

Had I been here, I would have voted for cloture on Rockefeller amendment No. 3911, the Intelligence Committee's FISA bill, and against cloture on Reid amendment No. 3918, to temporarily extend the Protect America Act.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ECONOMY AND FORECLOSURES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night, President Bush spoke of the bipartisan effort we've seen to put together an economic stimulus package.

I have joined this chorus of praise. It is important for us to remember that despite our differences, we can find common ground in pursuit of common good.

The stimulus package is in markup today in the Finance Committee. I am confident that Chairman BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY will send a bill to the floor that all 100 Senators can proudly support.

We all agree that with our economy ailing, homeowners struggling and energy prices rising, this short-term stimulus plan will help working Americans make ends meet.

But I think we also all agree that this is only the first step. A short-term solution will help, but we must create long-term solutions that will treat the cause rather than the symptoms.

President Bush suggested last night that this could be accomplished with more tax cuts for the wealthy.

We strongly disagree. No one wondering if they can make their next mortgage payment or whether they can afford to retire believes that more tax cuts for the rich will solve this problem.

This morning, the Reno Gazette Journal reported that home foreclosures in Washoe County—the Reno area of Nevada—skyrocketed 614 percent in 2007 from the year before.

This pain isn't just felt in one area or neighborhood. Foreclosures have risen in all parts of the Truckee Meadows.

One realtor said:

It's ridiculous. I'm up to 22 right now. A year ago, I had zero. I have potentially another 50 homes not foreclosed on yet but are on the brink. And that's just me.

Experts say this crisis in Reno, throughout Nevada, and all over America is going growing worse.

Nationally, foreclosures jumped 79 percent in 2007.

One of America's largest lenders, Countrywide, just reported that one out of every three subprime loans is now delinquent.

And this is affecting not just the families who may lose their homes—but their neighbors who are seeing property values drop, and all of us who are faced with the collateral damage of a badly damaged housing market.

We call on President Bush to work with us to solve this and other economic problems.

We need to provide tax incentives for companies to invest in renewable energy. This will create jobs, save consumers money, and protect our air.

America's infrastructure is crumbling. We saw it in the bridge collapse. Investing in our infrastructure will not only strengthen our communities, it will strengthen our economy by creating good-paying jobs.

For every \$10 billion we spend on infrastructure, we create 47,500 new jobs. And for every \$10 million capital investment in public transportation, we create \$30 million in sales for businesses.

Instead of cutting funding for community block grants and the Consumer Credit Council in his budget, the President should sit down with us to come up with real long-term solutions.

With less than a year to go in his term, we can still come together to solve these problems and get America's economy working again.

CITY OF HARTFORD, KENTUCKY, CELEBRATES 200 YEARS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish today to honor a long respected community in the great Commonwealth of Kentucky, the city of Hartford, which on February 3, 2008, will celebrate 200 years of establishment in the Commonwealth.

Since February 3, 1808, the great city of Hartford has been a part of my great State. After an act of the legislature of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Hartford was formally established on 400 acres of land around Rough River, in the county of Ohio, occupying the land of the late Gabriel Madison. The city humbly began governing with a group of seven trustees overseeing the town and has since grown to a population of over 2,000 outstanding citizens and has developed into the administrative center for Ohio County, becoming the county seat. Now, great leadership comes from Mayor Earl Russell, who proudly carries on the tradition of his family of governing in Hartford.

As proclaimed in Hartford's town slogan, this honored town is home to "2,000 happy people and a few soreheads." These "soreheads and happy people" strenuously work to promote civic pride and generate the enthusiasm needed to accomplish future goals throughout their city.

Due to the enthusiasm from citizens like these and great leadership from

Mayor Earl Russell, Kentucky has grown to the honorable State it is today. Inhabiting the western coal field region of the State, Hartford has been contributing to the Commonwealth for 200 years and has planned a celebration in honor of this. Because of the continued contribution of the citizens of Hartford to the betterment of their town, county and the Commonwealth, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating with them today for 200 years of dedication.

THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT OF 2007

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would strengthen and add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On January 14, 2008, 63-year-old Baljeet Singh was parking his car outside a Sikh temple in Queens, NY, when David Wood, 36, approached him. Wood reportedly shouted: "Arab, go back to your country" before physically attacking Singh. Wood continued to hurl epithets as he beat Singh, allegedly without provocation. Singh, whose family has attended the temple—known as a gurdwara—for over 12 years, sustained a broken nose and jaw, both of which may require surgery. Wood, who lives near the temple and allegedly has a history of harassing its members, has been charged with second-degree assault as a hate crime, second and third degree assault, and second-degree aggravated harassment.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. Federal laws intended to protect individuals from heinous and violent crimes motivated by hate are woefully inadequate. This legislation would better equip the Government to fulfill its most important obligation by protecting new groups of people as well as better protecting citizens already covered under deficient laws. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

JUSTICE

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise to speak about justice.

Today, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, in coordination with the Targum Shlishi Foundation, is conducting Operation: Last Chance, a final effort to bring the most guilty Nazis to justice before they die. The perpetrators of the Holocaust must not be allowed to cheat their deserved fate.

The uniqueness of the Holocaust crime lies not wholly in its number of