended to address the lack of language expertise in the Federal Government by providing limited undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships for students to study foreign language and foreign area studies, and providing funds to institutions of higher learning to develop faculty expertise in the less commonly taught languages. In turn, students who receive NSEP scholarships and fellowships are required to work for an office or agency of the Federal Government in national security affairs.

While NSEP has been successful, it is obvious that more needs to be done. To address the Federal Government's lack of foreign language personnel, I introduced S. 589, the Homeland Security Federal Workforce Act, on March 11, 2003.