

trade; Kate DeRemer for her outstanding work on the research title; Brooks Preston for all that he has done for the environment and for forestry; Nick Johnson for his very hard work on rural development. Diane Coates, Kevin Flynn, and Rob Headberg, for all that they have done. Gary Endicott and Tom Cole at the legislative counsel. I would especially like to thank Ed Barron, the Democratic chief of staff, and Jim Cubie, our chief counsel, who I think have not been to bed in several days.

I would say, if any members of their family are watching, I know exactly where they were. They were here all the time, chained to their desks but helping us go through. And also I give my personal thanks to my chief of staff, Luke Albee, who worked so hard with them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the committee for his outstanding job, Chairman LUGAR, and the ranking member's equally outstanding job, Senator LEAHY. They have worked a long time. This is a bipartisan bill. There were 20 Democrats, 44 Republicans who voted "aye" on final passage.

I believe there is enough flexibility. The President would certainly be inclined to sign this bill. I hope he might announce that this weekend when he is in Iowa. I think it will be very well received there.

This has been a long process. There were a lot of frustrating moments for all of us. But, just as farming requires patience and perseverance, so does passing farm legislation. It is always very difficult. There are so many issues involved, so many different commodities and so many different regional interests and State interests, it is hard to put a package together that satisfies everyone.

But I believe this is really a historic change, some would say the biggest change we have had in agriculture since the 1930's when Henry Wallace was Secretary of Agriculture. It seems to me we have made that because we have had this bipartisan cooperation.

I thank the Democratic leader, too, Senator DASCHLE, for working out, last night, an agreement which permitted us to vote at precisely 4:45. That is when we promised our colleagues we would vote and that is when the vote started.

Farmers will finally plant for the market and not the Government. The Government is going to get out of the supply control business.

We can take pride this bill is also good for the environment. The Conservation Reserve Program is reauthorized. A new program, the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, is included to provide farmers and ranchers a cost-share program as they work to develop ways to manage their farming operations. No doubt about it, another big winner in this legislation is the American taxpayer.

There is some concern about the transition payments. That has been expressed time after time. I believe we need now to make certain this is going to work so we do not have these stories appearing that somebody had a big crop and got a big payment. I think that is a very sensitive matter. But I believe, by capping entitlements, it is a sensible spending program.

It is not an end but a beginning, because there is much more we need to do to ensure survival of rural America. One is estate tax relief. I think capital gains tax relief is one. We need to take a look at regulation, regulatory reform.

I would just conclude by sharing a quote I read last week on the floor, the words of George Washington, over two centuries ago. He said, "I know of no pursuit in which more real and important services can be rendered to any country than by improving its agriculture." I think that is as true today as it was then. I thank all my colleagues for their patience and their support.

Again, I thank the chairman, Senator LUGAR, and Senator LEAHY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I know there are many who want to speak so I will be brief. Let me congratulate the chairman of the Agriculture Committee for the typical manner with which he has addressed this bill and this responsibility. In true fashion he has been cooperative and accommodating. I again want to publicly thank him for his effort.

Let me also thank our ranking member, Senator LEAHY, for his efforts. I appreciate very much the work of our two managers in this regard.

Working with the majority leader, we were able to accomplish what all of us said we wanted to be able to do, finish a farm bill, by a time certain, that would allow some opportunity for farmers to better understand what may be in store, what they have to decide with regard to their own management. This bill, as flawed as I believe it is, will accommodate that.

I must say, in all my time in the Senate, there has never been a time when I felt more discouraged, and frankly more concerned about the future of agriculture, the future of farm policy, than I feel this afternoon. I think the Senate has made a very tragic mistake. I think it is a mistake that will come back to haunt us. I believe we will be here again in the not too distant future addressing many of the deficiencies that this legislation represents.

Obviously, many of us feel very strongly about this. This fight is not over. We will come back. We will revisit many of these issues. We will offer amendments. We will offer additional legislation. We firmly believe we must continue to make farm policy work better than it will work if this farm legislation becomes law.

Finally, let me thank especially Tom Buis, on my staff, for the remarkable

job he has done. I do not know of anyone who has been more dedicated, or given his time and effort more generously, than has Tom over the last many days. So, I again thank him, and thank our colleagues for the work that we have done today in spite of the fact that I am so disappointed with the outcome.

I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business.

