

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.

Let me describe for people who do not have any idea what this means what the consequences are and what PMA's are. In my State of North Dakota, some 40 years ago, they decided to try to harness the Missouri River because it was causing a lot of problems. Spring flooding would come and the old Missouri would snake out in a dozen different directions and cause enormous flooding all the way down to Kansas City and elsewhere, and so they decided we needed to harness the Missouri River. So we built a series of dams under the Pick Sloan plan. One of the dams was built in North Dakota called the Garrison Dam. It dammed up a half million acres of water behind it. Communities that used to exist are now under water and have been for years. It created a dam in order to prevent flooding, and one of the benefits of creating that dam is that they put in turbines and the water runs through those turbines and generates electricity. The promise was that if you in North Dakota will be willing to play host to a flood that comes and stays forever, so that downstream they can play softball in the evening, light the city park and not worry about flooding—if you will play host to a flood that comes and stays forever on a half a million acres in order to help folks downstream, we will give you some benefits. One of these benefits is that you will be able to generate low-cost regional electricity and send it around in a way that will benefit folks in the region who are using electricity.

So our people said, "Well, that sounds like something we would be willing to do," and we did. The Pick Sloan program went forward and the dam was built and the flood was created and we generate electricity. That promise of low-cost electricity for our region is a promise that has been kept over the years.

Now, the Garrison Dam that generates that electricity with all the turbines and the water running through that is owned by the public. It is owned by the Government. And so are the transmission lines and the dam through which that electricity flows in order to provide benefits to people who are using their electricity on farms, in cities, in businesses. Those facilities, the dam and the transmission lines, are owned by the Government. It is a public facility owned by the Federal Government.

In our region of the county, it is called WAPA, Western Area Power Administration. It is the way we take public power generated from the dam and distribute it regionally for the benefit of the people in our region because we promised them if they would accept a flood that came and stayed, we would give them some low-cost electricity as part of the benefit, part of the payment.

Well, some years ago, there was a plan that was developed to cut Government waste—some of you remember it—called the Grace Commission. Peter

Grace headed the Grace Commission. It had a lot of good ideas. In fact, about two-thirds of the ideas in the Grace report were eventually adopted—a lot of good ideas, but like anything else that has a menu of ideas, some were genius and some were dumb.

One of the dumb ideas, in my judgment—using a pejorative term—in the Grace report was to sell our dams that generate hydroelectric power.

All the way back to the Grace report, we had this goofy notion that if we would sell the dams so that those who would buy these dams and the hydroelectric facilities could reprice the electricity to market rate, that would surely be a good thing for the Government. But, of course, that did not get much traction throughout the 1980's.

Some of the Grace report did because some of it made sense and some of it just did not make any sense at all. This was part that did not make any sense, so it never got done. However, in recent years, there were calls to sell the power marketing agencies—Southwest, SWAPA, WAPA, three of them, four of them actually, one of which is being sold—sell the power marketing agencies.

Well, it comes from people who, I suppose, have two motives now. One is they do not think the public ought to own anything—get it in private hands so it can be priced at whatever the highest price is. That is the philosophy of some. And the second philosophy by some is let us solve the budget problem today by selling assets.

In order to accomplish that philosophical purpose, they had to change the rules this year—the first year ever in which they changed the rules—to allow you to sell an asset and show a reduced deficit.

Would it not be interesting to have a family budget like that? You say, well, we will meet our yearly expenses by selling the car, then the house, then the yard.

Well, we had a rule against that in Congress, for good reason, because people who thought much about it understood what everybody knows: you do not solve your fiscal problems by selling your assets. At least you do not solve your operating budget deficit problems by selling your assets.

But this year, it is different. This year, the majority party says our budget is going to change. We are going to change that little old rule so you can sell assets and therefore show a lower operating budget deficit.

Well, there is one inevitable truth about selling the power marketing agencies. And that is this: Every single year they bring money into the Federal Government from the sale of this electricity. Every single year we get streams of hundreds of millions of dollars from the sale of this electricity from the hydroelectric facilities.

