

been working around the clock, and I am really indebted to them. I thank the distinguished chairman.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Senator for all his work.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GREGG. 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.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, in behalf of Mr. BINGAMAN, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Dr. Robert Simon on detail from the Department of Energy to his staff, during the pendency of Senate Resolution 98 or any votes occurring thereupon.

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

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, July 23, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,367,622,941,689.53. (Five trillion, three hundred sixty-seven billion, six hundred twenty-two million, nine hundred forty-one thousand, six hundred eighty-nine dollars and fifty-three cents.)

One year ago, July 23, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,171,664,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred seventy-one billion, six hundred sixty-four million.)

Five years ago, July 23, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,988,415,000,000. (Three trillion, nine hundred eighty-eight billion, four hundred fifteen million.)

Ten years ago, July 23, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,300,098,000,000. (Two trillion, three hundred billion, ninety-eight million.)

Fifteen years ago, July 23, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,086,341,000,000 (One trillion, eighty-six billion, three hundred forty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,281,281,941,689.53 (Four trillion, two hundred eighty-one billion, two hundred eighty-one million, nine hundred forty-one thousand, six hundred eighty-nine dollars and fifty-three cents) during the past 15 years.

APPROVAL OF GEORGE TENET AS DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, on Thursday evening, July 10, 1997, the Senate confirmed the nomination of George J. Tenet, of Maryland, to be the Director of Central Intelligence. I am delighted that the Senate has taken this action, based on the unanimous recommendation of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

George Tenet is well known to many members of the Senate, as he served with distinction as a staff member, and then Staff Director of the Senate Intelligence Committee during the service of Senator David Boren, of Oklahoma, when he was Chairman of that Committee. When Senator Boren retired, to take up the post of President of the University of Oklahoma, George became the Assistant to the President for Intelligence matters on the staff of the National Security Council, and served with great distinction in that capacity. As a result of that service, he was asked by Mr. John Deutsch to be the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence when Mr. Deutsch was appointed Director, and he has served as the Acting Director since January of this year when Mr. Deutsch returned to the private sector. Mr. Tenet has been praised on the floor by the current leadership of the Senate Intelligence Committee, by the Chairman, the distinguished Senator from Alabama, Mr. SHELBY, and the Ranking Democrat, the distinguished Senator from Nebraska, Mr. KERREY. They have praised Mr. Tenet's capabilities, judgment and character. I wish to express my own confidence in his leadership and I believe he has the capacity to bring the agency out of the unfortunate period that it has recently experienced which was tarnished by espionage scandals, and too rapid a turnover in the Office of the Director. He faces the challenge of bringing morale up, as well as restoring public and Congressional confidence in the intelligence organization of the nation. It is his responsibility to ensure that the Intelligence Community performs on the basis of the highest standards of integrity, and that the tremendous analytical, technical, and personnel resources that the community possesses, without rival in the world, are brought to bear on the often dangerous and difficult targets and areas of concern that constitute the intelligence agenda of the nation.

Mr. Tenet is already known as a strong leader with clear focus and a broad vision. I do not believe there is any recent Director of Central Intelligence that I have dealt with that brings as strong a knowledge of and constituency in the Senate as he enjoys. Intelligence in the confusing and shifting world of this post-cold war era is vital to both branches of the national government, and to be successful must enjoy the strong support of both of them. George is uniquely qualified to bring about a working consensus on the priorities, activities and budget of the intelligence community. He enjoys an extraordinarily deep reservoir of support here in the Senate, and I believe in the White House and the Intelligence Community as well. He is an outstanding choice, and the President is to be commended on his selection. I look forward to working with him to ensure that the highly dedicated, talented and courageous individuals who serve the nation silently day and night

across the globe enjoy the support that they need to carry out their duties. I wish him a long, fruitful and rewarding tenure as our new Director of Central Intelligence.

CNN'S COVERAGE OF THE SENATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE HEARINGS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, Cable News Network announced this week that it would provide live television coverage of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee hearings on campaign finance activities. But, Mr. President, their decision was based only on the fact that former Republican National Committee chairman, Haley Barbour, is scheduled to testify.

CNN has been suspiciously absent in its live coverage of the hearings, only allowing its viewers to see the opening statements of the chairman and the ranking member during the past 2 weeks of the hearings.

As I understand it, CNN based its decision to provide live coverage of Mr. Barbour's testimony on the judgment that he has celebrity status. Or, as CNN's own Washington Bureau chief, Frank Sesno, called them yesterday, "major players".

That is a decision more fitting of the program "Entertainment Tonight", instead of a network which prides itself on being the world's leader of news.

I am certain that I am not the only one disappointed by CNN's decision to forgo live coverage of the hearings. In fact, on CNN's own Internet web page, an overwhelming number of CNN's viewers are distressed over the network's failure to provide live coverage.

One viewer wrote, and I quote:

Although I am very pleased that you are carrying the campaign finance hearings through your Web site, I must say after all of the interminable O.J. hearings you carried live on CNN, why on God's earth aren't you carrying the hearings as well? I am very disappointed.

It was signed by Jim Merrick on July 16.

Mr. President, there has been such sufficient controversy over the CNN's lack of live coverage of the hearings—and even the lack of regular coverage of the hearings by the other television networks—that CNN devoted a substantial portion of its program "Inside Politics" on Tuesday, to discuss the uproar.

In a roundtable discussion, where journalists interview each other about what a great job they're doing, CNN's Judy Woodruff asked ABC's Hal Bruno about the difference of these hearings as compared to the Watergate and Iran-Contra hearings. Hal Bruno replied, and I quote:

Government was at a standstill in Washington as a result of Watergate and the whole country was immersed in it. And the same was true to a lesser degree with Iran-Contra. These were major stories of revelations of criminal wrongdoing.

Mr. President, Hal Bruno's comment is an outrage.