proven to be successful. Until I passed legislation that ended an outrageous conflict of interest by which those who approved the spending of salmon recovery funds awarded most of the money to themselves, the money was misspent. Now, at least the money goes to those whom objective scientists feel will use it most effectively.

Solutions Dictated to the region from Washington, D.C.: Recently, the Administration's top environmental staffer in Washington, D.C., Katie McGinty, was in Oregon to discuss the government's salmon recovery plans for the Northwest. That is exactly the wrong way to approach this problem. Why would our region put decisions about our economy, our communities, our future in the hands of someone 3,000 miles away? I believe we need to make these decisions, not Administration officials in Washington, D.C.

Rather than continuing the mindless attacks on my efforts to bring some balance to this debate, I make the following offer to those who criticize the Eastern Washington part of my Elwha package. If you are not for dam removal and want to keep the dams intact, offer up better legislative language that helps accomplish the goal of protecting our region's economic future. My legislation may need improvement. I am anxious to listen to how others would reach my goal. If there is a better idea of how we can ease the concerns of Eastern Washington with regard to dam removal, I challenge the Administration, Senator MURRAY, and the Sierra Club, and other opponents of this legislation, to offer a better alternative. I am interested in all proposals from those who want to make a statement in favor of protecting the dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.

If you favor removing dams, however, and that is what is really driving your opposition to my legislation, I think it is time for you to be honest with the Northwest and state your position clearly. The Clinton Administration, and major environmental groups have sent mixed signals on this issue. Many of them advocate extreme, unrealistic and unscientific salmon recovery measures; some do not. I think it is time for these people to make their positions clear—do they want the dams removed or effectively destroyed, or what? And if they continue to temporize on this issue, I ask them to address the goals that I discussed earlier—salmon, irrigation, river traffic, hydropower production, recreation, and flood control—and tell me how they are committed to those traditional objectives, or if the possibility of attaining some salmon recovery goals is worth destroying most or all of these other uses.

I want my Elwha Dam removal legislation fully discussed in committee and have requested hearings. In the past few weeks, the opponents of my anti-dam removal legislation have called me divisive, extremist, and a salmon-hater. I am none of those things. I hope that my opponents, and particularly the Administration and my Democratic colleagues from the Northwest, will work together with me to craft legislation that removes the lower Elwha River dam and protects Eastern Washington from those who want to remove dams, stop irrigation, eliminate barge traffic, reduce hydropower, raise electric rates for families, restrict recreation and push for dubious salmon solutions.

I welcome the opportunity for a full and reasoned debate on this subject. It's time to put the rhetoric aside, the tired adjectives aside, and the political smokescreens aside. It's time for everyone to come clean, and make clear where they stand on this important issue. This bill provides such an opportunity, and I look forward to receiving proposals from people throughout the region on how to improve my bill.

Ms. SNOWE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The distinguished Senator from Maine is recognized.

Ms. SNOWE. Thank you, Mr. President.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING ACT—CONFERENCE REPORT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the conference report.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back on the pending conference report.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my statement, the order of speakers be Senator COLLINS from Maine and Senator CHAFEE from Rhode Island.

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

Ms. SNOWE. I further ask unanimous consent that Senator DEWINE be recognized for up to 60 minutes following our statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

EFFORTS OF SENATOR GEORGE MITCHELL IN ACHIEVING THE NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE AGREEMENT

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join with my colleagues, Senator COLLINS from Maine and Senator CHAFEE from Rhode Island, in the wake of yesterday's 97 to 0 vote by the Senate to pass Senate Concurrent Resolution 90 acknowledging the historic Northern Ireland peace agreement reached just 2 weeks ago.

The agreement was produced through the hard work and patience and goodwill of representatives of Northern Ireland's political parties, the Prime Ministers of both Britain and Ireland, President Clinton, and a man well known in this Chamber, the former Senator from Maine and former majority leader, George Mitchell.

Senator Mitchell's skill, patience, and determination were largely responsible for bringing opposing parties to the point where they were able to broker a historic agreement that offers the people of Northern Ireland the opportunity to put an end to the long-standing fear and suffering they have endured and to achieve a future that will be as bright as the spirit and potential of her extraordinary people.

In describing Senator Mitchell's pivotal role, one of the participants in the talks said, ''Here the United States sent one of its most able, skilled, talented, humble politicians, a supreme diplomat, and frankly we didn't deserve him.''

Well of course, the people of Northern Ireland deserved his leadership that has provided, as we now know, the very best opportunity for these talks to succeed.

