

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 3430

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I understand that S. 3430, introduced earlier today by Senator COBURN, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3430) to provide for the investigation of certain unsolved civil rights crimes, and for other purposes.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

EMMETT TILL UNSOLVED CIVIL RIGHTS CRIME ACT

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, which profiles Mr. Alvin Sykes. Mr. Sykes and I have worked closely together to reach a compromise on this bill, and I would like the story of his life and his work on this legislation to be part of the record.

I would also ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a message from Mr. Sykes to me, expressing support for the compromise.

Finally, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD three letters. The first is to the bill's sponsor, Senator CHRIS DODD, explaining my objection to the legislation. The letter is dated June 25, 2007. The second is a subsequent letter to Senator DODD, seeking a UC agreement for floor time on the bill, dated June 19, 2008. The third is a similar letter to Senator REID, sent the same day.

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

[From the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Jun. 3, 2007]

CIVIL RIGHTS-ERA MURDER CASES: "ANOTHER DAY FOR JUSTICE"—SELF-TAUGHT LEGAL EXPERT ALVIN SYKES IS ON A QUEST TO GET LONG-UNPURSUED SUSPECTS INTO COURT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

(By Drew Jubera)

JACKSON, MISS.—A fourth-floor courtroom filled here last week much the way Southern courtrooms now fill every few years for a civil rights-era murder case.

The 71-year-old defendant, James Seale, requested headphones as he sat with his lawyers during jury selection so he could hear the proceedings.

The former crop duster and reputed Klansman is charged with kidnapping and conspiracy in connection with the May 2, 1964, abduction and killings of two black teenagers. The bodies of Henry Dee and Charles Moore were found in the Mississippi River, tied to a Jeep engine block.

Seale has pleaded not guilty to the federal charges.

Also inside the downtown courthouse: aging relatives of the murdered boys, includ-

ing Thomas Moore, 63, a Vietnam veteran who worked almost a decade to get his brother's moldering case reopened.

Before entering this historic scene and sitting in a rear pew, Alvin Sykes tugged at his blue-jean jacket, stroked his scraggly goatee and exhaled.

"Another day for justice," said Sykes, an improbable presence at yet another improbable decades-old case.

Sykes, a high school dropout and practicing Buddhist who once lived in a homeless shelter and learned the law reading books in public libraries, has become both a catalyst and an inspiration during the 11th-hour rush to reopen these old murder cases before the killers die off.

Since 1989, authorities in Mississippi and six other states have re-examined 29 civil rights-era murders, with 28 resulting arrests and 22 convictions.

The FBI has uncovered 51 more killings, and the Southern Poverty Law Center has a list of 127 race-related killings between 1954 and 1968.

It's in this atmosphere that Sykes has brokered meetings with people as various as U.S. senators, district attorneys and victims' relatives to seek long-delayed justice.

His behind-the-scenes maneuvering was key to the FBI's reinvestigation of the infamous 1955 murder of Emmett Till, a black Chicago teen brutally killed after he allegedly whistled at a white woman in Money, Miss. (Earlier this year, a Mississippi grand jury did not return an indictment in the case.)

Sykes also generated the idea for legislation now before Congress that grew out of the reopening of that now-52-year-old slaying. Commonly known as the Till Bill, and sponsored in the House of Representatives by Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), it would fund a separate unit in the Justice Department devoted to investigating civil rights-era crimes.

"He's a warrior," said Moore of the mild-mannered Sykes, whom he credits with inspiring him while he sought justice for his brother. "Every now and then a person comes along who you say, 'Where'd this guy come from?' Alvin's one of those guys. He might not have this degree or that background, but he has a lot of dedication and inner strength."

Added Margaret Burnham, a Northeastern University law professor who recently invited Sykes to speak at a conference in Boston about civil rights-era cases, co-sponsored by Harvard University, "He's a completely self-taught man who's incredibly skilled at knowing what buttons to push, when to push them and what cases the government might respond to. He's better at it than hundreds of people I've met in my long life as a civil rights lawyer."

"He brings a passion and insight to the work that would be extraordinary for anybody—a university-trained academic or lawyer—but it's particularly extraordinary given his personal history."

