

party and the Majority Leader. I appreciate the interest of the Chairman of the Committee in filling vacancies in his State and want to work with him. I ask only that the Senate be fair to these other nominees, as well. In my view, Ted Stewart is entitled to a vote on his nomination and should get it, but these other nominees should be accorded fair treatment, as well. Nominees like Judge Richard Paez, Justice Ronnie White, and Marsha Berzon should be voted on up or down by the Senate. We are asking and have been asking the Republican leadership to schedule votes on those nominations so that action on all the nominations can move forward.

Mr. EDWARDS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUNNING). The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

HURRICANE DAMAGE IN NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I want to speak for a moment today about the hurricane and report to my colleagues on what we have learned about the damage Hurricane Floyd has done in North Carolina.

As most folks know, North Carolina, unfortunately, has borne the brunt of hurricanes over the last few years. I think this is the fifth major hurricane to hit North Carolina since 1996. What we know thus far is that four people have died in traffic-related accidents as a result of the hurricane.

First, of course, our thoughts and prayers go to the families of those folks who have lost loved ones. Secondly, we have had enormous flooding. That flooding will continue, and there will be some period of time before that flooding recedes. Wilmington has received over 18 inches of rain in the last approximately 48 hours, and other areas of eastern North Carolina have received enormous amounts of rain during the same period of time.

We have also had enormous problems with crop damage and injury and damage to our farms, particularly in eastern North Carolina. These farmers are already struggling and suffering and having a difficult time making ends meet. Now they have received a blow, which may very well be a death blow, to the crops they still have in the fields. As I said, these are people who are already teetering on the edge. Now these farmers and their families must deal with the damage that Hurricane Floyd has caused their farms.

We have also had roads washed out in eastern North Carolina. We know we have power outages all over eastern North Carolina, and we have and will continue to have enormous problems with increased erosion as a result of this hurricane hitting the coast of North Carolina.

Let me say, first, that I have been in regular contact with Governor Jim Hunt, the Governor of North Carolina, since this hurricane began to approach the southeastern coast of the United States in order to help prepare for what we knew was inevitable—that this would do great damage for our State. In addition, I have been in constant contact with mayors from eastern North Carolina whose counties have been hit the hardest by this hurricane. Yesterday afternoon, I spent some time at the FEMA headquarters with James Lee Witt looking at the FEMA operation—looking at what they were doing to prepare for the onslaught of this hurricane and their preparations for going in after the hurricane and dealing with destruction created by the hurricane.

I have to say, first of all, it was an incredibly impressive operation. James Lee Witt has done an extraordinary job of turning FEMA around. They are well prepared and well organized. I strongly suspect they will respond quickly and efficiently to the destruction this particular storm creates.

In addition to that, I talked to the Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Slater, about the problems with roads and roads being washed out, keeping in mind that North Carolina has just recently been hit with Hurricane Dennis, which washed out Highway 12 up on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, and now it has been hit again by a larger, more serious hurricane. We are going to have enormous problems with our roads in eastern North Carolina.

I have also spoken with Secretary Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture, because of our concern for the farmers in North Carolina. The tobacco farmers and the farmers of all kinds in eastern North Carolina are going to suffer enormous crop damage as a result of the devastation created by this hurricane.

As I mentioned earlier, these are folks who are already struggling, already suffering, and already under enormous financial stress. And now here comes Hurricane Floyd putting what for many of them, I am afraid, will be the final nail in the coffin. These folks are going to need our help.

The bottom line is that while this hurricane has now moved out of North Carolina, it has created enormous damage. I think the devastation will be extraordinary once we have had a chance to go in and assess exactly what the damage has been.

As we go through the process of passing these various appropriations bills that the Senate is working very diligently on, I have asked my colleagues to keep in mind that the people of North Carolina, including the farmers of North Carolina, are desperately going to need help. They need help quickly, and they need that help getting to them in time to respond to the devastation that Hurricane Floyd has created.

I ask my colleagues in the Senate to keep that in mind. We will be in reg-

ular touch with the folks involved in appropriations in order to make them aware of the specific problems that we have in North Carolina.

I also add that this injury and this damage is not limited to North Carolina. I am absolutely certain there is damage in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. As the storm moves north through Virginia and Maryland, I anticipate there will also be damage in those States.

I ask my colleagues not only from those States but all of my colleagues in the Senate to be prepared to respond and respond quickly to a devastating blow that has been dealt to my State of North Carolina and to the surrounding States that have been hit by Hurricane Floyd.

Finally, I would like to say just a word about the people of North Carolina and their response to this hurricane.

The people of North Carolina, fortunately, are very experienced in dealing with hurricanes. They have been hit time and time again. I have to say we have gotten way more than our fair share of hurricanes and hurricane damage. The response of folks in eastern North Carolina has been heroic. It was absolutely extraordinary to watch their discipline and preparation when they saw the storm coming, their organized and coordinated effort to evacuate the coast when those evacuations were necessary, and their preparation for what they knew was inevitable, which was that Hurricane Floyd was going to come through eastern North Carolina and wreak havoc and devastation.

I am so proud of the people of North Carolina who have responded so heroically and in such a well-organized way to what they knew was coming, and I expect that response will continue over the next weeks and months as we begin the efforts of cleaning up the devastation that has been created by Hurricane Floyd.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 20 minutes as in morning business.

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

OPERATION ALLIED FORCE: LESSONS RELEARNED

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, over the course of the next several months, countless "lessons learned" studies assessed Operation Allied Force will be conducted by NATO authorities as well as by our armed services, our own Committees here in Congress, and their counterparts found among our NATO allies.

What I wish to do today is to approach this matter of "lessons learned" from the vantage point of one who regards the NATO Alliance to be a vital