

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Stephen Censky, of Missouri, to be Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; and Ted McKinney, of Indiana, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Censky and McKinney nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in 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.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY'S MAXWELL H. GLUCK EQUINE RESEARCH CENTER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to mark the 30th anniversary of the University of Kentucky's Maxwell H. Gluck Equine Research Center. The city of Lexington, KY, known as the Horse Capital of the World, is the proud home to the Gluck Center dedicated to scientific research and education. Because of its cutting-edge research, the center is internationally renowned and a destination for students, faculty, and members of the equine industry.

Since the center's founding in 1986, it has made significant contributions to the field of equine study. As part of the university's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, the faculty at the Gluck Center are also committed to the education of the next generation of veterinarians and researchers.

The Gluck Center's success would be impossible without the vision of its founder and namesake, Maxwell Gluck. With his wife, Muriel, the Glucks encouraged the university to establish the center and grow UK's connection to the equine industry, which is vital to

the economy and culture of the Commonwealth.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the director of the Gluck Center, Dr. David Horohov, and the chair of the Gluck Foundation, Dr. Stuart Brown. Under their leadership, this center has continued to grow and earn acclaim from all levels of the equine industry. Their efforts, along with those of UK's administration, including President Eli Capilouto and college dean Nancy Cox, have helped to fulfill Maxwell and Muriel Gluck's vision.

To mark this milestone, the center is hosting a seminar and open house featuring the inaugural "Teri Lear Memorial Lecture," which will honor the life and scholarly legacy of Dr. Teri Lear, a beloved UK professor of veterinary science who passed away last year. Dr. Lear was one of the foremost experts of equine cytogenetics and helped lead the Horse Genome Project. This lecture series will continue to build upon the center's reputation for excellence in research.

In addition to the lecture, the Gluck Center will also host a celebration to honor one of its faculty members, Dr. Peter Timoney, for a career of international accomplishment in the field of equine infectious disease treatment. Dr. Timoney previously served as the director of the Gluck Center from 1989 to 2006 and is also the past president of the World Equine Veterinary Association. I would like to add my voice to the chorus of congratulations to Dr. Timoney for his accomplished career, and I look forward to his continued contributions to his field.

For 30 years, this center has helped lead in equine research. I am proud to join the UK community to celebrate the Gluck Equine Research Center and its many contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and to the industry. I urge my colleagues to help me commemorate this occasion, and I look forward to many more achievements from the Gluck Center.

TRIBUTE TO TIMUEL D. BLACK, JR.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, sometimes, when I am asked to describe my politics, I say, "I believe in the Gospel of Saints Paul"—Paul the Apostle, Paul Douglas, Paul Simon, and Paul Wellstone.

Paul the Apostle was, of course, one of the most important figures in the history of the early Christian Church. Paul Douglas, Paul Simon, and Paul Wellstone were Members of this Senate and champions of human rights and human dignity.

This Friday, another champion of human rights and human dignity—Dr. Timuel Black—will be honored by Citizen Action Illinois with its ninth annual Pauls Award, named for Paul Simon and Paul Wellstone.

I am lucky enough to have been friends with both Pauls—Simon and

Wellstone. I am sure that they would have approved heartily of the decision to honor Dr. Black with an award bearing their names.

Dr. Timuel Black is a decorated World War II veteran, an educator, author, labor leader, civil rights activist, and historian—and a bender of the moral arc of the universe. He is a visionary and—for me and so many others—a personal hero.

Timuel Black was born in 1918, in Birmingham, AL—the son of a sharecropper and the grandson of slaves.

He was 8 months old when his family moved to Chicago—the first wave of the great migration of African Americans from the Deep South to the North. They settled in a part of town called the Black Belt, now known as Bronzeville.

He attended DuSable High School, a legendary all-Black public high school, where his classmates included Nat King Cole and John Johnson, who would go on to found Jet and Ebony magazines.

On his 23rd birthday, Japan bombed U.S. Navy ships at Pearl Harbor.

He served 2 years in a segregated U.S. Army. He participated in the Battle of the Bulge, the invasion of Normandy and the liberation of Paris, and he earned four battle stars.

He thought he had seen the worst of World War II—then he witnessed what had happened at Buchenwald, the Nazi concentration camp.

The horrors that he witnessed at that death camp changed his life.

For a time, he was filled with despair. Then he resolved to spend the rest of his life doing whatever he could to advance the causes of human rights and human dignity.

He returned to Chicago and earned an undergraduate degree from Roosevelt University and a master's degree from the University of Chicago.

He helped establish the Congress of Racial Equality. He also helped found a labor union that helped me work my way through college: the United Packinghouse Workers of America.

He began his professional career as a social worker, but he quickly discovered that his real love was "teaching young men and women about the world they live in and how to be responsible citizens of that world."

He spent more than 40 years as a teacher, including positions at DuSable and other Chicago public schools, as well as Roosevelt University, Columbia College Chicago and schools in the City Colleges of Chicago system.

Timuel Black was watching television in December 1955 when he saw "this good-looking man in Montgomery, Alabama." He was so moved that he boarded a plane to meet him.

A year later, Tim Black convinced that young man to come to Chicago—the first time Dr. Martin Luther King would speak in the city.

In 1963, Dr. Black helped organize the Freedom Trains that carried thousands of Chicagoans to hear Dr. King and

others speak at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. He was there when Dr. King delivered his immortal "I Have a Dream" speech.

He was with Dr. King in 1966 when an angry mob jeered him in Chicago's Marquette Park neighborhood.

In 1983, Tim Black provided influential support to help elect another of his DuSable High School classmates, Harold Washington, the first African-American mayor of Chicago.

Some years later, a young community organizer who had just returned to Chicago with a Harvard law degree asked Professor Black to teach him about organizing people so they could create a better life for themselves and their children.

