

Mr. LOTT. I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Nevada. I also note with regard to the last paragraph, we do not anticipate there will be a need to vitiate the agreement with regard to the Chao agreement. It is just that we have not received all of the papers yet. We do not expect there to be any problem, but because we do not have it all, it was necessary to put this in.

Also—and I appreciate Senator REID's comments—it is our anticipation to proceed, after these three stacked votes Tuesday afternoon, on the debate with regard to the Attorney General nomination, and it is at least my hope, and I believe everybody's hope, that we will be able to complete action on that nomination next week.

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

Mr. LOTT. In light of this agreement then, the next votes will occur back to back at 2:45 p.m. on Tuesday next.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now be in a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

NOMINATIONS

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to comment on several of the nominations on which we have voted in the last few days.

I am pleased the Senate is acting responsibly and quickly to put the President's cabinet in place. While I am sure I will not always agree with everything proposed by the nominees we have confirmed, I stand ready to work with them toward our common goal of the United States's best interest.

I especially want to welcome Governor Tommy Thompson, of my State of Wisconsin, to his new position as Secretary of Health and Human Services. I had the honor of presenting the Governor at his hearings before the Senate Finance and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committees. As I said there, the Administration is truly fortunate to have a man of his energy, creativity, and intelligence in this extremely important position.

I also want to comment on some of the other nominations on which the Senate has already acted.

I am pleased to lend my support to the nomination of General Colin L. Powell to be Secretary of State. There are many foreign policy challenges facing the next Administration including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, our peacekeeping commitments abroad, instability in the Middle East and in other hot spots, and the continued evolution of our relationships with Russia and China. I am confident that General Powell brings a wealth of experience, a formidable in-

tellect, and a level head to the challenges ahead. I look forward to working with Secretary Powell in forging a truly bipartisan foreign policy.

I am also pleased with President Bush's decision to appoint Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense. He is an experienced voice on defense issues, and one that the Congress has come to rely on for outside analysis. He recently addressed the threat of ballistic missiles in a special report to Congress that now shapes much of the debate on ballistic missile defense. His years of public service and expertise will give him the credibility inside the Pentagon to make the tough choices that face the new administration, and they will face many. I feel confident that Secretary Rumsfeld is qualified to help the President shape our armed forces to meet the evolving threats of the new century.

And finally, I support the nomination of Rodney Paige to be the Secretary of Education. Dr. Paige has received overwhelming praise since his nomination was announced, and in my opinion, there is good reason for that. He understands the need to change the system when the old programs aren't working like they should. He is willing to work with all sides—from teachers to parents to principals to school board members. And he brings with him to Washington an important lesson from his time in Houston: If you set high standards for students and teachers, and require them to meet them, they will strive to succeed.

Mr. President, there are many worthy nominees who deserve comment and support, but I will reserve further remarks until we engage later in the year in what I hope will be bipartisan legislating.

NOMINATION OF ANTHONY PRINCIPI

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate unanimously approved the nomination of Anthony Principi to be President Bush's Secretary of Veterans Affairs. In my judgment, Secretary Principi is supremely qualified to take on the challenges that will face the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and I fully supported his confirmation.

Secretary Principi will bring a wealth of experience in a broad-range of capacities pertaining to veterans and veterans health to his work at the VA. A graduate of the United States Naval Academy and decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, Secretary Principi is personally aware of our veterans needs and concerns. He was appointed deputy secretary of Veterans Affairs by President George Bush in 1989 and served as Acting Secretary during 1992—providing him with a working knowledge of the VA's structure and an understanding of how to make the system work for our veterans. Most recently, Secretary Principi served as president of a California-based health care contractor. Through a blend of public and private service, Secretary Principi has assembled an impressive track record and compiled the type of

practical experience that will serve him well at the VA.