Sykes was born to a 14-year-old at a home for unwed mothers, then taken in by a single 48-year-old friend of the family in Kansas City, Mo. He was sickly, in and out of hospitals with epilepsy, and says around age 11 he was sexually abused by a couple that lived across the street.

His formal education was spotty—he spent three years at Boys Town, the facility for at-risk kids in Omaha—then left school for good at 16.

He lived briefly with his biological mother—he thought for years she was a cousin—but says she was an alcoholic and rarely employed. He ran into her years later when he was homeless. She lived at the same shelter.

But Sykes calls leaving school the start of his education. Working nights managing a

band, he spent his days holed up in a library. "Education was important to me—that's the reason I left school," he said. "The administration was more concerned with students getting a piece of paper than an education. So I started teaching myself."

He also sat in on trials, watching legal strategies, researching what he didn't understand. He became involved in a federal desegregation case with the Kansas City public schools and befriended a Justice Department official. "I learned about cases and the system and started applying it to real matters," he said.

Sykes' work as a victims' advocate became locally renowned after a string of Kansas City musicians were murdered in the late '70s and early '80s. When a white defendant was acquitted of beating a prominent black musician to death, Sykes went back to the library with the victim's wife. "It was like in the movies," he recalled. "We just kept opening books. Then 10 minutes before closing time, I found it."

Sykes unearthed an obscure federal statute that allowed the defendant to be prosecuted on a civil rights violation. He sent everything he found to Justice Department lawyer Richard Roberts, now a federal judge in Washington, who got an indictment. The defendant was convicted and received a life sentence.

"His seriousness of purpose was impressive," Roberts said. "It made answering his phone calls much more attractive."

Sykes had worked for or founded a variety of local victims' rights groups, rarely living on more than \$10,000 a year, when in 2003 he read a story about Till's mother wanting her son's case reopened. Two documentarians also suggested there were living suspects beyond the two men, now dead, who were acquitted of the 14-year-old's murder but later bragged about it in an article.

Sykes and Donald Burger, a retired Justice Department official who befriended Sykes during the school desegregation case, met with Mamie Till-Mobley in Chicago and talked about pursuing the case. Till-Mobley died days later, after co-founding, with Sykes and others, the Emmett Till Justice Campaign.

"Alvin was the aggressor," said Wheeler Parker, 68, who traveled with Till, his cousin, from Chicago to Mississippi in 1955. "Don had more contacts and knowledge, but Alvin had the aggressiveness and nerve to pursue it. The fire's in his belly."

Sykes arranged a meeting in Oxford, Miss., with a U.S. attorney, the district attorney who would prosecute the case, a Till relative and documentarian Keith Beauchamp. The FBI soon agreed to investigate the case for local authorities.

"He was a very adept facilitator," recalled Jim Greenlee, the U.S. attorney. "Without his efforts, the chances for the investigation being reopened would have been much less. I call him a catalyst."

During the Till investigation, Sykes became aware of dozens of other cold cases from that era. He couldn't create a justice campaign for each one, so he envisioned a unit within the Justice Department with the money, resources and expertise to investigate them all. He sold the idea to Missouri's conservative Republican Sen. Jim Talent, who introduced the so-called Till Bill in 2005.

Talent, who credits Sykes with the initial idea, lost re-election last year, and the original bill stalled. But the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act has been reintroduced by Reps. Lewis and Kenny Hulshof (R-Mo.) in the House and Sens. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.). It provides \$11.5 million annually to look into the era's unsolved murders, and political observers say its chances now look good. Many give Sykes credit.

"He has played the role of public advocate on Capitol Hill to remind legislators who may not have experienced the tragedy of segregation and racial discrimination that unsolved crimes against African-Americans have left an intolerable stain on our democracy," said Brenda Jones, spokeswoman for Lewis. "He has helped remind many members of Congress that we must take steps to right these wrongs."

Leaving the Jackson courthouse during a break in the Seale trial, which continues with jury selection this week, Sykes shook his head.

"I was sitting there thinking, 'When I was 16, it was just like this.' I was sitting in a courtroom, getting an education."

Sykes sometimes wishes he could return to the music business, make a better living, have a better life. Living off donations, some speaking fees and a book Till's mother wrote that he sometimes sells out of a bag, he doesn't even own a car. Friends drove him to Jackson.

But he says he can't leave the cause yet. There are still too many low-profile cases he worries will stay lost. Even the Till case languished five decades without a reinvestigation.

