

and to the people of Albania the high importance attached by the United States Government to this parliamentary election as a central factor in determining the future relationship between the United States and Albania.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

##### COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on "Examining the Current Legal and Regulatory Requirements and Industry Practices for Credit Card Issuers with Respect to Consumer Disclosures and Marketing Efforts."

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

##### COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, at 10 a.m., on Port Security.

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

##### COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on Tuesday, May 17 at 9:30 a.m. to consider pending calendar business.

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

##### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. to hold a hearing on the Commission on Africa report.

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

##### PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m., for a hearing entitled "Oil For Influence: How Saddam Used Oil to Reward Politicians and Terrorist Entities Under the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program."

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

##### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 17, 2005 at 2:30 p.m. to hold a business meeting.

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE CHANGE AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Sub-

committee on Clean Air, Climate Change, and Nuclear Safety be authorized to meet on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a closed hearing regarding nuclear security. Only Members and staff with Top Secret security clearance are able to attend. The Hearing will be held in S-407 in the Capitol.

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION, BORDER SECURITY, AND CITIZENSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, TECHNOLOGY, AND HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship and the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security be authorized to meet to conduct a hearing on "The Need for Comprehensive Immigration Reform: Strengthening Our National Security" on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 2:30 p.m. in Dirksen 226.

#### Witness List

Panel I: the Honorable Asa Hutchinson, Chair of the Homeland Security Practice, Venable, L.L.P., Former Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC; Margaret D. Stock, Assistant Professor of Law, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY; and Mark Reed, Border Management Strategies, LLC, Tucson, AZ.

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

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT SECURITY AND AGING

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Retirement Security and Aging, be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 10 a.m. in SD-430.

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

#### PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent Patty Skuster, a fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the proceedings.

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

#### HISTORIC HAVANA MEETING OF ASSEMBLY TO PROMOTE THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN CUBA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration, and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 140.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 140) expressing support for the historic meeting in Havana of the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba on May 20, 2005, as well as to all those courageous individuals who continue

to advance liberty and democracy for the Cuban people.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 140) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### S. RES. 140

Whereas on May 20, 1902, the Republic of Cuba obtained its independence;

Whereas in the spirit of Jose Marti, many of the future leaders of a free Cuba have called for a meeting of the Assembly of the Civil Society in Cuba, an organization that consists of over 360 dissident and civil society groups in Cuba;

Whereas, on May 20, 2005, the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba seeks to convene a historic meeting in Havana on the 103rd anniversary of Cuban Independence; and

Whereas the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba will focus on bringing democracy and liberty to the island of Cuba: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) extends its support and solidarity to the participants of the historic meeting, in Havana, of the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba on May 20, 2005;

(2) urges the international community to support the Assembly and its mission to bring democracy and human rights to Cuba;

(3) encourages the international community to oppose any attempts by the Cuban government to repress, punish, or intimidate the organizers and participants of the Assembly; and

(4) shares the pro-democracy ideals of the Assembly to Promote the Civil Society in Cuba and believes that the Assembly and its mission will advance freedom and democracy for the people of Cuba.

#### RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF TIM NELSON AND HUGH SIMS IN DETAINING ZACARIAS MOUSSAOUI

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 144, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 144) recognizing Tim Nelson and Hugh Sims for their bravery and their contributions in helping the Federal Bureau of Investigation retain Zacarias Moussaoui.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 144) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 144

Whereas Tim Nelson called the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Minneapolis Office at 8:30 am on Wednesday, August 15, 2001;

Whereas Hugh Sims called the FBI's Minneapolis Office at 9:30 am on Wednesday, August 15, 2001;

Whereas their calls set into motion the only United States criminal prosecution, so far, stemming from the attacks on our Nation on September 11, 2001;

Whereas on April 22, 2005, Zacarias Moussaoui pled guilty to 6 counts of conspiracy to commit terrorism on September 11, 2001; and

Whereas according to FBI officials, the actions of these 2 courageous and greathearted men may have saved thousands of lives and preempted a possible attack on the White House: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Tim Nelson and Hugh Sims should be recognized for their bravery and their contributions in helping the Federal Bureau of Investigation detain Zacarias Moussaoui;

(2) the United States is grateful to Tim Nelson and Hugh Sims for their heroism; and

(3) we, as a nation, should continue to follow their example as we fight the war on terror.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2005

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 18. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President and Members of the Senate, tomorrow morning the Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of Priscilla Owen to be U.S. circuit court judge for the Fifth Circuit. We will debate the nomination throughout the day tomorrow. I encourage Members who wish to speak on the nomination to come to the Senate during tomorrow's session.

