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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 1995, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1995

The Senate met at 11 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

O God, give us the desire to do what we already know of Your will, so that we may know more of it, and make it ours. We want to be positive, open, receptive people who can receive Your guidance for each new challenge. You have shown us that discovery of Your will comes from consistent communion with You. We also know that You condition our thinking in preparation for the big decisions ahead of us in the future. Today's obedience results in tomorrow's guidance. Action is the nerve center of our spiritual life. Motivate us to do what You have shown us needs to be done in the mundane details of life so we will be prepared to discover and do Your will in momentous decisions in the future. Keep our souls fit with consistent practice of Your presence. May prayer throughout the day be as natural as breathing. We are filled with awe and wonder, gratitude and praise that You who are Creator of the universe and sovereign Lord of all nations would use us to carry out Your will in the United States. We press on with renewed commitment to serve You. In the name of our blessed Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, today the leader time has been reserved, and there will be a period for morning business until the hour of 2 p.m., this afternoon. At 2 p.m., the Senate will begin consideration of S. 1322 regarding the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel. The majority leader has previously announced that there will be no rollcall votes prior to 5 p.m., today.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—H.R. 1715

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). The clerk will read the bill.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1715) respecting the relationship between workers' compensation benefits and the benefits available under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I object to the further consideration of the bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour

of 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the Senator from Mississippi [Mr. COCHRAN] is recognized to speak for up to 50 minutes.

PROCESS FOR BALANCING THE BUDGET

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I understand that other Republican Senators would like to be heard this morning on the subject of the balanced budget process and our effort to get a reconciliation bill before the Senate this week for action and the general policy that we have embarked upon to try to do a better job of controlling the Federal deficit.

As part of this effort, of course, we have been trying to reduce the levels of funding in individual appropriations bills. We passed a budget resolution earlier this year. The conference report was agreed to by both Houses of Congress setting specific targets for spending, many of which are below last year's levels of funding for the operations of the Federal Government.

Let me give you one example of the success that we have achieved to date. And I am confident that more success will be achieved as we go through the balance of this legislative session.

The President signed a bill on Saturday appropriating funds for the Department of Agriculture and related agencies. This is the fiscal year 1996 appropriations bill that had previously been

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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passed by the Congress. This bill represents, first of all, successful negotiation with the administration over what had been some very contentious issues. We were able to work with our colleagues in the House and here in the Senate, on both sides of the aisle, to work out an agreed-upon bill which was passed here in the Senate, Senators may recall, with only three dissenting votes.

This bill provides funding at a level over \$5 billion less than the level of funding that was made available for this Department and these agencies for the fiscal year that ended on September 30. That shows remarkable restraint because many of the programs funded in that bill are mandatory programs, the programs that we will have to deal with when we take up the reconciliation bill later this week.

My recollection is that funding level for the bill was about \$63 billion. And of that amount, some \$50 billion was required to be funded by law: entitlement programs, reimbursements to the Commodity Credit Corporation for net realized losses, food stamp benefits that are made available to those who are entitled under the definition of the law of statutes to certain levels of food assistance. The qualifications for those benefits are set out in other laws, not the appropriations bill.

And so I am using this as an illustration to describe why it is so important if we are to continue to achieve reductions in spending in later years for us to take up and pass the budget reconciliation bill which does make changes in the eligibility for Government resources and funds under the definition of statutory law.

The amount of funds provided in the Agriculture appropriations bill for the discretionary funding programs amounted to only about \$13 billion of the total \$63 billion included in that bill. So even if we did not appropriate any money for the discretionary programs funded in that bill, next year or the next there would still be required to be spent by the Government way more than half, more than two-thirds of the total funds appropriated in that bill. That is true not only of that appropriations bill, but many others like it.

I am very glad the President signed the bill and that we were able to successfully negotiate our way through the process so that we could get a bill passed by this Congress that could be signed by the President and that does carry out the directive of the congressional budget resolution to cut spending, to try to do with less, to try to make do with less money than we have in the past for many of these programs. But we were restricted and restrained because of the provisions of law in most of the accounts that are funded in that bill.

