

Transportation be authorized to meet on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 9:30 a.m. on the nomination of Brenda Becker to be Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (DOC), and Michael Jackson to be Deputy Secretary for the Department of Transportation.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, to hear testimony on Medicare and SSI Benefits: Turning off the Spigot to Prisoners, Fugitives, the Deceased and other ineligible.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 10:30 a.m. and at 2 p.m., to hold two hearings.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 10 a.m., in SD226.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 2 p.m., to hold a closed briefing on intelligence matters.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOREIGN COMMERCE AND TOURISM

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs, Foreign Commerce and Tourism of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 2:30 p.m., on west coast gas prices.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND
TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, to conduct a hearing on "HUD's Program, Budget and Management Priorities for FY 2002."

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 2:30 p.m., in open session to receive testimony on the fiscal year 2002 budget request of the National Nuclear Security Administration in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2002 and the future years Defense program.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Daniel Wood be given floor privileges for this day.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mathew Tinnings, a fellow in Senator BINGAMAN's office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the pendency of the debate on S. 350.

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

SENATOR ROBERT KERREY OF
NEBRASKA

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I want to share a couple of thoughts regarding some reports that have appeared in the media in the last few hours regarding our colleague, Senator Bob Kerrey.

Some reports have been written during the last 24 hours about an incident that took place in Vietnam in February 1969, several weeks prior to Senator Kerrey receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor for the secret mission on which he served. I read a couple of those reports. I want to express my personal concern about the approach of the media to this issue, and express my personal support for Senator Bob Kerrey, particularly for the nature and the circumstances of the mission which has been written about.

It is my hope that the media is not going to engage in some kind of 32-year-later binge because there is a difference of memory about a particularly confusing night in the delta in a free fire zone under circumstances which most of us who served in Vietnam understood were the daily fare of life in Vietnam at that point in time.

I served in the very same area that Bob Kerrey did. I served there at the very same time that he did. I remember those free fire zones. I remember our feelings then and the great confusion many people felt about the ambiguities we were automatically pre-

sented with then by a military doctrine that suggested that certain areas were wholly and totally "enemy territory," but nevertheless to the naked eye we could often perceive life as we knew it in Vietnam being carried on in those areas.

Inevitably, there were older citizens, women, children, and others who were often, as a matter of strategy by the Viet Cong, drawn into the line of fire and put in positions of danger without regard, I might add, for their side as well as ours.

To the best of my memory, most people worked diligently—I know Senator Kerrey did as well as others—to avoid the capacity for confusion or for accidents. I know certainly within our unit there was a great deal of pride on many occasions when orders were changed on the spot simply because perceptions on the spot made it clear that there was the potential for innocents to be injured.

I fully remember what it was like to "saddle up" for a nighttime mission with no Moon, with no light, trying to move clandestinely and trying to surprise people. The confusion that can ensue in those kinds of situations is not confusion that lends itself to a 32-year-later judgment.

There were occasions in Vietnam, as everyone knows, when innocents were victims. There wasn't a soldier there at that time, or who has come back to this country and home today, who doesn't regret that.

But I also know it is simply a disservice to our Nation and to the quality of the service and a person such as Bob Kerrey to have condemnation after the fact which does anything to diminish the quality of service, or the unit's service, or the service of so many others who spent their sweat and blood and youth in that particularly difficult battlefield.

So it is my hope that in the next days people will understand the appropriate perspective and put this issue in its appropriate perspective. Bob Kerrey served with distinction. He obviously feels anguish and pain about those events, but I do not believe they should diminish, for one moment, the full measure of what he has given to his country and of what he represents. It is my hope that he personally will not allow it to.

TAIWAN

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, I want to say a word about what President Bush said this morning with respect to Taiwan because if what the President said is, in fact, what he means, or if it is indeed the new policy of the United States, it has profound implications for our country. He made a far-reaching comment this morning on the American defense of Taiwan, a comment which suggests that without

any consultation with Congress, without any prior notice to the Congress, a policy that has been in place for 30 years is now summarily being changed with implications that I believe are serious.

When asked by Charles Gibson, on ABC's "Good Morning America," whether the United States had an obligation to defend Taiwan if Taiwan were attacked by China, President Bush said:

Yes, we do, and the Chinese must understand that.

Charles Gibson then asked:

With the full force of the American military?

President Bush responded:

Whatever it took to help Taiwan defend themselves.

For almost 30 years, through Republican and Democrat administrations alike, the cornerstone of our approach to policy toward China and Taiwan has been the so-called "one China" policy: There is but one China; Taiwan is a part of China, and the question of Taiwan's future must be settled peacefully.

