

the pendulum is going to swing too far to the other side, and that is the danger in labor/management relations in this country. It is a danger for Bridgestone/Firestone.

I heard my colleague from Iowa say the other day that he would not buy any Firestone tires. Believe me, I am certainly not going to buy any Firestone tires, and I think there are going to be a lot of people in the United States who are going to feel the same way.

The sensible thing is to sit down and negotiate. I have, Mr. President, over the years been involved in some labor/management negotiations. Sometimes it gets tough, but getting people together around a table, sooner or later—a little bit like a conference committee between the House and the Senate—sooner or later you get something worked out. That is what Bridgestone/Firestone should do, not dismiss 2,300 employees. They ought to sit down and try to work things out. That is the American tradition.

I note that the Wall Street Journal, in an article about the chief executive of Bridgestone, refers to him as a bulldog, that he is a born gambler. Well, he is gambling with something that is very important. He is gambling with his company's future. He is gambling with labor/management relations in this country. He is gambling with the lives of 2,300 workers and their families. I hope common sense prevails, and I hope the Japanese Prime Minister gets the message that we who have spoken on the floor of the Senate have nothing but good will toward Japan. I respect that country. I might add, I grew up in the State of Oregon—something I do not stress in the State of Illinois—but I grew up in the State of Oregon. My father was a Lutheran minister and, in 1942, stood up when Japanese-Americans were taken away from the west coast. That was my first real experience in civil rights. I was 13 years old then. I remember the hostility that my father received on that occasion.

I do not want to sour United States-Japan relations. I want an improved relationship. I think the Japanese Prime Minister would be wise to get a message to the chief executive of Bridgestone: sit down and try to iron this thing out.

I yield back my time to my colleague. And, again, I thank him for his leadership on this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Six and a half minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Illinois, again, for his strong support for trying to inject some sanity and some reasonableness into these negotiations to try to settle this strike at Bridgestone/Firestone.

I want to say to my friends, whether they are watching in the Japanese Embassy, or to Prime Minister Murayama, I want to echo what Senator SIMON said. The vast majority of Japanese companies operating in this country operate in a highly responsible, effective, compassionate manner with their workers. I have seen many of them and, in many cases, the workers are happier there than perhaps they are at other companies that are not Japanese.

I do not want to cast Bridgestone's actions as something true of every Japanese company. That is not true. Senator SIMON is right on the mark with that. For some reason, this seems to be some kind of a rogue company. But it is always that bad apple that can spoil the barrel, and that is what Bridgestone/Firestone is going to do. They are going to color with their insensitive, outrageous behavior all the other fine Japanese corporations that are doing a good job in this country. I would hate to see that happen. I know the Senator from Illinois would hate to see that happen, too.

That is the message, I think, that we want the Japanese Prime Minister to take back with him. It is not just this one company and you can ignore it. This will have ramifications over and beyond just that one company.

Mr. President, I read from the letter from Sherrie Wallace who worked at Firestone 33 years. Her husband also worked there. Let me read one final paragraph. I will not read the whole letter. She said:

You see, we are one of those families that both husband and wife work at Bridgestone/Firestone in Des Moines, IA. We both have lost our jobs, our benefits and our livelihood. We have had days and nights of no sleep, wondering where our life is heading. Trying to keep the "American Dream" alive with dignity, conviction to stand up for what you believe in and hope.

Please hear our plead for help. * * * Over 25,000 employees, spouses and children will be affected by this one * * * incident.

So, Mr. President, I hope that the Japanese Prime Minister will heed this.

As I pointed out last year, Goodyear Tire and Rubber reached an agreement with its workers, and they were chosen to set the pattern for the industry. Well, they did. Now Bridgestone/Firestone has come in and said they want to break that pattern.

One can understand if, in fact, the workers are not productive, but as Sherrie Wallace pointed out in her letter, they have become highly productive. In fact, in March 1994, workers at Bridgestone/Firestone U.S. reached a new high of 80.5 pounds per man-hour and set an all-time record for pounds warehoused, and the company boasts that it did it with 600 fewer workers.

So it is not a problem of either they are not making money or that the workers are not productive. Just the opposite is true.

What Bridgestone/Firestone is saying effectively is that their workers are no more than pieces of machinery, to be

used, depreciated and then thrown out on the trash heap without any concern for their families or years of service.

But there is an option, and let this be the final warning to Bridgestone/Firestone. I will read a letter to the editor of the Des Moines Register by a farmer by the name of Joe Weisshaar:

A quick inventory tells me that my tractors, trucks, wagons, combine and cars roll on more than 140 tires. My vow to Bridgestone/Firestone is that if this strike is not settled within 30 days, I will never buy another tire made by them.

