

Mr. REED. Mr. President, with respect to the nominations confirmed today, I ask unanimous consent that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and that the Senate return to legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Inaugural Ceremony proceedings be printed in the RECORD.

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

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

Inauguration of Barack Hussein Obama, January 20, 2009, 11:30 a.m.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff assembled on the President's platform.

The Diplomatic Corps assembled on the President's platform.

The Governors of the United States and its territories and the Mayor of the District of Columbia assembled on the President's platform.

Members of the 111th House of Representatives of the United States, led by majority whip James E. Clyburn and Republican whip Eric Cantor, assembled on the President's platform.

Members of the Senate of the United States assembled on the President's platform.

Former Speakers of the House of Representatives, Thomas Foley and Newt Gingrich, accompanied by Mrs. Foley and Mrs. Gingrich, assembled on the President's platform.

Former Vice Presidents Walter Mondale, Dan Quayle, and Al Gore, accompanied by Mrs. Mondale, Mrs. Quayle, and Mrs. Gore, assembled on the President's platform.

Mr. William M. Daley, Ms. Penny Pritzker, Mr. John W. Rogers, Jr., Mr. Patrick G. Ryan, and Ms. Julianna Smoot, cochairs of the 56th Presidential Inaugural Committee; and Mr. Emmett S. Beliveau, executive director of the 56th Presidential Inaugural Committee, assembled on the President's platform.

The President-elect's Cabinet and agency designees assembled on the President's platform.

The Chief Justice of the United States, the Honorable John G. Roberts, Jr., and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States assembled on the President's platform.

The 39th President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter assembled on the President's platform.

The 41st President of the United States, George H.W. Bush, and Mrs. Barbara Bush assembled on the President's platform.

The 42nd President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton assembled on the President's platform.

The children of the Vice President-elect, CPT Beau Biden, Hunter Biden, and Ashley Biden, accompanied by House Chief Administrative Officer Dan Beard, assembled on the President's platform.

Mrs. Marian Robinson and the daughters of the President-elect, Malia and Sasha Obama, accompanied by Assistant Secretary of the Senate Sheila Dwyer, assembled on the President's platform.

The First Lady, Mrs. Laura Bush, and the wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Lynne Cheney, accompanied by Secretary Chao, Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Boehner, and Republican staff director of the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, Mary Sut Jones, assembled on the President's platform.

Mrs. Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, accompanied by the Secretary of the Senate, Nancy Erickson; the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Lorraine Miller; Mr. Blum, Mr. Pelosi, and Mrs. Reid, assembled on the President's platform.

The President of the United States, the Honorable George Walker Bush, and the Vice President of the United States, Dick Cheney, accompanied by Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, Senator Robert Bennett, House Republican leader, Representative John Boehner, and Secretary for the minority David Schiappa, assembled on the President's platform.

The Vice President-elect of the United States, Joseph R. Biden, Jr., accompanied by the inaugural coordinator for the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, Jennifer Griffith; Senate Deputy Sergeant at Arms Drew Wilson; House Deputy Sergeant at Arms Kerri Hanley; Senate majority leader, Senator Harry Reid; House majority leader, Representative Steny Hoyer, assembled on the President's platform.

The President-elect of the United States, Barack H. Obama, accompanied by the staff director for the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, Howard Gantman; the Senate Sergeant at Arms, Terrence W. Gainer; the House Sergeant at Arms, Wilson Livingood; chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, Senator Dianne Feinstein; Senator Robert Bennett; the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi; the Senate majority leader, Harry Reid; House majority leader, Representative Steny Hoyer; House Republican leader, Representative John Boehner, assembled on the President's platform.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President and Vice President, Mr. President-elect and Vice President-elect, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. The world is watching today as our great democracy engages in this peaceful transition of power. Here on the National Mall, where we remember the founders of our Nation and those who fought to make it free, we gather to etch another line in the solid stone of history. The freedom of a people to choose its leaders is the root of liberty. In a world where political strife is too often settled with violence, we come here every 4 years to bestow the power of the Presidency upon our democratically elected leader.

