

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is their objection to the original request by the Senator from Mississippi?

Mr. DASCHLE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is objection to both.

Objection is heard.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 123

Mr. LOTT. In light of the objection, I ask unanimous consent that the joint resolution be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is their objection? Without objection, it will be placed on the calendar.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

The distinguished minority leader is recognized.

LIMITED CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I just want to take a couple of minutes to discuss what many of us feel, that a limited continuing resolution is not an appropriate resolution of the situation before us.

This resolution does not cover the Federal Housing Administration, and, yet, the shutdown of the Federal Housing Administration has blocked home ownership for literally thousands each and every day. On an average day, the Federal Housing Administration processes 2,500 home purchases and refinancing applications totaling \$200 million with the mortgage loans for moderate- and low-income working families.

This resolution would do nothing to ensure the resumption of the financing of small businesses. On an average day, over 260 small businesses receive the SBA guaranteed financing. Thus far, more than \$40 million in loans have been delayed or forfeited as a result of the shutdown.

Another shutdown this resolution does not address—would not affect—is the shutdown on exports this country attempts to ship each and every day. On an average day over 30 export licenses valued at over \$30 million are approved by the Bureau of Export Administration.

The resolution does not address Head Start. Yet, if the shutdown continues much longer, 60,000 Head Start children will lose services each day, and 11,000 Head Start staff will do without funding.

This resolution is a holiday for deadbeat dads. Those who are not living up to their responsibilities as fathers do not need to fear collection attempts,

for the Federal Parent Locator Services which averaged 20,000 new cases a day is closed. The resolution does not affect that.

The resolution does not address the halt in tourism in and around national parks. Yet, on an average day, 726,000 people visit national park service facilities. With parks closed down, the public inconvenienced, business is lost in the surrounding communities.

The resolution offered today does not address the critical health care needs served by the National Institutes of Health, which provide advice to doctors and patients and the latest treatments available for serious illnesses. No new patients are being enrolled in research projects at the NIH Clinical Center. An average of 170 new patients per week were enrolled in these projects up until the time we saw the Government shut down.

The resolution does not allow for the pursuit of new medical fraud and abuse cases. On an average day, 100 calls from public sources reporting fraud and abuse are normally referred to the Office of Inspector General for further investigation. That has been completely shut down.

There has been a shutdown of projects and activities of the FBI, the Border Patrol, and other Federal law enforcement agencies. This resolution does not address that.

Finally, it does not address the shutdown of the Consumer Product Safety Commission work. Yet, in an average week, 20,000 toys are taken off the shelves because they are dangerous for children.

The point, Mr. President, is pretty simple. Obviously, we are concerned about the need to address all agencies of Government, all important services. We want to ensure that we are not balkanizing Government. Already, through the House's passage of this resolution and the refusal to pass a clean short-term budget, we are pitting one agency against another.

I think we have to come to an understanding that Government is important, and all these important services ought to be funded, not just some of them. We have been asked by the House to abandon that principle and provide funding for Government on a piecemeal basis. There is a regular appropriations process. Today, the President is going to sign the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill, and the legislative branch appropriations bill. The more appropriations bills we can send on to the President, the less we are going to need this balkanized approach to a continuing resolution.

Let us pass a straightforward continuing resolution. Let us take the riders off. Let us get the job done. Let us ensure that at some time in the not too distant future we can get on with dealing with the fundamental issue before this Congress, and that is a reconciliation bill: a comprehensive budget that balances the budget and reflects the true values and priorities of the Amer-

ican people—not the plan to devastate Medicare and Medicaid to pay for tax breaks for people who do not need them. Now that the reconciliation bill has passed, there is even less reason for a Government shutdown. The reconciliation bill should be sent to the President for its inevitable veto so we can get on with the real negotiations. I am hopeful that we can get to those essential negotiations and enact such a budget in the not too distant future.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to take a minute just to review the situation. First of all, there would be no shutdown of Government at all if the President had signed the continuing resolution that was sent to him last week, one that did include language for a balanced budget in 7 years, and by allowing this continued spending to go forward it would have opened the Government.

Second, there is another continuing resolution that has passed by a wide margin in the House and in the Senate—by 60 votes in the Senate, with some other Senators indicating they really would like to vote for it. We have that resolution ready to go to the President, but he said no, he will not sign that either.

That resolution is very simple, and it did not have any of the riders that had been objected to earlier. It says we will have a balanced budget in 7 years as certified by the Congressional Budget Office, which is what the President had called for in 1993, and it did allow for continuing of the spending at the lower of the House-Senate or current level and even the programs that had been zeroed by the Congress would be funded at 60 percent—more than a 50-50 split with the President.

So that has not been sent to the President yet because he indicated he would not sign it. But perhaps he will think better of it and indicate maybe later on today or tomorrow that he would sign it, and we could send that right down, he could sign that tomorrow afternoon or Monday morning and get the Government back to work, and we could get on to the serious business of the balanced budget that we are committed to, that this body voted for just last night and that we have been working on all year.

Now, I think also you need to emphasize here what was just objected to. This is a short or small continuing resolution that will allow the opening of Social Security, veterans and Medicare offices. Who is against that? The Senator just objected to us getting those very important offices open and working on Monday morning. Surely—

Mr. DASCHLE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. LOTT. There would be no objection to it. Let me continue, if I could, and I will yield.

We could get those offices open, and then perhaps there are some other areas where we could pass some other

continuing resolution that would perhaps address the concerns of the Defense Department. Hopefully, that will not be necessary because not only has the President been sent today from the Congress the Department of Treasury and Postal Service appropriations bills, which he indicated perhaps he will sign, I believe, and the legislative appropriations bill, which he indicated maybe he will sign, we also sent him a very important, very large Department of Defense appropriations bill. If he will sign that bill, then all of the Defense Department, our defense people can go back to work.