That is just one farmer's view from the State of Iowa.

I guess that ought to be the message sent to Bridgestone/Firestone. Our consumers have a choice, and if we have to and if Bridgestone/Firestone will not settle this in a decent manner, if they will not sit down, if they will not even speak to the Secretary of Labor, then maybe what the people of this country ought to do is just start rolling along another brand of tires. And Bridgestone-Firestone ought to know that we have that option.

So, Mr. President, I urge the Japanese Prime Minister to take the message we are sending back to the head of Bridgestone/Firestone, urge him to reconsider his unfortunate decision, and to reopen in good faith negotiations with their workers. It would not only be in the best interests of the workers and their families and communities, but also the relations between our nations and the good will that is so important to maintain.

Mr. President, I yield back whatever time I have. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we will soon in this Chamber turn to unfunded mandates bill, which is a piece of legislation that has been worked on by the Governmental Affairs Committee and by many Members of this Chamber. I wanted today to say a few words about that legislation to try to indicate why I support generally the subject, why I have worked on it in the Governmental Affairs Committee, and why I think it is important that we pass the legislation, but also why I think at the same time we ought to talk about all dimensions of this issue and why I intend to offer several amendments to it.

First of all, it is absolutely true that it has been far too easy for Members of

the House and the Senate to decide that they want to offer amendments that will require someone out there in the country to do something, most specifically a State and local government, but also the private sector, without any given thought about how much the mandate would cost. Too often, we overlook the questions of what kind of problems the mandate could cause, how heavy the burden will be, and on whom will it fall.

Too often it has been easy to say "Here is what we impose, and you worry about the rest of it. You worry about what it is going to cost."

Well, this legislation simply says that when we are prepared to impose a mandate, we ought to be responsible enough to understand what it imposes on someone. What is the cost going to be?

Then, if we impose a mandate on State and local government, we ought to say, "Here are the resources with which you can do it."

Senator DOMENICI and I wrote in this legislation provisions that also include the private sector. It is not just mayors and Governors who are concerned about mandates. What about the private sector? What about the businessman and business woman who also get socked with mandates? So there is in this legislation language which Senator DOMENICI and I wrote that includes the private sector. We provide that you must, when you bring legislation to the floor of the Senate, have with that legislation an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office of what this is going to cost the private sector.

Let us vote with full information. Let us vote with more information than we have ever had in the past to understand what we are doing and what burdens our laws are imposing on people around this country.

Some will, I suppose, support this legislation in a manner designed to suggest that everything Government does is largely unworthy. I do not believe that. We have done a lot of things, including imposing some mandates that are worthy and important and that I would vote for again and again and again. Would anyone here reasonably suggest that we should not have passed the Voting Rights Act? I do not think so. That imposed a mandate, and it was perfectly legitimate. It was our responsibility to do it. We did it, and I am proud of it. I can give you other examples.

My point is that some mandates are important. Some mandates we ought to impose. I can tell you one I would like to see imposed. I have been trying for years. Hopefully, I will get it done. I do not think it is going to cost anybody very much. Do you know there are nine States in this country where you can get behind the wheel of your car and, with your right hand, put the key in the ignition and, with the left hand, hold a bottle of Wild Turkey or Old Crow or your favorite brand of whiskey

and drive down the street drinking whiskey, and do so within the law?

In my country, I hope that will not last very long. There is not a State in this country that ought to allow drinking and driving. Nine of them do. At least nine of them do not have laws prohibiting open containers in vehicles or prohibiting the driver from drinking. I would like to mandate in every State in this country that no matter where you are driving with your family on vacation, you know you are not going to cross a State line and find in the next State that someone is drinking whiskey and driving, or drinking beer and driving, and turning into a murderer because the driver is drunk.

I would like to mandate that, and I have been trying. I have not been successful, but someday I am going to. I do not think it is going to cost the States that do not have this law a lot of money to decide they should comply with a reasonable mandate that you ought not drink and drive in this country.

I indicated over in the Governmental Affairs Committee that trouble runs on a two-way street in this country on the subject of mandates, and I said to State and local folks who testified that I support this legislation for the reasons I have just described now here on the floor of the Senate. But I also said as I participate in efforts to reform the way the Federal Government does business, we should and we will—and this bill will pass and will pass with my vote—require State and local governments to participate in reform as well. Mandates are a two-way street. Even as we talk about the burdens we impose upon them, there are officials out in other levels of government—Governors and others—who are plotting new ways they can hook their hose to the Federal tank and suck more Federal dollars out of the Federal tank; how can they get more Federal dollars?

