

reach agreement on this omnibus appropriations bill. It is before us. It is large. But it has been reviewed by the House. In fact, the House voted to pass the omnibus appropriations bill by a vote of 370 to 37, an overwhelming vote of approval. I listened to the debate well into the night on Saturday night. In fact, I stayed up until I saw the final vote, at about 10:30. They went into a lot of detail on what is in the bill. I was somewhat surprised and impressed by the way that it was presented, the information that was given to the House Members, and by the extremely bipartisan and very gentle debate that occurred.

Congressmen who had been fighting each other vigorously for the last 2 years were praising each other and saying what a good job had been done. Any time you have a bill this large, I am sure there are some mistakes included. I am sure that any one of us can find a lot of things that we do not like about it. But it has been passed, now, by the House. The President has endorsed it in writing. His letter of endorsement is in the RECORD. I placed it there last Saturday.

Now it is incumbent upon the Senate to do our job. It is all in our hands. We must act on this before late tonight so it will have time to be put together and delivered to the President. We have a number of Senators who have questions they want to raise about it, perhaps. The conference—the Democrats will meet at 12, the Republicans will be meeting at 2. We will talk it through. It is going to take a lot of cooperation—and sacrifice, as a matter of fact, in some cases, to get work completed.

There are other issues pending. Obviously, we need to get the FAA reauthorization done. I am committed to doing that. There appear to be some Senators who are willing to have a scorched earth policy, which would work against the Federal Aviation Administration, airport safety in America, against their individual States, and over a very small provision which is actually a fix in the law that was inadvertently caused.

We need to find way to work this out. We are trying to do it, again in a bipartisan way. I know Senator DASCHLE would like to do that. I know there are Senators like Senator PRYOR and FRITZ HOLLINGS on that side, Senator MCCAIN, and, obviously, Senator STEVENS, and so where there is a will there will surely be a way. We will try to work that out.

The parks bill is a major preservation piece of legislation. Some of the parks that were controversial or were strongly opposed by the administration were taken out. But the chairman of the committee in the House, Congressman YOUNG of Alaska, spoke very strongly for it. Some of the provisions that are desperately desired are in here, such as the Presidio, Tallgrass project—a whole number of others are included in this bill. So I hope we will find a way to get through it and get passage of this parks legislation.

If we can leave tonight having passed the omnibus appropriations bill, the Defense appropriations bill, a parks bill, and the FAA reauthorization, we could go out truly on a very high note.

I know our colleagues who are leaving, like the Senator from Alabama, who I am pleased to see back with us here this morning, are prepared to speak, as well as other Senators who are retiring after many, many years of great service—they would feel very good. It would give us a little time to thank them one last time before they leave this Chamber.

WAIVING CERTAIN ENROLLING REQUIREMENTS IN H.R. 4278—HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 197

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of House Joint Resolution 197, which was received from the House, and further, the joint resolution be considered read three times and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

Mr. STEVENS. Reserving the right to object, what is that?

Mr. LOTT. That is regarding hand enrollment of the omnibus appropriations bill.

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

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 197) was considered, ordered to a third reading, read for a third time, and passed.

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

OMNIBUS CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to consideration of H.R. 4278, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4278) making omnibus consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I might say to the leader, that last resolution was a significant resolution. I would like to talk about that later.

In any event, Mr. President, let me yield to my good friend from Alabama for the statement he wishes to make, reserving the right to resume the floor after he finishes his short remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

RFD'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRESSMAN RICHARD HENRY CLARKE

Mr. HEFLIN. Tomorrow, Mr. President, on October 1 of this year, the Post Office will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Rural Free Delivery [RFD]. RFD now serves the whole country, some 25.5 million households and businesses in all, and it is a necessity in States like Alabama. In fact, I am proud to say that Congressman Richard Clarke of Alabama was an early leader in the effort to initiate this service. As this important anniversary approaches, I would like to recount Congressman Clarke's leadership efforts in its successful implementation.