I was pleased to hear during Secretary Principi's nomination hearing that he plans to focus on veterans benefits, among other concerns. I agree strongly with this priority. Through dedicated service and sacrifice, generations of veterans and their families have answered the call to serve this nation in her darkest hours and most shining moments alike. They have kept the solemn covenant established by honored patriots past and have earned the gratitude of a grateful nation.

With 139 facilities serving 3.5 million veterans and survivors, however, the task at hand is a daunting one. While broadly speaking, the VA provides high-quality health-care and services to our veteran community, ensuring that such a standard is maintained requires constant attention and a firm guiding hand. I am confident that Secretary Principi has the leadership and managerial skill, and perhaps more importantly, the compassion, to serve well our veterans and their families, as they have served our country.

I commend President Bush for putting forth such a quality and qualified nominee. Secretary Principi will be a credit to this Administration. I am pleased that the Senate has moved emphatically to confirm him as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. I look forward to working closely with him on issues of mutual concern, and I wish him well.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am very pleased to support the nomination of Anthony Principi to serve as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Principi is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, and a combat-decorated veteran who commanded a River Patrol Unit in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War.

Since completing his service in the U.S. Navy, Mr. Principi has had a distinguished career in public service serving as staff director of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs for several years until he was appointed Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs by President Bush in 1992. Now, as Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Principi will have responsibility for a \$48 billion budget in the Federal Government's second largest department, coordinating a nationwide system of health care services and benefits to serve America's more than 25 million veterans.

As we begin the 107th Congress, there are few challenges we face more important than ensuring that America's veterans receive the health care and benefits that they so justly deserve. The challenges include providing adequate funding for veterans health care services, ensuring access to VA health care for homeless veterans and veterans living in rural areas, providing timely access to specialized medical care, and responding to the many concerns of Persian Gulf Veterans as well as veterans with service in the Balkans. Secretary Principi, as a combat veteran in

Vietnam, is well aware of these challenges. He has been a strong advocate on behalf of veterans during his service in the Senate and as Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

As ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, I look forward to working with Secretary Principi to ensure that the FY 2002 budget for veterans health care services and benefits are sufficient to meet the growing needs of our veterans population, particularly our aging veterans. We must also make certain that the Department of Veterans Affairs is equipped to meet the many new challenges that are emerging as a result of the activities of our military personnel in peacekeeping operations and more non-traditional assignments around the world. I congratulate Secretary Principi on his appointment and commend him for his commitment to serve our Nation's veterans. No individual has a more solemn responsibility than the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

RETIREMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL DRENNAN A. CLARK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an outstanding individual, patriot and friend, Major General Drennan A. "Tony" Clark from my home state of Nevada. Major General Clark is retiring from the Nevada National Guard after more than 40 years of loyal and dedicated service.

Major General Clark first joined the Nevada National Guard as a young photo lab technician in 1960, and eventually rose to Adjutant General, the highest position in the Nevada Guard—a position he held for 14 years, a remarkably long time. It speaks volumes of the respect that General Clark commands in Nevada that he was re-appointed to that position four times, by Governors from both parties.

During his 14 years as Adjutant General, Tony Clark led the Guard through many upheavals, ranging from floods, to earthquakes, to civic emergencies, to the war on drugs. Units of the Nevada Guard fought in the Persian Gulf War. Hundreds of Nevadans owe their lives to the timely assistance of the Guard in all manner of emergencies.

The face of Nevada has changed dramatically since General Clark first assumed command—the state's population has nearly tripled in the last decade alone, small towns have exploded into cities, and Las Vegas has become an attraction to the world—and the Guard's military role has also shifted, from reconnaissance, to airlift, to Medevac, to tank-busting—but through it all, Tony Clark kept the Guard constantly vigilant, ready and able to answer any call. General Clark has led the Guard so capably and for so long that it will be hard to imagine the Nevada Guard without him in command.

