

Army and our great Nation. General Bell was commissioned as a distinguished military graduate and second lieutenant in 1969 upon graduation from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Following commissioning, General Bell specialized in armor and served with distinction as he rose through the ranks. His orders took him to posts throughout the United States, Germany, and the Middle East.

General Bell assumed command of the United Nations Command, Republic of Korea/United States Combined Forces command, and United States Forces Korea on February 3, 2006.

During his time in command, North Korea made provocative missile launches and numerous demilitarized zone and airspace incursions. Despite these threats, General Bell maintained military readiness even as he reduced the U.S. footprint in Korea by moving soldiers, civilians, and family members south, thus transforming the commands in Korea.

In addition, General Bell has been a principal participant in the fast-paced bilateral military and political discussions, where he has earned the reputation as a well-respected ambassador for the United States. He also developed and maintained close ties with the military and civilian leadership of the Republic of Korea in partnership with the U.S. Ambassador to Korea. He has helped fuse a lasting bond between the two countries.

General Bell is a soldier's soldier. Throughout his career, he has made the wellbeing of soldiers, families, and civilians a priority. He expects those serving below him to do the same.

During service in Desert Shield and Desert Storm as the United States Central Command executive officer, he worked to ensure that each soldier was properly prepared, trained, and equipped for the mission and that every family was cared for by a Family Readiness Group.

Throughout his illustrious career in the Army, General Bell has been nothing less than exceptional. He is a great credit to the Army and this country. I wish him and his wife Katie well in their new endeavors.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, 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.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:37 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5658. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the protection of child custody arrangements for parents who are members of the Armed Forces deployed in support of a contingency operation, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 5658. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for the protection of child custody arrangements for parents who are members of the Armed Forces deployed in support of a contingency operation, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-6359. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Sorghum Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information" (RLN0581-AC70)(Docket No. AMS-LS-07-0056) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6360. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Avocados Grown in South Florida and Imported Avocados; Revision of the Maturity Requirements" (Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0054) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6361. A communication from the Administrator, Office of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rules of Practice Governing Formal Adjudicatory Proceedings Instituted by the Secretary Under Various Statutes" (Docket No. AMS-LRRS-08-0015) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6362. A communication from the Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Potato Grade Standards" (Docket No. AMS-2006-0136) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6363. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Peanut Promotion, Research, and Information Order; Amendment to Primary Peanut-Producing States and Adjustment of Membership" (Docket No. AMS-FV-08-0001) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6364. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Olives Grown in California; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0155) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6365. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Salable Quantities and Allotment Percentages for the 2008-2009 Marketing Year" (Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0135) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6366. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Onions Grown in South Texas; Increased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0151) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6367. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pistachios Grown in California; Change in Reporting Requirements" (Docket No. FV07-983-2 FR) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6368. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pistachios Grown in California; Change in Reporting Requirements" (Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0095) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6369. A communication from the Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines, and Tangelos Grown in Florida" (Docket No. FV07-905-610) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6370. A communication from the Administrator, Dairy Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Milk in the Appalachian and Southeast Marketing Areas; Correction" (Docket No. DA-07-03 A) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6371. A communication from the Administrator, Poultry Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Increase in Fees and Charges for Egg, Poultry, and Rabbit Grading; Correction" (Docket No. AMS-PY-08-0030) received on May 29, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6372. A communication from the Administrator, Dairy Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Dairy Promotion and Research Program, Section