

look at other ways that we can accomplish that goal. It is too important to just set it aside because it is too tough.

There are a lot of other issues we will deal with in the regular order. For example, bankruptcy reform, liability reform for charities, charitable choice in Federal programs, to end discrimination against faith-based organizations, prohibition against partial-birth abortions, as well as child custody protections to safeguard family rights, and modernization of financial services. I have spoken with Senator GRAMM and encouraged him, as the new chairman of the Banking Committee, which has jurisdiction, to pick up the legislation and see if he can forge an agreement that we can move forward on so that we will have broader choices and better service for consumers.

In due time, we will deal with all of those and a great many other subjects. During the next few weeks, I realize that the news media will be focused on one thing. My remarks here will be little noted or remembered—other than the part on the impeachment proceedings. But the record must begin to be made now that we have other very important priorities that are the people's priorities back in our respective States.

This Senate was designed by the Framers of the Constitution to be the steady element in Government, the place where passions are cooled and judgments come slowly.

It serves us well when we take our time and we make sure that the process is fair and the result is equitable.

I expect that to happen in the days ahead. No one can predict the outcome of the deliberations on impeachment, but everyone can expect the calm and careful exercise of our duty under the Constitution. That will not conflict with our role as legislators. It will rather confirm that we are more than mere lawmakers. As Members of the Senate, we are guardians of the rule of law and defenders of the rights of every American. That is our most important role, our most solemn charge, and our most enduring honor.

I yield the floor, Mr. President. I observe the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

CHALLENGES FACING THE SENATE IN 1999

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I wanted to take just a moment following the

presentation by the majority leader to say that he begins this session of Congress with a very substantial weight on his shoulders. He is a leader in a Congress that is facing a very unique challenge. I consider the majority leader a friend. I know that these are not easy times for him, and I hope that as we proceed with the important matter of impeachment that all of us in this Chamber can work together with Senator LOTT and the Democratic leader, Senator DASCHLE, to see that we do the job that we are required to do by the Constitution in a thoughtful, deliberative, and bipartisan way.

I know there are some outside these Chambers who are worried about the Senate proceeding too quickly with the impeachment trial. Those who have had an opportunity to read two centuries of history of the U.S. Senate know that one of the last worries that one ought to entertain is that the Senate will ever move too quickly, or follow too closely.

The U.S. Senate is an extraordinary, deliberative body. The problem has seldom ever, in the history of this country, been that the Senate moves too quickly. Rather, my concern is that we discharge our responsibilities to do our duty and do it in a way that will give the American people confidence that the Senate exhibited the dignity they would expect from this institution.

The Senator from Mississippi, the majority leader, indicated that there are many other issues that challenge us and that will require our attention. He is absolutely correct about that. I, too, hope that we can join together to deal with these issues in a more bipartisan spirit in this Congress than we have seen in recent Congresses.

I want to mention just a couple of those challenges.

The Senator from Mississippi said that the way the last session ended was not a good way to end. He is right about that. It was shameful that so much business was left on the table at the end to be considered and dealt with by a few people—many of them unelected—behind closed doors and then brought to the floor by unanimous consent. That is not a way to do the Senate's business. It is not a way to do the business of Congress. All of us know that. All of us knew it then, and we ought to see if we can find a way to change the rules to prevent that from happening in the future.

With respect to challenges that we face, first the challenges abroad: All of us understand the dilemma that is posed to us and the entire world in what is increasingly a global economy as a result of the economic collapse and significant challenges facing the economies of the Asian countries. All you have to do is ask American farmers what they have experienced as a result of Asian economies being weak and, therefore, purchasing less in farm

commodities from our country, and you will understand the direct impact, not just in that sector, but in virtually every sector in this country. We have a stake in how well other countries in the world are doing. When the Asian economies experience significant trouble—recession and collapse—it affects our country and our future. When the Russian economy collapses, it affects us. When the Brazilian economy is in trouble, it affects us.

So these difficulties that are being experienced in many areas of the world have the capacity to affect in a significant way the American economy. And we must work with our Secretary of Treasury, with the President, and with Members of Congress, to reach out and see that we try to contain the spreading financial problems that exist in other parts of the world.

