

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COLEMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### NOMINATION OF SECRETARY GORDON ENGLAND

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise tonight in strong support for the nomination of Secretary Gordon England to be the first Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security. I thank the majority leader, in cooperation with the Democratic leader, for promptly scheduling the Senate's consideration of this very important nomination.

President Bush nominated Secretary England on January 7. The Governmental Affairs Committee, which I am privileged to chair, held a hearing on his nomination last Friday, and today, I am pleased to report, the committee unanimously voted to discharge the nominee from consideration. The committee thoroughly considered the nomination at a hearing on Friday. In addition, Secretary England responded to extensive prehearing questions about a wide variety of issues.

I have no doubt, based on my review of the record, and my conducting of the hearing, that Secretary England is extraordinarily well qualified for this position. In fact, it is difficult for me to think of two more qualified Americans than Tom Ridge and Gordon England to head up this vital new Department.

Secretary England currently serves as Secretary of the Navy. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have gotten to know him well in that capacity. I have enormous regard for his ability. He has held that position since May of 2001.

Prior to becoming our Secretary of the Navy, Gordon England had an impressive portfolio of management experience. He served as executive vice president of General Dynamics Corporation, and he previously served in various executive positions at a number of General Dynamics divisions. His experience in both the public and the private sectors will provide him with exactly the experience and expertise needed to oversee the merger of some 22 agencies and 170,000 Federal employees that will be transferred into this new Department.

As preparation for being Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, it would be difficult to beat a tour as Secretary of the Navy. The Department of the

Navy has a budget of over \$100 billion. It consists of 372,000 active duty and 90,000 Reserve sailors, 172,000 active duty and 40,000 Reserve marines.

In addition, as Secretary of the Navy, Gordon England has overseen a civilian workforce of nearly 190,000 employees. That number, I note, exceeds the number in the workforce of the new Department. We often talk about what a management challenge it is going to be to the leaders of this new Department to oversee 170,000 civilian employees. As Secretary of the Navy, Gordon England has overseen a civilian workforce that exceeds that number, not to mention the sailors and marines under his jurisdiction.

Secretary England's extensive experience in managing large, complex operations in both the public and private sectors will serve him well in his new position. I have been very fortunate to have had the pleasure of working with him when he was Secretary of the Navy, and I look forward to continuing our partnership in his new capacity.

I urge my colleagues to support confirmation of this important nomination. The new Department of Homeland Security opened its doors officially last Friday, and it is critical that we get the top management positions filled as quickly as possible.

Mr. President, I do hope this nominee will be approved unanimously.

I yield the floor.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today to draw attention to an alarming issue—the growing number of premature births. According to data released by the National Center for Health Statistics, the percentage of babies born prematurely—birth at less than 37 completed weeks of gestation—has risen to nearly 12 percent, the highest level ever reported in the United States. In 2001 alone, more than 476,000 babies were born prematurely in the U.S. Unfortunately, in my own State of Tennessee, 14 percent of births are preterm. There cannot be a clearer wake-up call for us.

Today, the March of Dimes is launching a national, five-year prematurity awareness, education, and research effort aimed at preventing prematurity, the leading cause of infant death in the first month of life. I cannot imagine a better organization to take on this serious problem. Over its 63-year history, the March of Dimes has conducted two highly successful national campaigns—the first focused on preventing polio and the second involved educating the public and health providers on the role of folic acid in preventing neural tube defects. My friend, former Health and Human Services Secretary, Dr. Louis Sullivan, is the honorary chair of this campaign, and I salute him for his continued commitment to the public's health.

I'm pleased to be able to salute and encourage this new campaign which holds the promise of significantly reducing the incidence of premature birth throughout the country. Babies

born prematurely are more likely to face serious multiple health problems following delivery: a tragedy for families but one which may be preventable.

Since coming to the Senate, I have focused on disparities in healthcare quality and access. Prematurity is one of the clearest indices of this problem. Rates of preterm birth vary significantly by race and ethnicity. In 2001, rates for black women were highest among all racial and ethnic subgroups—17.5 percent for black as compared to 11 percent for white Americans. We simply do not know why these numbers vary so dramatically. But without further research, our public policy options are limited.

Our great health research institutions also have an important role. I have fought for the five-year doubling of NIH's budget. With this significant increase in funding, the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development and the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities can expand research in this area.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me today in congratulating the March of Dimes on its launch of this new national campaign to target the rising rate of premature births.

#### ERRONEOUS TIME MAGAZINE REPORT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, I spoke about the importance of continuing his legacy and working to ensure that the civil rights of all Americans are protected. I discussed my concerns that some of the current administration's policies jeopardize the gains our Nation has made.

In prefacing my remarks last week, I criticized President Bush, based on a disturbing report that recently appeared in Time magazine declaring that this administration had reinstated the tradition of delivering a floral wreath to the Confederate Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

The information I referenced in my speech was inaccurate, as Time magazine has subsequently issued a correction clarifying that the wreath practice was not initiated by President Bush, but in fact had been done by previous administrations. I, therefore, apologize to President Bush, as my remarks regarding the floral arrangement were inaccurate.

I do think this exercise should be discontinued by President Bush, regardless of the past history of the practice.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. In the last Congress Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.