Those who doubt the supremacy of the ballot over the bullet can never diminish the power engendered by nonviolent struggles for justice and equality like the one that made this day possible. No triumph tainted by brutality could ever match the sweet victory of this hour and of what it means to those who marched and died to make it a reality. Our work is not yet finished, but future generations will mark this morning as the turning point for real and necessary change in our Nation. They will look back and remember that this was the moment when the dream that once echoed across history from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial finally reached the walls of the White House.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. In that spirit, we today not only inaugurate a new administration, we pledge ourselves to the hope, the vision, the unity, and the renewed call to greatness inspired by the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you, and God bless America.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. At this time I call upon Dr. Rick Warren, pastor of the Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA, to provide the invocation.

Pastor WARREN. Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Father, everything we see and everything we can't see exists because of You alone. It all comes from You. It all belongs to You. It all exists for Your glory. History is Your story. The scripture tells us: Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. And You are the compassionate and merciful one, and You are loving to every one You have made. Now, today, we rejoice, not only in America's peaceful transfer of power for the 44th time, we celebrate a hinge point of history, with the inauguration of our first African-American President of the United States. We are so grateful to live in this land, a land of unequalled possibility, where the son of an African American can rise to the highest level of our leadership. And we know today that Dr. King and a great cloud of witnesses are shouting in heaven.

Give to our new President Barack Obama the wisdom to lead us with humility, the courage to lead us with integrity, the compassion to lead us with generosity. Bless and protect him, his family, Vice President Biden, the Cabinet, and every one of our freely elected leaders. Help us, O God, to remember that we are Americans, united not by race or religion or blood but to our commitment to freedom and justice for all.

When we focus on ourselves, when we fight each other, when we forget You, forgive us. When we presume that our greatness and our prosperity is ours alone, forgive us. When we fail to treat our fellow human beings and all the Earth with the respect that they deserve, forgive us.

As we face these difficult days ahead, may we have a new birth of clarity in aims, responsibility in our actions, humility in our approaches, and civility in our attitudes, even when we differ. Help us to share, to serve, and to seek the common good of all. May all people of goodwill today join together to work for a more just, a more healthy, and a more prosperous nation and a peaceful planet. And may we never forget that one day all nations and all people will stand accountable before You.

We now commit our new President and his wife Michelle and his daughters, Malia and Sasha, into Your loving care. I humbly ask this in the name of the one who changed my life, Yeshua, Esau, Jesus, Jesus, who taught us to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I am so pleased to introduce world renowned musical artist Aretha Franklin to sing "My Country Tis of Thee." (Performance by Ms. Aretha Franklin.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Please join me in welcoming my colleague from Utah, the Honorable Robert Bennett.

Mr. BENNETT. It is my great honor to introduce Associate Justice of the Supreme

Court of the United States John Paul Stevens, who will administer the oath of office to the Vice President-elect. Will you all please stand.

Associate Justice JOHN PAUL STEVENS administered to the Vice President-elect the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, which he repeated, as follows:

“I, JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN, JR. do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of my office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. It is my pleasure to introduce a unique musical performance: Mr. Itzhak Perlman, violinist; Anthony McGill, clarinet; Yo-Yo Ma, cellist; and Gabriela Montero, pianist, performing “Air and Simple Gifts,” a composition arranged for this occasion by John Williams.

(Performance by Mr. Yo-Yo Ma, Mr. Anthony McGill, Ms. Gabriela Montero, and Mr. Itzhak Perlman.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. It is my distinct honor to present the Chief Justice of the United States, the Honorable John G. Roberts, Jr., who will administer the Presidential oath of office. Everyone, please stand.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, JOHN G. ROBERTS, JR., administered to the President-elect the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, which he repeated, as follows:

“I, BARACK HUSSEIN OBAMA, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. So Help me God.”

THE CHIEF JUSTICE. Congratulations, Mr. President.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great personal honor to present the 44th President of these United States, Barack Obama.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDENT. Thank you. Thank you.

My fellow citizens, I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our Nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.

Forty-four Americans have now taken the Presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often, the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office but because we, the people, have remained faithful to the ideals of our forebears and true to our founding documents. So it has been. So it must be with this generation of Americans.

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our Nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the Nation for a new age. Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet. These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable but no less pro-

found is a sapping of confidence across our land, a nagging fear that America’s decline is inevitable, that the next generation must lower its sights.

