

Mr. MURKOWSKI. In responding to my friend from Massachusetts, about 6 minutes. I am satisfied if we go back and forth, as suggested, it would concur with the unanimous consent agreement pending.

Mr. KERRY. I ask unanimous consent that following the Senator from Texas, the Senator from Louisiana be recognized for 10 minutes; following that, the Senator from Alaska be recognized for 5 minutes; the Senator from Minnesota for 5 minutes; and I would like to follow the Senator from Minnesota for 5 minutes.

Mr. LOTT. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. To clarify that, when the District of Columbia appropriations conference report and its parts arrive, that will be taken up at that point regardless of the order. But then, of course, when that is completed, we can go back to this order.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, again, may I ask the distinguished majority leader: I think we have such a tight containment here, there are some who have some problems off the floor. So it may be that he would be held up by about 5 minutes, I think, in total.

Mr. LOTT. If it is something like that, it should not be a problem. But they are voting in the House at this time, so the papers will be headed this way. Rather than holding up the debate getting started, I think with the order we have lined up, we should be all right. I think we could extend the colloquy to the point where we couldn't do the business of the Senate.

Mr. KERRY. Would the majority leader then permit us to put in place the request we have made?

Mr. LOTT. I withdraw my reservation.

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, it is obvious that there are a lot of people who want to speak. Let me sum up by saying that in an era where I think we have gotten Government out of balance, where extremist elements are determined to impose their will and their values—often at the expense of the jobs of people who work with their hands and who, in the process, contribute to America—when we become callous to the needs of working people by catering to people who are often quite well off and quite successful and quite comfortable, who, in some cases, would put their interests and their hobbies ahead of working people, it is very important that we have someone such as Senator BYRD who pulls us back to reality.

I think Senator BYRD mentioned my name as a cosponsor. But just in case he did not, I ask unanimous consent that my name be added.

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

Mr. GRAMM. I am proud to support this amendment. I think the adminis-

tration has become dominated by people who are more concerned about specific elements of the environment, as they define it, than they are concerned about the environment based on good science. I think they are more concerned about their values than the well-being of the people who do the work and pay the taxes and pull the wagon in America.

It is easy for a planner or an idealist to set out a policy and act as if destroying the livelihood of a coal miner is as irrelevant as simply overturning a regulation. But we know the difference between a regulation and the livelihood of a coal miner. It is because we know the difference that we are here.

I hope this amendment passes. I hope it sends a clear signal that the Clinton administration has become an extremist administration in terms of the environment. This is a bipartisan effort. I think it is important. I think it pulls us back to the center in recognizing we want a better environment. But we want to look at costs and benefits. We want to look at science. When we are putting thousands of people out of work, we ought to stop and reflect on what we are doing. Senator BYRD is asking us to do that today. I am proud to join him in this effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I am appreciative of the 10 minutes granted to speak on a different subject. I understand that mining is an important issue and deserves our attention. Until it is resolved, we will probably be working for many days. I know that the Senior Senator from West Virginia feels very passionately about this issue, and other Members may want to add their remarks as the evening goes on, so I will try to be brief.

A week from tomorrow, many of us will head home to be with our families and celebrate Thanksgiving. In my mind, it is extremely appropriate that Thanksgiving falls in this month, which many of you know is National Adoption Month. For like Thanksgiving, National Adoption Month is a time not only for celebration but also for reflection.

So let me begin with some facts about adoption that people may find interesting in hopes that this would be something the American people will embrace. In 1992, the last year for which adoption statistics were available, there were 127,000 children adopted in the United States. Forty-two percent of these children were adopted by step parents or relatives; 15 percent of these adoptions were from foster care; 5 percent adopted children from other countries; and 37 percent of these children were adopted by private agencies.

The poster behind me is a collage of just a few of the 130,000 legally freed children awaiting permanent families.

Some of them are only children and some are sibling groups, some are younger children some are older. Although they are all different, all of these beautiful children are looking for someone to love and care for them and to make them a part of their home.

The fact remains that there are half a million children in foster care. By way of comparison, allow me to refer to a hometown landmark, the Superdome. The Superdome has hosted several superbowl—the Saints have never been to one there, but other teams have. We can seat about 80,000 people in the Superdome. To get an accurate vision of the number of children, picture 5 superdomes filled with children, one in every seat. That is a lot of children—if you think about one in each seat in five Superdomes—in need of homes in America.

