

of our Senators-elect, in this case the Senator-elect from New York, HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, although I think she was there more in her capacity as First Lady.

It was interesting to see the reaction of the people in Ireland, both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, both in the Catholic community and the Protestant community. The President was greeted as he should be, as a hero in Ireland because more than any President perhaps since John Fitzgerald Kennedy, he has shown a real interest in Ireland.

He has become personally and intimately involved in trying to stop the sectarian damage, carnage, killings, and murders in Northern Ireland. He sent our distinguished former colleague and former majority leader of the Senate, George Mitchell, on countless trips to Northern Ireland helping to broker the peace agreement which became known as the Good Friday accords.

Whether it was standing in the small town on the northern border of the Republic of Ireland, bordering Northern Ireland, a town of just a few thousand people but where 50,000 to 60,000 people from the whole area came and stood in the cold, the rain, and the fog for hour after hour waiting for the President and those accompanying him to arrive, and then giving him a hero's welcome and not wanting him to leave.

I saw the faces of those people. I saw the children who looked out to him with hope in their eyes. I saw the older people who said he sought to bring prosperity to this area because he helped us stop the fighting that goes back and forth across the border. He has brought hope for our children and grandchildren.

I saw the same thing in Northern Ireland in Belfast the next day where those who had been sworn enemies a few years ago were joining in meetings with the President, encouraging him to stay involved and asking him to please come back even after his Presidency. It had to be an emotional time for President Clinton, but it was very much for the people there.

I talked with several who again told me he brought hope for them and brought an understanding that their children could live in a world they had not known, a world where they could go to school, where they would not be defined by their religion but defined by who they are.

What an improvement that was and how grateful I am for the opportunity to have been there, not just as an Irish American but one who holds deeply our sense of freedom, our sense of democracy, and our sense that people do not get excluded because of their religious faith or their ethnic background or who their parents were but are included because they are human beings and because they have intrinsic worth.

#### RETIREMENT OF SENATOR RICHARD H. BRYAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, with my dear friend from Nevada, Senator REID, on the floor, I want to talk about his colleague, also my friend, RICHARD BRYAN, who announced his plans to retire from the Senate. When he did, he said very simply and earnestly: It's time to come home.

I have known DICK and Bonnie BRYAN since they came here. I say DICK and Bonnie BRYAN because, like Marcelle and me, we think of them as one person because usually at events outside work, when you see one you see the other. In fact, that is what I cherish about both my colleagues from Nevada. I cherish their family life.

DICK said it is time to go home, and I am disappointed to learn we are going to lose a good humored and skillful colleague. As a Vermonter, I have to empathize with that deep-rooted impulse to go home. Everything DICK BRYAN has accomplished here paves the way for his return to a better Nevada, something all of us hope for because all of us will leave this body at one time or another.

Most of the time, the strength of our Nation stood resolutely with the welfare of Nevada in Senator BRYAN's mind. As Democratic cochair of the Senate National Guard Caucus, he blocked unwise and unjustifiable cuts in our citizen-soldier force. He brought us together so the Guard's voice could be heard, and his persistence has positioned this invaluable force to prepare for the new, continually emerging strategic landscape. Under his watch, Nellis Air Force Base became a national treasure, where our best, most skilled pilots mastered the art of war so that our country would never have to call on them for the real thing.

Senator BRYAN guaranteed the credibility of the institution of the Senate. I think of the Senate as being the conscience of the Nation, and we should be the guardians of it. Those who abused the public's trust and the powers of office, as Senators knew they would, received intense scrutiny when Senator BRYAN chaired the Ethics Committee in 1993 and 1994. None of us will forget his calm and dexterous handling of numerous sensitive investigations, something he could do because he was trusted by both Republicans and Democrats to do the right thing.

It had to be one of the most difficult times, requiring arduous work by any Senator, but never once did any of us hear Senator BRYAN complain about the difficult task, nor did he swerve from the steady course toward fairness and justice.

Indeed, in so many areas, RICHARD BRYAN made a difference whether in preserving the fragile desert environment or modernizing our commercial aviation system. The list is long, and if he stayed, he would have accomplished even more.

Senator BRYAN has made a choice that deserves only accolades and respect. He is going home, and Nevada is a fortunate State for it. It is also fortunate that he has left his partner, HARRY REID, here to carry on his battles. My wife Marcelle and I wish DICK and his wife Bonnie all the best, but I am going to miss some of our late night conversations and some of the humor and good will he has shown to all Senators.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant 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.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I have just spoken to Senator DASCHLE. We have been communicating with our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol. I understand the Senate will shortly receive from the House the appropriations bill containing the final appropriations measures, and we hope to have some agreement on how to proceed shortly.

We will notify Senators and hotline that information. Once Senator DASCHLE arrives on the floor, hopefully we can move forward with that. In the meantime, there are just a couple of bits of information for our colleagues about the remainder of this session and the dates for activities we will have next year.

Of course, we hope to have the sine die adjournment resolution here shortly.

Senator DASCHLE and I jointly will have resolutions thanking the officers of the Senate, the staff of the Senate who do just a magnificent job on our behalf and on behalf of the American people quite often during long and weird hours. They really do a magnificent job, and we thank all of them for what they do.

Also, I see Senator REID is here, the assistant Democratic leader. He has really made a difference since he has been in his leadership position. He is always calm and always diligent. He works on both sides of the aisle. I want to acknowledge that and thank him for all of his work. I will not overdo it now because I don't want to get him into trouble as we approach the last few minutes of the session.

I want to inform the Members of some important dates and events of interest concerning the beginning of the 107th Congress. I see Senator DASCHLE is here. He can communicate with the staff. I will run over these dates quickly, and then we can visit.