Now, if you sell them, what would be the budget impact? The budget impact in the first couple years would be—you would get the money for the sale,

would you not? So you show some more money coming in because you sold them. Then what happens every year after that? Every single year after that you have a loss. The Federal Government would not be getting the money it used to get and not getting the money that it expected to get.

This is so symbolic of the way fiscal policy exists around here. Sell an asset, use it to say you are going to deal with an operating budget deficit. Sell an asset and get some money now despite the fact that in the long term by selling the power marketing agencies you lose money. You lose money every single year in the long term because the income stream that used to come in will no longer come in.

Now, we are going to meet on Wednesday in the Energy Committee to deal with this reconciliation requirement. And you know, I am just not moderate on the question of whether we should sell the power marketing agencies. The answer is no; under no condition should we sell the power marketing agencies.

Some say, let us let the customers buy them on a preferential basis. The power marketing agencies are part of a long-term promise that philosophically ought not be abridged or violated. We ought not, for short-term purposes, construct a mechanism here in budgetary policy that is just pound-foolish in every respect—that will bring some money in in the short term by doing something that is fundamentally unsound and philosophically wrong and that in the long term will increase the Federal deficit.

This is to me both philosophically important, because I believe there are certain public principles involved in the public ownership of these assets, and it is also important from a fiscal policy standpoint. And when we meet on Wednesday, I intend to be one of those on the Energy Committee that says, I do not support and will not support the sale of the power marketing agencies.

There are a lot of good ideas running around this Chamber. I embrace many, support many, and stand to speak for many. But when I see an old idea masquerading as a new idea, that is in fact a bad idea for this country, it is time to blow the whistle and say, "Enough; no more." I do not know where the votes are on Wednesday, but I hope we can defeat this.

I say to those who wonder what the consequences might be, well, in my State, North Dakota—a very small State, 640,000 people—if they sell the power marketing agencies and have people bid on them so we get some short-term money in, what will happen is we will have short-term money in the front end and it will cost us higher budget deficits in the long term, and about 200,000 North Dakotans will pay higher electric rates.

It makes no sense at all. It violates the promise that exists as a result of the construction of these facilities.

And in my judgment, this Congress would do well to decide to stand on principle and not entertain any longer the idea of selling the power marketing agencies.

Mr. President, I know there will be a substantial amount of debate and discussion about this in the Energy Committee on Wednesday, and I hope that when the dust settles, we will find a way to defeat this proposal.

RESTRUCTURING THE FARM PROGRAM

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me address one other quick item as long as no one is seeking the floor. A group of us just had a press conference about an hour ago to introduce a piece of legislation that calls for restructuring the Farm Program. That is not very important to most people if you are not involved in farming or do not live in a rural county or do not live in a rural State. It may not matter to you what kind of a Farm Program this country has. But if you are a family farmer trying to raise some kids and raise a crop and keep things together and make a decent living, the question of whether this country has a Farm Program is critical to your survival.

We have two different approaches to the Farm Program these days: One embodied in the most recent budget that says, let us cut \$14 billion out of the agricultural function, that says we should increase defense spending, build star wars, but we cannot afford a decent farm program; let us cut \$14 billion. The President, by contrast, said, let us cut \$4 billion.

Well, I accept that Agriculture should have some budget cuts and I supported budget cuts in the past for them. They have taken more than their share in the past than they should have, but more is to come. But not \$14 billion, \$4 billion to \$4.2 billion the President suggested is in the range that makes some sense.

But what is interesting to me is that now that this budget requirement is out there, one which I do not support by the way, we are discovering that the chairs of both committees in the House and the Senate in the agricultural area cannot write a farm plan. They cannot get a consensus on a farm plan. They cannot find 10 votes in the Senate committee for a farm plan apparently, because they paint themselves in a corner with a \$14 billion budget deficit reduction number in agriculture. You cannot write a decent farm plan with that.