I will tell you one way. They have decided to concoct phony schemes for provider taxes in Medicaid. Some states tax their health care providers, which brings in more Federal Medicaid dollars. Then these states reimburse their health care providers. In effect really the providers have paid no tax and the only result is that the states increase the Federal deficit by sucking more money out of the Federal trough.

We are going to reform the way we do business. They ought to reform the way they do business. It is not acceptable to me to have people complaining about unfunded mandates at the State and local level and then to see them in every conceivable way line up to see how much they can pay out of the Federal trough and get more Federal moneys in their area, some of it with schemes that are fundamentally phony.

Well, my point is, yes, let us change; let all of us change, not just the Federal Government but State and local government as well. The fact is we send a substantial amount of money back to State and local governments, some of

it with no strings. I could give a list of programs for which we send billions, literally tens of billions of dollars, back to State and local governments in which they have the control over the spending and in which there are very few mandates, and in some cases none.

And I think, again, this is a two-way street. We need to work together. Let us try to stop imposing unreasonable burdens on each other, and let us all act responsibly and all construct the kind of behavior in Government that the American taxpayers expect us to have.

The legislation itself is good. There are a number of questions that will be asked about it that I think ought to be answered, and some were not answered in the Governmental Affairs Committee. It is reasonable for us to understand exactly what we are doing even now, as we deal with mandates. So there are a lot of questions. But when all the dust settles and the questions are answered, this legislation, I think, will be improved by some amendments. Then the legislation will pass, and it will pass with my vote because I have helped write part of it, especially including the private sector. But I am going to offer a couple of amendments. Let me describe the three of them.

One is, there is a commission described in this legislation to do some studying. It is a new commission. We do not need a new commission. The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, ACIR, which has existed for a long, long while—I have worked with it, in fact I was appointed to serve on it a couple of years ago—is a commission existing to do precisely these kinds of things. We do not need to construct or produce a new commission. Let us use the commission that exists. In fact, the ACIR was the commission in this legislation up until a few weeks ago and was replaced for reasons I do not understand. So I will offer an amendment to place it back in the legislation.

Next, I am going to offer an amendment that deals with a mandate that sort of gets under my skin. We have a metric conversion act in this country. We are forcing America to go metric. It is not that I am living in the last century. It is not that I am backward. It is not that I fail to understand. I have nothing against metric. I do not happen to care how many kilometers it is to the next rest stop. So I do not want them taking down the highway signs telling me how many miles it is and putting up signs telling me how many kilometers it is. It does not matter to me. I want to know how long it takes to get there, and I guess I can best measure that by seeing how many miles it is.

We do not need a Metric Conversion Act that we enforce through the Federal Government, through the Department of Transportation, that will take down all those green highway signs on the interstate and replace miles with kilometers. It is a terrible waste of

money. But more than that, in the deep recesses of the bureaucracy, in every agency, there is some metric conversion enforcement officer who is now busy at work, scurrying somewhere underneath a pile of paper, trying to figure out how to mess up the next project.

In North Dakota, we are going to try to build 20 little houses up on an Indian reservation to house Indian Health Service workers. Do you know what? Those 20 houses are held up. Do you know why? Because they have to be built under the metric system; metrification. Twenty houses have to be built under the metric system. I have been trying for 3 months to get a waiver. You cannot do it. The bureaucracy simply does not bend.

I am going to offer an amendment that says let us suspend for 2 years the enforcement of the Metric Conversion Act. Just suspend the enforcement of it. Then let us have this commission that is going to study the other things get back to us and tell us what the Metric Conversion Act is costing us and why. Of what value is it to build a house using metric? It is more expensive and takes longer in the planning. This makes no sense to me. I am going to offer an amendment, and I hope we add it to this bill, that we suspend for 2 years the enforcement of the Metric Act while the study is done, the study which I hope will then convince us we ought not to be doing this.

Yes, parts of the private sector are going metric because if you want to compete in certain areas overseas you ought to do it in metric measurements. The automobile industry does that when they send cars overseas. I see nothing wrong with that. But we do not have to use metric when we want to build a house on an Indian reservation. That makes no sense to me.

