amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4578) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment and the Senate agree to the same, signed by all of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of September 29, 2000.)

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I say to those who are interested, we are going to the report, but there is no time agreement to run off. Nobody has given up their rights in that regard, but we are now going to be able to proceed to the conference report, and we will continue to work on the issues that are of interest to Senators.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

In addition, I ask unanimous consent that the next 2 hours be under the control of Senators ROBERTS and CLELAND. I will be anxious to hear that presentation.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to the leader, we are at a point now where people have spent literally months on the bill. It is good we are here. Senator LANDRIEU still has concerns. She wants to make sure everyone understands she may want to speak at least 2 hours and do some things with the legislation generally because of her unhappiness.

Mr. GORTON. Reserving the right to object, I ask the leader, does this mean we will start the actual debate on the Interior bill later today or will it be tomorrow?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, there is no time agreement, so we will not be running off agreed-to time. If Senators want to speak on the bill itself, he or she can. Since we do have 2 hours set aside now for Senator ROBERTS and Senator CLELAND, which will take us to 8 o'clock, I presume the decision will be that we will begin on the Interior bill first thing in the morning.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I also say to the leader, we will all want to be getting our slippers on and pajamas ready for the big debate tonight.

Mr. LOTT. That is what I had in mind.

Mr. REID. By 8 o'clock.

Mr. LOTT. Did we get a clearance? Are the reservations withdrawn?

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

UNITED STATES PARK POLICE

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to draw attention to a group of federal officers who carry out a vital mission and provide critical services, but are largely unknown to people not in the law enforcement community. I am referring to the men and women of the United States Park Police.

An agency within the Department of Interior, the United States Park Police traces its lineage back to 1791 when then President George Washington established a force of ''Park Watchmen''. In subsequent years, the authority of what has become the Park Police has been expanded so that today, that department is responsible for providing comprehensive police services in the National Capital Region. Furthermore, they have jurisdiction in all National Park Service Areas, as well as other designated Federal/State lands.

While you will find their officers in New York City and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco, the bulk of the officers and duties of the United States Park Police are right here in the National Capital Region. Park Police officers provide a multitude of services ranging from patrol to criminal investigation and from counter-terrorism to helping to protect the President. They are responsible for patrolling and providing police services in 22% of the geographic area of the District of Columbia, which includes all the national monuments; as well as, Rock Creek Park, National Parklands in the Capital Region, and 300 miles of parkways in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

The United States Park Police is a tremendous asset, but I am deeply concerned that due to a lack of adequate funding, it is an asset that is losing its edge. Make no mistake, I question not the leadership of the Park Police nor the brave men and women who serve selflessly as officers and support personnel in that agency. Chief Langston and his officers will do yeoman's work no matter how well or how poorly funded their agency is, they are professionals and committed to protecting the public. I am worried that the Department of Interior lacks a commitment to providing sufficient funds to the law enforcement operations that fall under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior. The Park Police is now 179 officers below its authorized strength of 806 officers. Furthermore, it is an agency that loses approximately 50 officers a year either through retirement or lateral transfers. It is understandable that it is difficult for some Park Police Officers to resist the higher pay of other agencies, especially when you consider that over a 30-year period, a United States Park Police Officer makes approximately $135,429 less than what the average salary is for officers at other agencies in this area. In addition to being shorthanded, equipment, from the officers' sidearms to the agency's radio equipment is antiquated and in need of replacement. The Park Police needs our help.

It is truly a shame that the Park Police is facing the challenges it is today and we are in a position to do something about it. The men and women who serve as Park Police Officers have not had a raise since 1990, and we should support legislation that will give them a much needed pay boost. In an era when it is harder and harder to attract qualified individuals into public service, let alone a life threatening profession such as law enforcement, it is vital we do something to reward those who already serve, as well as, to attract new officers to an agency that provides services that keep the Capital Region safe.

It might sound cliche, but the United States Park Police is there when they are needed. They are there when someone suffers an emergency in the waters around Great Falls, they are on the parkways when someone is in need of assistance, and they are on the Mall keeping visitors to Washington safe. They were there when the tragic shooting took place in this building, and they landed their helicopter on the plaza outside the Capitol in a valiant attempt to get a wounded United States Capitol Police Officer transported to a local trauma center as quickly as possible. Giving the officers of the United States Park Police a raise is not going to solve all of that agency's needs, but it will help recruit and retain personnel. More importantly, it is the right thing to do.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION BILL

SECTION 303

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, section 303 of S. 2507, the Intelligence Authorization bill, as amended by the managers' amendment, establishes a new criminal offense for the unauthorized disclosure of properly classified information. Existing criminal statues generally require an intent to benefit a foreign power or are limited to disclosures of only some types of classified information. Administrative sanctions have constituted the penalty for most other leaks.

While I support the basic objective of this provision, we must ensure that it will not be used in a capricious manner or in a manner that harms our democratic institutions.

I see two respects in which some caution is merited. First, it could be applied to trivial cases. I believe that former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger once said that he told everything to his wife. If his discussions with his wife included classified information, he surely would have violated the letter of this bill. But so-called ''pillow talk'' to one's spouse is common, and I don't think we mean to throw people in jail for incidental talk