

with her the importance of implementing measures that will expedite the completion of the numerous highway projects for which America's taxpayers have been waiting for a great many years. Ms. Peters explained that she is committed to pursuing efforts to streamline the federal approval process. I look forward to working with her in this effort.

I again urge my colleagues to support the confirmation of Mary Peters to be our next Federal Highway Administrator.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate has just confirmed almost 30 people for various positions in the Federal Government, and that number will be more than that counting all the military people. So it is a good day for us. In fact, I have just been informed by the staff that the military who were approved today are in the hundreds, so we have done very well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Agriculture Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations and that the Senate proceed to their immediate consideration:

Mark Edward Rey, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture;

Mark Edward Rey, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation;

Hilda Gay Legg, to be Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service at the Department of Agriculture;

Elsa Murano, to be the Under Secretary of Agriculture;

Edward McPherson, to be the Chief Financial Officer for the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that these nominees be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate return to legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Mark Edward Rey, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment.

Mark Edward Rey, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Hilda Gay Legg, of Kentucky, to be Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Department of Agriculture.

Elsa A. Murano, of Texas, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety.

Edward R. McPherson, of Texas, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Agriculture.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

OFFICER RONALD C. SHEFFIELD

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today family and friends gathered outside De-

troit to pay their final respects to Federal Protective Services Officer Ronald C. Sheffield and to remember a life of sacrifice and service to others. Last Friday, September 21, 2001, Officer Sheffield was shot and killed while on duty at the McNamara Federal Building in downtown Detroit. My largest State office is in the McNamara Building and many members of my staff were in the building when the shooting occurred. His loss will be felt by the entire McNamara Building family but most deeply by those closest to him, particularly his daughters Jessica Lynn and Jinelle Marie. Officer Sheffield spent his career protecting Americans and defending our great country. He was a sergeant in the Marines during combat operations in the Persian Gulf War and a police officer with the Veterans Administration before joining the GSA.

The past 2 weeks have made all Americans even more aware of the dedication and bravery of the thousands of law enforcement officers, firefighters, military and emergency personnel who risk their lives every day to protect us. Officer Sheffield now joins the ranks of those American heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice. My thoughts and prayers are with Officer Sheffield's family, friends and fellow officers who are grieving. And my sincere thanks and admiration go out to law enforcement officers, firefighters, military and emergency personnel across the country.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of this year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred August 1998 in Bridgeport, PA. Greg Thorpe, 30, allegedly made anti-gay threats and assaulted a lesbian outside a bar. On September 23, 1998, he was charged with aggravated and simple assault, recklessly endangering another person, terrorist threats, harassment, stalking, disorderly conduct, conspiracy and ethnic intimidation.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation, we can change hearts and minds as well.

PRE-ELECTION CONDITIONS IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to draw the Senate's attention to the continuing political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe.

This summer, the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on this crisis. The overwhelming consensus of the witnesses at that hearing, witnesses from the administration, from NGOs, and from academia, was that Zimbabwe would continue in a downward spiral, with potentially disastrous results for the entire Southern African region, unless the rule of law is sufficiently restored to create conditions for a fair Presidential election next year.

I regret that recent events suggest that the Government of Zimbabwe is intent on taking the opposite approach. Zimbabwean authorities have expelled representatives of the widely-respected International Foundation for Electoral Systems, better known to many in this body as IFES. An IFES team had traveled to Zimbabwe to monitor pre-election conditions, which are critically important to a free and fair election. If the only information available to voters is state-controlled propaganda, if opposition party leaders and supporters are intimidated, and if the administrative structure established to prepare for and govern elections is biased, the deck is stacked against democracy before voting even begins. Without international monitors in place, the international community cannot adequately assess these important issues.

In fact, despite recent encouraging reports that the government of Zimbabwe had agreed to a rule-governed land reform strategy in return for significant assistance from Britain, conditions continue to be grim within the country. Reports indicate that 900 of 1,150 farms are unable to continue normal operations because they are still under occupation, and food supplies are inadequate.

I strongly support rule-governed land reform in Zimbabwe. It is clearly urgently needed and the United States should provide significant assistance to such an effort. But the most pressing problem in Zimbabwe is not about land. It is about the systematic destruction of the rule of law; it is about the intimidation of independent journalists; it is about executive interference with the judiciary; and it is about the abuse of Zimbabweans who support the opposition party or have the misfortune of standing between ruling party-financed thugs and the objects of their desire. So far no evidence has come to light indicating that these fundamental issues have been resolved.

As the United States quite rightly devotes itself to fighting terrorism, we must not let the horrific attacks of September 11 deter us or distract us from our other important foreign policy goals and interests. This country must continue speaking out against oppression and in favor of freedom all over the world. Sham elections will not be legitimized by the international community, and President Mugabe's government cannot regain credibility