Over the years, Professor Black and that young organizer became good friends.

On January 20, 2009, it was my privilege to invite Professor Black and his incredible wife, Zenobia Johnson-Black, to be my guests as that community organizer swore an oath to become President of the United States of America—Barack Obama.

My friend, Paul Wellstone, had a beautiful definition of politics. He used to say: In the last analysis, politics is not predictions and politics is not observations. Politics is what we do. Politics is what we create, by what we work for, by what we hope for and what we dare to imagine.

Dr. Timuel Black has witnessed injustice and inhumanity, but he has never stopped working to believe in a better world, and he has never stopped working to make that world a reality. He is a true inspiration, a Chicago treasure, and an American hero.

REFUGEE ADMISSIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last Friday, President Trump announced that he will slash our refugee admissions to 45,000 in fiscal year 2018—the lowest annual target since the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act. Instead of embracing our moral and legal obligation to address the worst refugee crisis in global history, as has been our tradition for decades, President Trump seems intent on relinquishing our role as the humanitarian leader of the world. The dimming of our beacon is not just a symbolic loss; tens of thousands of human lives are now placed at risk.

There is no rational basis for this shameful retreat. The administration's own analysis shows that refugees contributed a net benefit of \$63 billion to our economy between 2005 and 2014. National security leaders across the political spectrum, including former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, are unanimous in their view that refugees are the most stringently vetted travelers to the United States. Our commitment to welcoming refugees plays a critical role in strengthening our alliances in areas of conflict.

The President stands alone in his disregard for the staggering suffering we are witnessing around the world. Last month, the Senate Appropriations Committee—on which I serve as vice chairman—unanimously approved a funding bill that demonstrates our unwavering commitment to refugees. It fully funds offices that are critical to the continuity of refugee programs and even provides a \$50 million increase to the State Department's refugee assistance and resettlement missions. Our bipartisan bill repudiates any claims by President Trump that the United States is unwilling to commit the resources required to fund a refugee program that honors our history as a refuge for the persecuted. Even the conservative Heritage Foundation has called on President Trump to set annual refugee admissions "based on historical refugee levels," which have never dropped below 67,000 per year since the beginning of the Reagan administration.

I am proud that my own State of Vermont has welcomed and resettled approximately 7,500 refugees since fiscal year 1989. The city of Rutland was preparing to resettle an additional 100 refugees mainly from Syria last year and this fiscal year, until the Trump administration inexplicably halted certain refugee admissions and announced drastic reductions to the refugee resettlement program. Vermont and other States stand ready to do more to address this global crisis, but the leader of our country is shamefully directing them to do less.

Presidents have an obligation to protect our Nation's fundamental values. Presidents of both parties have long understood this. They have not forsaken our history as a nation founded by enterprising individuals seeking refuge and freedom from persecution. They have ensured that our policies do not betray our proud tradition as the humanitarian leader of the world.

This decision illustrates that President Trump is misinformed and that he has caved to the counsel of xenophobic voices seeking to hollow out our refugee program. By shutting our doors to thousands of innocent human beings fleeing persecution and tyranny, he misunderstands the history of the country he was elected to lead. I hope that he reconsiders his callous decision, as the law in fact empowers him to do, in light of emerging humanitarian concerns. Nothing less than our Nation's identity as an unwavering beacon of hope during the world's darkest chapters is at stake.

TRIBUTE TO RAINER WEISS, KIP S. THORNE, AND BARRY C. BARISH

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Physics to Rainer Weiss, Kip S. Thorne, and Barry C. Barish for "decisive contributions" to the observation of gravitational waves.

This landmark discovery marks a giant leap forward in human knowledge, and I salute these Americans on their honor.

Over 100 years ago, Albert Einstein predicted that massive objects and energy could distort space-time. In order to detect these "ripples" in the fabric of space and time, known as gravitational waves, scientists worked over many years to develop the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory, or LIGO.

On September 14, 2015, scientists working at LIGO detected a "chirp"—a ripple in space-time. What was observed because of LIGO was the result of two massive black holes merging together over 1.3 billion light years away. This breakthrough discovery means that we now have an entirely new way of observing the universe.

This achievement would not have been possible without the leadership of Dr. Weiss, Dr. Thorne, and Dr. Barish, along with the countless scientists who helped with the project, including the National Science Foundation.

Two of the distinguished recipients hail from my home State. Dr. Thorne and Dr. Barish are professors at the California Institute of Technology, and I am proud of the role that Cal Tech played in making this discovery possible. I also recognize Dr. Weiss, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor, for his achievement.

On behalf of all Californians, I commend these physicists on a well-deserved honor and for all that they have done to push our knowledge of the universe forward. Let us hope that this discovery will continue to expand the horizon of human knowledge and lead to new efforts in humanity's never-ending quest for enlightenment.

Again, I congratulate these three distinguished Americans and their families on this remarkable discovery and prestigious award.

TAIWAN'S 106TH NATIONAL DAY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, a week from today, on October 10, the Taiwanese people will celebrate their 106th Taiwanese National Day. I would like to take a few minutes to congratulate my Taiwanese friends on this important occasion.

Taiwan has long been a trusted friend of the United States and a valuable partner in the increasingly important Asia-Pacific region.

Taiwan is hugely important to Oregon. It is also one of Oregon's largest trading partners and a big export market for Oregon products like grain. Portland's annual Grand Floral Parade and Rose Festival host delegations from Taiwan. Portland, OR, and Kaohsiung, Taiwan, are sister cities.

These ties are both broad and deep, as I saw myself when I visited Taipei several years ago.

That was more than a year before Taiwan's historic 2016 election, but the Taiwanese people's commitment to democracy was already very much on display.