

seen the primary process dominated by people at each end of the political spectrum, we have seen the work of the U.S. Senate also not benefited from the center.

When I came to this body after the 1980 election, I frequently said that out of 100 Senators, there were 40 on each side who took ideological positions—maybe 35—leaving 20 or 30 of us in the center to be the decisive voices. Now we find that number has been reduced drastically. That is part of the reason we have had such contentious debates in the Senate and why we have not been able to do our work in the traditional legislative way. We could have produced a budget differently than through this continuing resolution as part of a conference report. I think we are all going to have to try harder to do better next year.

We find with those who are departing from the Senate that we are losing a tremendous number of centrists. That is going to mean a heavier responsibility on those of us who are here next year to perhaps put aside some of our ideological predilections or preferences, and try to move to the center.

It is hard to calculate why we are having Senators leaving this institution in unprecedented numbers, and maybe it is the contentiousness in this body which has caused this to happen. We are losing an extraordinary group of Senators.

First, in priority, is Senator MARK HATFIELD, who has done such an extraordinary job since being elected in 1966; with an extraordinary conscience; taking stands which have pitted him really against the entire body of his own political party and voting as he did on the constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. I think he was the only one out of 54 Republican Senators to vote against the amendment, and although I didn't agree with him on the vote, I admired his courage. He has been up all night working through as the chief negotiator, as the center, on this continuing resolution.

We are losing SAM NUNN, who is without peer when it comes to matters of military affairs. Like MARK HATFIELD, BILL COHEN, NANCY KASSEBAUM, and ALAN SIMPSON, when SAM NUNN speaks—like E. F. Hutton—"everybody listens."

We do not have anybody who is irreplaceable, but we are going to see what is going to happen on the Armed Services Committee, Madam President, where you serve, as to what is going to be done without SAM NUNN's voice—a big, big loss—and he is very much a centrist.

We are losing an extraordinary Senator—really, a great Senator in every sense of the word—in BILL COHEN. For those of you who really want to get to know BILL COHEN, you ought to get a volume of his poetry. I have had a chance to hear his poetry publicly and quasi-privately in our Intelligence Committee deliberations and hearings which are not public—but with extraor-

dinary depth, and he has also made an extraordinary contribution as a centrist.

Senator NANCY KASSEBAUM is leaving. She had the extraordinary skill to bring forward reform on health care that so many of us talked about for so long with the Kassebaum bill, where finally we made some key structural changes without the massive proposals advocated by the administration depicted on the chart which my staff and I prepared, and which Senator Dole used last week in an attempt to depict the complicated bureaucracy the administration wanted to create. But when the chips were down, with one of her last two legislative acts, Senator KASSEBAUM led the way with health care reform.

We are losing another key centrist in ALAN SIMPSON, who has been able to bring so many people together with his wisdom and his sense of balance, illustrated by a sense of humor, in the work that he has done on the immigration bill, which is not yet completed. But he has been just extraordinary. He held the fort on the Gallegly amendment, which would have deprived education to children born of parents who are illegal immigrants. While we ought to protect our borders and not have illegal immigrants in the United States, we certainly ought not to deprive children of their educational opportunities, which will just haunt American society, where they will not be able to support themselves in adulthood and where they will be delinquents and perhaps criminals on the streets.

Madam President, may I inquire as to how much of the 20 minutes I have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SPECTER. I ask unanimous consent that I made proceed for an additional 10 minutes. No Senator has come to the floor in the interim. So I am not depriving any of my colleagues of an opportunity to speak.

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

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair. HOWELL HEFLIN is leaving, and he is also a centrist. I worked with Senator HEFLIN on the Judiciary Committee. He has made an extraordinary contribution as we have worked through some of the toughest problems on the nominating process—Judge Bork, Justice Thomas—the whole process.

Senator BRADLEY, perhaps not quite a centrist but not too far from center, has made an extraordinary contribution as he has done so much to awaken America to the problems of racism coming from a State with big cities, an issue that I have worked closely with him on.

Senator BROWN is a key loss—another centrist. I sat next to him on the Judiciary Committee. He would whisper most of the questions which have gotten me into so much trouble on the Judiciary Committee, also with a great sense of humor.