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

THE SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I just want to make a few remarks about the recess. In fact, we are going on a vacation period when we have not even come close to completing the work of the U.S. Senate. I do not know whether people realize it, but if they look at the calendar they will see that we are into the middle of February. I do not think they realize what a short time period we have left to do the business of the Senate for this year in 1996. This year there are political party nominating conventions, and we will adjourn before the November elections. We will not come back in after the elections because that is just a lame duck session.

In effect we are saddled with getting everything done between now and the convention time. If you consider our sine die adjournment which is scheduled for October 4, and take out the normal holiday periods of Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, August recess, and Labor Day, we have about 85 legislative working days left. And if we go on our normal 4-day week schedule where we do not come in until Monday noon and go out by Friday noon, which makes about a 4-day workweek, it means we have a total of about 65 working days left in this legislative year.

I do not think people realize how tight we are on time. We have not even begun to complete the work of last year yet. We have five appropriations bills—VA-HUD appropriations, Commerce, State, Justice appropriations, Interior appropriations, Labor-HHS appropriations, and D.C. appropriations. In addition to that, we had hoped to have a balanced budget agreement. We had hoped to have welfare reform. We have an absolutely critical debt limit extension that has to be done so that the full faith and credit of the United States is honored around the world. That is not one that we can really put off at all.

The continuing resolution and the debt limit expire by March 15. We now are taking off 3 weeks—almost 3 weeks.

I find that unconscionable. Then we wonder why the American people have a lack of faith in their Congress to get things done for this country.

I appreciate the fact that there is a Presidential campaign on. But we need a balanced budget agreement. We want welfare reform. The debt limit absolutely has to be passed. We need health insurance reform legislation. We have a continuing resolution to provide funding for those appropriations bills not yet enacted, all of which are limping along below their normally funded levels.

Mr. President, these are the leftovers from last year. This does not even address the new authorization and appropriations bills that we have to pass in 1996 for fiscal 1997. Here we are out for approximately a 3-week period, and to avoid a vote on whether we should go out or not—we are going to have pro forma sessions; a couple of them a week in which there will be no votes. We will have morning business only. We will come in and make our speeches, and nothing else will be accomplished. I find that unconscionable.

I never said I am ashamed of the U.S. Senate. But I will tell you right at this moment I come closer to it than any other time.

Do people realize we only have some 65 to 90 legislative days this year? These are important pieces of legislation. The items that are being partially funded with the continuing resolution now are limping along, as I said. We have veterans programs that are begging right now—where veterans hospitals are not getting the funding that they should have. We are not getting the new hospitals that were promised to be built.

So we know that on February 26, we will not get anything done. Then we will have the 27th, 28th, and the 29th, and the 1st left in that week, if we work all day Friday—which is becoming rare around here. The debt limit expires on March 15 and we will actually have only somewhere around 11 or 12 days to complete the work. That will be the total time that we will have to work on the continuing resolution to provide for those five appropriations bills left over from last year. And we know from past experience that there are going to be quid pro quos all over the place on the debt limit and any CR's. We know that because that is what has happened every time they have come up this year. I think we are getting very, very short on time.

I think we should stay here. And I think we should be working at the people's business. I think we should be working around the clock on this. And I think we should be working from 9 o'clock on Monday morning until 6 o'clock Friday afternoon—which is what the people expect of us when they elected us and sent us here. They do not expect us to come in here and work 3½- or 4-day weeks and then come back home and make all sorts of excuses about why we cannot get important legislation passed. I do not think people across this country realize we are still working on last year's agenda—five appropriations bills that we do not

have done yet, and the new appropriations bills coming up this year. We only have 65 to 85 legislative days left in this year. For us to go out now for whatever purpose and for whatever reason I just think is not right.

I am sorry we were not able to have a vote on this so we could in effect hold people's feet to the fire and say, "OK. If you want to go out, at least have guts enough to vote on it." But that is not the way things work.

So we are going out. We will not have pro forma sessions next week because that is President's week. Normally there is a break here. And then the following week we will have two pro forma sessions, as I understand it; one this Friday on the 9th, and then on the 20th and the 23d but not with votes. We cannot have any votes on anything important. So we will all come in here and act like we are doing something, and we are not. I just do not think that is worthy of the people of this country who sent us here.

Mr. President, in one of these pro forma sessions I will have a great deal more to say about this. I will provide additional examples of where we are being hurt.