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious, and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America—they will be met.

(Applause.)

On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord. On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and wornout dogmas that for far too long have strained our politics. We remain a young Nation, but in the words of scripture: The time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit, to choose our better history, to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation, the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.

(Applause.)

In reaffirming the greatness of our Nation, we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our journey has never been one of shortcuts or settling for less. It has not been the path for the faint-hearted, for those who prefer leisure over work or seek only the pleasures of riches and fame. Rather, it has been the risk takers, the doers, the makers of things, some celebrated but more often men and women obscure in their labor who have carried us up the long rugged path towards prosperity and freedom. For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life. For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip, and plowed the hard earth. For us, they fought and died in places like Concord and Gettysburg, Normandy and Khe Sahn.

Time and again, these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked until their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions, greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.

This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful Nation on Earth. Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week or last month or last year. Our capacity remains undiminished, and our time of standing pat and protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions—that time has surely passed. Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.

(Applause.)

For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of our economy calls for action, bold and swift. And we will act, not only to create new jobs but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We will restore science to its rightful place and wield technology’s wonders to raise health care’s quality and lower its cost. We will harness the Sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. All this we will do.

Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions, who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short. For they have for-

gotten what this country has already done, what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose and necessity to courage. What the cynics fail to understand is that the ground has shifted beneath them, that the stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long no longer apply.

The question we ask today is not whether our Government is too big or too small but whether it works—whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is, yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. Those of us who manage the public’s dollars will be held to account—to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day—because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their Government.

Nor is the question before us whether the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to generate wealth and expand freedom is unmatched. But this crisis has reminded us that without a watchful eye, the market can spin out of control and that a nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous. The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product but on the reach of our prosperity, on the ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart—not out of charity but because it is the surest route to our common good.

(Applause.)

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers, faced with perils that we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience sake. And so to all the other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born, know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman, and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity and that we are ready to lead once more.

(Applause.)

Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks but with sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use. Our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. We are the keepers of this legacy. Guided by these principles once more, we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort, even greater cooperation and understanding between nations.

We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan. With old friends and former foes, we will work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat and roll back the specter of a warming planet. We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waiver in its defense. And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken. You cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.

(Applause.)

For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and nonbelievers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth. And because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help

but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that American must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.

(Applause.)

To those who claim power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

(Applause.)

To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to the suffering outside our borders, nor can we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

As we consider the role that unfolds before us, we will remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who at this very hour patrol far off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us, just as the fallen heroes who lie in Arlington whisper through the ages. We honor them not only because they are the guardians of our liberty but because they embody the spirit of service, a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves. And yet at this moment—a moment that will define a generation—it is precisely this spirit that must inhabit us all. For as much as Government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this Nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job which sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child that finally decides our fate.

Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success defends—honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosities, loyalty and patriotism—these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history. What is demanded, then, is a return to these truths; what is required of us now is a new era of responsibility—a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our Nation, and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but, rather, seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task.

This is the price and the promise of citizenship. This is the source of our confidences—the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny.

This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed—why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent Mall, and why a man whose father, less than 60 years ago, might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.

(Applause.)

So let us mark this day with remembrance of who we are and how far we have traveled.

In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying camp fires on the shores of an icy river; the capital was abandoned, the enemy was advancing, the snow was stained with blood; at a moment when the outcome of our Revolution was most in doubt, the Father of our Nation ordered these words be read to the people:

Let it be told to the future world . . . that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive . . . that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it].

America, in the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents and endure what storms may come. Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested, we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back, nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.

Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I have the distinct pleasure of introducing an American poet, Elizabeth Alexander.

Ms. ALEXANDER. "Praise Song for the Day."

Each day we go about our business, walking past each other, catching each other's eyes or not, about to speak or speaking.

All about us is noise. All about us is noise and bramble, thorn and din, each one of our ancestors on our tongues.

Someone is stitching up a hem, darning a hole in a uniform, patching a tire, repairing the things in need or repair.

Someone is trying to make music somewhere, with a pair of wooden spoons on an oil drum, with cello, boom box, harmonica, voice.

A woman and her son wait for the bus. A father considers the changing sky. A teacher says, "Take out your pencils. Begin."