"The thing that gets me [maddest] in terms of the Till case," he said, "is the realization that [the two killers who were acquitted on murder charges] could have been tried for kidnapping before they died."

"I have a chip on my shoulder about all the people more knowledgeable than me who could have pursued that case. On my more benevolent days, I say they just didn't know the law enough. On my most cynical days, I say it was just too much work."

SYKES' SUCCESSES

Sykes' behind-the-scenes maneuvering was key to the FBI's reinvestigation of the 1955 murder of Emmett Till.

Sykes generated the idea for legislation that would create a separate unit in the Justice Department devoted to civil rights-era crimes.

DECADES-OLD CRIMES

Since 1989, officials in Mississippi and other states have taken another look:

- 29: Number of murders re-examined
- 28: Number of arrests made
- 22: Number of guilty verdicts

JULY 31, 2008.

DEAR SENATOR COBURN: First allow me to extend our appreciation and admiration for you and your staff for assistance and communication with us concerning S. 535, the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act. While we still believe that the hold that you placed on our bill was not the good way to effect the institutional change in the manner that the United States Senate does business, we do appreciate the open lines of communication and respect that your staff, in particular Brooke Bacak and Tim Tardibono, have shown in negotiating with us on proposed language and conditions that would address your concern and minimize the loss we have suffered from going this route. Therefore our Board of Directors has voted to endorse a unanimous consent agreement that would include the latest draft language that rectifies the concerns with the controversy over the Attorney having authority to reprogram funds from one congressionally directed fund to another by eliminating all reference to reprogramming and replacing with prioritizing spending request if Congress does not fully fund the Till Bill. Furthermore we support you having the right to submit this language as an amendment in the cloture vote process as long as the floor debate time is limited and that you would not replace your hold on our bill if

your amendment fails. Nothing in this request is meant to criticize the Senate Leadership on the enormous work that they have done to craft and advocate for the passage of this bill, especially the good work of Patrick Grant in Senator Dodd's office and Darrell Thompson in Senate Majority leader Harry Reid's office who has kept hope alive on this historic bill. However we firmly believe that truth and justice can be best achieved by opening and maintaining effective lines of communication and searching for a win-win justice seeking solution. We further believe that since you started this by placing your hold on our bill, you should be the one to finish it. Therefore the Emmett Till Justice Campaign, Inc. requests that you make an overture to the Democratic Leadership and the sponsors of the Till Bill by introducing the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act, as proposed amended, under the Unanimous Consent Agreement outlined above tonight in the interest of time, truth and justice.

Sincerely, in the pursuit of justice, I am,

ALVIN SYKES,
President,
Emmett Till Justice Campaign, Inc.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, June 25, 2007.

Senator CHRISTOPHER J. DODD,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHRIS: As you know, I have not agreed to a unanimous consent request for the Senate to approve S. 535/H.R. 923, not because I disagree with the well intended motives of the legislation, but because it violates the principles I use to evaluate every piece of legislation. I sent you and the other members of the Senate a copy of these principles in February.

Among these principles are: If a bill creates or authorizes a new federal program or activity, it must not duplicate an existing program or activity; and if a bill authorizes new spending, it must be offset by reductions in real spending elsewhere.

Your bill both creates a new government program that duplicates an existing program and authorizes new government spending without offsetting the costs.

The bill authorizes \$115 million over 10 years to investigate murders committed before 1970 that have gone unpunished. Perhaps you are unaware, but the Department of Justice initiated an effort over a year ago to do just this.

In February 2006, a full year before you introduced your bill, the U.S. Attorney General and the FBI director announced a partnership with the NAACP, the Southern Poverty Law Center and the National Urban League to investigate unsolved crimes from the civil rights era. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has pledged that "The Justice Department is committed to investigating and prosecuting civil-rights era homicides for as long as it takes and as far as the law allows—because there is no statute of limitations on human dignity and justice."

According to the FBI, "in February 2006, the FBI enacted an initiative to identify hate crimes that occurred prior to December 1969, and resulted in death." The Bureau's 56 field offices have been directed to re-examine their unsolved civil rights cases and determine which ones could still be viable for prosecution. The FBI has partnered with a number of state and local authorities, civic organizations, and community leaders to re-examine old files. Since the initiative began, the FBI has received nearly 100 such referrals. The FBI is continuing to assess each referral for its investigative and legal viability

and, given the updated investigative and forensic tools, move forward in investigating these cases.

