

tough as balancing the federal budget. Making the matter more difficult is the fact that senators know they have to be "for ethics reform." So the politics of freebies involves diversion and dilution. The anti-reform dynamic aims to stop a comprehensive ban by pushing one that meets appearances of reform without reducing the flow of trips and free meals.

Also designed to weigh against a comprehensive gift ban is one of the parliamentarian's oldest tricks: send a controversial issue to a committee to be chewed up. The Senate's bipartisan task force on lobbying reform has the potential to assure that the sugary river of senatorial gifts is drawn down one hummingbird-sized sip at a time.

The comprehensive gift ban may cramp some senators' style, but it is an important step in restoring public confidence. The current climate about politics and its practitioners says the Senate must prove it is not for sale, one member at a time, to special interests that provide seats on the 50-yard line and a winter break in the tropics.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, this is from the St. Paul Pioneer Press, a paper that both of us in Wisconsin and Minnesota receive. The last paragraph reads as follows:

The comprehensive gift ban may cramp some Senators' style, but it is an important step in restoring public confidence. The current climate about politics and its practitioners says the Senate must prove it is not for sale, one Member at a time, to special interests that provide seats on the 50-yard line and winter break in the tropics.

That is stated quite directly. I think the Pioneer Press speaks for the vast majority of people in the country. Some of it may be perception. I do not always assume because people take gifts that that leads to some sort of awful private deals that take place between lobbyists and Senators. I do not make that assumption at all.

But I say to my colleagues, it is time to let go of these perks. It is time to let go of these privileges. It is time to no longer take these gifts. It is time to no longer have lobbyists pay for vacations for ourselves and our spouses, and we ought to end this. It is time to restore some confidence on the part of the people we represent in this political process.

A lot of our colleagues think that we are the only ones interested in these issues. That is not true. People in the country care fiercely about this. I hope in the next couple of days that there will be lobbying disclosure reform, gift ban reform—maybe there will be give and take, I say to my colleague. Maybe we will come together around some initiatives that will not be everything we want, but I do not think either one of us or any of us who have worked on gift ban are going to accept a proposal that does not meet the test of representing significant reform.

Then eventually—and I thank my colleague for his work on this—we will get to campaign finance reform. When we reform this political process, we will be dealing with the root issue, and the root issue is many, many people in the United States of America have lost confidence in the Nation's Capitol. They do not believe this Capitol be-

longs to them. By God, we have to make sure it does—we have to make sure not only they believe it, but that that is the case, this Capitol belongs to them. This is only one step in that direction, but it is an important one. I hope all of our colleagues will support comprehensive gift ban reform.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and 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. SIMON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

THE CHILDREN OF BOSNIA

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, I think it is fairly clear that we are heading toward some kind of a military climax in the Bosnian situation. Precisely what is going to happen I do not know. None of us knows. But there is likely to be more bloodshed in the immediate future, and I hope not a continuation of the constant agony and bloodshed that we have seen these past few years since 1991.

I have a citizen from Illinois by the name of Al Booth who says we took children out of Germany, Austria, and England in the very difficult years prior to and during World War II, saved a great many people, and that we ought to be doing something to save the children of Bosnia today.

It is not simple. I have talked to Bosnian officials. My office has talked to the International Red Cross people. The Red Cross people said if you had taken them out by bus or by any kind of vehicle or by plane, and the plane is shot, there would be substantial criticism. There are at least some in the Bosnian Government who feel that to take the children out almost means you are sending a signal that the Government cannot continue, that it is going to collapse. It is a difficult situation.

At this point I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from Al Booth that was printed in the Chicago Tribune about this situation.

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

[From the Chicago Tribune, June 19, 1995]

BOSNIA'S CHILDREN

CHICAGO.—The children of Bosnia should not be allowed to become the slaughtered innocent victims of the intensified fighting.

In 1937 a kindertransport was organized in Germany, before Hitler closed the door, when the British government made 10,000 visas available for German children. Seven thousand children were rescued—75 percent Jewish and 25 percent Christian. (Only 1,000 children arrived in the U.S. from Germany—with parents, relatives or alone—in 1938 and 1939.)

