

historic yields at 65 percent of the market price. This new catastrophic coverage is 50 percent of historic yield at 60 percent of the market price.

That may not sound like a great deal of difference, but it is. It is a substantially different program that is now being made available to disaster victims.

I know that one reason for the change and one reason for the adoption of the new Crop Insurance Program was to provide a predictable level of benefit when an agriculture disaster struck, and if farmers were not satisfied that that was enough, they would be encouraged thereby to buy additional coverage. They would buy up to another level of protection on their own. But a lot of farmers have not done that, for varying reasons. Some misunderstood the benefit package that catastrophic insurance provided; some were, frankly, convinced that the additional insurance was too expensive for what they would probably get from it as benefits; and there may have been other reasons. There has always been a question about how the yields are calculated and whether the yields were too high or too low, whether they were individual yields or countywide basis yields. There have been a lot of problems with crop insurance, and everybody knows that.

I raise this issue now, and I know it will be debated later by those who are trying to strike this money from the bill, so Senators will be on notice that we are probably going to have to vote on this amendment. Unlike other disasters that have been occasioned by flood or bad weather, this is a disaster that actually resulted in farmers going out and spending money to try to prevent it on their own, trying to apply what they hoped would be new chemicals that were promised to work and did not or did not work well enough to justify the enormous expenses that farmers went to to protect themselves.

Here they were. It was just weeks away from these bolls ripening and producing the cotton for harvest when they noticed that these bolls were being infested with bud worms and army worms and other pests.

One part of the story is good news, and that is that in many parts of our State, the delta region particularly, the cotton had gotten to the stage of development where it was not affected by the worms, and so we are not talking about every area of our State being equally devastated by this problem. But we do have many areas of our State where there are total losses and many areas where the yields are not nearly what they were expected to be. It is disheartening and it truly is a disaster of enormous proportions. So I hope the Senators who are resisting this effort to provide additional assistance will reconsider.

The amount of money in the bill for this purpose is about \$40 million, and Senator KERREY's amendment will strike that money. We hope that the Senate will vote against it.

I am going to ask unanimous consent, Mr. President, to put in the RECORD some additional supporting documentation on this, specifically an article that I talked about that was in the paper this weekend which more clearly describes the seriousness of the situation and the enormous losses that are occurring in Mississippi and elsewhere as a result of this cotton crop disaster.

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

[From the Clarion-Ledger, Sept. 17, 1995]

GROWERS PICK TOUGH YEAR FOR MORE COTTON

STARKVILLE.—Cotton yields will not be what many growers dreamed of when they increased Mississippi's crop by 100,000 acres to take advantage of stronger prices.

Higher than normal insect pressure and excessive heat have taken their toll.

"Preliminary yields do not look good," said Will McCarty, extension cotton specialist at Mississippi State University.

The Sept. 1 crop report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture brought bleak news on the expectations for Mississippi's crop.

"The September report estimates 480,000 fewer bales of cotton for Mississippi than the August report predicted," McCarty said. "The pounds per acre expectation dropped 158 pounds. I can't remember the crop reporting service ever dropping us that much in one month."

The cotton specialist said the news could get worse as the season finishes.

"There is no doubt that the severe, continuous heat in July, August and early September has taken a heavy toll on the crop," McCarty said.

Blake Layton, extension entomologist at MSU, said the state had faced the risk of catastrophic tobacco budworm numbers for several years because of high levels of insecticide resistance.

"The extremely high numbers in 1995 turned that risk into reality," Layton said. "This risk will exist again next year because we still will have problems with insecticide resistance. Severe winter temperatures will help reduce the danger."

The entomologist said because of the cyclic nature of these insects next year hopefully will be less severe.

"We seldom have two back-to-back years of insect populations at these levels of a pest like this," he said.

Layton said natural predators and parasites increase with high numbers of an insect and help knock the numbers back down. He said the damage to the 1995 crop is done. Growers are no longer applying insecticides as the tobacco budworms prepare to overwinter in the ground.

In Forest County, where cotton is a new crop, growers are anxious to harvest and see the bottom line.

"We're one of the few counties that haven't had tobacco budworm problems, but we've had everything else—bollworms, beet armyworms, yellow-striped armyworms and even loopers," said Lee Taylor, Forest County agricultural agent. "Last fall's eradication efforts helped keep boll weevils from becoming a factor this year."

Taylor said growers turned to cotton as marketing of soybeans and corn became less attractive. He said 1995 has been a good year for cotton.

Otis Davis, Madison County agent, said growers began harvesting cotton slightly earlier because of the dry conditions. The drought is causing lighter seeds and smaller bolls.

"Insects were a tremendous expense to growers throughout Madison County," Davis said. "Cotton prices probably will entice growers to return to cotton again next year."

Growers throughout the southeast continue to await word on disaster assistance from the federal and state governments as a result of tobacco budworm damage.

Mr. INHOFE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to address the Senate as if in morning business.

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

INDEPENDENT STATUS FOR THE FAA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, last month I introduced a bill that would give the FAA independent status. As a matter of fact, when I introduced it, I read a speech as if I were giving it. It was really a speech that was given 20 years ago by Barry Goldwater, and Barry Goldwater's speech was a lengthy one, one that outlined the problems in 1975 that had occurred since the FAA had gone under the Department of Transportation back in 1967. He talked about the procurement problems and the personnel problems that are very unique to the FAA.

Oddly enough, it was 20 years ago that Barry Goldwater made that speech, and I talked to him the other day and he said, "I hope we will be able to do it now."

I am talking about a life-and-death issue as a commercial pilot, I guess the last active commercial pilot in Congress. I have experienced having our lives in the hands of those controllers down there, and it is very significant that we do give them the independent status that Barry Goldwater was seeking back in 1975.