I talked to the Democrat leader about the structure of the debate, and he will accommodate Members who desire to make statements. I encourage Senators to contact cloakrooms if they would like to speak on the nomination. We look forward to the debate on Priscilla Owen, and we hope all of the Members will participate.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask the Senate stand in adjourn-

ment under the previous order at the conclusion of the remarks of the distinguished Senator from Tennessee.

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

The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

ENERGY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the matter of giving the President an up-or-down vote on his judicial nominees or, more accurately, giving the country an opportunity for any President to have what every President has always had, a chance for the full Senate to have an up-or-down vote on his nominees, is a matter of great importance to our country. It is not the only business before the Senate. I would like to speak for a few minutes about natural gas prices and prices at the pump and how, at a time when China and India are buying up oil reserves around the world, we make sure that we have plenty of energy.

We spend, in this country, about \$2,500 per person on energy per year. We are about to have a big debate and discussion in the Senate about how much we spend on energy in the future. The Senator from Louisiana was here a few minutes ago. She made an excellent address. She summed up some of what happened today in the Senate Energy Committee. It was a very good meeting. At one time, virtually every member of the Senate Energy Committee was present, even though the purpose of the meeting was simply for us to make opening statements and to take initial action on a few relatively noncontroversial matters. That is because all of us understand how important it is.

It is also because Chairman DOMENICI and Ranking Member BINGAMAN, who are from New Mexico, have worked unusually hard in creating a framework so that we could have a significant piece of legislation. To those outside the Senate, that may sound like a lot of "inside baseball," but it is not. It is crucially important for the Republican majority to have listened, as Senator DOMENICI and the rest of us have over the last several months, to the views and attitudes of the Democratic minority and vice versa.

What is happening in the Energy Committee is no accident. Senator DOMENICI, at the beginning of the year, told the Republican members of the committee that as he looked back over the last session of Congress and saw our failure as a Congress to grapple with this question of high prices at the gas pump, high prices for natural gas, which are driving manufacturing jobs overseas, which are raising costs for farmers, which are making it hard to heat and cool our homes, he decided he wanted to operate in a little bit different way. So we have. In a way, it is a good thing that we didn't pass an energy bill last year because this one ought to be a lot better, a lot more aggressive, and a lot bolder.

The situation is more urgent. We have a better bipartisan framework, and we have learned a lot in the last year. Senator DOMENICI and Senator BINGAMAN have cochaired large conferences on coal and natural gas, so Senators themselves and key staff members could learn about the newest technologies and could understand the facts about what are a very complex set of considerations so we are better prepared.

I especially compliment the Senator from Louisiana. She mentioned the Americans Outdoors Act that she and I introduced together again yesterday. We introduced it in the last session of Congress. She has worked on major parts of it for the last 6 years. But basically it picks up a principle that was a part of President Reagan's Commission on Americans Outdoors which I chaired 20 years ago. It sought to create a steady stream of reliable funding for conservation purposes, specifically the Land and Water Conservation Fund, for city parks, for wildlife, for enjoyment by soccer players, by duck hunters, by walkers, by most Americans.

The idea is, if we are going to drill for gas and oil and use up some of our assets, we ought to take a part of that and use it and put it back as an asset. If there is an environmental burden, there ought to be an environmental benefit. That is a very simple idea.

She and I call it a "conservation royalty," and it is our hope to persuade a majority of the Senate, which we believe is conservation minded, that a majority of Americans—and we know there is a conservation majority in the United States—want us to help them have more places to enjoy themselves outdoors.

I look forward to working with her on that and the conservation royalty.

Mr. President, let me put the meeting Senator DOMENICI chaired in the Energy Committee in this context. A couple weeks ago, I had a private letter from GEN Carl Steiner. He is a real American hero. He was head of the special forces, a very brave man. He wrote to remind me that September 11 was a big surprise, but it should not have been. During the 1980s and 1990s, there were terrorist attacks on American interests around the world and in our country itself. If we had paid attention, General Steiner reminded me, we would not have been surprised on 9/11.

The next big surprise in this country will be to our pocketbooks. But it doesn't have to happen. If we pay attention, we already know we have the highest natural gas prices in the industrialized world. Three or 4 years ago, we had the lowest natural gas prices in the industrialized world. Today we have the highest. We know gas at the pump is at record levels for our country. We know China and India are increasing their demand for energy. We know that because of high prices, manufacturing jobs are moving overseas, farmers are taking a pay cut, and consumers are paying too much to heat and cool their homes.