This is not an indication that this is all we should do or can do or will do. We are just saying that we would like for the Social Security offices, the veterans offices and the Medicare offices to be open. I do not think any Senator wants to object to that.

So we put it on the calendar, and we will have a chance, I am sure, to vote on it at some subsequent point. If I could just make one more point, and then I will yield to the Senator's response, if he feels so inclined.

What is really at stake here? There is a continuing effort by the President to get a continuing spending resolution. The President wants more spending available to him. What we are trying to get is a commitment to the balanced budget in 7 years with honest numbers. That is all we are trying to accomplish.

Now, discussions continue, are underway. There have been conversations today across the aisle with both sides of the Congress and with the White House. I am hopeful that something could be worked out where the President can agree to the 7-year balanced budget as certified by the Congressional Budget Office so we can make sure the numbers are allowed, and maybe that will happen. There are a number of ways that we can continue to work together and get the Government open. Certainly we should get these very important offices open on Monday. The House has already voted that way.

I would be glad to yield to the leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank my friend for yielding. I would just ask the distinguished Senator from Mississippi, my friend, whether he is aware that the President has already made an announcement that all of those people will be going back to work on Monday, making the resolution as he has proposed it unnecessary?

The second question I would ask is, why, even if he thought it was necessary—perhaps he was not aware of the President's announcement—why would he feel the need to open the offices in Social Security and other branches and maintain closure of small business offices around the country, the Federal Housing Administration? Why would he see the need to keep the National Institutes of Health and a number of other Federal agencies that I would think he would view as equally important, closed down? What I tried

to do in my subsequent unanimous consent agreement, to which the Senator objected, was to open those offices, too. How does the Senator draw the distinction?

Mr. LOTT. If the President as a matter of fact has been moving to open these offices, certainly it makes good sense to me that the Congress would concur and put that into law. But I might respond to the Senator, why did the President stop with these offices? Why did he not go further? Every one of these things cut both ways.

I think it is important to note that the other side of the aisle has objected to moving to this targeted continuing resolution. This bill would provide sufficient funding—until the relevant appropriations bills are signed into law, or if necessary, for the remainder of FY96—to allow HCFA to pay claims filed by Medicare contractors, the Social Security Administration to meet its administrative expenses, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to process and disburse veterans compensation, pensions, and dependency and indemnity compensation payments. The minority leader points out that the President has sent an Executive order sending many of these workers back to work; however, it is important to note that the President's Executive order does not provide funding for these employees. This, I believe, is a very important distinction.

I think what we need to do is quit arguing about what should be open and what should not be open, get an agreement to do that, and get a commitment to a 7-year balanced budget with honest numbers. That is what really is at stake, and we are hopefully very close.

The leader, I believe, has had indications by many Members on his side they want a 7-year balanced budget. The ranking member on the Budget Committee in the House indicated that he supports that. I think there is growing support in the Congress to get that commitment agreed to, go with honest numbers and pass a continuing resolution that will allow the spending to continue while we get a way to control the budget that has been out of control for 30 years.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me just respond, and I know others seek the floor, so I will not belabor this point. This issue is not about a 7-year balanced budget. The Senator from Mississippi knows it. This issue is about whether or not we can make Government function while we debate the critical issues behind the issue of a 7-year balanced budget. I think we could get broad-based support for a 7-year balanced budget if we could also get broad-based support for what that means—what the budgetary values priorities defining that budget are.

What does it mean? What so many on the other side seem to be arguing is that we have to come to the bottom

line before we know what the components are. If the Senator will tell me exactly what the tax cut figure will be, exactly what the growth assumptions will be, exactly what all the cuts in entitlements will be, exactly what we can anticipate in terms of freezes on discretionary spending, then we can probably get some better appreciation of whether it is going to take 7 years or 8 years or what. Seven years is fine with most of us, 5 years, 4 years might work, depending on the assumptions and priorities entailed, but that is not the issue. We have to consider all the components of the budget as we debate this issue.

The real debate will begin almost immediately because the President will be vetoing the reconciliation bill that we passed last night. So we are left now with the realization that if we are serious about doing this the right and responsible way, we need to put the rhetoric aside and get down to making some very tough decisions about whether we can do all that everybody says they want to do in 7 years. We better start negotiating for real on that reconciliation bill. That is the issue. The continuing resolution debate ought to be behind us because that really should not going be the issue any longer.

The issue is, can we seriously debate our goals in reconciliation. If we can do that, if we can sit down in a bipartisan way, then I believe we can accomplish our task. But the longer we debate this continuing resolution, the longer we decide we have yet another iteration, another alternative, another way to play political games with a document that ought to fund Government for whatever length of time it is going to take to get the real job done, the less the real job is a real possibility.

So I hope that we could both agree to that. I will agree with what the Senator said about the ongoing effort to try to resolve this matter.

I must really commend him and Senator DOMENICI, the distinguished Senator from New Mexico, the chair of the Budget Committee, and others who have been working diligently all day long in an effort to find some resolution. I think we are very close on our side. I wish I could say the same for those on the other side. But I do commend them for their work and their effort. I know it is still ongoing. And I hope, even though the odds seem to be diminishing, I hope at some point, even yet today, we could find some resolution. I yield the floor.

THE BALANCED BUDGET ACT

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I wanted to take a few minutes today to address a few specifics of the Balanced Budget Act passed yesterday by this Chamber. With the time available today, I wanted to offer a few specific thoughts on the agriculture provisions contained in the conference report.

As I have said on previous occasions during this debate, the balanced budget