The Department of Justice is not lacking resources either. At the end of Fiscal Year 2006, the Department had \$2.5 billion in unobligated balances, which is unspent money. The Department is expected to have \$1.6 billion in unobligated balances at the end of Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008.

Because the FBI is already working on this issue and the Justice Department has billions of unspent dollars, I am unsure why creating new government programs and authorizing more than \$100 million in new spending is necessary.

If authorizing more spending for this ongoing effort, however, is necessary, we could pay for it with unspent Department funds or with offsets from existing lower priority spending, as I have proposed doing.

I realize that many members of the Senate do not care about our national debt which is why it is nearly \$9 trillion. Most Senators, including you, voted to kill a Sense of Senate resolution stating that Congress has a moral obligation to offset the cost of new Government programs and initiatives. You even voted to fund the infamous "Bridges to Nowhere" in Alaska which cost half a billion dollars!

So while you may not concern yourself with our national debt or the impact of adding to it, I do. That it why I was very disappointed that you issued a press statement last week claiming that I am "delaying this bill's passage under false pretense."

If you really care about this issue and the economic future of our nation, I would hope that you would actually discuss the matter directly with me instead of holding press conferences and issuing press releases. In fact, my office did make an offer to your staff to find a way to pay for this bill, which was rejected.

If you have any interest in passing this bill in a fiscally responsible manner, please contact me. In the meantime, you can rest assured that the Attorney General and the FBI are already conducting the investigations that your bill seeks to address.

Sincerely,
TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
U.S. Senator.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, June 19, 2008.

Senator CHRISTOPHER J. DODD,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DODD: As you are aware, I am ready to enter into a unanimous consent agreement on S. 535, the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act. This weekend marks the anniversary of the murders of three civil rights workers in Mississippi, and I believe it is an opportune time for the Senate to give this bill the vote it deserves. To that end, I have offered four amendments for your consideration. Unfortunately, until you agree to allow me to offer these amendments on the floor, the Senate is prevented from moving to the bill. My hope is that we can resolve this issue soon, so that the Senate may consider S. 535 immediately.

I have always supported the admirable goal of this legislation: namely, to ensure that perpetrators of heinous civil rights cold case crimes are finally brought to justice. I was pleased to learn of the Government's efforts to identify and prosecute these crimes, initiated a full year before your bill was introduced. It remains my desire to see these efforts continue, but I insist that they be done in a fiscally responsible manner.

My concerns with this bill have always involved its cost, and I have worked consistently to identify possible offsets. I made

known these concerns as early as August 2006, when the measure was first considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee. At that time, the bill's sponsor worked with me to find an agreeable offset; however, our proposals were ultimately rejected by an unnamed Senator. In June 2007, I had another opportunity to explain my concerns when the bill again came before the Committee. Additionally, more than three months before I publicly objected to your request for unanimous consent to consider the bill on the floor, I sent you a letter explaining in detail my position on the bill. Finally, in October 2007, I offered an amendment to provide \$1.68 million to investigate and prosecute unsolved civil rights crimes by transferring funds from other wasteful programs. That amendment was defeated after a majority of the Senate, including 11 of the bill's sponsors, voted to table it.

Even if I had not been so vocal about this bill in the 109th Congress, the letter I sent to you and all of my Senate colleagues in February 2007 should have left no doubt about my position this year. That letter outlined the principles I use to evaluate legislation, which include: If a bill creates or authorizes a new federal program or activity, it must not duplicate an existing program or activity; and if a bill authorizes new spending it must be offset by reductions in real spending elsewhere.

Because S. 535 both creates a new, duplicative government program and authorizes new government spending without offsetting the costs, you had ample notice—long before you hotlined the bill—that I would object.

Because of the knowledge you had about negotiations that occurred in the previous Congress, my staff's earlier failed efforts to negotiate an offset with your staff, and my own public statements, there has been a consistent understanding of my willingness to allow the full Senate to consider S. 535. My only desire is to be permitted to offer amendments to the bill. I regret that my position has been unfairly—and incorrectly—characterized as an insurmountable obstacle to final passage.