The other challenges are pretty obvious as well.

When the country of North Korea tests medium-range missiles, when the country of Iran begins testing medium-range missiles, presumably to hoist something aloft and threaten someone down the road, do we need to be concerned about that? You bet. The testing of missiles by North Korea and Iran is a very ominous threat to this country and ought to be of great concern to us.

When India and Pakistan decide to punctuate their poor relationship by exploding nuclear weapons virtually under each other's chin, is that destabilizing to the world? You bet it is. Do we need to be concerned about that? Of course.

We have about 7,500 nuclear weapons in our arsenal. I expect that in Russia and other parts of the world there are 7,500 nuclear weapons. And if the Russian Duma decides to approve START II at some point in the future, we whittle that number of nuclear weapons down to 5,000. That is still far too many—5,000 nuclear weapons on each side? It doesn't make any sense.

So we have a challenge to try to respond to that. We must respond to the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

When you look at the potential threat to the entire world posed by India and Pakistan, two adversaries detonating these nuclear weapons virtually in front of each other, and then consider that other countries are trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction, as well as the capability of delivering them on the top of a missile, is that a concern. When countries like Iran and North Korea start testing missiles, is that a challenge to this country? You bet it is. And this Congress needs to be concerned about it and work with this President to develop policies to try to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the technology for delivering those weapons.

Here at home the challenges also are obvious.

We are blessed with an economy that is growing and strong. Virtually every indicator of economic health in this country is positive. Unemployment is down—way down. Inflation is down, almost nonexistent. Home ownership is up. Crime is down. Violent crime is way down.

You can take a look at a whole range of statistics to determine what is happening in this country. While we have a lot of challenges, you have to conclude that things are better in this country as a result of economic growth and other public policies that have encouraged changes in America.

That doesn't mean everything is just fine.

Among the challenges we have in this country is still to deal with the issues of education and health care, for example.

The majority leader mentioned education. We don't run the education system in this country, and we shouldn't. Elementary and secondary education is largely operated and controlled by local school boards, and by State legislatures. Local control of schools has been a hallmark in this country, and I don't quarrel with that. I support that. But we can and should in this country develop national goals and aspirations of what we want to accomplish in education. Among the things we can do will be to commit ourselves to repair or construct new school buildings to replace those that are falling down.

At the end of the Second World War, we had folks come back to this country who fought for our country's liberty and beat back the fascism of Hitler. They came back and got an education under the GI bill and had families. They paid taxes to build schools. We had a lot of new schools built all over America in the 1950s. Today, many of those schools are in disrepair. We need new schools and bigger classrooms. We need to repair schools that are crumbling.

I have spoken at length on this floor about going into a school that educates largely Indian children—the Cannon Ball Elementary School. At this school, sewer gas comes up into a room used as a classroom at least once or twice a week and the classroom has to be evacuated. 150 kids go to school in a building where there are two bathrooms and one water fountain, where you can't connect a computer to the Internet because the wiring is so old, a building that has largely been condemned.

Do we need to do something about that? Is it fair to a third grader to go to school in conditions like that? No. We can do something to encourage additional school construction and school repair to make these facilities good facilities. We can also do something to encourage the reduction of class size by the hiring of more teachers. We can encourage that through public policy

here without deciding that we should run the local school systems in this country.

But I will tell you, if we improve education nationally through public policies that say education matters, this country will be stronger and better because of it. Education must be a priority. Our children are our future, and our ability to educate our children to become the best they can be is a significant investment in the future of America.

Health care is another important issue we must address. We had a debate about this in the last session of Congress, but we did not solve the problem. Mr. President, 160 million people are now herded into health care chutes called managed care organizations. And now too often a family enrolled in an HMO discovers when a loved one gets sick that the question of what kind of care they are going to get is not necessarily just a function of what the doctor says that care ought to be but also a function of whether an accountant 500 or 1,000 miles away in the insurance company office decides they want to allow that kind of medical treatment to be performed.