On January 5, 1892, Representative Richard Clarke became the first Member of Congress to introduce a bill to make RFD a permanent service. He introduced bills in two succeeding Congresses, H.R. 13 in the 52d and H.R. 402 in the 53d "To provide for the free collection and delivery of mails in rural districts." He contacted many Members on the need for such legislation and made the first speech advocating the establishment of the program. When the bill was finally adopted by Congress, Mr. Clarke was engaged in a campaign for Governor of Alabama. Therefore, Congressman Tom Watson of Georgia took the lead in obtaining its passage. Although his name does not appear as the official sponsor of the legislation which ultimately created RFD, the people of his district and the State of Alabama have every right to claim that this Member of Congress was a leader in establishing RFD.

Richard H. Clarke was born in Dayton, Marengo County, AL on February 9, 1843. He attended Green Springs Academy and was graduated first in his class from the University of Alabama in July 1861. During the Civil War, he served in the Confederate Army as a lieutenant in the First Battalion of the Alabama Artillery. He later studied law, was admitted to the bar in 1867, and began practicing in his hometown. He later moved to Demopolis, also in Marengo County, where he continued to practice law. From 1872 until 1876, he served as the State solicitor for Marengo County. He was the prosecuting attorney of the seventh judicial circuit in 1876 and 1877 and later resumed his private law practice in Mobile, AL. He served as president of the Alabama State Bar Association in 1897.

He was elected as a Democrat to the 51st Congress and to the three succeeding Congresses. He served from March 4, 1889 through March 3, 1897. He served on the Rivers and Harbors Committee. Among his many legislative accomplishments was the deepening of the channel of Mobile Harbor and the establishment of Mount Vernon Hospital for the mentally ill. He ran for Governor of Alabama as a "sound money"—gold standard—Democrat in 1896, but was defeated by the silver standard candidate, Joseph Johnston. He resumed his law practice and served

in the State house of representatives in 1900 and 1901. He passed away in St. Louis, MO on September 26, 1906 and was buried in the Magnolia Cemetery in Mobile. His grandson, Dr. Richard Clarke Foster, served as president of the University of Alabama in the late 1930's and early 1940's.

Of course, Congressman Clarke was by no means alone in his efforts on behalf of RFD. The Post Office says that the first rural delivery route began just after the Civil War, in a very unofficial way. In 1868, a group of families in Norwood, GA, hired a freed slave named Jerry Elliot to deliver their mail. Mr. Elliot collected his employers' sorted mail at the local post office, where future Congressman Tom Watson worked as a clerk. Apparently, Watson was highly impressed with the idea, and years later he joined as a crucial sponsor of legislation to fund the service.

The official battle over RFD began more than 20 years later and spanned four Postmaster Generals. John Wanamaker, appointed in 1889, was the first Postmaster General to urge adoption of Rural Free Delivery. Wanamaker had received a number of letters complaining that the cities received free delivery, but rural America did not. Free delivery for urban areas had begun in 1863.

At Postmaster General Wanamaker's request, the Congress passed a joint resolution on October 1, 1890, to authorize a test of the free delivery system in small towns and villages. It also appropriated \$10,000 for this pilot program. The towns Wanamaker selected for the experiment ranged in size from 400 to 8,000 residents. Farmers became strong advocates of the service, realizing that they would receive daily market quotations and information about where they could sell their crops.

With the success of his experiment and the strong support of the farmers, Wanamaker continued to push for Rural Free Delivery.

The same year that Congressman Clarke introduced his second RFD bill, Congressman Tom Watson's legislation to extend RFD to farmers, rather than just villages and towns, was passed. But this measure, too, only provided for an experimental expansion. Postmaster General Wanamaker's successor, William Bissell, argued correctly that this amount was vastly insufficient to facilitate permanent RFD. In fact, Bissell refused even to continue experimentation, and a stand-off between him and Congress ultimately forced his resignation.