Several European countries are organized to accept refugee children. There they would be closer to home. These countries are very experienced on matters relating to refugees.

The UN is in the best position to organize the transfer of children of any ethnic group out of Bosnia. To do so at this time would certainly make it plain to those forces attacking the "safe havens" that at long last the NATO countries and the U.S. wish to put an end to using snipers to kill children and mortars to kill civilians. The Air Force would be there to protect the children.

We may not be able to stop ethnic violence or expanded civil wars, but we should be able, at this moment, to take the initiative to remove children and women.

A kindertransport program is long overdue in Bosnia. Those children who came out of Germany and Austria left their parents behind, and almost all never saw their parents again. We have a better chance of that not happening this time, but we must get the children out of Bosnia now, before they become orphans and victims.

AL BOOTH,

President,

International Music Foundation.

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, in response to that letter, he received a letter from the consul general of France. Let me just read two paragraphs from this letter. The consul general read Al Booth's letter in the Chicago Tribune:

In addition to its participation in the organization of an air shuttle in Sarajevo and the creation of a central pharmacy in Bihac, the French Government evacuated more than 200 Bosnian children between 1993 and 1994.

Furthermore, a private association called "Equilibre," with the support of our Regional Councils, organized in November '92 the temporary evacuation of 1045 mothers and children. This operation was repeated in 1994 for 1000 children and their mothers.

For a total of 2,045.

This time the operation concentrated on the children whose health was failing and who could not have spent the winter in Bosnia.

He says these operations would not have been possible without the support of the French Government in particular regarding the retention of temporary permits for the accompanying adults.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter of the French Consul General.

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

CONSULAT GENERAL DE FRANCE,

Chicago, IL, July 11, 1995.

MR. AL BOOTH,

International Music Foundation, Chicago, IL.

DEAR MR. BOOTH: I read with much interest your letter published in the Chicago Tribune of June 19, 1995, and sent a copy to the French Foreign Ministry, who have provided me with the following information.

In addition to its participation in the organization of an air shuttle in Sarajevo and the creation of a central pharmacy in Bihac, the French Government evacuated more than 200 Bosnian children between 1993 and 1994.

Furthermore, a private association called "Equilibre," with the support of our Regional Councils, organized in November '92 the temporary evacuation of 1045 mothers and children. This operation was repeated in 1994 for 1,000 children and their mothers. This time the operation concentrated on the children whose health was failing and who could not have spent the winter in Bosnia.

These operations would not have been possible without the support of the French Government, in particular regarding the obtention of temporary permits for the accompanying adults.

I hope that this information answers, at least in part, your concerns which we entirely share about the fate of the children (and other members of the civilian population) who are caught up in the daily horrors of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

With best regards,

GERARD DUMONT,
Consul General.

Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, I do not know if anything can be done. But I think we ought to do everything we can to save these children, if possible, in this horrible, horrible situation in which they find themselves. Obviously, these would only be volunteers.

Let me say for those who have fears of the religious implications, because these are mostly Moslem children, though not entirely. There are a number of Bosnian families in the United States as well as in Western Europe who, I am sure, would be willing to take these children—not all of them obviously, but many of them would—so that they could be raised in homes where there is a Bosnian culture and a Moslem background. So the religious factor should not be a barrier to going ahead.

Again, Mr. President, I do not have any good answer. But I do think this idea of somehow saving these children, or as many of them as we can, is just a sound, simple, humanitarian thing to do. I hope that somehow we can do something.

LOBBYING DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President. I wanted to talk about the bill that is on the floor.

Mr. President, I think that we are coming to a very important time in this Congress, and that is the time that we are going to be dealing with reform of our lobby laws, and later the gift laws that apply to Members of Congress.

Mr. President, it is important that we have Government in the sunshine.

