

applicant is not a qualified applicant. If the applicant is not considered a qualified applicant, the explanation need not address the remaining matters described in subparagraph (3).

(3) If the applicant is preference eligible and a qualified applicant, the employing office's explanation shall advise whether the person appointed to the covered position for which the applicant was applying is preference eligible.

(b) Upon written request by a covered employee who has received a notice of reduction in force under section 1.120 above (or his/her representative), the employing office shall promptly provide a written explanation of the manner in which veterans' preference was applied in the employing office's retention decision regarding that covered employee. Such explanation shall state:

(1) Whether the covered employee is preference eligible and, if not, the reasons for the employing office's determination that the covered employee is not preference eligible.

(2) If the covered employee is preference eligible, the employing office's explanation shall include:

(A) a list of all covered employee(s) in the requesting employee's position classification or job classification and competitive area who were retained by the employing office, identifying those employees by job title only and stating whether each such employee is preference eligible,

(B) a list of all covered employee(s) in the requesting employee's position classification or job classification and competitive area who were not retained by the employing office, identifying those employees by job title only and stating whether each such employee is preference eligible, and

(C) a brief statement of the reason(s) for the employing office's decision not to retain the covered employee.

END OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS

RECOGNITION OF MARK MORSE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the public service of Mark Morse of Las Vegas, NV.

Mark has served as field manager for the Bureau of Land Management's Las Vegas Field Office for the last 5 years. Serving as a field manager for any BLM office is a challenge, but nowhere are the competing demands of recreation and conservation, urban development and species preservation more pronounced than in southern Nevada.

Some might throw up their hands in the face of such challenges, but Mark confronted them head on. He is respected by such diverse groups as local and county government officials, environmental organizations, and recreation advocates for balancing the needs of all who take an interest in our public lands.

He has forged partnerships between the BLM and local organizations, including the Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association, Friends of Red Rock Canyon, the National Wild Horse Association, Master Gardeners, UNLV, and the Clark County School District. These partnerships have not only included the local community in the stewardship of our public lands; they have ensured that these lands are better cared for than they would be under only BLM supervision. Red Rock en-

thusiasts are improving the BLM's interpretation of Red Rock Canyon; students from a local high school are discovering the unique history of Tule Springs. It was Mark's vision that made these partnerships happen.

We in Nevada's congressional delegation have also handed Mark his share of challenges. The Nevada BLM oversees an enormously successful program that disposes of Federal land in southern Nevada while using the proceeds to preserve Nevada's natural treasures. This program has made federal land agencies work together in ways that have no precedent in our country. Mark has helped create interagency teams that improve both the care of Federal lands and the efficiency of the agencies charged with that care. Without Mark's leadership, this program would not be such a success story.

Mark has helped the Las Vegas Field Office adapt to the unique nature of managing Federal land in this growing urban setting. He is proud of his team, and he would say it has embraced change and achieved excellence. The BLM is not always a popular entity in Nevada, but Mark's accomplishments have greatly improved its reputation.

Mark's retirement is the culmination of 39 years of service with the BLM in the West, including time in northern California and Colorado as well as Nevada. I wish Mark the best, and I hope I will have the privilege of working with him again in the future.

BALTAZAR CERVANTES' 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I speak today in recognition of Mr. Baltazar Cervantes' 100th birthday.

Mr. Cervantes was born and raised in Mexico, and he came to the United States in 1919, making Nevada his home in 1958.

He worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad for 36 years, then worked part time for the city of Elko, in northeast Nevada, for the next 20 years. He finally retired in 1993 at the age of 88.

Throughout his life, Mr. Cervantes has dedicated himself to his family, a group that has continued to grow over time. Today his extended family include 10 children, 44 grandchildren, 54 great grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandchild.

Mr. Cervantes has experienced many things during his life, and he has seen some historic figures. When he was a young boy, he saw Pancho Villa in Mexico, and after he moved to the United States he was fortunate enough to see the legendary Babe Ruth play baseball.

Mr. Cervantes has long been an avid baseball fan, and his favorite team is the Atlanta Braves. He tells his children that even though the Braves didn't enjoy much success during the early years when he watched them, he always knew they would turn it around. I am sure Mr. Cervantes has enjoyed the Braves' 13 consecutive playoff appearances.

Today Mr. Cervantes lives with his daughter Norma and her daughter Kara, and he enjoys watching Braves games in the company of his loving family. It gives me great pleasure to offer my sincerest congratulations to this special man on the occasion of his 100th birthday.

EGYPT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in his recent State of the Union address, President Bush stated:

the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East.

In light of the President's statement, I would like to submit for the RECORD an op-ed by Jackson Diehl that appeared in today's Washington Post titled "Egypt's Gamble."

In this piece, Mr. Diehl notes with concern that the Egyptian Government appears to be acting under the assumption that, despite the President's strong statement on the need for democratic reforms in the country, the United States will still turn a blind eye to the recent heavy-handed actions taken by the Egyptian authorities toward prodemocracy activists. Mr. Diehl's piece notes:

The U.S. Embassy in Cairo is urging caution; it argues that an overly aggressive U.S. reaction [to the crackdown] would play into the hands of Egyptian "hardliners."

Mr. President, I am deeply troubled about these reports, if they are true.

President Bush's statement of policy with respect to Egypt could not be more clear. Nonetheless, it appears that there are those in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the State Department who are attempting to return to "business as usual" with respect to U.S. policy toward Egypt. I would like to go on record as reiterating my strong support for the need for Egypt to reform its political and economic institutions, and I look forward to working with Secretary Rice to ensure that the President's vision of democracy in the region is not diluted at lower levels of the Department through bureaucratic inertia and intransigence.

I ask unanimous consent that the op-ed be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 14, 2005]

EGYPT'S GAMBLE

(By Jackson Diehl)

The appearance of Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit and intelligence chief Omar Suleiman in Washington this week should bring to a head a bold attempt by their country's strongman, Hosni Mubarak, to neuter President Bush's campaign for democracy in the Middle East within weeks of his inaugural address.