General Clark grew up in Reno, Nevada and graduated from Bishop Manogue High School in 1955. He stud-

ied political science at the University of San Francisco, joined the Nevada Air National Guard shortly after graduation, and served in the Guard while attending law school.

After receiving his law degree in 1964, he began a budding career as a lawyer. But fate had something different in mind, and in 1968, young Second Lieutenant Clark was called to active duty during the Pueblo Crisis and served as the Commander of the 6314th Supply Squadron at Suwon Air Base and Oson Air Base, Korea.

He was released from active duty in 1969, and returned to Nevada and his career as a rising young lawyer. But a few years later, he sacrificed what in all probability would have been a distinguished and lucrative career in the legal profession to accept assignment as the Nevada Guard's Staff Judge Advocate, where he handled the Guard's legal matters, and a few years later was appointed the State Judge Advocate. After only a year as the State Judge Advocate, Tony Clark was appointed Assistant Adjutant General in 1984, and then became the acting Adjutant General in 1986. In 1987, he was formally appointed Adjutant General and held that position until his retirement last week.

During his tenure as the Adjutant General for the state of Nevada, General Clark was responsible for enhancing the National Guard nationally and within the state. General Clark was appointed by the Secretary of the Air Force to the Air Reserve Forces policy committee. Additionally, he served on the Reserve Forces Policy Board, as chairman of the Advisory Board to Air National Guard Professional Military Educational Center, and chairman of the National Guard Bureau Executive Environmental Quality Board. In each of these critical and prestigious assignments, General Clark played a key role in enriching and highlighting the National Guard.

General Clark's military awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal with two bronze oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one silver oak leaf cluster, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with four bronze oak leaf clusters, Air Reserve Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with one silver and three bronze oak leaf clusters, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with one silver hourglass device, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with one bronze star, and many others.

Yet in spite of his long list of accomplishments and the many hours he

spent working to improve the Guard and ensure the safety of Nevada, Tony Clark never lost sight of the things that are truly important in life—his wife Andrea, his six children, and his many friends.

Many years ago, General Clark sacrificed a lucrative career as a lawyer to serve the people of his state and his country, and we are all better for his choice. And although he retired from the Guard last week and could have done many things with his career, Tony Clark chose to remain in public service, as Nevada's Solicitor General, where he will continue to serve the people of Nevada.

Mr. President, on behalf of myself and all of Nevada, I want to thank Tony Clark for his long years of sacrifice and service in the Nevada National Guard, and to wish him the best in his new career.

PIPELINE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I am pleased to have co-sponsored a bill to modernize our Nation's pipeline safety programs. The issue of our country's pipeline safety came to the forefront after tragic explosions in Bellingham, Washington, and later, in my own state of New Mexico.

Just after midnight, August 19, 2000, an El Paso Natural Gas pipeline exploded on the Pecos River near Carlsbad, New Mexico. Twelve members of an extended family were camping near the explosion, which sent a 350 foot high ball of flame into the air. Six of the campers died instantly, and the remaining six later died from their horrific injuries.

Pipelines carry nearly all of the natural gas and about 65 percent of the crude oil and refined oil products. Three primary types of pipelines form a network of nearly 2.2 million miles, 7,000 miles of which lie throughout New Mexico.

Last Congress, the Senate unanimously passed similar legislation. Our colleagues in the other Chamber voiced serious concerns regarding that bill. Many of their criticisms related to the Office of Pipeline Safety, the Office within the Department of Transportation charged with keeping our Nation's pipelines safe. Unfortunately, the Office of Pipeline Safety has had a poor history of regulation and enforcement. It is true that the Office has traditionally been slow to act.

That said, we should not allow a former executive agency's failures to dictate our failure to act in accordance with our legislative mandate. In that regard, I intend to discuss the issue with our current Secretary of Transportation nominee, Mr. Mineta. I am confident that he will address our concerns regarding the Office of Pipeline Safety's record of enforcement with the new Director of the Office when he or she is nominated by our new President.