Of course, at 12 noon on Wednesday, January 3, the 107th Congress will convene with an immediate live quorum, to be followed by the swearing-in ceremonies for the newly elected Senators.

I want to emphasize that. That is on January 3. It is at 12 noon. There will be a live quorum, and all Senators are required by law, if they want to be sworn in and receive pay, to be here for that occasion.

On Saturday, January 6, the Senate will proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the official counting of the electoral college votes.

The Senate has passed a resolution that would move that to January 5, which would be a Friday, instead of Saturday, January 6. The House has not yet passed that resolution. But they have indicated that they may pass a resolution changing the date to Friday, January 5, for the counting of the electoral college votes. We will let all of our colleagues know exactly about that.

I believe we are required to proceed at 1 p.m. on either Friday, January 5, or, as it now stands, January 6. We will make that clear later on. Senators will be notified if there is a date change, if and when it is confirmed.

Of course, Inauguration of the 43rd President of the United States will occur at 12 noon on Saturday, January 20.

Furthermore, because a Senate committee is a continuing body, committees may begin working on committee nominations on January 5 or 6. Senator DASCHLE and I will be working on that. But there is the possibility, between January 3 and the Inauguration, that there could be some committee hearings on nominations. We will have to work through that. Of course, it will depend on the receipt of those nominations once the investigations have been completed. We will work through what committees and how that will be handled. Members who might be involved will be notified as early as possible, and hopefully that will be even before the end of the year.

Votes on confirmations may take place even on Saturday, January 20. I believe that has been the case in the past—if not January 20, certainly beginning on Monday, January 22. We will want to move forward very quickly on actually confirming the nominations. Senators will be further notified on January 3.

Regarding the Cabinet nominations schedule, when we receive those nominations, again we will work together on what that schedule may be.

Again, I want to thank the Senate officers, Senators, and leadership on both sides of the aisle for what I believe has been a very productive session and for the dedication of Senators to the American people.

I see Senator DASCHLE is here. We have some resolutions we can do if we

have a break here in a moment. Then we will have some that we want to do at the very end of the session.

At this point, I yield the floor if Senator LAUTENBERG wishes to make any comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader and the Chair for recognition.

#### SERVING IN THE SENATE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I want to be sure before I go into my remarks that neither of the leaders, the majority leader or the Democratic leader, is waiting for some floor time for some special things they want to go ahead with because I hope not to cover every day of the 18 years I have served here.

But I do want to make some remarks about this moment in time—a moment that I have kind of looked at with some amount of trepidation because this is the end for me, at the bottom of the ninth inning, and we have a couple of things to do before it is pretty much all over.

I am probably speaking now for the last time in the U.S. Senate. After 18 years as a Member of this institution, some time ago I made a reluctant decision to step down—not to try again after three terms. And, to be perfectly honest, there are those moments when I look at that decision not to run for a fourth term with considerable regret. This has been an incredible experience—an experience that so few ever get to have and such a worthwhile thing to do.

While my friends, the Democratic leader and the Democratic whip, are on the floor, I want to express to each one of them how deep my appreciation is for the cooperation and the ability to work together on issues of concern—not just for my State but for the country at large—and how helpful Senator DASCHLE, our leader, has been; and my good friend HARRY REID from Nevada, the only State that really competes with New Jersey in the hospitality of the gaming industry. I hope we will continue to do more business than Nevada.

In all seriousness, these are States that have a certain kinship that is not always easy to recognize because our coast is far larger than their coast, and sometimes we differ on issues but never on intent.

This is a job that has been the highlight of my life, next to my family—my children, my grandchildren, eight of them; the oldest is seven. I want to make sure they understood what their grandfather did when he was spending time in Washington. They are too young to really know what the job is about. But they know who the President of the United States is. Some of

them knew because the oldest one is seven. There are eight of them, obviously, and one is just 2 months old. The little one could not understand what I have done. I was lucky and brought all of them down for Father's Day. I was able to take them to the White House and take some pictures with the President. They will look at these pictures one day and say, OK, that is where our grandfather spent his time when we didn't see much of him. I hope they will feel the same kind of pride and love for country as I do.

This job, one of some 1,850 people who ever served in the Senate, is such an honor to have. It is such an exciting place to be. I look at my desk now as a reminder of why I had this desk moved as my seniority improved from the far corner next to where it is now. I brought it with me wherever I went. It was a fairly easy task. I don't want the citizens to think I had people put to work for little reason; just a couple of screws lift out of the floor and we move it over here.

When I think of my parents and what this country meant to my grandparents when they brought my parents as little children to these shores, I open the desk. As everyone here knows but the public probably doesn't, there is something one could call "graffiti" in these desks—a signature, a carving, a writing in indelible ink that gives a name and the State that the individual represented. I never got discouraged about this job, but anytime I needed a little stimulation about how important the work we were doing was outside of the legislative routine, I looked in this desk and I seen "Truman, Missouri." Harry Truman sat at this desk when he served in the Senate. It is such an honor for me to be able to fill the seat, not the shoes, as they say.

Every day I came to work here was a privilege, even when the day didn't turn out as one expected. The people of New Jersey sent me here to accomplish things that affected their lives and their families, and it is not easy to relinquish those duties. I hope they will believe that FRANK LAUTENBERG served them honestly and diligently. I will leave it to them to mark the report card to see how we did.

My service was a way for me to give something back. I had a successful business career, and I spent 30 years doing that, but there was something more that was needed as far as my life was concerned. I am so grateful my grandparents, in their wisdom in the earliest part of the last century, decided to pack up bag and baggage—they didn't have much baggage, I can tell you that; all they had was the spirit and desire to live free—and come to this country, my mother a year old from Russia, and my father 6 years old from Poland. They believed so much in America. They were so sensitive about things. For my grandparents, whose