

Department of State; and Richard Newcomb, Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury.

Panel II: Curtis Kamman, Former United States Ambassador to Colombia, Department of State, Washington, DC; Michael Shifter, Adjunct Professor and Program Director, Inter-American Dialogue, Center for Latin American Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington, DC; R. Grant Smith, Former United States Ambassador to Tajikistan, United States Department of State, Washington, DC; and Martha Brill Olcott, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC.

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that a member of my staff, Bill Holmberg, be given floor privileges by the Chair.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Phil Ward be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the day.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 2175

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding that H.R. 2175, which has been received from the House, is now at the desk. Therefore, I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2175) to protect infants who are born alive.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2002

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 14; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of the energy reform bill under the previous order entered.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment following the statement of the Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Delaware.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOMINATIONS

Mr. BIDEN. Madam President, as my colleagues know and the staff knows, it must be important to me to come to the floor after there are no votes and miss a train home to Delaware. As I think I can verify, there probably has not been 10 times in my career that I have spoken after there are no votes, so I apologize for keeping the staff here and keeping folks in, but this is of consequence to me and my State.

My good friend—and we all say that; we use that phrase, and he really is a good friend not only politically but personally—JOHN MCCAIN came to the Chamber and asked the rhetorical question of who has a hold on two nominees for the Department of Transportation. He does not like secret holds.

He was being very polite because he did not want to point out what he already knew: That I have a hold on those two nominees.

I have been a Senator for 29 years. I have never, not one single time but this, in my entire career ever put a hold on any nomination, legislation, or anything on the Senate floor. I know Senator MCCAIN understands holds. He has put holds on Department of Transportation nominees before, but I agree with him, the holds should be made public.

I wish to publicly acknowledge what I thought everyone knew. I am the guy who has put the hold on those two nominees. Madam President, let me explain to you why, very briefly.

After September 11, Congress moved very quickly and effectively to provide necessary funds for aviation security improvements and ultimately for port security improvements. I supported those bills wholeheartedly, as did almost all of my colleagues.

At the time, however, it was my understanding, given to me in the Chamber of this body and, I believe—and I am not suggesting she is any part of this—but I believe the Presiding Officer will recall, as every other Senator

will, there was a commitment that there would also be a move to quickly address a similar and equally vexing problem of railroad security.

Passenger rail is a critical component of our national transportation infrastructure as, I might add, September 11 so vividly has shown. Imagine what would have happened if we had no passenger rail system September 11 when the skies shut down. And yet all of those passengers continue to travel at their risk. They continue to ride in poorly lit, poorly ventilated, and poorly maintained tunnels, some of which were built as long ago as 1879.

They remain serious targets for acts of terrorism. There is no ventilation. There is no lighting. There is no escape. There are more people, right now as we speak, in tunnels on railcars underneath New York City than in seven 747s completely filled. We have done nothing to improve the security and safety of the people who are riding these rails right now.

Imagine what happens if a bomb, a chemical weapon, or a biological weapon is dispersed in that confined area? I might point out to my friends, they may remember a little over a year ago there was a fire in the Baltimore Tunnel. It shut down Baltimore. It not only shut down the rail, it shut down the south end of Baltimore for a long time.

My frustration is reaching the boiling point. Because of these security threats, immediately following the attacks of September 11, I attempted to authorize funds for rail security improvements as part of the aviation bill. Because of the objections raised, however, I then went to Senators HOLLINGS and MCCAIN, and instead, based on their commitment, which they kept, they offered to pass a separate bill in the Commerce Committee authorizing rail security monies. True to their words, on October 17, they did just that. S. 1550 authorized \$1.8 billion for passenger rail security improvements, even though Amtrak had originally requested \$3.2 billion; \$1.8 billion was a barebones minimum the committee believed it would provide for essential security upgrades in safety improvements, mainly a billion of that to improving the tunnels and the safety in the tunnels against threatened attacks.

The other \$800 million went to having dogs on trains sniffing bombs, and additional police. Yet here we stand 6 months later, and we still do not have the money for rail security. I still do not even have a vote on rail security.

This completely defies logic. The reason is because a number of my colleagues have objected secretly, not publicly, to S. 1550, and they have put holds on the bill. This despite all it will do to safeguard our passenger rail system and despite the backing of the Commerce Committee.

Remember, this other stuff we did immediately did not even go through