I am going to offer another amendment, on the Federal Reserve Board. The Federal Reserve Board imposes the ultimate mandate. In fact, I think next week they will decide once again—closing their doors and in secret with their brethren, the banking community, the central bankers—decide to increase interest rates. And they will increase the cost of paying for the Federal debt by the Federal Government. They will increase the cost for State and local governments, and more important, they will increase costs on every American citizen. That is mandated. They are going to mandate an increase in interest rates that will cost every American citizen additional money.

So I am going to offer an amendment that is very simple but will give them an apoplectic seizure, I am sure, because even if you suggest somehow that they are maybe a part of America and we ought to understand what they are doing behind those closed doors, they say you are Fed bashing. I am not Fed bashing. But I am going to offer an amendment that says when the Federal Reserve Board meets in secret to decide once again they want to increase

interest rates, within 30 days of that decision they must send a report to Congress and a report to the President that tells us how much that action cost us, what it cost the Federal Government in increased debt service.

Incidentally, the Fed's actions last year—again in secret, by the Fed, the central bankers who control the money supply—their actions last year increased the cost of debt service over the coming 5 years by nearly \$125 billion. In other words, they, by their decisions, took back nearly one-fourth of the deficit reduction savings that we agonized over and debated and wrestled over here on the floor of the Senate for months the year before. They did not wrestle. They did not debate much. Actually, we do not know that because the door was closed. But I assume they reached a consensus very quickly on behalf of their constituencies. They took back, by their action to increase interest rates, about \$125 billion in deficit reduction. Said another way, they took action to increase the Federal deficit by \$125 billion because they increased the cost of paying for the Federal debt. But it was more than that. They increased the cost of home payments for people who have adjustable rate mortgages.

My point is this. When the Federal Reserve Board meets and decides it is going to mandate another interest rate increase, I just say, within 30 days you have a responsibility to tell us and tell the President what this increase will cost. The reason I make this suggestion is that I asked at a recent hearing of Federal officials what did this cost, your five or six interest rate increases last year? Do you know what was the cost of it, and who is going to pay it? They had not studied it.

So I am saying I would like the Fed to study it and give us a report. I will offer that amendment as well to this legislation, and I hope that some of my colleagues will support that and that we could add that provision to the unfunded mandates bill.

Let me finish where I began on this subject. This is a piece of legislation that I believe will be supported by substantial numbers in both political parties. Most of us understand it has been too easy to impose mandates on others, both State and local governments and, also, the private sector. There are mandates that are important, necessary, and which I support. We would not want, I believe, in this country, to decide we will retreat on the question of child labor. We have child labor laws prohibiting the hiring of 12-year-olds and paying them 12 cents an hour. We would not want to retreat on that. We would not want to retreat on the issues of worker safety. Should we have a safe workplace? Should we have child labor laws? There are dozens and dozens of things that we have done that helped create a better country. They are important and they have been in mandates.

But in recent years it has been too easy. In recent years there has been a call for us to be more responsible, and that is what this legislation says. Let us understand what this mandate is, who it costs and what it costs. If we do understand, we will make this Senate a better legislative body.

I hope that next week when we really debate this bill, Senators will not tell us that this bill is just the way it has to be as it comes out of committee and that they oppose all amendments. This bill is not perfect. I helped work on it and I know it is not perfect, and that is why I think we ought to have a free and open exchange, agree to some amendments where amendments have merit, and get this bill ready for final passage. We will have accomplished something together as Republicans and Democrats, and we will be responding to what I think is a real problem.

Mr. President, with that I yield the floor, and I make a point of order a quorum is not present.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOTE

Due to a printing error, the following statement from the RECORD of January 10 is reprinted in correct form at this point.

A MAN OF MANY TALENTS— SENATOR BENNETT JOHNSTON

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, Madison in the Federalist No. 53 states, in part, as follows:

No man can be a competent legislator who does not add to an upright intention and a sound judgment a certain degree of knowledge of the subjects on which he is to legislate. A part of this knowledge may be acquired by means of information which lie within the compass of men in private as well as public stations. Another part can only be attained, or at least thoroughly attained, by actual experience in the station which requires the use of it.

In the same Federalist paper, Madison writes as follows:

A few of the members, as happens in all such assemblies, will possess superior talents; will, by frequent reelections, become members of long standing; will be thoroughly masters of the public business, and perhaps not unwilling to avail themselves of those advantages. The greater the proportion of new members and the less the information of the bulk of the members, the more apt will they be to fall into the snares that may be laid for them.

Mr. President, I speak today of a Senator who has demonstrated superior talents, a Senator with 22 years of experience in this body—Madison, having referred to men of "superior talents" and also to the advantages of