Although my office has not been contacted by yours (or any other bill sponsors) since before the press conference you held to question my intentions on this bill, I have been in frequent contact with the Emmett Till Justice Campaign. That Campaign is undoubtedly the bill's greatest supporter, and the persistent efforts of President Alvin Sykes have outdone any member of the Senate, both in character and enthusiasm. It has been my privilege to work directly with Mr. Sykes, and it is to his credit that so much progress has been made these past few months. We could all stand to learn from his example.

In short, the purpose of this letter is to secure your commitment to a UC agreement allowing me to offer four amendments to S. 535 during floor debate. If you will do so, I am prepared to take up the bill immediately. Especially given the timeliness of this weekend's memorials commemorating the 44th anniversary of the deaths of three civil rights martyrs, I see no reason for further delay.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
U.S. Senator.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, June 19, 2008.

Senator HARRY REID,
Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: The purpose of this letter is to reiterate my willingness to enter into a unanimous consent agreement allowing floor consideration of S. 535, the Emmett

Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act. I understand that your staff, along with that of the bill's sponsor, is still considering the four amendments I have proposed as a condition of my consent. My hope is that we can resolve this issue soon, so that the Senate may consider S. 535 immediately.

I have been disappointed in the progress of this bill. Although I made known my specific concerns over the bill's cost as early as August 2006, my intentions have repeatedly been questioned both by members of the media and the Senate. The attacks have been disingenuous, as I have always supported the admirable goal of this legislation: namely, to ensure that perpetrators of heinous civil rights cold case crimes are finally brought to justice. Consistent with the position I have taken toward all legislation authorizing new spending in the 110th Congress, I exercised my right to withhold consent on S. 535.

I have, however, always made known my willingness to work with bill sponsors on identifying needed offsets. Because they have been unwilling to accept my offers and have shown no willingness to otherwise negotiate, the Senate must now consider the bill on the floor. In order for this to happen, we must reach an agreement as to time and amendments. I have put forth my request for consent to offer four amendments and continue to await a response.

Although my office has not been contacted since last year by any Senator seeking to move this bill, I have been in frequent contact with the Emmett Till Justice Campaign. That Campaign is undoubtedly the bill's greatest supporter, and the persistent efforts of President Alvin Sykes have outdone any member of the Senate, both in character and enthusiasm. It has been my privilege to work directly with Mr. Sykes, and it is to his credit that so much progress has been made these past few months. We could all stand to learn from his example.

This weekend marks the 44th anniversary of the murders of three civil rights workers in Mississippi. The occasion makes consideration of this bill especially timely, and I want to make clear that I support prompt consideration. Please give me a response on my request to offer four amendments so that the Senate is able to take up S. 535 as soon as possible.

Thanks,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
U.S. Senator.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in 2004, when I was selected by my peers as the Democratic leader, the first public appearance I made following the vote we had, I walked out to the press and said I would rather dance than fight. I still feel that way. I was elected to the Senate because the people of Nevada knew I was a good Democrat but that I always would eagerly reach across the table and find common ground wherever possible. I guess I learned that in the courtroom in working cases. You have to be willing to compromise in the law, as you do in politics. I have a strong conviction, that is true.

There is no better example of that than my relationship with JOHN ENSIGN. JOHN ENSIGN, the junior Senator from Nevada, and I had a bitter race in 1998. He was a Member of Congress. I was a sitting Senator. He ran against me. That was a close race. No one ever thought we would wind up in the Senate together, but as fortune spins, Senator Bryant unexpectedly decided not to run for reelection, and JOHN ENSIGN was able to come to the Senate.

For 8 years, we have worked to develop a relationship that has turned into a strong friendship. JOHN ENSIGN and I, though we disagree on some political issues, never, ever publicly or privately discuss our differences politically.

I mention that because we need in the Senate to work together. Even though we may have different political views on different aspects of Government, we need to work together. It may not be apparent to those who watch the daily skirmishes of the Senate from afar, but I try to approach every issue in this Congress with the same eagerness to find common ground that I do working with Senator ENSIGN.

There have been occasions—not often enough—where Republican colleagues have joined Democrats in the pursuit of progress. When they have chosen that path, we have, together, accomplished some very good things for the American people, even in this work period, which has seen some bitter partisanship. While it will be remembered probably for the Republican obstructionism that has occurred, we can still look and find examples of significant bipartisan compromise.