Some say, well, we have a new approach called the freedom to farm bill. The freedom to farm bill, as my colleague, TOM HARKIN, said, is the "welcome to welfare" bill that disconnects in every single way an opportunity to have a long-term price support that is beneficial to family size farms.

I will not apologize for a minute to anybody for believing that investing in family farmers with a safety net that

makes sense is worthwhile for this country. Nobody in this Chamber ever ought to stand up and claim to be pro-family if you are not pro-family farmer. Nobody under any condition ought to talk about being pro-family unless they are willing to stand for the interests of maintaining a network of family farms in this country. That is where the nurturing and caring and sharing and the kind of development of family values in this country has always begun for 200 years and rolled across this country to our small towns and cities.

The fact is, it makes a difference in our future whether we have an inventory of agri-factories producing America's food or whether we have families out there living on the land where the yard light is on at night and sending kids to school and buying tractors in town. It makes a difference the kind of agriculture we have.

Family farm-based agriculture is critically important to this country's future. I know a group of us introduced legislation today that says you can create a better farm program and save money if you simply disconnect from the giant agri-factories and decide to focus a targeted price support on the family size farms.

People say, "What is a family-size farm?" I do not know the answer to that. We do not have a statistical definition of a family size farm. But we do not have enough money anyway, so you try to layer in the best price support you can for the first increment of production; and the effect of that is to provide the bulk of the benefits to family sized operations.

Now, we hope in the coming 3 or 4 weeks, in the time that is critical for the future of the new 5-year farm bill, that we can find a critical mass between Republicans and Democrats, all of whom, hopefully, will come together to get a network of family farms in this farm bill. And we hope we can do that.

There are some in this Congress who are willing to wave the white flag of surrender and say, "We give up. It cannot be done." What they do is consign rural counties in this country to economic despair and economic depression. My home county lost 20 percent of its population in the 1980's and 10 percent in the first half of the 1990's. It is shrinking like a prune. The current farm program does not work. And it is not going to help a thing by deciding to surrender and pass something called a freedom to farm act, which, as I said, is nothing more than a welcome to welfare act.

There is a better way to do this. Senator DASCHLE, myself, Senator CONRAD, Senator EXON, Senator HARKIN, and others introduced legislation today that we think puts us on the road, the right track, to deal with this country's farm problems. I hope all Members of the Senate will be able to review it and consider it as we evaluate what direction this country takes with respect to farm policy in the coming 5 years.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I make the point that there is not a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ABRAHAM). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, let me again remind my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, the managers of the Agriculture appropriations bill are on the floor. They have been on the floor throughout the day.

There are Members here who have amendments who, for some reason, are holding back offering those amendments. Let me repeat what I tried to indicate this morning, that if we can complete action on the six remaining appropriations bills this week and by the 30th of next week, by next Saturday, a week from this coming Saturday, we would, I think, be prepared to take the next week off, plus Columbus Day.

That is if we complete action on the appropriations. I do not mean complete the conference but complete action in the Senate Chamber so that either will be ready for conference as soon as we return.

We are trying to avoid the so-called train wreck come October 1, which I think can be avoided fairly easily.

I know some of my colleagues are around but they just have not come to the floor. It is very difficult for the managers to proceed with the bill.

If we finish this bill, this will be No. 8 out of 13. Then we will move to another appropriations bill, hopefully do three this week and three next week. But the managers of the bill cannot move unless they have the cooperation from Members.

Members sometimes are hard to move, but if you intend to offer an amendment to this bill, I would say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, please cooperate. We are only trying to accommodate the requests of many, many Senators the week of October 1. But we cannot accommodate those Senators unless we have the cooperation of all of our colleagues. There will be a vote sometime this afternoon, about 5:30.

Mr. COCHRAN. If the distinguished leader would yield, I can say that we are trying to reach an agreement on a vote at a time certain later this afternoon, certainly not before 5:30.