We encounter each other in words, words spiny or smooth, whispered or declaimed, words to consider, reconsider.

We cross dirt roads and highways that mark the will of some one and then others, who said I need to see what's on the other side.

I know there's something better down the road. We need to find a place where we are safe. We walk into that which we cannot yet see.

Say it plain: that many have died for this day. Sing the names of the dead who brought us here, who laid the train tracks, raised the bridges, picked the cotton and the lettuce, built brick by brick the glittering edifices they would then keep clean and work inside of.

Praise song for struggle, praise song for the day. Praise song for every hand-lettered sign, the figuring-it-out at kitchen tables.

Some live by love thy neighbor as thy self, others by first do no harm or take no more than you need. What if the mightiest word is love?

Love beyond marital, filial, national, love that casts a widening pool of light, love with no need to pre-empt grievance.

In today's sharp sparkle, the winter air, any thing can be made, any sentence begun. On the brink, on the brim, on the cusp,

praise song for walking forward in that light.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. And now it is my privilege to introduce the Reverend Dr. Joseph E. Lowery to deliver the benediction.

Reverend LOWERY. God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou who hast brought us thus far along the way, Thou who has by the might, led us into the light, keep us forever in the path we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee; lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget Thee, shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand true to our God and true to our native land.

We truly give thanks for the glorious experience we have shared this day. We pray now, O Lord, for your blessing upon thy servant, Barack Obama, the 44th President of these United States, his family and his administration. He has come to this high office at a low moment in the national and, indeed, global fiscal climate. But because we know you have got the whole world in Your hands, we pray for not only our Nation but for the community of nations. Our faith does not shrink, though pressed by the flood of mortal ills, for we know that, Lord, You are able and You are willing to work through faithful leadership to restore stability, mend our brokenness, heal our wounds, and deliver us from the exploitation of the poor, the least of these, as well as favoritism toward the rich, the elite of these.

We thank You for the empowering of Thy servant, our 44th President, to inspire our Nation to believe that, yes, we can work together to achieve a more perfect Union. While we have sown the wind of greed and corruption and even as we reap the whirlwind of social and economic disruption, we seek forgiveness and we come in the spirit of unity and solidarity to commit our support to our President by willingness to make sacrifices necessary to respect Your creation, to turn to each other and not on each other.

And now Lord, in the complex arena of human relationships, help us to make choices on the side of love not hate, on the side of inclusion not exclusion, tolerance not intolerance. And as we leave this mountaintop, help us to hold on to the spirit of fellowship, of koinonia, and the oneness of our family. And take that spiritual power back to our homes, our workplaces, our churches, our temples, our mosques, wherever we seek Your will.

Bless President Barack, First Lady Michelle, look over our little "angelics," Sasha and Malia. We go now to walk together, children, pledging that we won't get weary in the difficult days ahead. We know You will not leave us alone with Your hands of power and Your heart of love. Help us, then, now Lord, to work for that day when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, when tanks will be beaten into tractors, when every man and every woman shall sit under his or her own vine and fig tree, and none shall be afraid; when justice will roll down like water and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Lord, in the memory of all the saints who from their labors rest, and in the joy of a new beginning, we ask You to help us work for that day when Black will not be asked to get back, when Brown can stick around, when Yellow will be mellow, when the Red man can get ahead man, and when White will embrace what is right. Let all those who do justice and love mercy say amen. Say amen. And amen. Amen.

(Applause.)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the singing of our national anthem by the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters Chorus. Following the anthem, please remain in place while the presidential party exits the platform. Thank you very much.

(Performance by the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters.)

(The Inagural ceremony was concluded at 12:36 p.m.)

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 249

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 249, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to qualify formerly homeless youth who are students for purposes of low income tax credit.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I also express my appreciation to my Republican colleagues for the unanimous-consent request I am going to offer at this time, which has been approved, as I understand it, by the Republican leader and the other Senators.

Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that tomorrow, January 21, at the hour of 12 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of HILLARY CLINTON to be Secretary of State; that there be 3 hours of debate, with the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination of Senator CLINTON; that upon confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that no other motions be in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess for our usual party luncheons, and that the recess begin, if it is appropriate with the distinguished Republican leader, at 12:45 p.m., rather than at 12:30, so some debate can move forward.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if the majority leader would yield for a question?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would be happy to.