So, to take care of that problem, to address that need, to deal with the realities facing this Congress on how we approach the challenge of reductions in

spending to achieve a balanced budget, we have to make changes in the law which qualify individuals and other entities for Federal dollars every year.

The reconciliation bill carries out that important requirement by assembling a package of changes from every legislative committee in the Congress, which will, if passed and signed by the President, reduce the costs of Federal programs over the next 7 years to the extent that by the year 2002 we not only will have a balanced budget, but we will have a surplus in the annual operating budget of the Federal Government.

That is the plan. That is the purpose of the passage of the reconciliation bill, and also the adoption of the individual appropriations bills as we are taking them up now in a process, as a part of a plan, that will meet the challenge of developing a new policy of fiscal responsibility at the Federal level.

This is the change, I am convinced, Mr. President, that the American people voted for in the last election. It is the change that President Clinton ran on when he was elected President, but he did not do anything after he was elected President to force the changes that we are now requiring under the budget reconciliation and budget process that has been adopted by the Republican Congress.

So we are trying to deliver on the promise President Clinton made when he ran and also deliver on the promises that were made by those who were candidates for Congress in the House and the Senate in the last election, and we are making progress. That is the point.

This Agriculture appropriations conference report that we adopted and the bill that was signed on Saturday by President Clinton shows that we can deliver on the promise to cut spending, to be more responsible, to make tough choices. We would like to be able to appropriate more money for the funding of programs under the jurisdiction of that committee, but we were confronted with the reality of a \$200 billion operating deficit in the last fiscal year and a budget that recommended the same thing for next year, and that was intolerable.

The Congress decided, when it adopted the resolution on the budget, that it was intolerable, and so we changed that policy and determined that we would bring the deficit down. We started doing it, and I am proud of the Congress for taking up the challenge and delivering on the promises. I hope we can continue to carry through with this kind of momentum until we achieve the success that the American people deserve and want and achieve a balanced budget by the year 2002.

Mr. President, I know there are a number of Senators on our side who indicated an interest in speaking on this and related subjects. I am happy to yield the floor so that Senators can be recognized under the previous order.

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, let me, first of all, thank my colleague from Mississippi for the work he has done, as have many on this side of the aisle, to bring about this Budget Reconciliation Act that we will be debating later on this week that is so critical to the economic viability of our country.

For this Senator, it is absolutely exciting to stand on the floor and speak the words "balanced budget," and, for the first time in all of the years that I have had the privilege of serving my State, for those words to actually mean something.

Starting in the early eighties, I and others, when I was serving in the House, began a movement that went nationwide to bring about a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. We knew that the Congress could not control or curb its spending appetite, and, of course, history proves that we were somewhat right. It was not until the American people spoke so loudly last year on the issue of debt and deficit that finally this Congress got the message, and the message was: Stop spending, control the fiscal purse strings of our Government, and bring about a balanced budget.

Of course, as most of us know—and the public was watching—we missed by one vote in producing a balanced budget amendment for the citizens of this country to consider, which would really then put ourselves on a path toward a balanced budget.

Over the course of the last 6 months, all of the appropriate committees have worked hard to produce a responsible document that we could honestly turn to the American people and say, "We are speaking to your wishes. More importantly, we are speaking to what you told us to do last November, and that was to bring about a balanced budget."

We will begin debate later this week on the Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act of 1995, and it does some very, very profound and important things for this country. But more importantly, it does some important things for our Government. It puts goals in place, it puts parameters into a dynamic process that cause this Congress to be the fiscally responsible Congress that the American people have so demanded for way too long.

My colleague from Mississippi began to outline the kinds of efforts that are incorporated in this critical piece of legislation that bring together all of the efforts of this Congress over the last good many months into a final document that will submit to the President a process and a procedure that brings us to a balanced budget by the year 2002.

The thing that I find most important about it is that while we were debating the balanced budget amendment, those from the other side cried and pleaded with the American people that Republicans were only going to balance the budget on the backs of the elderly and