And Senator BENNETT JOHNSTON, who has added so much in four terms; Senator PRYOR, who has added so much in three terms—both southerners, but having a much broader focus than simply on the South.

Senator EXON who has contributed so much on Armed Services and as ranking member of Budget.

And Senator SHEILA FRAHM, who is here for too short of a period of time. Senator FRAHM comes from western Kansas, almost on the Nebraska border, on the northern Colorado border in the West.

As Senator BURNS said a few moments ago, my home was originally in Russell, KS, a hometown I share with Senator Dole.

While these outstanding men and women will be departing and many friendships will be lost, or at least not as close, the real meaning for the country is the issue of losing so many of this group which have contributed so much to the center and, I think, to the importance of governance in America.

THE PROBLEMS IN THE MIDEAST

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I would like to make some brief comments on the escalating problems in the Mideast, with the Israeli-Palestinian clashes which have been on the front pages, and which have been on the television screens, and my urging of parties on all sides to accelerate negotiations, because I am personally convinced that the bloodshed can be brought to a conclusion and that the peace process can move forward if the parties return to the bargaining table—and return to those pictures which are so meaningful of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Palestine Chairman Yasser Arafat shaking hands and talking out their problems.

I make this recommendation having been in Israel last month and having had a chance to talk with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat. I am convinced that both of those leaders do want peace. And, candidly, it has been a tough time, watching Chairman Arafat honored on the White House lawn back on September 13, 1993. But my view is that now that the Israelis, who have been the chief victims of PLO terrorism, have welcomed Chairman Arafat, I think we in the United States should do what we can to promote the peace process.

Prime Minister Netanyahu is new at the job but a man of tremendous abilities—substantial experience generally, but limited experience as Prime Minister.

After talking to Prime Minister Netanyahu, I know that he wants to work out the issues—they are complicated. There is Hebron, where there are Jewish settlers, and the issue is, what will the degree of Palestinian control be. There is Jerusalem, which is the Holy City and in which the controversy has arisen over the tunnel. And there are so many corollary problems such as the closure of the borders

to Israel, an act Israel took for very strong security reasons but which is causing very substantial economic losses to the Palestinians.

I think the administration has done a good job there with the work of Dennis Ross, as a de facto roving ambassador, talking to the parties and trying to work through the issues. That is a matter which I think requires expedited assistance from the U.S. Government and others to try to bring those parties back to the conference table, to try to work out their problems, to try to stop the fighting and the bloodshed, and to move the peace process ahead.

While the Palestinian-Israeli problems are taking the front pages, the Syrian-Israeli problems still are very prominent, with the Syrians still undertaking military maneuvers which may threaten Israel.

I had an opportunity to discuss those issues when I was in the area last month with Syrian President Assad and also with Prime Minister Netanyahu. In fact, I carried two messages from Prime Minister Netanyahu to President Assad. One was on the subject of Israel's interest in cooling the contentiousness on the southern Lebanon border, where Prime Minister Netanyahu had publicly said that Syria would be held responsible for the Hezbollah attacks on northern Israel. President Assad's response was that those military maneuvers were not with hostile intent but were really of a routine nature. Whether that is exactly so or not, that process has to be moved forward.

Prime Minister Netanyahu asked me further to convey the message that he personally would engage in the negotiations, leaving, of course, the option to President Assad as to whether he would or would not so participate. But there again I think the administration has done a good job. I think the roving de facto ambassador, Dennis Ross, has done a good job. Those matters have to be moved forward through the negotiation process. I urge the parties to move ahead there. It is difficult, obviously, for Prime Minister Netanyahu to be handling the Palestinian controversies at the same time, and they are on the front part of the front burner, but the Syrian negotiations have to be addressed as well.

GULF WAR DRUG TESTING

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I wish to comment briefly on a report on damage to United States troops from exposure to Iraqi poison gas back in 1991 during the gulf war. This is a subject on which there was a joint hearing earlier this week, on Wednesday, of the Intelligence Committee, which I chair, and the Veterans Affairs Committee, on which I serve, chaired by Senator ALAN SIMPSON.

During the course of those hearings, we heard from the chief medical officer of the Department of Defense, Dr. Stephen C. Joseph, as well as representa-

tives from the CIA and the Veterans Administration. The views expressed by Senators on both sides of the aisle were that the Department of Defense had not done nearly enough to respond to the ailments which came out of that exposure to Iraqi chemical warfare agents.