Weather forecasting is being degraded. Public safety is jeopardized. The National Weather Service is cutting back for lack of passing a Commerce bill. There is a whole number of things that people do not normally think about, programs funded at levels that are one-fourth reduced. Advanced Technology, the program Ounce of Prevention Council, Local Climate Change, Cops on the Beat, Drug Courts, AmeriCorps, Community Development Financial Institutions, HHS Office of Consumer Affairs—all of these are things that are being cut back now because we do not stay here and do the job we were sent here to do. I just find that unconscionable.

I am so sorry that we are not staying here to take care of these things that we thought were "must-do" legislation.

One other comment on the debt limit: Do we know what we are dealing with here? Are we to the point where Wall Street and world's financial community doubt the true faith and allegiance of the United States monetary system? Most of the nations of the world use our currency as their reserve currency. They put dollars in the bank depending on them. We put gold in the bank at one time. They put dollars in the bank. They have that kind of faith. Yet, we are going to run right up to the hilt again on this and create a lot of doubt as to whether we are going to pass a debt limit. And, if the past is any predictor of the future, we know we are going to have a lot of things attached as riders so that the House has its way on the Contract With America. I wish they had a Contract With America on how to keep faith and allegiance in our currency, and faith in our Government, because all we have been doing so far is creating doubt as to our

ability really to manage things. So I regret we are going out. I regret we are going to stop having productive sessions here. I would have much preferred that we stay here and take care of the Nation's business. It seems to me that is what we should be doing.

We will have more to say on this later, and I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. GLENN. I yield for a question.

Mr. LEVIN. First, I wish to commend the Senator for pointing out what I think is a very, very serious inadequacy, which is to leave here for almost 3 weeks when we have two major threats to this economy which are looming before us, which hang over our heads. One is the extension of the debt limit. In effect, we will be paying our obligations through March 15, but from then on there is uncertainty. And we are also operating on interim funding for critical programs including education, the environment, and a number of other programs which have had major cuts. As the Senator from Ohio has pointed out, during this interim period, a \$3 billion cut in education annualized. If that cut continues at the current level that we have through March 15, there will be a \$3 billion reduction in education programs, everything from title I to Head Start to college loan programs to school-to-work programs, and so forth.

Now, my question of our friend from Ohio is this. One of the big issues that is outstanding is whether or not we are going to extend the debt limit so we pay our obligations, just simply pay our obligations. The country has never defaulted on an obligation yet. We have always paid interest owing. But as of right now we do not know whether or not there is going to be an extension of our debt limit in time to pay our obligations or whether March 15 is going to come and go and we could default unless we extend that debt limit.

Would the Senator from Ohio agree with this, that the fact we leave this issue hanging, the fact that this uncertainty is created, and the fact that we are going out effectively for 3 weeks while this uncertainty is out there could create a major economic problem for us even if at the last minute or in the last few days before March 15 there is a satisfactory resolution; that the act of going out now with the uncertainty that will be created between now and when we effectively come back in itself is a danger even if people were confident that somehow or other between the time we come back and March 15 there would be an extension of the debt limit?

Mr. GLENN. I would answer the Senator by saying absolutely, I think there is that danger. We saw a lot of comment in the international financial press and our own domestic financial press when we extended this to March 15. There was some real concern expressed as to why March 15, why was it not longer? If we really were confident

that we were taking care of the best interests of the United States and our economy, why did we not make it longer? Why did we make it such a short period of time? The closer we get to that deadline, it seems to me, the more questions are going to be raised.

The Senator makes a very good point. If we ever had a real default, if we ever come up and really go into default, it affects our credit rating. It raises interest rates, and it would cost future taxpayers billions of dollars in higher borrowing costs. To play around with that like Russian roulette, playing with fire around gasoline on something that important for the future of this country I just think is unconscionable. I do not think we should be going out.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank my friend from Ohio for yielding. I commend him for his statement. I must say that I totally concur, that the threat of using these weapons against our own economy is a very, very dangerous thing. That threat should be removed before we go out for what amounts to a 3-week recess.

Mr. ASHCROFT addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I thank you for the opportunity to speak.

THE BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. ASHCROFT. It is a matter of interest and of concern to hear questions raised about the business of the Senate. We have much business to conduct. I should just point out that if we are worried about the cost of interest or worried about the finances of this country, if we are worried about the financial well-being of America, the full faith and credit of the United States, nothing could be more important than balancing the budget and moving this country in a fiscally responsible way toward accountability. We must cease the practice of displacing to the next generation the responsibility of paying for the programs to which we seem addicted.

