

Thus ended my abridged observations of November 1963.

In my remarks during the 1976 dedication ceremonies in this chamber, I returned to the themes of 1963. I stated my belief that, in its fundamentals, the Senate of modern times may not have changed essentially from the Senate of Clay, Webster, and Calhoun.

What moved Senators yesterday still moves Senators today. We have the individual and collective strength of our predecessors and, I might add, their weaknesses. We are not all ten feet tall, nor were they. Senators act within the circumstances of their fears no less than their courage, their foibles as well as their strengths. Our concerns and our efforts in the Senate, like our predecessors and successors, arise from our goals of advancing the welfare of the people whom we represent, safeguarding the well-being of our respective States and protecting the present and future of this nation, a nation which belongs—as does this room—not to one of us, or to one generation, but to all of us and to all generations.

The significance of that 1976 gathering—and perhaps of our being here tonight—is to remind us that in a Senate of immense and still unfolding significance to the nation, each individual member can play only a brief and limited role. It is to remind us that the Senate's responsibilities go on, even though the faces and, yes, even the rooms in which they gather, fade into history. With the nation, the Senate has come a long way. And still, there is a long way to go.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, March 24, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,542,617,421,989.90 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-two billion, six hundred seventeen million, four hundred twenty-one thousand, nine hundred eighty-nine dollars and ninety cents).

One year ago, March 24, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,370,449,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred seventy billion, four hundred forty-nine million).

Five years ago, March 24, 1993, the federal debt stood at \$4,222,103,000,000 (Four trillion, two hundred twenty-two billion, one hundred three million).

Ten years ago, March 24, 1988, the federal debt stood at \$2,480,220,000,000 (Two trillion, four hundred eighty billion, two hundred twenty million).

Fifteen years ago, March 24, 1983, the federal debt stood at \$1,223,450,000,000 (One trillion, two hundred twenty-three billion, four hundred fifty million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,319,167,421,989.90 (Four trillion, three hundred nineteen billion, one hundred sixty-seven million, four hundred twenty-one thousand, nine hundred eighty-nine dollars and ninety cents) during the past 15 years.

#### U.S. FOREIGN OIL CONSUMPTION FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 20TH

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute's report for the week ending March 20, that the U.S. imported 8,724,000 barrels of oil each day, 2,318,000 more barrels than the 6,406,000 imported each day during the same week a year ago.

Americans relied on foreign oil for 57.6 percent of their needs last week, and there are no signs that the upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian Gulf War, the United States obtained approximately 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970s, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity sure to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the U.S.—now 8,724,000 barrels a day.

#### A TRIBUTE TO ZION GROVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a tremendous community which exemplifies citizenship, character, and service to humanity, the Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

On January 18, 1998, the members of the Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church held their long and eagerly anticipated "Mortgage Burning Party." Under the guidance of their respected pastor, the Reverend Frank L. Selkirk III, Ph.D., the Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church will draw to a close its financial debts and begin to look forward, with faith, hope and love to a future filled with opportunity.

The history of this wonderful church has been nothing short of a small blessing. From its humble beginning on October 15, 1938, with a congregation of only eight members, Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church continued to grow and flourish with each year and each dedicated pastor until it reached its present location at 2801 Swope Parkway in Kansas City, Missouri. This church and the community which comprises it are examples of dedication, perseverance, and commitment to the future.

With God's blessing, and the faithful support of the Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church community, "The Mortgage Burning Party" will be a celebration of the blessings that will continue to reward the Zion Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

#### TRIBUTE TO HELEN COX

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a tremendous individual who exemplifies citizenship, character, and service to humanity, Helen Cox.

Helen Cox of Willow Springs, Missouri has been a foster parent since 1989. Throughout her tenure as a foster parent, Helen has cared for over 150 foster children. Helen has spent countless hours drying tears, rocking children to sleep, and sitting up night after night with children unable to sleep. The golden rule of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you is exemplified in Helen's home. Through pa-

tience and firmness, Helen has taught these children that household tasks, school work and other responsibilities are a part of learning how to survive and thrive in the world. The comfortable country environment, that includes the friendship and therapy of animals, has nurtured many children.

Helen recently celebrated her seventy-second birthday and was honored at a reception on December 7, 1997, by the Foster Parent Association of West Plains, Missouri. Even at the age of seventy-two, she is serving others and maintaining frequent contact with many of the children who were placed in her home. It is an honor to commend Helen for her commitment to provide a loving home for the many children she has served as a foster parent.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:55 a.m. a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to the provisions of section 517(e)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1131), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following participant on the part of the House to the National Summit on Retirement Savings to fill the existing vacancy thereon: Mr. Jack Ulrich of Pennsylvania.

The message also announced that pursuant to the provisions of section 801(b) of Public Law 100-696, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the United States Capitol Preservation Commission: Mr. WALSH of New York.

The message further announced that the Houses has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 118. An act to provide for the collection of data on traffic stops.

H.R. 2843. An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to reevaluate the equipment in medical kits carried on, and to make a decision regarding requiring automatic external defibrillators to be carried on, aircraft operated by air carriers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3096. An act to correct a provision relating to termination of benefits for convicted persons.

H.R. 3211. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to enact into law eligibility requirements for burial in Arlington National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3213. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify enforcement of veterans' employment and reemployment rights with respect to a State as an employer or a private employer, to extend veterans' employment and reemployment rights to members of the uniformed services employed abroad by United States companies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3226. An act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain lands and improvements in State of Virginia, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3412. An act to amend and make technical corrections in title III of the Small Business Investment Act.

At 6:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by