The average age of children in foster care is 9.5 years. The problem is many children spend the average of 3 years in foster care. Three years is too long to live without the love and security of a permanent family. We need to shorten that time. If a child has to be removed from their biological parents because of terrible, unfortunate circumstances, they should spend a short time in foster care and then be placed permanently with a loving family. Seventy percent of the children available for adoption and foster care are under the age of 10. They should not spend their tender years without a home.

True, we are making progress and we should be proud. In 1996, 28,000 children in foster care were placed in permanent homes. It is projected that, in 1999, the number will be 36,000, an increase of about 30 percent.

In celebration of those who made this progress possible, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption instituted a wonderful idea that we hope will go on year after year, The Congressional Angels In Adoption. We asked all of our colleagues to send in recommendations for individuals in their respective States and districts who had done something extraordinary in the area of adoption. I would like to submit for the RECORD a list of the 55 families who have been nominated and selected for the first 1999 Angels In Adoption Awards.

I ask unanimous consent that this list be printed in the RECORD.

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

1999 ANGELS IN ADOPTION

Freddie Mac Foundation, Virginia, Nancy Kleingartner, Bismarck, North Dakota, Jeff and Earletta Morris, Marshalltown, Iowa, Earl and Judy Priest, Caldwell, Idaho, Dave Thomas, Dublin, Ohio, Peter and Mary Myers, Sikeston, Missouri, James and Denise Jones, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Fletcher Thompson & Jim Thompson, Spartanburg, South Carolina, Carol McMahan, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Lori and Willie Johnson, Russellville, Arkansas, Candice Mueller, Ewing, New Jersey, Joan McLaughlin, Morristown, New Jersey, Carol Stoudt, Fargo, North Dakota, Bill and Laura Trickey, Kansas City,

Missouri, Tom and Debbie Ritter, Warrentown, Missouri, Debbie Breiden, O'Fallon, Missouri, Senator Gordon and Sharon Smith, Hope Marindin, Chevy Chase, Maryland, Doreen Moreira, Cabin John, Maryland, Sky Westerlund, of Lawrence, Kansas.

Doug and Mary Spangler, Kansas City, Vivian Robinson, Harrisburg, Illinois, Reverend George Coates, Eldorado, Illinois, Ms. Gloria King of Oakland, California, Becky and Mike Dornoff, Williamsburg, Michigan, Steve and Cherie Karban, Rapid River, Michigan, James L. Gritter, Traverse City, Michigan, Ms. Sidney Duncan, Detroit, Michigan, Anne Pierson, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Jane Sarnes, Lexington, Nebraska, Peggy Soule, Rochester, New York, Laurence and Jane Leach, Raleigh County, West Virginia, Judge Gary Johnson, West Virginia, Hays and Gay Town of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, David and Jane Zatz Redmond, Washington, Dennis and Shirley Smithson, Nashville, Tennessee, Anne Desiderio, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Francis Ann Mobley, Daytona Beach, Florida, Kurt and Stacy Stahl, Lake Oswego, Oregon, Sallie Olson, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Ruth Ann Gaines, Des Moines, Iowa, Larry and Jackie Bebo, Berthoud, Colorado, Gary Cerkvenik and Kim Stokes, Britt, Minnesota, Aimee Oullette, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Bill and Brenda Baker, Redfield, South Dakota, Richard and Karen Butler, Faith, South Dakota, Reverend Ed and Diane Nesseslhuf, Vermillion, South Dakota, Debbie Hoffman, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Melvina and Louie Winters, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Geraldine Bluebird, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Scott and Val Parsley, Madison, South Dakota, Mrs. Brenda Edusei, Bedford, New Hampshire, Debra Kloper, St. Louis, Missouri, Jessica Dennis of Rosedale, New York.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Here are some examples from around the country. I will read into the RECORD just a few. First of all, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption has recognized the Freddie Mac Foundation of Virginia, nominated because of countless contributions to the promotion of adoption. In this year alone, Freddie Mac has donated millions of dollars to help fund programs for adoption and foster care. Their commitment and dedication demonstrates their unique understanding that there is more to a home than four walls. We thank the Freddie Mac Foundation for their effort.

I will read a few more brief entries to give an example of some of the people that were honored. My friend, the Senior Senator from Arkansas, submitted a family from Russellville, Arkansas, Lori and Willie Johnson. In an increasingly self-absorbed world, Lori and Willie Johnson remind those around them of the meaning of the word "selfless." They are the proud parents of 17 children, 13 of whom are adopted and have special needs. Because of their love and dedication, these children have a family to call their own.

