

most abused administration nominees. Mr. Stewart, if Mr. Lott had his way, would be confirmed a few weeks after his nomination, while nominees who have waited around endlessly will continue to wait.

Democrats understandably balked at this, so on Tuesday they took the extraordinary step of filibustering a judicial nomination from the Clinton White House—not in order to prevent his confirmation but rather to ensure that other nominees get votes. Afterward, Democrats sought to force consideration of Judge Paez and Ms. Berzon, but Republicans stopped this in two more party-line votes. The result is that nobody is getting considered, though all of the nominees on the floor likely have the votes for confirmation.

The filibuster of a judicial nomination is a very bad precedent, one we suspect Democrats will come to regret, but it's hard to see what choice they had. The conduct of the Republican majority here is simply baffling—and the rhetoric equally so. Mr. Hatch pleaded with the Senate Tuesday evening to "stop playing politics with this nomination and allow a vote expeditiously"—as though he had not himself played games to get Mr. Stewart nominated in the first place. Trent Lott last week expressed dismay that a minority of only 41 senators would be able to block a nomination. But as Sen. Patrick Leahy pointed out in response, there is a deep irony in fretting about the ability of a minority of 41 senators to stop a nomination when Judge Paez has been held up for more than three years by a tiny group of senators who do not even have to give their names to keep his nomination from coming to a vote.

Mr. Lott's other comments were worse still. He made it clear that confirming judges is something he would rather not do at all. "There are not a lot of people saying: Give us more federal judges," the majority leader said on the floor last week. "I am trying to help move this thing along, but getting more federal judges is not what I came here to do." The honesty of this comment, at least, is refreshing. But the Constitution does not make the Senate's role in the confirmation process optional, and the Senate ends up abdicating responsibility when the majority leader denies nominees a timely vote. All the nominees awaiting floor votes, Mr. Stewart included, should receive them immediately.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, again, I make this heartfelt plea. I have made the same plea in private to the Republican leader, the Democratic leader, and others. I love the Senate for what it can and should do. I know that, like everybody else my time here is only as long as the voters and my health allow. I also know that someday I will be gone and somebody else from Vermont will fill this seat.

I look at the Senate as the conscience of this great Nation. It is a body moving by precedence, moving sometimes by what some would say is an overformalized ritual, but moving in a way that the country can respect and in which the best of the country can be reflected, a body that is built on precedence.

A famous Thomas Jefferson story spoke of the Senate as the saucer that allows cooling of passions, the Senate also allows us to step above partisan politics because of our 6-year terms.

We have not done that with the judiciary. We have a duty to protect the Senate, but also, because of our unique role in the confirmation process, we have a duty to protect the integrity and independence of the Federal judiciary. We are failing both in our duties as Senators and we are failing in our duty to the Federal court.

Let us all take a deep breath and think about that and go back to doing what we should—not for this President or any past incident, but for all Presidents, present and future, and for all Senates, present and future, and for the American people, and for the greatest Nation on Earth, present and future.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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.

#### FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, the Communist party is celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the People's Republic of China on October 1. Unfortunately, many Chinese people have little reason to celebrate. Indeed, this is not a celebration of the Chinese people but an orchestrated celebration of the Communist party—a party of purges.

From the formative decade at Yanan, where the party was headquartered, and Mao Tse-tung soundly crushed challenges to his power; to the killing of hundreds of landlords in the 1950s; to the anti-rightist purging of half a million people following the Hundred Flowers period and during the Great Leap Forward; to the Cultural Revolution, during which millions were murdered or died in confinement, to the massacre at Tiananmen Square just ten years ago—the Communist party has sustained its existence not by the consent of the people, but through the violent elimination of dissent.

Even today, we see the party of purges in action on a daily basis. The Communist party is deeply engaged in a piercing campaign to silence the voices of faith and freedom—to purge from society, anyone they see as a threat to their power. The Chinese government continues to imprison members of the Chinese Democracy Party. In August, the government sentenced Liu Xianbin to thirteen years in prison on charges of subversion. His real crime was his desire for democracy. Another Democracy Party member, Mao Qingxiang, was formally arrested in September after being held in detention since June. He will likely languish

in prison for ten years because of his desire to be free. I could go on, but some human rights groups estimate that there could be as many as 10,000 political prisoners suffering in Chinese prisons. The party is determined to purge from society, those people it finds unsavory.

And the Chinese government will not tolerate people worshiping outside its official churches. So when it began cracking down on the Falun Gong meditation group, which it considers a cult, the government used this inexcusable action to perpetrate another—an intensified assault on Christians. In August, the government arrested thirty-one Christian house church members in Henan province. Henan province must be a wellspring of faith because over 230 Christians have been arrested there since October. Now I am concerned that eight of these House church leaders may face execution if they are labeled and treated as leaders of a cult. Let me say clearly and unequivocally that the eyes of the international community are watching. I hope that these peaceful people will be released.