After his retirement from the Senate, President Clinton invited Senator Mitchell to serve as a special economic adviser to Northern Ireland. However, before he finished his efforts to attract business investment to Northern Ireland, Senator Mitchell was selected by both the British and Irish governments to join a panel that recommended the decommissioning of arms by the paramilitary factions in Northern Ireland. He assumed responsibility for taking over the peace talks in June of 1996.

Senator Mitchell faced tremendous obstacles in attempting to win the trust of the parties involved in seeking an agreement. After all, previous efforts resulted in failure. However, his patience, diligence and sincerity won them over. I know that Senator Mitchell's long experience in the Senate helped prepare him for this unique challenge. As one who served with him for more than 14 years in the Maine Congressional Delegation, I know he has an excellent ability to understand the concerns of whomever he is talking with—whether it is a constituent from Bangor, or Augusta or Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland.

Being an effective majority leader in the Senate, as we know, requires one to be a good listener, to know when to compromise, to know when to coax and cajole, to know when to be patient and to know when to be firm. All these qualities served George Mitchell well in this body and served him well in his most recent role which consumed 22 long, hard months of negotiations.

This was by no means an easy task and often it must have seemed a hopeless one. However, the toll of the continuing violence in which over 3,200 people have died since 1969 led in the end to a deep yearning for peace. Individuals who grew up accustomed to violence were tired of going to funerals and watching their friends and family members die. Senator Mitchell led an effort that promised a way out—a path toward a future of peace and hope. In 1996 he proposed the decommissioning of weapons be addressed during the talks and that participants make a commitment to nonviolence. That was the same year that bombings took place in London and Manchester. Yet none of that deterred Senator Mitchell. When the agreement was concluded, he commented that ''no one wants to go back to the bitterness of the past.''

In his understated way, Senator Mitchell commented that ''This agreement is a reason to celebrate. But by itself, it guarantees nothing.'' I fervently hope that the agreement does indeed turn out to be the harbinger of a new era in Northern Ireland. Ultimately it is the Irish people, voting on May 22nd, who will determine whether or not this agreement will succeed. I am optimistic that it will.

The agreement is a landmark achievement. There will be a 108 seat assembly in which Protestants and Catholics share responsibility and powers. It will be elected this June, and I hope those who are chosen in that election will share the dream that Senator Mitchell cited when he talked about the babies who were born in Northern Ireland on the same day his new son Andrew was born 6 months ago.

Senator Mitchell said, ''I believe that they are entitled to the same chance in life that I want for my son. Peace, political stability and reconciliation are not too much to ask for. They are the minimum that a decent civilized society provides.''

Eloquent words that I am sure touched the hearts of mothers and fathers on both sides of the historic divide that has scarred Northern Ireland.

In the agreement Senator Mitchell helped to forge, in addition to the afore-mentioned assembly, there will be a North/South Ministerial Council which will provide an opportunity for ministers from the Republic of Ireland to promote joint policymaking with the Northern Ireland Assembly. This council will have the opportunity to implement policies for the entire island of Ireland but only with the approval of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Irish Parliament in Dublin. This remarkable opportunity will allow the benefits of peace to be provided and to be shared by all the Irish people.

At the conclusion of the talks, Senator Mitchell said, ''It doesn't take courage to shoot a policeman in the back of the head, or to murder an unarmed taxi driver.'' But he knows it does take courage to finally face down the horrors of sectarian violence, that it does take courage to realize that sometimes you have to make compromises for a future of peace.

When he first visited Belfast and saw a 30-foot wall dividing neighborhoods, I am sure he was reminded of the most famous wall of all, the Berlin Wall, which came down in 1989 when communism crumbled. Just 2 years before a new millennium, the wall in Belfast still divides people. But this agreement may bring us one day closer to the day it, too, crumbles.

Senator George Mitchell has helped broker an agreement that will, I hope, be the spark for an era of peace and prosperity for Northern Ireland and bring to a close one of this century's most tragic and stubborn conflicts. This agreement is one that should be celebrated for all it can bring to Northern Ireland. It should also be celebrated as proof of how one remarkable individual can make a difference for his fellow human beings. It is my fervent hope that the people of Northern Ireland will long remember and celebrate the contributions of this one man, George Mitchell, toward providing them the key to a lasting peace.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Maine is recognized.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I am very pleased to join the senior Senator from Maine and our distinguished colleague from Rhode Island in paying tribute to the extraordinary accomplishments of a former Maine Senator, George Mitchell, in bringing a new sense of hope, peace, and security to Northern Ireland.