Mr. McCONNELL. Is the Senator suggesting that the time on Senator CLINTON's nomination run through the luncheons?

Mr. REID. Well, what I would like to do: We would stop at a quarter to 1 and come back at 2:15 to complete that debate at that time.

Mr. McCONNELL. That is fine.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THANKING SENATOR ALEXANDER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I express my appreciation to the distinguished Senator from Tennessee for his usual courtesies. He had to wait for me to get here, and I appreciate his withholding until the Republican leader and I got here. The Senator from Tennessee is always a gentleman, and even though he and I do not agree once in a while on political issues, we always agree he is a gentleman.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his remarks. Unless the Republican leader has some remarks, I would like to say a couple things.

AMERICA: A REMARKABLE COUNTRY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, in August 1963, I was a law student and a summer intern in the U.S. Department of Justice here in Washington. I was standing at the back of a huge crowd on a hot day when Dr. King spoke of his dream that one day his children would be judged not "by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

The inauguration of our former colleague, Barack Obama, the day after Dr. King's birthday, symbolizes both remarkable progress on America's most intractable problem—race—and a reaffirmation of our country's most unique characteristic—a fervent belief that anything is possible.

I thought about this in the same way 4 years ago at almost this time. I formed a speech in my head that I wanted to make, but I did not make it. Senators are rarely guilty of unexpressed thoughts. I have said many things I wish I had not said, but this is one time I wish I had said, 4 years ago, what I was thinking. So I wish to say it today, right after President Obama's inauguration. And I am especially delighted Senator MARTINEZ happens to be here too.

What I was thinking 4 years ago as the new Senators were sworn in was that here were three Members of the new class who had had especially unique characteristics, and they had special people in the gallery that day.

I, with Senator CARPER and some others, had been asked by the leaders

to work on the orientation for the new Senators. So we had gotten to know the new Senators, including SALAZAR and Obama and MARTINEZ, during that period of time.

So here is what I was thinking that day—and let's take them one by one. Here was Senator SALAZAR from Colorado with a Spanish surname, but he will be quick to tell you that his family has been here for 14 generations and helped to found Santa Fe. He has had a distinguished career here now. On that day 4 years ago, his mother was in the gallery.

Senator MARTINEZ was sworn in 4 years ago as a new Member of the Senate, in this case from Florida. His story, which he has just published in a remarkably good book which I have given to many of my friends, is the story of a young boy growing up very happily in Cuba whose parents took him to the airport one day, after having bought him a new suit, when he was 14 years of age, and put him on an airplane to Miami, not knowing if they would ever see him again. He was in a foster home there, then moved to Orlando. The story is all in the book. He went to Florida State, met his wife Kitty, became the mayor of Orlando, then became a member of President Bush's Cabinet, then a Member of the U.S. Senate. A very remarkable story. His mother, who put him on the airplane in Cuba, was here that day.

These same 4 years ago when we swore in these new Members of the Senate, we also had the Senator from Illinois. We all now know his story very well: a father from Kenya, a mother from Kansas. I don't need to repeat that extraordinary story, about which he has written so well in his autobiography. But what struck me was that his grandmother was in the gallery that day. It was either his grandmother or his grandfather, but I believe it was his grandmother. His father's parent was in the gallery that day on the first trip, I believe, from Africa to this country to see the son of an immigrant sworn into the U.S. Senate.

So I thought 4 years ago, and I think again today on this day on which we swear in Barack Obama as President, what a remarkable country this is. Here in this Senate 4 years ago, the 14th-generation American KEN SALAZAR is now going into President Obama's Cabinet as Secretary of the Interior. MEL MARTINEZ, having had a long career in public life as mayor in Orlando, as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, as U.S. Senator, is going on to other things in his life. Former Senator Obama, of course, is now the President of the United States. But what was remarkable to me was 4 years ago they came to this Senate, and in that gallery were their parents—and in one case a grandparent—reaffirming what I think Barack Obama's inauguration represents for us today. It was historic in the sense that it helped us symbolize the overcoming of one of our most intractable problems, the problem of race. But just as