There were those, principally Senator SIMPSON, who made the point in his customary strong way that the evidence was inconclusive, saying that people had not shown the effects of the poisonous gas immediately and that would have happened if there had really been a problem, and was in defense of the Department of Defense.

Virtually every other Senator—and I think some 14 attended, from both sides of the aisle—was very critical of what the Department of Defense had done. And perhaps no one was more critical than Senator ROCKEFELLER, the ranking Democrat, on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. He has sent a letter, which I was about to cosign but could not quite review fast enough on Thursday, over to the Pentagon and Secretary Perry asking for more action. In that letter, Senator ROCKEFELLER was very explicit about what the Department of Defense had not done in acting on the complaints of the service men and women in the area.

This morning the Washington Post has a story, page A18, which I will ask to be made a part of the RECORD as if read in full, which is headlined "Pentagon Alters Stand on Gulf War Testing." The second paragraph—almost completely reversing comments made at a Pentagon briefing Thursday, that is, the day after our hearing—says that our troops were not told the drug was being used on an investigational basis and might have side effects, but said that information was not deliberately withheld from them.

Mr. President, it is a little hard at this stage to say that where you have withheld some key facts, it was not deliberate. After all, why wouldn't people on whom the drug was being used on an investigational basis be told? How can you say it is not deliberate if you do not tell people that they are, in effect, guinea pigs or not tell them that it might have side effects. Any person is entitled as a matter of fundamental fairness to know that. How can you subject someone to a drug testing without them being told that? It is more than a little incomprehensible.

The article then goes on to say: "On Capitol Hill, Senator JOHN D. 'JAY' ROCKEFELLER called on Defense Secretary William J. Perry to fire the Pentagon's top health official."

Saying that the Department of Defense had squandered its credibility, which is a conclusion reached by the staff of a Presidential commission which I brought out at last Wednesday's hearing.

Then the article concludes by noting that Secretary of Defense Perry and Deputy Secretary of Defense John D. White "continue to have the full and

utmost confidence" in the health leadership at the Department of Defense and that no "health changes" in "health leadership are being contemplated."

That, of course, again is a little surprising in the context that Secretary Perry could not conceivably have had an opportunity to review the Senate hearing since he has been at a NATO meeting. And when we have a hearing like that and many Senators are present and express themselves and facts are brought out, one would at least think that the Secretary of Defense would review the matter, or the Deputy Secretary also could not have had an opportunity to go through the complex matters which were raised at that time.

I ask unanimous consent a copy of this Washington Post article be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 28, 1996]
PENTAGON ALTERS STAND ON GULF WAR DRUG TESTING

The Defense Department said yesterday it did not deliberately withhold information from U.S. troops in the 1991 Persian Gulf War on an anti-nerve gas drug to keep Iraq from learning about U.S. defenses.

Almost completely reversing comments made at a Pentagon briefing Thursday, it said troops were not told the drug was being used on an investigational basis and might have side effects but said that information was not deliberately withheld from them.

Researchers are studying whether the drug, pyridostigmine bromide (PB), in combination with chemicals in the Gulf War, might be one cause for illnesses among thousands of veterans.

On Capitol Hill, Sen. John D. "Jay" Rockefeller IV (W.Va.), called on Defense Secretary William J. Perry to fire the Pentagon's top health official. Rockefeller, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, told Perry in a letter that the Pentagon has "squandered its credibility" on the issue of Gulf War illness.

The senator did not name a specific official in his letter. But a spokeswoman for Rockefeller, Laura Quinn, said he was referring to Stephen C. Joseph, the Pentagon's assistant secretary for health affairs.

Perry has been attending a NATO meeting in Norway, but a spokesman said both Perry and Deputy Defense Secretary John D. White "continue to have the full and utmost confidence" in Joseph and that "no changes" in "health leadership are being contemplated."

Mr. SPECTER. Finally, I now turn to the introduction of legislation. I ask this be under a separate heading in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COVERDELL). The Chair will advise the Senator from Pennsylvania that his time has expired.

Mr. SPECTER. I ask unanimous consent for 3 additional minutes, Mr. President.

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

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that, following the remarks of the Senator from Pennsylvania, I be recognized for up to 10 minutes.