Bissell's successor, Postmaster General William Wilson, complained that the Post Office's funding was so small that he might only improve existing services. So, a Senator named Marion Butler from North Carolina urged passage of a further appropriation, and the Post Office began an experimental system in West Virginia. This experiment proved successful, and it led to the establishment of the current system with the help of further Congressional ap-

propriations. By that time, Postmaster General Wilson had been succeeded by James A. Gary.

Mr. President, I am proud that a Member of Congress from Alabama—Richard Henry Clarke—was so influential in the establishment of Rural Free Delivery, a service most Americans in rural areas take for granted today. Although there are several individuals who might arguably be considered the father of RFD, I wanted to make sure Congressman Clarke's efforts did not go unrecognized. The creation of this service is very much a part of his legacy.

Mr. STEVENS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I see the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee is here. If he wishes to make an opening statement on this bill, I will be pleased to yield to him. I have a lengthy statement to make about the subject I believe should precede this omnibus appropriations bill, the FAA conference report. If the Senator from Oregon wishes to make a statement, I will be happy to yield to him.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield to the Senator from Oregon with the understanding that I will resume the floor when he has completed his statement.

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

OMNIBUS CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS, 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, I believe that the pending business is the omnibus appropriations bill; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. HATFIELD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, the Senate now has, as the Chair has indicated, under consideration the fiscal year omnibus appropriations bill which will conclude our action on the six fiscal year 1997 appropriations bills that have not been enacted into law, and they are: No. 1, Commerce, Justice, State, and related agencies; No. 2, the Defense appropriations bill; No. 3, the foreign operations appropriations bill; No. 4, the Interior and related agencies appropriations bill; No. 5, the Labor-HHS appropriations bill; and No. 6, the Treasury-Postal Service appropriations bill.

As Senators are aware, members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee and their staffs worked around the clock at the end of last week to reach a bipartisan agreement with the administration on all the outstanding issues included in these bills. Our colleagues in the House adopted this bill Saturday by an overwhelming rollcall vote of 370 to 37, and the President has indicated he will sign the bill as soon as it reaches his desk.

I know that many Senators have questions and concerns about this legislation. Senator BYRD and I will be here throughout the day to address those matters as best we can. I hope and expect that when we reach a vote on final passage later today, a large majority of the Senate will vote for this legislation.

Mr. President, this will be the last appropriations measure that I will manage here on the Senate floor. For the past 16 years as chairman or ranking minority member of the full committee, I have stood here with Senator BYRD, Senator Stennis, and Senator Proxmire as we have brought to the Senate the 13 annual appropriations acts, supplementals, rescissions bills and continuing resolutions. It has been an extraordinary experience. The appropriations process has been the crucible of debate on enormous range of issues, great and small. We have carried on through the revolutionary 1981 reconciliation process, the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, budget summits, and Government shutdowns. Despite it all, year in and year out, this Congress has acted on appropriations bills and sent them to the President. It is our principal constitutional duty to do so.

Mr. President, I cannot adequately express how honored I am to have been a part of this process. I owe an enormous debt to all of my colleagues with whom I have served, both here in the Senate and in the House. I am privileged to have enjoyed relationships across the aisle in both bodies that have immeasurably enriched my life, and I can only hope that I have managed to return those gifts in some way.

All of us on the Committee on Appropriations, both here and in the House, are served by an extraordinary staff. These highly capable men and women are the best there are. Before I leave Washington for Oregon later this month—I started to say later today; that perhaps is only wishful thinking at this moment—I hope to be able to thank each one personally for their contributions.

It would be impossible, Mr. President, to make a comprehensive recitation of the provisions of this legislation, and I will not try. I believe that this bill, which I hold in my hand, represents our completed product which is, obviously, a rather enormous package. I believe that various summary descriptions have been distributed. The text of the legislation is printed in the RECORD and copies are available here on the floor and in cloakrooms and in Senators' offices.

Mr. President, I wonder if the Senator from Alaska will respond to a request that he amend his unanimous-consent agreement to be recognized following my brief presentation in order to permit the ranking member, Senator BYRD, to make his opening statement as well.

Mr. STEVENS. I have just conferred with Senator BYRD, and I agree. I do amend my request that I be recognized