

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for a period of time not to exceed 5 minutes.

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

#### ICE STORM 1998

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, winter is only half over, and even though there has been some stormy weather here in the Nation's Capital, sections of the Northeast experienced the ice storm of the century, maybe the millennium, earlier this month. For 2 days straight, freezing rain, snow and sleet battered the Champlain Valley of Vermont, upstate New York and parts of New Hampshire, Maine and the Province of Quebec.

Tens of thousands of trees buckled and shattered under the stress and weight of several inches of ice that coated their branches. Power lines were ripped down by falling branches and the weight of the ice, leaving hundreds of thousands of people without electricity for days and even weeks. In fact, some are still without electricity. Roads were covered with ice and rivers swelled and overflowed with heavy rain. The crippling ice storm brought activity in the area to a grinding halt.

Just a few days after the storm, Senator LEAHY and I visited the hardest hit areas of Vermont. The storm's damages were the worst I have ever seen. In the Burlington area, 20 to 25 percent of the trees in that city were toppled or must be chopped down. Another 25 percent were damaged. The storm also destroyed sugar bushes and dropped trees across hiking trails and snowmobile trails.

Mr. President, local and State emergency officials acted quickly to help their fellow Vermonters and to assess the damage. Soon after the storm, the President declared six Vermont counties a disaster. The response from FEMA was impressive, and I thank Director James Witt for standing behind Vermont.

Vermonters rallied, with the help of the National Guard, led by Adjutant General Martha Rainville, to help themselves and their neighbors.

As the temperatures dropped below zero days after the storm, with thousands still without power, volunteer firefighters, police officers and National Guard troops and every able-bodied citizen came together working day and night to help feed, heat and care for the people in their community.

Hardest hit were dairy farmers. Already struggling to make ends meet due to low milk prices, the ice storm left farms without power to milk their cows. Cows need to be milked twice a day every day. At times, cows went for hours and even days without being milked. Fortunately one of the missions of the National Guard was to get power generators to farms and to keep them running so that farmers could milk their cows and keep their milk cool and preserve the health of the cows.

One unit of the National Guard became known as the "Mobile Milking Team"—or the MMT, as is usual in the military sector to have acronyms—by going farm to farm with their generators. However, despite the efforts to bring generators to farmers, for many the damage was already done. Because the margins are already so close for many farmers, the loss of a single milk check could mean staying in business or selling out.

Mr. President, the organized and volunteer responses to this disaster were incredible. The Vermont Petroleum Association, in conjunction with Mobile Oil and R.L. Vallee Petroleum, came to the aid of the farmers and the homeowners who were relying on their generators to run their businesses and to heat their homes by graciously donating 8,000 gallons of diesel fuel.

Stories of Vermonters helping Vermonters were commonly told throughout the disaster counties in the State. Utility companies worked long hours in the cold to help clear debris and restore power. Lines men and women came from as far away as Hawaii to help repair the damage. Let me tell you, the ones from Hawaii had an adventure they will never forget.

Vermonters also helped their neighbors to the north just across the Canadian border. Two weeks after the storm first hit, over 700,000 citizens in the Providence of Quebec were still without power and over 30,000 people were relying on meals from local food shelves. I teamed up with Cabot Creamery and H.P. Hood to help get 20,000 pounds of cheddar cheese, yogurt, and cottage cheese and 1,000 cases of water so necessary through the many restrictions at the border to help feed the Canadians who were driven from their homes. Many Vermonters helped by sending firewood and heating oil. Thousands of cords of wood were shipped over.

Mr. President, the citizens and trees of Vermont as well as upstate New York, Maine and New Hampshire have suffered enough from this storm. Local and State assistance will help communities and individuals get back on their feet. But Federal relief is needed to ensure that the disaster areas are not overwhelmed by their recovery.

I know I speak for Senator LEAHY and my colleagues from New York, Maine and New Hampshire when I say we all will do what we can to help. We look forward to the coming spring. But

before the arrival of warm weather, months of hard work to restore Vermont to its pristine beauty is needed. And we will all be helping, I assure you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I would like to check on the status. I believe that under a previous order I have 30 minutes reserved. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President.

#### BOSNIA

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I asked for 30 minutes today because I think it is very important that we address an issue that will be coming before the Senate in the very near future. It is an issue that has been brought about by the President's pronouncement that he wants to keep our troops in Bosnia in an undefined mission for an undefined time.

Mr. President, I think that would be a mistake for our country. I hope the Senate will focus on this issue. Indeed, I hope the American people will focus on this issue, because it is going to set a precedent that I think is very bad.

I do not want to pull up stakes and leave Bosnia without doing it in a responsible way. I think America has that responsibility. But in fact many of us have asked the President to lay the groundwork with an established and clear mission that has a chance to succeed and a mission that has a finite term so that both our allies and any enemies of our cause would know exactly what to expect from America. But in fact both our allies and our adversaries could not possibly know what to expect from America because in fact America has said it is going to leave twice and we have not left. In fairness, we have not left because we have not laid a proper base to leave.

What I am asking the President to consider and what I would ask the American people to consider is starting the process of an honorable and responsible approach to Bosnia which includes an honorable exit.

Mr. President, we are looking at a time when our readiness is being called into question. In fact, if you look at all of the responsibilities that America has in the world, I think we are spending too much on Bosnia and therefore putting in jeopardy the security of the United States in the future and the future of our ability to respond to other places where America may have to respond even unilaterally. And, Mr. President, that is not what we should be doing.

I think it is most important that America start with the issue of Bosnia,