At a time when we see such interesting things around the country that need so much help, we have been able to pass legislation in one area of great concern: housing. We passed a comprehensive housing bill. The housing crisis has been uprooting families and wreaking havoc in neighborhoods across the country for far too long. It was a struggle to get this bill passed. Never in the history of the country, I am told, has there been a bill that has passed the Congress where we have had seven filibusters on one bill—the same bill—at the same time. We had one filibuster right after the other, seven of them, but we finally got to the finish line on housing. It is a good piece of legislation. Some 8,500 families who receive foreclosure notices every day will not be confronted with that in many instances because of the legislation we passed.

During this work period, we also passed the Medicare doctors fix—the salvation of Medicare is what it was—and we did that by overriding the senseless veto by the President of the United States. We were only able to do that because right down here stood Senator TED KENNEDY, a man who should not have been here. He was not supposed to be flying. He wasn't supposed to be around crowds, and of course there were lots of crowds that

were here—everyone wanted to be around him—and he stood here and cast the deciding vote that broke the impasse. We had 60 votes. After we got 60 votes, the Republicans in good will joined and allowed us to save Medicare. It took the courage of TED KENNEDY, rising from his sick bed against doctors' orders, to cast the deciding vote. Because he did, and enough Republicans joined with us, we renewed the long-held American promise that the elderly, the disabled and the orphans and widows will receive the health care they need.

We also passed, during this work period, a bill that is a test to America's charity and moral authority in the world, the so-called PEPFAR bill. This legislation provides an unprecedented level of support for the fight against AIDS in Africa. It is not often I have occasion to praise the President, but he did a good job on this, and I commend him for helping us. I am glad that even after we had struggles for months at a time, Senate Republicans joined with the President and Senate Democrats to choose to end their obstruction and allow us to pass that legislation.

Late yesterday, we wrapped up work on an important piece of legislation. We did it at the end of this work period. In fact, we did it on two important pieces of legislation: consumer product safety and the higher education bill, both very important pieces of legislation. At a time when parents are rightly more concerned than ever about the safety of the toys they buy for their children, the consumer product safety legislation gives parents and all consumers new assurance that the goods we buy are fully tested and approved for safe use. That applies to the stereotype, which is the toys the children use in America, but it is far broader than that. With rare exception, it is everything we consume in America today now will be safe.

The Higher Education Act had not been reauthorized in some 10 years until last night. Of course, it was long overdue, but since we passed it, millions of bright young American minds will have the opportunity to unlock the doors of opportunity a college education provides.

Our country will be stronger for every one of the bills we passed this work period—every one of them. I wish we had passed a lot more. Those we did are important. I am glad we did it. As with any legislation, when you pass a bill, there are lots of accolades to be passed around. When you don't pass a bill, there is a lot of blame to go around.

I feel a lot of disappointment, though, when I think back upon this work period and wonder what might have been, what might we have accomplished if our Republican colleagues had decided to dance with us more often than fight. We could have gone a long way toward solving America's energy crisis. Yesterday was a microcosm for why the Senate failed to do so.

Democrats came to the floor to offer seven different energy initiatives. Our plan would tackle every piece of the energy puzzle: Increasing supply with more domestic production, meaning increasing supply with more American production; reducing demand by investing in clean and renewable alternatives; going after those who keep oil prices artificially high for their own financial gain; and helping those in need pay their skyrocketing heating bills.

Earlier today, a group of 10 Senators—5 Republicans, 5 Democrats—indicated they had done some work to come up with a proposal that they think would help the energy crisis. I have been kept informed of how this has been progressing, and I am glad they have worked on what they did. They have worked very hard. There are many good ideas. Do I agree with everything they did? No, I don't agree with everything, but even the 10 don't agree with everything in the package.

I look forward to working with them. We are going to work with this group in a number of different ways. First of all, the information we got from them is important. I am going to hold a summit in Las Vegas on August 19—an energy summit, a clean energy summit. President Clinton will be there, Mayor Bloomberg, T. Boone Pickens, the Governors of Utah, Arizona, Colorado. We have people from the private sector, the public sector coming to talk about what we can do to wean ourselves from fossil fuel.