From Spartanburg, South Carolina, we have selected Fletcher Thompson and Jim Thompson, nominated by our colleague in the House, JAMES DEMINT. Having practiced adoption for over 25 years, they are rightly considered adoption experts. They place over 100 children a year. They practice law in a way that helps build families and

brings hope to children and joy to parents. We thank them for their great work.

I would also like to mention, the Angel from Idaho—since the Senior Senator from that State was on the floor earlier speaking about the important mining issue,—as Co-chair of the Congressional Coalition he nominated Earl and Judy Priest from Caldwell, Idaho. For over 25 years, the Priests have opened their hearts and home to children of all ages and abilities. They are parents of five children, three of whom are adopted. In addition, they have fostered 160 other children.

Hays and Gay Town, from my own home State of Louisiana, founded and personally funded an agency that has placed over 200 children. They have also reached out to help young mothers in crisis.

There are many examples, from California to New York to Louisiana to Michigan. There have been examples of judges, attorneys, parents who have adopted children, advocates in the community, agencies, who are really contributing to making our goal of finding a home for every child in America and the world a reality.

In closing, I would like to remind my colleagues, of several pieces of pending legislation concerning adoption. First, we look forward to passing, with Senator HELMS' and Senator BIDEN's leadership, the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. This treaty will, for the first time, lay out a framework for international adoption. Mr. Chairman, as a lawyer and a former prosecutor, you most certainly know the importance of laying out a legal framework to prevent fraud and abuse, reduce costs and make the process easier for families adopting abroad. Together with Senator ABRAHAM, I have introduced the Adoption Awareness Act to fund a nationwide campaign promoting adoption. Through this campaign, we hope to encourage potential adoptive parents to open their homes to a waiting child.

Finally, we hope to be able to increase the present adoption tax credit from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

As you can see, there is a lot of work we have to do when we come back. I want to take this opportunity, once again, to recognize all of our "Angels in Adoption," and to thank my colleagues for all the good work they have done on this issue. I look forward to working with them when we return to make the reality of a permanent and loving home real for so many children who need it.

Thank you.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

BYRD-McCONNELL MINING AMENDMENT

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I think we all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the senior Senator from West Virginia.

What we have now is a situation concerning mining in the U.S. where a crucial decision is either going to be made to maintain an atmosphere where mining can continue or through the prevailing attitude within the Clinton administration to simply drive this industry offshore.

The Clinton administration, by its actions, evidently opposes the working people of America who are involved in mining.

Those opposing Senator BYRD's proposal basically are destroying the entire coal industry which exists west of the Mississippi—the mine workers whose jobs depend on that industry, the railroad workers, the barge men, and the truck drivers.

I think it is important to note that Senator BYRD's amendment directs the application of the Clean Water Act to be returned to the way it was at the beginning of October of this year.

Senator BYRD's amendment does not change the law. It does not change any practice that has been followed over the years. It is our job to change the law—not the White House and not the courts.

Senator BYRD's amendment gives the Congress and the Federal agencies time to apply existing law without destroying the coal mining industry of this country—time to apply the law, or make such adjustments that are necessary in a way that protects the environment, the coal mining industry, and all those who depend upon that industry for their well-being.

We are looking for a balance. The administration's proposal throws this out of balance.

The amendment goes further. There are two additional issues involved.

One deals with the recent Solicitor's opinion that would throw out 127 years of precedent on the size of mill sites—only 5 acres per claim, if followed through with, this would make mining on public lands absolutely impossible.

I do not know how many Members have an idea about what it takes to make up a mine. The mine needs a mill site, grinding and crushing facilities, shops, processing plants, tailings disposal, headquarters, a water plant, parking lots, and roads. This simply cannot fit on the space provided within the 5-acre mill site per claim. It simply can't be done. This is how they propose to eliminate mining. In my State of Alaska, we would not have a new mine developed, nor could we.

You are depriving us and this country the right to produce minerals from the rich resources we have.

Make no mistake; the Solicitor wrote the opinion to end mining in the West, to drive mining offshore, to drive the jobs offshore, and to drive the dollars offshore.

The provision in this amendment would allow mining operations that have been submitting plans prior to a recent Solicitor's opinion to continue under the law and the precedent that was relied on the developed plan.