We have talked on the floor of the Senate about the horror stories. I am not alleging that these incidents happen with all HMOs, but I am alleging that they happen all too often. We need to pass in this Congress a Patients' Bill of Rights to say to the American people that when you go to a doctor, you have the right to go to a doctor of your choice who can meet your medical needs. You have a right to go to an emergency room if you need to.

I told a story several months ago about a woman who broke her neck and was taken to the hospital unconscious. She was told later that her care was not covered because she didn't get prior approval to come to the emergency room. Now, what kind of nut case would make that kind of judgment—that someone who is unconscious and has a broken neck needs prior approval to get emergency treatment.

We need a Patients' Bill of Rights, and this Congress ought to pass it. We didn't in the last session, and we need to this session. I hope we can join together on this issue. If there are specific debates about the details, let's work them out. Let's pass a Patients' Bill of Rights to respond to these problems.

I come from farm country. While this country is doing better, and there are a lot of reasons to say our country is in pretty good shape, family farmers aren't in good shape. Those who went out and bought a Christmas ham probably paid \$30 or \$35 for a pretty good sized ham. Do you know that at about the same time, there was a farmer who put a hog in a pickup truck and hauled that hog to market and sold it. That

200-pound hog brought that farmer \$20. The shopper bought a ham for \$35 and the farmer gets \$20 for selling a 200-pound hog. Somebody is stealing in between. That is strong language, but the fact is that all of the packing plants, for beef, sheep, chickens and hogs, are now tightly controlled by just a few companies. If you are selling a cow, you sell it into a market system in which four companies control over 80 percent of the cattle slaughtered in this country. The same is true with hogs—slightly less but pretty much true.

The point is that these family farmers are experiencing collapsed prices for hogs, collapsed prices for cattle, collapsed prices for grain. This country will end up without family farmers in its future if it doesn't come to grips with a better farm policy that gives family farmers a chance to make a living.

Every single institution, every single enterprise that touches what farmers raise is making record profits. Farmers who gas up the tractor and tend to the cattle are the ones who are losing their shirts. But everybody else is making record profits—railroads are making record profits; the slaughter plants, record profits; the cereal manufacturers, record profits. The farmer gets practically nothing for his grain, and the manufacturer puts it in a plant someplace and puffs it up, and then puts it on the grocery store shelf as puffed wheat. The farmer got close to nothing for the wheat and the folks who puff it up and put it in the box get rich because they are providing the puff to the consumer.

Why have we decided in this country that family farming doesn't matter? Because a majority of this Congress in recent years apparently doesn't care whether we have family farmers in our future. I hope that changes, and I hope in the 106th Congress we can go back and revise that and have a farm program that really matters. We need a farm policy that says to family farmers: this country is a better place if we have a network of family farmers all across America, out there working and raising families under those yard lights that we call family farms.

You talk about family values. You can't be for family values if you are not for family farmers. The history of this country is one of nurturing family values on family farms. Those values roll out to our big towns and big cities from our family farms. So that is another of the challenges.

Finally, Senator LOTT mentioned appropriately the challenge of dealing with the entitlements programs. We must in this Congress deal with the long-term financial difficulties facing Social Security and Medicare. Is that a tough job? Sure, but we need to do it. The issues facing Social Security and Medicare are born of success. If people

weren't living longer, we wouldn't have financial strains on these programs.

One hundred years ago, in the year 1900, if you were living in the United States of America, you were expected to live to be about 48 years of age. Now a century later, you are expected to live, on average, about 78 years in the United States. Is that good news? Absolutely.

I was at a place a while back where there was a 94-year-old woman. She danced all night at this place where they polka and waltz, and so on. You can go out and find people living much longer, healthier lives, doing things they never expected to do. Part of it is perhaps a better lifestyle, safer workplaces, part of it is better nutrition, part of it is the result of breathtaking medical changes. Fifty years ago, someone who had cataracts would be blind. Today they get an operation, and they can see. It used to be if you had bad knees or bad hips, you were in a wheelchair. Today you get new knees or new hips. Those who half a century ago would die of heart disease have heart surgery. You can find people 80 years old who have new knees, new hips, heart surgery and no cataracts, and they say, "We feel like a million bucks."