Also, the week we get back in September, we are going to have an energy summit of Democrats, a bipartisan energy summit, to see if there is any way we can work together to move forward—move forward on things that are so important to this country, such as having multiple year energy tax credits so we can wean ourselves from the fossil fuels and look to the Sun, the wind, and geothermal for our energy. I certainly hope we can do that.

Republicans have said no to every proposal we have made. Because they did, the American people will have to wait for short- and long-term solutions to the energy crisis. That truly is unfortunate.

With more Republican cooperation, we could have passed mental health parity. That is so important. It is a bipartisan bill to ensure equal access to health care for people with mental illness. We were prevented from doing that.

With more Republican cooperation, we could have passed a package of 13 bipartisan bills that Republicans blocked. That package includes the Emmett Till unsolved crimes bill which would help heal old wounds and provide the Department of Justice and the FBI tools needed to effectively investigate and possibly solve civil rights-era murders.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act would provide grants for health care, education and workforce programs and housing programs for runaway and homeless youth.

The combating child exploitation bill would provide grants to train law enforcement to use technology to track individuals who trade in child pornography and establish an Internet crimes against children task force.

The Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act would enhance cooperation in research, rehabilitation, and quality of life with people who suffer from paralysis.

LIHEAP, a bill that was called Cool In Summer, Warm In Winter Act to provide relief to the aged, the disabled, and the poor so they can have energy assistance to cool their homes in summertime, heat their homes in the wintertime—the Republicans turned it down.

We were amazed that Republicans said no to these bills and many others, but they did, and that is unfortunate.

The list of critical priorities we could have done something about with even a small degree of Republican cooperation is no longer available to us now. It would have been nice if we could have done the list. The list of things we could have done is far longer than I can recite today, but I say that because Republicans chose the path of obstruction. The good we did is far outweighed by the good that could have been. Of course, that is disappointing to all of us.

When you strip away the differences between the McCain Republican approach to energy and the Democratic approach to high gas prices, you find the Republican policy is the Exxon policy, and our policy is an energy policy. The Republicans have a one-word policy: drill. That is the Exxon policy. Our approach, the Democratic approach is No. 1, drill where appropriate, but also develop competition for oil by encouraging solar, wind, geothermal. The Republicans say no because it will lower oil prices, and that is not what Exxon wants. Our policy is to increase the supply now by releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The Republicans say no because it will lower oil prices and that is not what Exxon wants.

No. 3, we say go after financial speculators. The Republicans say no because that would lower the price of oil, and that is not what Exxon wants.

No. 4, we say invest in new car battery technology. The Republicans say no because that will lower oil prices, and that is not what Exxon wants.

The Republicans' affection for Exxon explains why they say no to even allowing us to debate issues that are so important. No, no, no is what Exxon wants—to keep oil prices high.

That is too bad.

When we return in September, we need to get right back to work. We have just a few weeks to get a lot done. Perhaps by then, though, the political winds will blow in a different direction, and the Republicans will return with a new willingness to work together. If they do, we can work out a bipartisan plan on energy that meets our country's near- and long-term needs.

We can send the American people a new economic stimulus bill to help families make ends meet and strengthen an economy that has now lost jobs every month this year.

We can pass the Defense authorization bill that provides our military with the funds they need to keep our country safe. It takes care of those who serve us bravely with an across-the-board 3.9-percent military pay raise and major investments in the physical safety and mental health of our troops, not the least of which is attempting to rebuild the military which is in a state of distress because of the Iraq war.

We can pass a Military Construction/Veterans Affairs appropriations bill to maintain and upgrade military facilities, build better military family housing, and ensure the care our veterans deserve.

We can pass a Defense appropriations bill to keep our Armed Forces prepared for combat and peacetime missions, relieve the strain of constant 12- and now 15-month deployments, and support highly classified initiatives in the fight against terrorism.

With the Presidential election drawing near, our time will be short. But with new cooperation from our Republican colleagues, we can do all this—and pass several other important bipartisan bills already passed by the House of Representatives.

So I wish all my colleagues well in their August travels. I know we are all weary from the long, difficult work period.

I also know the fights that await our return won't be easy. I hope a month back home will give our Republican colleagues a new appreciation for how America needs badly the changes they have blocked.