I really believe if we could do that, we could effect enough savings to actually prevent having to raise fees and having to raise taxes as is being considered right now in another bill, and as also is being suggested by the President.

On August 9, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee made a statement in the Chamber, and he said, "The FAA tells us if they could have this kind of operational flexibility"—now we are talking about independent status, free from the bureaucracy of the DOT, free from the procurement guidelines and the personnel guidelines—"they believe they could cut as much as 20 percent out of the procurement budget" from what they are spending today.

Now, this is significant because that happens to be approximately the amount that historically has been contributed to the FAA for operations from the general revenues. And I suggest to you that my bill does not give

the FAA the power to increase fees indiscriminately. I suggest, if we do that such as is suggested in the McCain bill, instead of streamlining their bureaucracy, they would merely raise fees.

I will read from the McCain bill the portion I am talking about. It says, "to establish a program of incentive-based fees for services to improve the air traffic management system performance and to establish appropriate levels of cost accountability for air traffic management services provided by the FAA."

So, Mr. President, I have a lot of respect for Mr. Hinson, David Hinson, who is the Administrator of the FAA. I think he is one of the few real good appointments that this President has made. And I think that if anyone could streamline his bureaucracy, it would be David Hinson. But I suggest to you that the words that I recall that Ronald Reagan made way back in 1965 when he said, "There is nothing closer to immortality on the face of this Earth than a Government program once devised," that is exactly what we are faced with now. A bureaucracy never, as long as it has the ability to raise funds, is going to streamline their operation.

So I hope that we will be able to consider my bill very seriously. And I suggest there are about several million pilots out there that are concerned about this also. I think it would be very difficult to go out right now and tell the pilots, who are paying an average of about \$2,320 in various costs each year—for a small four-passenger airplane in addition to that, they are paying the gas tax—to go out and tell these pilots that in 1990 we raised your gas tax and we raised it again in 1993, and now we are going to start raising your fees.

So, Mr. President, this can be done without increasing fees and taxes. My bill will do that. I am going to be urging the passage of this legislation.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

ARS FACILITY AT EL RENO, OK

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I rise to express my concern with the Senate committee's designation of the primary ARS laboratory at El Reno, OK, as a "worksite." Upon a thorough evaluation of the Fort Reno facility, it remains clear that this primary station remains an important and valuable resource for the agricultural community of the Midwest.

Fort Reno's 7,000 contiguous acres, numerous existing structures, including buildings and fences and valuable on-site personnel resources, make it a unique asset and an ideal location to direct and administer research.

A large amount of work at Fort Reno is dedicated to closing the forage gaps

in livestock production systems common to the Great Plains States by experimenting in forage alternatives to native pasture and winter wheat pasture.

Fort Reno's regional value is visible in their cooperative efforts with ARS stations in Booneville, AR, and Bushland, TX, to solve the problems caused by cattle raised on fescue pastures in the eastern-third of the United States. Fort Reno's research on the resistance of tropical cattle breeds of fescue fungus problems continues to hold valuable promise.

In addition, Fort Reno many years ago established watershed research locations on several pastures to collect runoff and evaluate the environmental impact of agricultural waste, chemicals, and sediment generated by various grazing systems. Current plans call for an evaluation of this long-term data and an expansion of the program to larger, system-size watersheds. This information will be very valuable as non-point source pollution reduction goals are expanded in the Clean Water Act reauthorization.

As a primary research facility, these are just several examples of progress being made at Fort Reno and a demonstration of the facility's continuing contributions to the agricultural community of the Midwest.

I know the committee is aware that the House of Representatives maintains full funding for the ARS station at Fort Reno in their fiscal year 1996 Agriculture appropriations bill. In light of the important research and existing nature of the Fort Reno site, I continue to strongly support full funding for primary research at Fort Reno.

Mr. COCHRAN. Senator NICKLES, I am aware of your strong interest in the ARS facility at El Reno, OK, and share your support for the agricultural research conducted there.

The valuable work being conducted at the Fort Reno's facility is indeed unique and I recognize the importance of continuing research at the site. As this issue is revisited by a House-Senate conference committee, I will work to maintain this valuable research asset.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, there has been a unanimous-consent agreement worked out in connection with the handling of an amendment to the appropriations bill. The amendment is a committee amendment.

The Senator from California, Senator BOXER, for herself and Senator FEINSTEIN—and maybe others—has offered to strike that amendment. In connection with that, I propose the following:

I ask unanimous consent that at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, the Senate resume consideration of the excepted committee amendment regarding chickens, and there be 2 hours to be equally divided between Senators BOXER and COCHRAN or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I further ask that immediately following the vote on passage of H.R. 4, as amended, the Senate resume H.R. 1976, and there be 4 minutes for debate on the committee amendment, to be equally divided in the usual form, to be followed by a vote on or in relation to the committee amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Arkansas and all Senators for permitting us this unanimous-consent agreement.

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

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for 5 minutes.

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

SALE OF PMA'S

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, on Wednesday, the Senate Energy Committee will be meeting their reconciliation targets by debating a proposal offered by the Chair which includes, among other things, something most people have not heard much about. It is called the sale of the PMA's. Almost nobody knows what that means—the sale of SWAPA or WAPA or the PMA's.

Well, there are a lot of ideas ricocheting around the Chambers of the House and the Senate these days. Many are labeled "reform," "change," "new," "bright." The fact is some of these ideas are old ideas dressed in new clothes that have been bad for years. This is one of them. The notion that we should sell the power marketing agencies in order to raise some short-term dollars in the short run and lose dollars every year thereafter makes no sense at all.