All of these breathtaking medical advances have helped improve life in this country. People are living longer. That provides us with a challenge. With more people living longer, it means we have more strain on Social Security and the Medicare programs, but, gosh, that challenge is born of success. We ought not shrink from that. So we make some adjustments here and there, thoughtful adjustments that recognize these programs work and they are good programs, but we can do that. This Congress can do that and should.

Mr. GREGG assumed the Chair.

Mr. DORGAN. President Clinton has proposed at a meeting I was at with the bipartisan leadership of the Congress, that this is the year in which we tackle the challenges facing Social Security and Medicare. I think the Presiding Officer was at that meeting. I think there is a determination by Republicans and Democrats in Congress, by the President and Congress, that we owe it to the American people to address these entitlement questions, to make the kinds of changes that are necessary so that we can give the American people confidence that these programs will be around for a long, long while. But I do want to emphasize this challenge is born of success because people are living longer and better lives. I don't want people to come here saying these programs don't work. The Social Security program and the Medicare program have been remarkably successful. Just before the Medicare program was developed, over half of the senior citizens in America had no health care coverage at all. None. Now, 99 percent

of the senior citizens in America are covered with health care. That is a dramatic difference and an improvement in the lives of tens and tens of millions of Americans.

Mr. President, those are some of the challenges we face. I agree with the majority leader that the sooner we get to them the better. We must discharge our responsibility first on the impeachment issues, but then we must turn to the business of this country and respond to the challenges I have just described.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I make a point of order a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. SMITH of Oregon assumed the Chair.)

Mr. SMITH of OREGON. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAPO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. SMITH of OREGON. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 5 p.m. today and the majority leader be recognized at that time.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:09 p.m., recessed until 4:58 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ABRAHAM).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ABRAHAM). The Senator from Georgia.

RECESS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 6 p.m. today, with the majority leader recognized at that time.

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:58 p.m., recessed until 6 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. GRAMS).

RECESS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, seeing no Senator seeking the floor, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 6:30 p.m. today and that the majority leader be recognized at that time.

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

Thereupon, at 6 p.m., the Senate recessed until 6:31 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BROWNBACK).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Kansas, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONGRATULATING THE REVEREND PETER CHEI ON RECEIVING HIS U.S. CITIZENSHIP

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, it is a great honor and privilege to extend congratulations to the Reverend Peter (Yee Chung) Chei as he celebrates the granting of his United States citizenship on Friday, October 16th, 1998. Reverend Peter Chei has served our nation admirably during the thirty-three years he has made his home on our shores, and now, as a United States citizen, his continuing commitment to this nation has been sealed with the words of the Oath of Allegiance. The United States has thereby greatly profited.

The Reverend Peter Chei has long been held in my highest regard. His dedication to the redemptive mission of Christ has been an inspiration for many people across the state of Missouri, this country, and the world.

It was my good fortune to meet Reverend Chei when he was still living in Hong Kong. His father had escaped with the Chei family to Hong Kong after the communists took over the Chinese mainland in 1950. The trials faced by the Chei family as they were uprooted from Peter's birthplace parallel the trials faced by many of America's first adopted citizens escaping religious persecution. Peter Chei's decision to move to the United States in 1965 and his decision to become a United States citizen are made all the more meaningful by this stark comparison.

Having arrived in this country, Reverend Chei determined to serve God and his adopted country through a life of evangelism. His long history of ministerial and community service demonstrates his commitment. Reverend Chei has volunteered as Head Start Policy Council President, Head Start Parents Association President, Coordinator for the American Bible Society, Coordinator for the National Day of Prayer, Coordinator for the International Year of Bible Reading, Coordinator for the 1999 Year of the Bible, and as a member of the Crosswalk Teen Center. The Reverend Peter Chei founded Missouri Head Start Parents' Association, Singles and Families Educational Seminar, Christians Together in the City of Nevada, His Hope House, the Christian Artist Series, Hope for