This policy was laid out in the 1972 Shanghai Communique issued by the United States and China at the end of President Nixon's historic visit. It was reaffirmed in subsequent bilateral communiqués—in 1979, when the United States recognized the People's Republic of China and again in 1982 on the question of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.

A consistent tenet of this policy is the U.S. expectation that the question of reunification of China and Taiwan will be settled peacefully. We have never stated what the United States would do if Beijing attempted to use force to reunify Taiwan with the mainland—until today. We have not stated it in the course of Republican and Democrat administrations alike because we understood the danger of doing so.

We have been deliberately vague about what the circumstances might be under which we would come to Taiwan's defense, not only to discourage Taiwan from drawing us in by declaring independence but also to deter a Chinese attack by keeping Beijing guessing as to what the response might be.

Sometimes some people have talked about trying to reduce that ambiguity and simplify it and simply say, of course we would come to their defense. But if you do that, you invite a set of consequences that might carry with it its own set of dangers, and you may lose control of the capacity to make a determination about what has happened and what the circumstances really are to which you need to respond.

President Bush's comments this morning on "Good Morning America" suggest that the administration has decided to abandon the so-called strategic

ambiguity. If so, the President has made a major policy change with absolutely no consultation with the Foreign Relations Committee, the Armed Services Committee, the Intelligence Committee, or the leadership of the Congress.

In my view, it is a policy change that serves neither our interests nor Taiwan's. Any situation which results in the use of force across the Taiwan Strait is unlikely to be simply black and white, as clear as can be. The Tonkin Gulf is a classic example of that. To this day, people debate over whether or not there really was an attack on the Maddox and the Turner Joy, and whether or not there was an appropriate response under those circumstances.

The scenarios which could lead to the use of force and the conditions under which the United States might respond are simply too variable to lend themselves to a simple, clear declaration such as the declaration made by the President this morning.

For example, if China attacked in response to what it sees as a Taiwanese provocation, would we then respond? Apparently so, according to President Bush. Or if Taiwan declared independence, and China responded militarily, would we then come to Taiwan's defense? Have we given Taiwan a card it wanted all along, which is the capacity to know that no matter what it does, the United States would, in fact, be there to defend it?

The answer to that question is the reason that we have carried this ambiguity through President Ford, President Carter, President Reagan, President Bush, the President's father, and President Clinton.

In a subsequent interview on CNN, the President reiterated that we maintain the "one China" policy, and he hopes Taiwan will not declare independence. But he remained vague as to what we would do if Taiwan did declare independence and China attacked.

To remove the strategic ambiguity runs the risk of decreasing Taiwan's security rather than increasing it and of eliminating the flexibility that we will need to determine how to respond in any given situation.

Notwithstanding President Bush's efforts to clarify that the United States does not want Taiwan to declare independence, the new policy has the automatic impact, if it is in place, and if it is the declaration that was made, of emboldening Taiwan and, frankly, reducing our control over events.

Although I have argued that we need to inject more clarity into our engagement with China, I personally believe that on this question our interests and Taiwan's are better served by the ambiguity that has existed and would be better served by maintaining it. It not only deters a Chinese attack, but it discourages Taiwan from misreading what the United States might do.

President Bush has said that the United States has an obligation to defend Taiwan. Certainly we want to help Taiwan preserve its thriving democracy and robust, growing economy. I have said previously that I think this is enough of a message to the Chinese, that no American President could stand idly by and watch while that democracy that has been gained is set back, by force or otherwise. Nevertheless, we need to press both Taipei and Beijing to reinvigorate the cross-strait dialogue, without any misinterpretations about our role.

So let us be clear: The Taiwan Relations Act does not commit the United States to come to the defense of Taiwan in the event of an attack. The Taiwan Relations Act commits us to provide Taiwan with the necessary military equipment to meet its legitimate self-defense needs. The arms package that the Bush administration just approved for Taiwan, I believe, is the right mix and the right measure, and it will significantly increase the Taiwanese defensive capacities. I support that package.

It may be the case that we would send American forces ultimately to Taiwan's defense if there were an attack, but that decision should not be made by an American President in advance during a television interview.

A decision of this magnitude, which holds the potential for risking the lives of American military men and women, should be made in response to the circumstances at the moment, on the ground, in the air, and, most importantly, in consultation with the Congress of the United States in the due performance of its responsibilities with respect to the engagement of our forces overseas.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes.

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

(The remarks of Mrs. LINCOLN pertaining to the introduction of S. 775 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. LINCOLN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2001

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it adjourn until the hour of 10 a.m. on