

Just this morning I had a notice from a friend of mine who told me this:

Presently, there are only two steel mills in the world that are capable of delivering the pipe needed for our pipeline as it is presently designed. The design will require one-half of the world's capability to produce pipe during the period of its construction. If the producers start work on the project this year, it would take until 2010 or 2011 for gas to actually reach the U.S. market. There are over 18 months of work required to complete enough of the design and permitting prior to ordering the pipe. For orders placed in 2003, the pipe materials would be delivered in the year 2007.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND, TARJA HALONEN

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting to the Senate the distinguished President of the Republic of Finland, President Tarja Halonen.

Mr. President, for the time between when Senator STEVENS relinquishes the floor and the time the vote starts, I ask unanimous consent that our guests be granted the privilege of the floor during the vote so they can meet Senators.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask that the unanimous consent request be amended so that I might make a statement on the nominee who will be voted on at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. HELMS. Absolutely.

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

Mr. STEVENS. I ask unanimous consent I regain the floor after the vote.

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

The Senator from Wyoming.

NOMINATION OF TERRENCE L. O'BRIEN

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Carolina and the Senator from Alaska for their courtesies. I appreciate this opportunity to speak on behalf of the circuit court judge who we will be voting on at 5:30 p.m.

I am so pleased we are having this vote. I have known Terry O'Brien both personally and professionally for over 22 years. I am proud of my association and friendship with him. It is not often that we get to vote on a close friend in this body.

In a few minutes, I and my colleagues will have the opportunity to vote to confirm Terry O'Brien to serve on the Tenth Circuit. The Senate Judiciary Committee recognized that Terry is highly qualified to serve in this position when it unanimously voted him out of committee. While the committee members had an opportunity to review Terry's accomplishments and get to know him during his hearing, I would

like to share some information about Terry with the rest of my colleagues.

After Terry served as a captain in the U.S. Army and worked as an attorney at the Division of Land and Natural Resource in the Department of Justice, he came back to Wyoming to practice law in Buffalo at the law firm of Omohundro & O'Brien. Then in 1980, he was appointed to be a district judge for the Sixth Judicial District in Wyoming located in Gillette, WY. As a result, he moved to Gillette where he remained for 22 years.

Terry continued to be our judge until he retired from that position 2 years ago. As mayor of Gillette, I had an opportunity to observe what the local district judge just down the street from my business was doing in the community. Believe me, those who came before him let me know what they thought, too. What I saw and people observed is that Terry had a no-nonsense, fair approach to the law and to the parties involved. He made his decisions based squarely on the law, the facts, and careful consideration, and he explained his reasons for what he was doing. Even if you were the party or the attorney who lost, you always knew where he stood because he took the time to be certain to explain his reasoning and rationale to you.

My other observation is that Terry ran his court effectively, professionally, and efficiently. He never wasted anyone else's time nor let any of the parties or their attorneys waste each other's time, either.

As to his decisions, they are not full of legal jargon or unnecessary words. Instead, he explains the law so everyone can understand it. To me, this makes him a very good judge and an exceptional writer.

On a personal level, we have known each other over 22 years. We were in the same community for that time and watched each other's children grow up. Terry always cared about our community and made many contributions to it. One notable contribution is the 13 years he served as the president and a member of the board of directors of the Campbell County Health Care Foundation.

But the most important thing I want to stress is the fact that I have gotten to know Terry both professionally and personally. I can give my personal assurance that our country will benefit from his many talents. I am confident he will be a stellar judge for the Tenth Circuit Court, and I am proud to make this recommendation to my colleagues in the Senate.

He began his service to our country as a captain in the U.S. Army, and I hope you will help him to continue his service as a U.S. Tenth Circuit Court judge.

I thank the Chair for this opportunity to talk about my friend, Terry O'Brien.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I know we are close to the voting time. I recommend to all of my friends in the Senate that we approve Judge O'Brien. Certainly, no one has been as qualified, as my colleague pointed out.

In the appointment process, we had a committee sort through the judge prospects in our State, and they came up with Judge O'Brien as the judge they thought would be best qualified. I thank the committee for moving this matter along.

He is one of the few circuit judges who has been approved, and we certainly look forward to his approval by the full Senate.

Again, I recommend him without any question to be a circuit court judge in the Tenth Circuit.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I repeat for emphasis that we have the President of Finland in our midst today. She will be here to meet the Senators as they come in to vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair welcomes our guests.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF TERRENCE L. O'BRIEN, OF WYOMING, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will go into Executive session and proceed to the consideration of the nomination of Terrence L. O'Brien, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Terrence L. O'Brien, of Wyoming, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the Senate is voting on the 43rd judicial nominee to be confirmed since last July when the Senate Judiciary Committee reorganized after the Senate majority changed. With today's vote on Judge Terrence O'Brien to the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, the Senate will confirm its eighth circuit court judge in little more than 9 months, since I became chairman this past summer.

The Senate is making progress on judicial confirmations. Under Democratic leadership, the Senate has confirmed more judges in the last 9 months than were confirmed in 4 out of 6 full years under Republican leadership. The number of judicial confirmations over these past 9 months—43 exceeds the number confirmed during all 12 months of 2000, 1999, 1997 and 1996.

During the preceding 6½ years in which a Republican majority most recently controlled the pace of judicial confirmations in the Senate, 248 judges were confirmed.

Some like to talk about the 377 judges confirmed during the Clinton administration, but forget to mention that more than one-third were confirmed during the first 2 years of the