Mr. President, it was Samuel Johnson who said in 1777 that knowledge that you will be hanged in a fortnight does wonders to concentrate your mind. In 1998, former Senate majority leader, George Mitchell, proved the truth of this aphorism by giving the Northern Ireland peace talks a Good Friday deadline, placing upon these negotiations the equivalent, if you will, of a sunset provision that left the parties with no alternative but finally to come up with a real solution.

This deadline accomplished its purpose wonderfully. It concentrated their minds wonderfully and led directly to the historic agreement. Some years ago, it scarcely seemed possible to imagine a Northern Ireland in which children could grow up without fear of violence and bloodshed. Today, however, due to the extraordinary efforts of former Senator George Mitchell, this brighter future is not only imaginable—it is very nearly here.

That Senator Mitchell should possess such statesmanship and skill is, of course, no surprise to the people in my home State of Maine. Senator Mitchell is greatly admired in this country for his work on behalf of the citizens of Maine and indeed of all Americans. Today, however, the people of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland—and peace-loving people everywhere—also owe Senator Mitchell a great debt for helping to steer these talks to their successful conclusion. I do not believe that we would be celebrating this agreement without his heroic efforts.

It is my great hope that with his statesmanship and steady hand, Senator Mitchell has now made it possible to achieve a real reconciliation in Northern Ireland—and for the Irish people to go about building their future together, in cooperation rather than in conflict.

I am very pleased that the Senate has passed overwhelmingly a resolution expressing our support for the Irish peace process and the brighter future represented by this truly historic agreement.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I join the two distinguished Senators from Maine in paying tribute to the remarkable job that Senator George Mitchell did in Ireland.

Senator Mitchell would be the first to say that success is not assured and that this is but the first step in a long, difficult process. But because of what Senator Mitchell did, the chances for peace have been greatly improved. And it truly was an extraordinary job, as the two Senators from Maine have outlined.

What patience George Mitchell showed, and what skills as a negotiator he displayed.

I join in the sentiment that has been expressed that his success there comes as no great surprise to those of us who knew him well. I served in this Senate for the entire time that George Mitchell was here as Senator from Maine. I had the privilege of serving in not one but two committees, the Finance Committee and the Environment Committee, with George Mitchell.

Indeed, as soon as he came to the Senate, he went on the Environment Committee, and there I saw the tremendous abilities that he had. I can remember particularly the Clean Air Act, that George Mitchell was the one most responsible for the reauthorization of that act, which occurred when George Mitchell was majority leader. Because of the guidance that he gave to all of us, that extraordinary reauthorization took place.

I personally have deep ties to the State of Maine. My father was born in Maine. I have spent childhood summers there and adult summers likewise. So I am very familiar with that State. I might point out that although Maine is large in size, it has a relatively small population, about 1 million people. It is true that Maine is a very large State; it is as large as the rest of New England put together; but, as I said, it has a relatively small population.

Yet from that relatively small population of 1 million people have come a series of extraordinary Senators. I look back, Mr. President, just in the ones I have had the privilege of knowing—Margaret Chase Smith, for example, who stands out as a beacon, particularly in connection with the impeachment hearings and leading up to that of President Nixon. We remember clearly Ed Muskie, with whom I had the privilege of serving on the floor of the Senate. He was active, ran for Vice President, and gave one of the finest television speeches it has been my privilege to hear. And George Mitchell, whom we have just had the privilege of extolling, and rightfully so. And Bill Cohen, who is now our Secretary of Defense. And that great tradition of those outstanding Senators is carried on now by the two Senators from Maine, Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE and Senator SUSAN COLLINS.

It seems to me that the people of the State of Maine have great reason to be extremely proud not only of the Senators who have been before—and I listed some of them—but of their current Senators, Senators SNOWE and COLLINS. It is a tradition that they are carrying on. It is a remarkable one, Mr. President. As I thought about these remarks today and thought of the Senators I have known, I don't think you could name a State that is as small in population as the State of Maine and has produced such outstanding Senators as those I just listed.

Mr. President, in making this salute to George Mitchell, it seems to me we are saluting the people of the State of Maine, who have had such good judgment. These are not all Republicans, and they are not all Democrats. They are Republicans and they are Democrats, both. It has been a remarkable flow of outstanding servants, not just for the State of Maine but for the United States of America. I think all of us can be very proud of those who have gone before and those who are now serving in the U.S. Senate from the State of Maine.

I thank the Chair, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEWINE. 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. DEWINE. I ask that I be allowed to proceed under the previous order for 60 minutes.

