

time the position demanded of Admiral Johnson in his off-duty hours. I do not raise any issue of wrongdoing in this matter. But there is the inherent appearance of conflict of interest in serving as an active duty Admiral while appearing to endorse a commercial insurance service catering to other naval officers, by virtue of the fact that he accepted a paid position on its Board of Directors. I note that the Secretary of Defense has now disallowed this practice of serving on such boards for remuneration, but I think it does not show the kind of judgement I would expect of someone whose personal example must guide the Navy after an era with too many instances of misconduct and poor judgment on the part of Navy leaders.

I support the Navy. It involves tough, demanding work, with long periods of family separation serving in dangerous environments across the world. The spirit of courageous service and the expertise the Navy daily demonstrates in warfighting and in making ready for warfighting needs to be matched with better judgement in areas involving apparent financial conflicts of interest. These issues of character need to be addressed in a way that will serve as a sorely needed example in a society where standards and values seem to be slipping away from where they should be. This is the message I wish to convey in stating my opposition to this nomination. Let the record show that, if a roll call vote were taken on this nomination, I would be recorded as voting "no."

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the nomination of Adm. Jay Johnson to serve as Chief of Naval Operations.

As the chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, I have taken a very close look at Admiral Johnson's record of service, his leadership qualities, his vision for the Navy and his character to insure he will lead the Navy with distinction and honor into the next century.

Based upon all of the information provided to the Armed Services Committee and a private meeting in my office, I have concluded Admiral Johnson is the best person to assume the challenges and opportunities that appear on the horizon for the next Chief of Naval Operations.

Admiral Johnson has an exceptional record of performance as a naval aviator. During his career, Admiral Johnson has also served with distinction in numerous command positions such as Commanding Officer VF-84, Commander Carrier Air Wing One, Commander Carrier Group Eight, Commander Theodore Roosevelt Battle Group, Commander Second Fleet, Commander Striking Fleet Atlantic, and Commander Joint Task Force 120. In March, 1996 Admiral Johnson reported for duty as the 28th Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

A review of Adm. Jay Johnson's record indicates leadership qualities

that will serve him well as our Nation's next Chief of Naval Operations. I strongly support Admiral Johnson's confirmation to serve as the next CNO. I have every confidence Admiral Johnson will serve our Nation well in this important position.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I will only take a moment, if I may.

A TRIBUTE TO LEADERSHIP

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to pay a special tribute to the leadership of two Senators on the issues that we have just passed. There are a lot of people who often question what happens around here and the meaning of the life of being a Senator, and some people have, obviously, chosen to engage in a different life and move on, some out of frustration from what you can get done around here.

I think the example of my senior colleague, Senator KENNEDY from Massachusetts, on the legislation that we have just passed, both the health care bill and the minimum wage, is precisely what being a U.S. Senator is all about and why it is so important for people to be able to make a difference in the lives of our fellow citizens.

Both of these bills have happened because of many people, and Senator KENNEDY graciously mentioned many of those involved in it.

But I think all of us know that on day after day after day he was down here on the floor blocking, pushing tenaciously, advocating on behalf of people who do not often have a loud voice on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Millions of Americans will now earn more and millions of Americans will preserve more of their income as well as the fabric of their lives as a consequence of his extraordinary commitment to these two issues. I think the entire Senate should salute the meaning that he has given to being a Senator and a legislator in the course of these efforts.

For Senator KASSEBAUM, who will be leaving the U.S. Senate, I think that this health care bill would not have been on the floor, notwithstanding Senator KENNEDY's great efforts, had she not stood up and made it clear that this bill was going to find its moment on the floor of the U.S. Senate. She stood up to the leadership on her side and made that clear.

So this bill is a legacy to two Senators who have cared and remain steadfast in their sense of priorities and of public rectitude. I wanted to pay tribute to both of them for those efforts. And there are many, many Americans

whose lives will be better because of what has been achieved here today.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the Senator from Massachusetts has said it so well. I wish to associate myself with his remarks.

This is a very important day for all of us. But I cannot think of anyone who deserves more credit and more commendation for the tremendous work that it has taken to get us to this point of passage of essential health reform than the senior Senator from Massachusetts, Senator KENNEDY.

It has been my great pleasure to work with him, not only on this legislation but on so many other matters. In the view of many of us, he is a professional's professional. His dedication, his intelligence, his integrity, his willingness to compromise and work with Senators from both sides of the aisle on both sides of the issues has been proven throughout this effort to pass this health bill.

His persistence and perseverance to ensure that at some point in this session we would enact the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill is a tribute to him and to the extraordinary effort that he has put forth. So I want to commend him, commend his extraordinary staff and all of those responsible for bringing us to this point this afternoon.

As the distinguished junior Senator from Massachusetts indicated, the Senator from Kansas also deserves our thanks and a great deal of credit for working so diligently with Senator KENNEDY and all of us to bring about this very important accomplishment.

This is a day that will affect many, many millions of Americans, Americans who care deeply about their health and the health of their families, Americans who deeply need help to find and afford adequate health insurance. We are going to be able to help families do that in large measure, thanks to the accomplishments and to the extraordinary leadership demonstrated today by Senators KENNEDY and KASSEBAUM.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you, Mr. President.

HEALTH CARE AND MINIMUM WAGE LEGISLATION

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to say how pleased I am on behalf of the people of California that we have made such progress on raising the minimum wage tonight and passing a long overdue health care bill. The things that we did tonight are going to ripple throughout this country. There has been much discussion of the trickle-down effect. People who work hard at the bottom end of the economic ladder deserve dignity and an income to support their