We have spent a year working hard to try to do that. It is a little bit troublesome to hear individuals from the other side of the aisle suggest that the work has not been hard. It has been very hard. Last year, we voted well over 600 times. In the first 5 years of this decade we voted about 320 times on an average per year. I think if we really care about the future of this country, if we really care about interest rates, we will balance the budget. We will enact an amendment which will structurally require us to balance the budget and the full faith and credit of the United States will not be dependent upon the activities of the Senate and the House. They will be guaranteed by the structure of the Government which we have.

I believe that if we are concerned about the debt limit, we ought to take

the steps necessary to make sure we do not unreasonably incur debt and that we do not irresponsibly continue to displace the costs of those things which we seek to have to the next generation. I am perfectly willing to work hard and to stay late, and I believe we all are and we all ought to be. But we all ought also to work in good faith. When we see a bill like the farm bill come up and we see a threatened filibuster and several hundreds of amendments proposed, with a view toward making it difficult to pass and enact the measure, I think those who are concerned about the way in which we spend our time here ought to speak clearly in those instances as well. Because when we have filibustering, whether it be done formally through time spent speaking in the Chamber or through efforts to delay passage of legislation merely by proposing redundant amendments which have nothing to do with the legislation, sense-of-the-Senate amendments that are not really germane to our activities, those also impair our progress.

So I do believe that we have a great job to do. I think we have to be realistic about doing it. We have to be consistent in working toward it. We have to understand if we are, indeed, worried about the cost of interest and the cost of capital in this country and what it does to our citizens, we should understand that balancing the budget of the United States would very likely reduce the average cost of housing in this country to families by a couple thousand dollars a year, and reduce the average cost of a car loan by \$1,000 or more.

That is important. That can happen by balancing the budget. So we ought to do our work. There are tasks that have been left undone, and we must focus on them. I am eager to get them done.

I rise today to point out one of those tasks which remains undone. This task does not remain undone, however, because the Congress has failed to act. The task of welfare reform remains undone because the President of the United States has vetoed the work product of the Congress, and has preferred the status quo, a rather bankrupt welfare system, the tragedy of which is to be measured most importantly in human lives and human costs, not in terms of the actual resources in dollars and cents, although they are not inconsequential.

At the time our Republic was coming into existence, Madison envisioned, in Federalist Paper No. 57, a Congress "with a habitual recollection of their dependence on the people." He wanted Government to be dependent on the people. I am afraid we have inverted that. We have people who are now dependent upon Government. And perhaps today's business in the agricultural area was a clear indication of that—farmers who clearly would not know how to plant, could not understand whether the Government would

allow them to plant or not allow them to plant until we passed a new agriculture bill.

It is a shame that instead of having a Congress habitually aware of its dependence on the people, the people could not even do the most fundamental things that citizens are supposed to do without first looking to the Congress. I have to say that I was pleased that the agricultural act this year moves us away from that system of dependence.

It is the freedom to farm act. It begins to say to individuals, "Government will not be dictating when you plant, when you reap, whether you plant wheat or whether you plant corn, when you inhale, when you exhale. The Government does not want you dependent on Government." We need to have a farm program and a system of agriculture in America that initiates its activities based on the will, the desire, the creativity of individuals and the demands of the marketplace. So today we took a step away from dependence by the agricultural community on Government. We tried to take a step away from dependence by many people on Government with welfare reform, moving people from the dependence of welfare to the dignity of industry and work. The President of the United States vetoed that.

It is a tremendous problem that our welfare system has encouraged dependence on Government. Welfare law has conditioned assistance on dependence and irresponsibility rather than promoting the virtues of work, independence, and integrity.

We have sent the wrong message. We have said to individuals, "No matter how irresponsible you are, we will continue your payments." As a matter of fact, it has been worse than that. We have said, "The more irresponsible you are, the more children you bring into the world, children whom you cannot support, we will increase your payments." We have actually provided an incentive for irresponsibility.

That has been a pernicious, negative impact of our welfare system that instead of moving us toward the value of independence, it has moved us deeper and deeper into the mire of dependence. The tragedy of dependence has not only been in the numerics of a budget that is out of control, in an entitlement system, it has been in the tally of individual lives, families and entire communities.

When I served as chairman of the National Commission on American Urban Families in 1992, I went to some communities where 80 percent of the children were without fathers. That was shocking. But it was almost impossible to comprehend that in some neighborhoods children were born and raised who did not know a child with a father. In other words, in some of the neighborhoods in those communities, fatherhood was nonexistent. That is a tragedy. That is a consequence of a welfare system that demands reform, a welfare