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

NATIONAL ORGAN DONOR WEEK

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, we are concluding National Organ Donor Week. I think as we conclude our week here in the U.S. Senate, it will be appropriate to pause for a moment and discuss the importance of this week. This is one of the few times when the mere talking about an issue actually will, in fact, make a difference.

Why do we celebrate or why do we call attention to National Organ Donor Week? We do it because of a tragedy. The tragedy is that 7, 8, 9, in some weeks 10, of our fellow citizens die, die every week, because there aren't enough organs available. They don't die because medical science can't save them—medical science can save them. They die waiting on a list, waiting for an organ to become available, and seven, eight, or nine of them every week die.

What can be done about this? What we can do is talk about this issue. As we talk about it, we can encourage people and their families around the kitchen table to talk about it. Talking about it does make a difference. Too many families, when faced with life's most horrible tragedy, which is the unexpected, usually sudden, loss of a loved one—a daughter, son, mother, father, wife, husband—when they are asked by the medical personnel at the hospital, ''Can we use your loved one's organs to help save someone else?'' they don't know what to say. They are faced with horrible trauma, something they have not expected. Too many of our fellow citizens say no, not because they don't want to help people, but they say no because they never thought of it.

I am convinced if people talk about this issue, if they talk among the members of their family, that we will increase the number of people, when they are faced with that horrible tragedy, to in fact say yes, and we will save lives. That is why we set aside a week as National Organ Donor Week.

The ribbon I am wearing symbolizes that. One of our great pages who was out in the hallway a moment ago asked me, ''Senator DEWINE, what does that stand for?'' And I was able to tell her what this stands for. I think it is something that we want to share with all our fellow Americans.

The Postmaster General and his committee will issue a postage stamp next August to remind us all as we put postage on our letters, as we receive letters, of how important it is to encourage people to become organ donors. I appreciate, Mr. President and Members of the Senate, having an opportunity to talk about this issue this afternoon.

STARR INVESTIGATION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I have, with few exceptions, been very careful not to comment about the ongoing investigation, the Starr investigation, the independent investigation—however you want to characterize it. I have refrained from doing that for many reasons.

I want to speak this afternoon about a very limited aspect of that investigation. I speak as a former county prosecuting attorney. I bring, I guess, to the Senate floor today that particular perspective. This past week, there have been news stories—and again I emphasize ''news stories;'' we don't know whether it is true or not true—news stories about the possible subpoena into the grand jury here in Washington of Secret Service agents. That has been the report.

Before I go any further, let me say I don't know what the facts are. I don't know whether that is true or not true; nor do I know what the facts are underlying this investigation; nor do I know what Mr. Starr and his prosecutors have uncovered so far; nor, obviously, do I know what has occurred inside the grand jury. So my comments have to be qualified, and that fact has to be taken into consideration. My comments must be understood in that light, and they are given in that light.

Former President Bush was quoted in the Washington Post in what was described as a private letter—it was in the Washington Post of Thursday, April 23, yesterday. This was a letter that apparently was privately sent to, directly to, the Secret Service Director, Lewis C. Merletti. And the Washington Post quotes the letter from former President Bush as saying, in part, the following: '''I can tell you, sir, that I am deeply troubled by the allegations swirling around there in Washington and what all this might do to the office I was so proud to hold,'' Bush wrote Merletti.

Continuing the quote: ''Regardless of all that, I feel very strongly that the United States Secret Service agent should not be made to appear in court to discuss that which they might or might not have seen or heard.''

Mr. President, I hope that this issue about the potential subpoenaing of Secret Service agents into a grand jury, if it's true, to testify about things they observed involving the President of the United States would be resolved not in the courts and not by legislation. As a former prosecutor, I hope that this matter will be resolved by the sound, good judgment of the special prosecutor in this case. It should be resolved by the proper use, the measured use, the reasoned use of what we refer to as ''prosecutorial discretion.''

Mr. President, the prosecutor in our system has a unique role. I don't know of any other country where the prosecutor has quite this distinctive a role. The prosecutor, really, in many respects, is the most important player in the criminal justice system. It is because of prosecutorial discretion the prosecutor must decide whether the evidence that has been gathered is sufficient to even summon a grand jury, to even present a case to a grand jury. A prosecutor carries a very, very heavy burden. It is a burden that is not carried by the defense attorney, whose job it is to present the defense. It is a burden that is really not even carried by the judge, who is not the principal acting force because, under our system, nothing really happens until a prosecutor says it happens. Nothing goes into