Our hands remain outstretched. Our eagerness to seek common ground remains as strong as ever. We will fight if we must, but we would much rather dance.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 624

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate record

reflect the Senate adoption of Calendar No. 924, S. Res. 624, as reported by committee.

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CROSSING OF THE NORTH POLE BY THE USS "NAUTILUS"

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today, joined by my colleagues Senators LIEBERMAN, REED, and WHITEHOUSE, to mark the 50th anniversary of a momentous occasion in our Nation's maritime history, an occasion that truly launched the American Navy into the Nuclear Age. On August 3, 1958, the USS *Nautilus*, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, became the first vessel to travel under the North Pole. The intrepid crewmen of the *Nautilus* received a Presidential Unit Citation for their service, and Operation Sunshine, as it was called, provided a powerful boost to American morale following the Soviet launch of Sputnik. Today, we mark this important milestone with a resolution honoring the *Nautilus*'s historic feat.

The USS *Nautilus*'s Arctic voyage was a remarkable feat of American naval engineering, demonstrating the evolution of submarines from slow underwater ships to warships that could submerge for many weeks and travel through varied depths and conditions, maintaining travel speeds of 20–25 knots. Submarines, as was proven that day, would pursue unconventional courses to achieve incredible results, in this case, traveling a much shorter distance than was thought possible, to reach strategically important destinations on the other side of the globe.

But most important, it marked a major milestone for our nuclear Navy, which would lead to other developments, such as submarines powered by single pressurized water reactors, and an aircraft carrier, USS *Enterprise*, powered by eight reactor units in 1960.

While the *Nautilus*'s successful voyage was an inspiration to all America, it serves a particularly important point of pride to our submariners, as well as the engineers and shipbuilders of the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics, who have built our Nation's nuclear submarines in Connecticut for more than four decades. As a young boy, I attended the launch of the USS *Nautilus* in Groton, CT; and had the honor to witness my late mother christening the USS *Stimson*. My first cousin, Bill McAree, was one of the chosen few to serve in the nuclear submarine force under Admiral Rickover, and for 34 years, I have had the distinct pleasure of representing the home State of our Nation's premier undersea warfare facilities, including Naval Submarine Base New London.

As we commemorate the 50th anniversary of this important voyage, we must also look forward to the future of American naval power. As nations around the world continue to enlarge

their own submarine fleets, the U.S. ability to travel freely and swiftly beneath the waves represents a critically important component of U.S. seapower. Today, our submarine fleet is contributing invaluable surveillance and reconnaissance to our warfighters, and providing an important platform for operations in what the Navy calls "the littorals," or coastal areas. Our military has no more stealthy means for delivering power than the submarine, carrying Navy SEAL teams to enemy territory undetected, or traveling to specific locations to launch cruise missiles. Submarines are not merely weapons of war, they are tools of statecraft, providing critical intelligence to policymakers and serving as a critical deterrent to promote stability throughout the globe. And it is submarines' demonstrated ability to traverse the world undetected, at any point in the ocean, even the North Pole, that makes the work of our silent service, our submariners, so critically important to our national security.

As we look back on the first 50 years of America's nuclear submarine program, the United States must be ready to continue the great legacy of the USS *Nautilus*, its crewmen, shipwrights, and designers, and remain in the forefront of submarine development.

COSPONSORSHIP—S. 3406

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, through an oversight of our two offices we neglected to add Senator DOLE as an original cosponsor to this act when we introduced it last night. Senator DOLE is a leader on disability issues and should be commended for her and her husband's commitment to individuals with disabilities.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to apologize to the Senator from North Carolina for this oversight. Our legislation, S. 3406, enjoys broad support among advocates for individuals with disabilities, and I want everyone in that community to know that Senator DOLE intended to be an original cosponsor of this measure. We look forward to working closely with her and the rest of our colleagues to pass this measure when the Senate reconvenes in September.

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL RICHARD A. CODY

Mr. LEAHY. I rise to commend GEN Richard A. Cody, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, on his retirement. General Cody is one of the Nation's finest military officers, and, with a career that spans over 36 years in the Army, he leaves behind a stronger, more experienced, and more professional fighting force. Vermont is proud to call General Cody a native, and there is little doubt that his time growing up in our State capital, Montpelier, instilled in him a deep sense of loyalty and public service.