The bill that is before us, lobby reform and lobby control, is an important one, and we have passed a similar bill in previous Congresses. Last year, I voted for a bill that would have required more disclosure of lobbying efforts without in any way though infringing on the right of individuals to seek an audience or a time with their Members of Congress.

We do not want to do anything that would keep a teacher who happens to be a member of a teachers organization from directly contacting a Member of Congress. But there are many lobbying

activities that may now not be disclosable that should be disclosable. I know the Members of our parties on both sides of the aisle are working on a compromise right now, and I hope we can come up with something that will provide public information of everything that is going on, every contact that is being made by a registered lobbyist or someone representing a lobby group. I think it is very important that the people of this country know who it is seeing Members of Congress when we are talking about important legislation.

We are also going to be taking up gift reform, and that is another important issue. I think it is important we have contribution limits, and we do have contribution limits. And I have voted to make those contribution limits even lower. We also have limits on how much you can take in a gift, which may be a T-shirt or it may be a basket of fruit or it may be something very small but that someone gives you just as they would give you if you worked in any office.

I wish to just say that those are appropriate limits. We do now have limitations which I think are very appropriate. I think we must be very careful as we go into the debate on gift ban not to go to such a level that you would then be able to be prosecuted for something which would really be inadvertent.

For instance, if you go to a zero gift, then presumably if you have coffee and doughnuts or a lunch with someone who happens to be a friend who may also work for a corporation or may be a teacher, then are you going to violate a ban on gifts?

I do not think anyone who is thinking rationally believes that just because you talk to someone or have lunch with someone or dinner with someone or a group gives you a T-shirt that is going to affect the way you vote on important public policy issues. These are things that happen in offices all over our country. It is the way people show normal appreciation for a friendship or for working together on some kind of issue. So I think we have to be very careful to make sure we do the things that would keep you from being able to abuse the ability to receive a gift without going to such a length we then allow for selective prosecution by people who do not have good will or for inadvertent things to happen that do not mean anything but nevertheless would put you in the position of a technical violation.

Mr. President, I just think as we go forward we need to keep in mind that everyone wants openness in Government, reporting of things that are received, without in any way, though, keeping a normal person from being able to contact or have the minimal ability to send a flower or a T-shirt to someone who they have worked with on an issue and had a good result or want to show some appreciation.

I go to functions across my State, and I may go to the chamber of com-

merce and make a speech to a chamber of commerce banquet. They will send me flowers or they will send something from the city, a cup or something. I appreciate that. I think it is a nice gesture. It makes me think of that city. I have things all over my office, cups and candy jars and things from the city of Lamar, from the city of Gainesville, or the city of Houston, or the city of Dallas. We cannot stop normal behavior, normal appreciativeness, contact with chambers of commerce or teachers or unions. That just does not make sense.

So I hope we will keep the common-sense test as we go forward. I do not think anyone believes that being able to have the normal course of business is in any way prohibiting a fair look at legislation.

So I just hope common sense will be the test, Mr. President. I think it is very important that we make improvements. I think we are doing that. I think as we go along and we see what works and what does not work or what is falling through the cracks we will take the steps to close those loopholes. That is what we are trying to do, and I hope we will have a good result. I hope we will have a big lobby reform vote today, just like we did last year. It was something like 96 to 5 that the lobby reform bill passed last year, but then it got hung up in conference, and it got changed and did not pass.

So I hope we can pass a good bill this year; that it will go through conference and that it will be an overwhelming, bipartisan effort to close the loopholes we have in the law today. But let us make sure we have enough common sense that an inadvertent error which really does not make a difference does not cause someone who does not have good will or good intentions to be able to prosecute or in any way build something up so that it makes a criminal out of a public servant.

It is not easy to be in public service at this point in time, and I certainly do not want to harass people who are just trying to do what is right by having some kind of law that would allow a technical violation. So let us go forward in a positive and bipartisan way and see if we cannot work to close the loopholes that are there and have sunshine in Government. That is what we all want, and that is what I think we can come to agreement on if we will just look at the big picture and put common sense in the equation.

I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, what is the pending business of the Senate?