

to law, the Financial Plan and Budget for Fiscal Year 1998; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2300. A communication from the Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, a draft of proposed legislation relative to judicial review to protect the merit system; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2301. A communication from the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-79 adopted by the Council on May 6, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2302. A communication from the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, copies of D.C. Act 12-80 adopted by the Council on May 15, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2303. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report under the Inspector General's Act for the period October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2304. A communication from the Federal Co-Chairman, Appalachian Regional Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report under the Inspector General's Act for the period October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2305. A communication from the Chairman and General Counsel, U.S. Government National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report for the period October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2306. A communication from the Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law a report relative to the period ending March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2307. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, sixteen reports relative to the period of October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2308. A communication from the Public Printer, U.S. Government Printing Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the period from October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2309. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Management and Information, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, three rules including a rule entitled "Correction of Implementation Plans" (FRL5847-8, 5848-4, 5844-3) received on June 23, 1997; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2310. A communication from the Regulatory Policy Official, National Archives and Records Administration, a report of a rule relative to Reproduction Fee Schedule (RIN3095-AA71), received on June 17, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Relations.

EC-2311. A communication from the Regulatory Policy Official, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of a rule entitled "Domestic Distribution of United States Information Agency Materials in the Custody of the National Archives" (RIN3095-AA55), received on June 17, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2312. A communication from the Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the period of October 1, 1996 to March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-2313. A communication from the Inspector General, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law,

a report relative to the period October 1, 1996 through March 31, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KYL, and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 950. A bill to provide for equal protection of the law and to prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in Federal actions, and for other purposes; read the first time.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. KYL and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 950. A bill to provide for equal protection of the law and to prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex in Federal actions, and for other purposes; read the first time.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1997

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am pleased today to announce the introduction of the Civil Rights Act of 1997. President Clinton has asked for a national dialog on the issue of race in America. I applaud his efforts and welcome this opportunity.

Any discussion of race must begin with the basic principle that all are created equal. In fact, the Constitution, our Nation's most cherished document, mandates that all individuals receive the equal protection of the laws.

No one in our history understood the principle of equality better than the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Reverend King spoke eloquently about a time when people would be judged by the "content of their character" and not the "color of their skin." He, like so many of us do today, prayed for America to become a colorblind society.

This fundamental principle of equality is the foundation for the Civil Rights Act of 1997, which declares that: the Federal Government shall not discriminate against or grant a preference to any individual or group based on race, color, national origin, or sex.

The Federal Government must lead by example. We must promote a nation where our citizens are seen as individuals and not as mere members of a group. We must declare that the immutable traits of race and sex will not be relevant in Federal contracting and employment. Simply put, the Federal Government should not decide who gets the contract or who gets the job based on race and gender.

NO WINNERS IN A WORLD OF GOVERNMENT PREFERENCES

Throughout our nation's long history, we have established that certain immutable traits should be irrelevant

in life. Yet, in direct defiance of this principle, the Federal Government has engineered policies and programs to award valuable Federal dollars, jobs, and contracts to individuals based on the immutable traits of race and gender. In fact, last summer, the Congressional Research Service found that the Federal Government runs approximately 160 race and gender preference programs.

These preference practices and programs serve to divide, rather than unite. There are no winners in a world of government-sponsored set-asides and quotas.

First, Government preferences harm the very ones it seeks to help. Minorities who receive affirmative action preferences are often stigmatized and stereotyped. And, the stigma doesn't stop with those who receive the preferences. The cloud also unfairly hovers over the heads of all the other minorities whose accomplishments are not based on their race or gender, but purely on merit. All of this serves to reinforce group stereotypes at a time when we so desperately need to move beyond division.

Second, every time the Government grants a preference to one person based on race or gender, it discriminates against another based on race and gender. Discrimination by any other name is still discrimination. And, it still strikes at the very heart and soul of the person being discriminated against.

Let me put a face on this discrimination, as reported recently in the Wall Street Journal:

Michelle Doe is a 16-year-old girl and a straight-A student from a humble background in Corpus Christi, TX. She decided that she wanted to go to summer camp. The camp was called Camp Planet Earth, and was funded by the Federal Government's National Science Foundation.

Michelle applied and became a finalist. Her hopes were dashed, however, during the interview stage where it became clear that she wasn't eligible for the camp. Why wasn't she eligible? Was it her grades? No, she was a straight-A student. Was it her application form? Did she forget to answer a question on her application? No.

Michelle was denied the opportunity to go summer camp because of her race. You see, "the program was for 'minorities' only," and Michelle was not a minority.

In the words of the Wall Street Journal, "[w]hen Michelle went looking for some productive way to spend her summer, she soon discovered that the government divides people according to skin color."

Third, race and gender preferences create a downward spiral of division and animosity in our national melting pot. Government preferences put individuals into little group boxes and then pit them against each other. African-Americans against Hispanic-Americans against Asian-Americans against Caucasian-Americans.

Some have even gone so far to calculate the amount of money that one race owes to another. For example—and I promise that I'm not making this up—Richard America, a lecturer at the