In the months leading up to this fiftieth anniversary celebration, everything and everyone has been swept aside to cast a glamorous light on the Communist party. But the reality is quite ugly. Hundreds of street children, homeless, and mentally and physically disabled people have been rounded up and forced into Custody and Repatriation centers across the country. They are beaten, they are given poor food in unsanitary conditions, and they must pay rent.

In fact, only 500,000 people will be allowed to participate in the celebration in Beijing. Non-Beijing residents cannot enter the city and migrant workers have been sent home. They will not be able to see the Communist Party in all its glory, as it displays the DF-31 intercontinental ballistic missile and other arms, nor will they see the tanks rolling past Tiananmen Square. And Tibetans in Lhasa, who certainly do not want to celebrate, are being forced to participate under threat of losing their pay or their pensions.

This gilded celebration will not obscure the corrosion beneath. We must recognize the nature of this regime. We must never turn a blind eye or a deaf ear to cries of those suffering in China. We must be realistic when we deal with the Chinese government.

So when Time Warner chairman Gerald Levin courts President Jiang Zemin even when Time Magazine's China issue is banned, when our top executives are silent on human rights, when we put profit over principle, we are shielding our eyes from the stark reality of persecution in China. As Ronald Reagan said, "... we demean the valor of every person who struggles for human dignity and freedom. And we

also demean all those who have given that last full measure of devotion.”

Mr. President, it is my sincere hope and desire that in the next fifty years, the Chinese people will truly have something to celebrate. I hope that they will no longer be suppressed by a regime that extracts dissent like weeds from a garden, but that they will be able to enjoy the fruits of democracy.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, September 30, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,656,270,901,615.43 (Five trillion, six hundred fifty-six billion, two hundred seventy million, nine hundred one thousand, six hundred fifteen dollars and forty-three cents).

Five years ago, September 30, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,692,750,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred ninety-two billion, seven hundred fifty million).

Twenty-five years ago, September 30, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$481,743,000,000 (Four hundred eighty-one billion, seven hundred forty-three million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,174,527,901,615.43 (Five trillion, one hundred seventy-four billion, five hundred twenty-seven million, nine hundred one thousand, six hundred fifteen dollars and forty-three cents) during the past 25 years.

#### REAUTHORIZING THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of S. 1653, which would reauthorize the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. As an original cosponsor of this important legislation, I would like to applaud the excellent work of Senator CHAFEE and the Foundation to conserve the fish, wildlife, and plant resources of the United States.

The Foundation was created by Congress in 1984 to promote improved conservation and sustainable use of our country's natural resources. Since then, it has awarded over 2,400 grants, using \$101 million in federal funds, which it matched with \$189 million in nonfederal funds, putting a total of over \$290 million on the ground to promote environmental education, protect habitats, prevent species from becoming endangered, restore wetlands, improve riparian areas, and conserve native plants. The hallmark of this outstanding organization is forging partnerships between the public and private sectors—involving the government, private citizens, and corporations—to address the root causes of environmental problems. This reauthorization will allow the Foundation to continue its valuable work throughout the country.

Besides being an important link between groups with differing interests in natural resources, the Foundation is an extremely effective tool for stretching scarce federal dollars. The Foundation was created by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, which stipulates that the Foundation must match any federal money appropriated to it on a one-to-one basis. The Foundation does the Act one better. It has an internal policy of matching federal funds at least two-to-one with money from individuals, corporations, state and local governments, foundations, and nongovernmental organizations. Furthermore, all of the federal money appropriated to the Foundation supports on-the-ground conservation—its operating funds come strictly from private donations. The Foundation does not use federal funds for lobbying; nor does it support projects that entail political advocacy or litigation.

In my home state of Maine, the Foundation has invested over \$3.4 million in federal funds in 109 projects, generating an additional \$6.9 million in matching funds from private, corporate, and other state sources. Most notably, the Foundation has funded projects in Maine to help fishermen cope with the collapse of traditional groundfish fisheries, build a program to preserve Maine's native Atlantic salmon, and protect habitat for breeding Neotropical migratory birds.

Mr. President, I strongly support this bill to reauthorize the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Year after year, the Foundation consistently performs valuable conservation work, not only in my state, but throughout the country. Its ability to triple the power of federal funding for conservation is unique, making it one of the most effective means we have for preserving our natural resources. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting expeditious passage of this important measure.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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 10:39 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the report of the committee of the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill, H.R. 2084, making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

##### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:40 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2981. An act to extend energy conservation programs under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act through March 31, 2000.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

At 1:57 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill, H.R. 1906, making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The messages also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2910. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the National Transportation Safety Board for fiscal years 2000, 2001, 2002, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2436. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice to protect unborn children from assault and murder, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2910. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the National Transportation Safety Board for fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 2436. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice to protect unborn children from assault and murder, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-5469. A communication from the Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior, transmitting a draft of