

will lose a generation of consumers and gain a generation of dependents; an outcome that no one wants. I am confident that Alexis Herman's talent and experience will propel the efforts to improve retirement security forward and I would welcome the opportunity to work with her on this issue.

I would like to emphasize that I believe that one of Ms. Herman's greatest strengths is that she has formed partnerships with both business and labor in her many years working on employment issues. She understands the kind of investment business must make in human capital to improve productivity, increase profits, and create new jobs. She understands how difficult it is for small businesses to start up, and also how important these small businesses are to the economy as a whole. She understands that people want to work, and that they need the opportunity to be trained so that they can become productive members of the work force. She understands that we are all in this together.

Alexis Herman has spent many years serving the people and the country. I believe that there could be no better candidate for Secretary of Labor than Alexis Herman. She is an outstanding public servant. Her confirmation will make history; as Secretary of Labor she will make a difference in the lives of millions of Americans and workers throughout the world. I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Alexis Herman to be Secretary of Labor and I look forward to her rapid confirmation.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each.

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

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, March 17, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,363,306,532,631.89.

Five years ago, March 17, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,858,355,000,000.

Ten years ago, March 17, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,247,176,000,000.

Fifteen years ago, March 17, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,049,729,000,000.

Twenty-five years ago, March 17, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$429,286,000,000 which reflects a debt in-

crease of nearly \$5 trillion (\$4,934,020,532,631.89) during the past 25 years.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. PAUL CURRIE ON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, Senator Christopher S. "Kit" BOND and I would like to share with our colleagues in the U.S. Senate the example of a man who has been a model of citizenship, character, and service to humanity throughout his lifetime. The gentleman about whom I speak is Dr. Paul Currie, who will soon retire as pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Caruthersville.

On September 22, 1983, Dr. Paul Currie was present in this Chamber serving as Chaplain and offering the opening prayer. While this is historically an honor for any individual, we believe it was more of an honor for the U.S. Senate to have Dr. Currie serving in this chamber. Indeed, we believe the nearly four decades of service rendered to the community of Caruthersville, MO, serves as the real testimony to his compassion for his fellow man.

Since arriving in Caruthersville in 1958, Dr. Currie has always sought to reach beyond the lines of faith and unite all denominations in service to those in need. We can take faith that there are others who have been inspired by Dr. Currie and now live outside our great state, serving others.

Although Dr. Currie will be retiring, we will never forget his leadership. This veteran of the Korean war, this humble servant of God, community, and family, deserves to be recognized for his decades of service to his fellow man.

Senator BOND and I recognize today not only a lifetime of accomplishments by Dr. Currie, but also his inspiration of others. His example will inspire others to seek to enhance freedom, opportunity, and family life for generations to come.

In closing, I would like to quote a few words from Matthew 25:21, which I feel summarizes Dr. Paul Currie's many great deeds: "Well done, my good and faithful servant!"

We congratulate Dr. Currie on his retirement and extend him our best wishes for health and happiness for many years to come.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:29 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to the provisions of section 274(b)(2) of Public Law 104-264, the Speaker appoints to the National Civil Aviation Review Commission the following members from private life on the part of the House: Mr. John J. O'Connor of Pennsylvania and Mr. D. Scott Yohe of Washington, DC.

The message also announced that pursuant to the provisions of section

274(b)(2) of Public Law 104-264, the minority leader appoints to the National Civil Aviation Review Commission the following members from private life on the part of the House: Col. Leonard Griggs (retired) of Missouri and Mr. John O'Brien of Virginia.

At 6:50 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 924. An act to amend title 18, United States code, to give further assurance to the rights of victims of crime to attend and observe the trials of those accused of the crime.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measure was read the second time and placed on the calendar:

H.J. Res. 58. Joint resolution disapproving the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-1436. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA) plan; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-1437. A communication from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a request for supplemental relative to the National Transportation Safety Board; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-1438. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the notice concerning a retirement; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1439. A communication from the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of approval for a personnel management demonstration project for the Department of the Navy; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1440. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report on the Joint Demilitarization Technology Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1441. A communication from the Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Comptroller of the Currency, Administrator of National Banks, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Government Securities Sales Practices," (RIN3064-AB66) received on March 14, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1442. A communication from the Managing Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Advances to Nonmembers"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.