

the west coast, especially California, on U.S. flag vessels. The export ban drastically reduces the market value of the oil and creates an artificial surplus on the west coast. This depresses the production and development of both North Slope crude and the heavy crude produced by small independent producers in California.

Our legislation would go a long way toward helping to revive the domestic oil industry, create American jobs, and preserve our U.S. tanker fleet. In June 1994, the Department of Energy released a comprehensive report which concluded that Alaskan oil exports would boost production in Alaska and California by at least 100,000 barrels per day by the end of the decade. The Department also concluded that exports of this oil on U.S. flag ships would help create as many as 25,000 new jobs and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in new State and Federal revenues. Our legislation would require the use of U.S. flag ships to carry the exports, meaning that, in general, the ships which carry this oil today will continue to do so in the future.

Mr. President, I emphasize that this legislation will increase jobs for Americans. It will help small businesses by permitting the oil market to function normally. It will help keep U.S. seamen employed in a U.S. tanker fleet. It will slow the decline of production of North Slope crude oil and encourage production in California, which will, in turn, help to salvage our energy security. Finally, it will help to eliminate an injustice which has unfairly discriminated against Alaska's citizens for too long. We urge the administration to join with us to help move this legislation as quickly as possible.●

FIRST WOMAN PILOT IN SPACE

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the achievements of Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Marie Collins, a native of Elmira, NY. On Friday, February 3, Lt. Col. Collins became the first woman to pilot a NASA space shuttle. As pilot on the *Discovery*, Col. Collins' main duty was to operate and maintain the engines, battery-powered hydraulic system, and electrical system. As we all saw, the *Discovery* rendezvoused with the Russian space station *Mir*, another historic achievement on this flight. The *Discovery's* 8-day flight is the first of eight missions NASA hopes to carry out this year.

Colonel Collins began taking flying lessons at the age of 19 while studying mathematics and science at Corning Community College, in Corning, NY. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in mathematics and economics from Syracuse University. After graduating in 1979 from Air Force undergraduate pilot training at Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma, she became an instructor on T-38 and C-141 aircraft. From 1986 to 1989 she taught mathematics at the Air Force Academy and continued as a

flight instructor. It was in 1990, while she was attending the Air Force Test Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base in California, that NASA selected her to be an astronaut.

Now Colonel Collins joins the ranks of other astronauts from New York such as Mario Runco, Jr., and Ronald J. Grabe. I congratulate her for this great milestone in her career, and wish her success in all future endeavors.●

THE SURGEON GENERAL NOMINATION

● Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as most of my colleagues know, I have generally held the view that a President is entitled to the nominees of his choice, and the Senate's constitutional role of advice and consent is an inherently limited one.

At least until the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Robert Bork, it seemed to me that matters of ideology and politics should not figure prominently into the Senate's calculation when it reviewed a President's nominees. That standard may have been irrevocably transformed by the still-painful memories of the Bork nomination, but I think it still applies to less consequential presidential nominations.

Now that the White House is embroiled in yet another embarrassing battle over one of its nominees, it is attempting to raise the specter of unfair, ideologically driven opposition. Caught in a self-made web of contradictory statements and blatant falsehoods, the administration is now asserting that concerns about Dr. Henry Foster, its nominee for Surgeon General of the United States, are motivated entirely by moral conservatism, all engineered by the "religious right."

This smokescreen is an insult to the intelligence of every Member of this body.

Since when are ACT-UP and the National Organization for Women considered rightwing zealots? Yet both these organizations have serious reservations about Dr. Foster's record. I imagine that the Democratic Senators who have expressed misgivings about this botched nomination would be amused to hear themselves described as hard-line conservatives—agents of the religious right, no less. Yet that is what the White House wants us to believe.

Perhaps a little history is in order to set the record straight.

Ever since the President's nomination of Dr. Foster as Surgeon General, we have been subjected to yet another round of White House credibility bingo. When Senator KASSEBAUM first asked about Dr. Foster's abortion practices, the White House responded that he had performed only one. Then Dr. Foster announced that the number was "under a dozen." Then 55 and 700 abortions popped up in public accounts of Dr. Foster's research on abortion-related procedures. Now, Dr. Foster has called bingo at 39.

One doesn't have to be against abortion to find it troubling that a nominee can't get his story straight about how many of them he has performed. After all, we're not talking about how many M&M's the man has eaten in his lifetime.

But the White House credibility game gets worse. Last weekend, it was disclosed that Dr. Foster also performed experimental sterilizations on severely retarded women. Leaving aside the serious issues of privacy rights and medical ethics which these incident raise, it is again troubling that neither the White House nor its nominee found them significant enough to mention at the outset. Perhaps they hoped no one would find out.

Mr. President, more is at issue here than one nominee. Because of this administration, we are struggling to salvage the public respect and dignity of the position of Surgeon General. Over the last 2 years, our Nation has been forced to sit and watch as this once-respected office was made an object of ridicule by the actions and remarks of the previous appointee. We cannot allow that to happen again—before or after a nominee is confirmed.

The White House just can't figure out that the business of the Surgeon General is public health—not politics. It is about fighting serious diseases and health risks, not promoting some left-wing, politically correct agenda. After the embarrassing controversies and ultimate removal of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, one would think the White House had finally learned its lesson. But this is one administration that never quite seems to get it.

The Nation's advocate for public health does not have a large staff at his or her disposal, or a large budget. Instead, the primary asset which a Surgeon General must use in protecting the public's health is the public's trust. If a Surgeon General is regarded as untrustworthy or ill-equipped by the public, that Surgeon General will be unable to perform his or her job in any meaningful way.

That is why the issue of credibility is so fundamental to this particular nomination. And on the question of credibility, this nominee has a serious problem—one which has been compounded by severe incompetence at the White House. As stated in a February 10 editorial in the *New York Times*:

Misleading statements by candidates for high position simply cannot be condoned * * *. [T]he Administration put out false information on the number of abortions performed by Dr. Foster * * *. [B]oth he and the Administration made it look as if their accounts were unreliable or designed to mask a more troubling history.

Rather than admit the plain facts, the administration now wants to turn this nomination into a holy war over abortion. That is a gross distortion of reality and an evasion of the White House's responsibility for its negligent handling of this nomination.