

security, freedom, prosperity and an end to indiscriminate killings and terrorist acts.

Mr. President, our concurrent resolution thanks a lot of people. But for me, the most inspiring people I met were outside of Belfast. The role of the community leaders cannot be overemphasized. While the negotiations proceeded in Belfast, at homes, neighborhoods and towns across the region, people were building local relationships which crossed borders and communities. These are the true heroes of the peace process. The people I met are making changes and making a difference where they live. They support the political process, but were not waiting around for anything coming from the capitals. Spending time among the people in the border regions, with the strongest faith in their abilities to make a difference in their own towns and neighborhoods, I became convinced that peace had a chance in Northern Ireland.

I salute all of the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland today who have labored for peace. They are the driving force behind the peace process, and they will make it work.

Mr. LOTT. I have a few remarks I would like to make on this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank Senators KENNEDY and DODD for their comments. I thought it appropriate today, without another day going by, that the U.S. Senate express itself on this very important issue on behalf of the American people. That is why we made sure that we brought it up and had these few minutes to discuss this resolution, and that we put on the Record our salutations to those who have been involved in these negotiations. We offer our congratulations to all the participants in the negotiations. I think they deserve recognition for their willingness to make honorable compromises in order to reach this agreement.

I think particular credit goes to our former colleague, Senator George Mitchell, for his persistence and his doggedness. Frankly, I wasn't sure that it could be pulled off, but he stayed with it. I think we owe him a debt of gratitude for his work.

Also, of course, I commend Prime Minister Tony Blair and Taoiseach Bertie Ahearn for their involvement and leadership. I believe the American people are proud of the contributions the United States and our President have made to this effort. We hope it will lead to approval in the May 22 referendums. Most of all, we hope it will lead to a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. That is the desire and that is the prayer of the people in Northern Ireland, in America and, hopefully, throughout the world. I endorse this resolution.

I have no further request for time. I am prepared to yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, Senator DASCHLE and I have been communicating. We do have an agreement we think is a fair way to conclude the debate on the education bill and also an agreement with regard to how the State Department reorganization conference report will be considered.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Coverdell A+ education bill be advanced to third reading and that there be 3 hours 40 minutes of remaining debate time, to be equally divided in the usual form; and that following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of the Coverdell A+ bill.

I am hoping that Senators have had an opportunity to say what they need to say on this. Those who want to make closing remarks will be free to do so under this agreement, but it would be all right with the majority leader and the Senate if we did not have to use the full 3 hours 40 minutes. At that time, we will have a recorded vote, if this agreement is entered into, on the education bill, followed by a vote on the Irish resolution.

I further ask unanimous consent that at 10 a.m. on Friday, the Senate begin consideration of the conference report to accompany the State Department reorganization bill under the consent agreement of March 31, and that the vote occur on adoption of the conference report at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 27, with 10 minutes of debate remaining for closing remarks to be equally divided just prior to the vote.

I further ask unanimous consent that when the Senate reconvenes on Monday, April 27, following morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the NATO enlargement treaty.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, we will have two votes back to back around, I presume, 7:30, hopefully. Then we will have the State Department reorganization debate on Friday, with no recorded votes. The next recorded vote after tonight will be at 5:30 p.m. on Monday. We will have no other subject debated on Monday other than NATO enlargement. We will stay on NATO enlargement until Senators feel they are prepared to vote. Hopefully, by having that debate Monday and votes on amendments perhaps on Tuesday and Wednesday, we can come to a conclusion on Wednesday, but we will not hurry this most important issue and deliberation of the Senate with regard to the NATO enlargement treaty.

Therefore, that will be the schedule for the remainder of this week and through some part of Wednesday of next week.

I yield the floor, and we can now begin the debate.

#### EDUCATION SAVINGS ACT FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the order just stated, the Senate will now resume discussion and debate of H.R. 2646.

Under the previous order, the question is on the engrossment of the amendments and third reading of the bill.

The amendments were ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read a third time.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the great State of California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I have not had an opportunity to speak on this bill. I take this opportunity to do so now.

Prior to yesterday, it was my full intention to vote for this bill. After yesterday, I regret to say I have some serious problems with it and cannot vote for it at this time, but I will, if the problems are remedied, vote for this bill when it comes out of conference.

Let me speak just briefly about what the problems are and then why I think the Coverdell-Torricelli bill is so important and groundbreaking.

Yesterday, this body accepted on a 50-to-49 vote an amendment to convert over \$10 billion in currently targeted Federal education funds to a block grant to States. With adoption of this amendment, our efforts to direct limited Federal funds to national priorities are obliterated. Funds for disadvantaged students, funds to make schools safe and drug-free, funds for meeting national student achievement goals—virtually gone.

For ESEA Title I, the bill as it now stands deletes important requirements:

Requirements for student performance standards and assessment, something that I believe is vital if we are going to change the downward trend of public education in this country.

Requirements for evaluating a program's effectiveness. How could someone oppose that?

Requirements to take corrective action if programs are not effective. You mean, don't change a program if you find out it is not effective?

And requirements that Federal funds not supplant State and local funds. That was the Gorton amendment.

Secondly, that same day the Senate adopted, on a 52-47 vote, an amendment which would prohibit voluntary national testing of students. Last year, this body worked out a bipartisan compromise on reading and math testing