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Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, January 22, 1996)

The Senate met at 2:30 p.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by a guest Chaplain, Rev. Johnny Sloan, Hamilton Christian Center, Hamilton, OH. He is a guest of Senator DEWINE.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, the Reverend Dr. Johnny W. Sloan, offered the following prayer:

Let us bow our heads for prayer.

Lord God Almighty, Creator of life, giver of liberty, we exalt Your holy name. This day we come before You with hearts grateful for Your grace upon our lives. You have faithfully protected and provided for our Nation. From generation to generation, You have been our guide, giving light where there was darkness and strength when there was weakness. Lord, we ask for Your will in the affairs of this land. Help us to speak less and listen more. Help us to take less and give more. Help us to fear less and trust more. Let us walk in unity without requiring individual conformity. Let our song be in harmony, sung by a people of diversity. We want to love, as You have loved us. We want to forgive, as You have forgiven us. Lift our eyes from the human mud stains of yesterday's journey to the rising sun of divine destiny and hope for tomorrow. Give us wisdom, as we set our hands to the task before us, that working together we may accomplish Your will and purpose. Lord, to You be all glory, honor, and praise, now and forever. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator DOLE, is now recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until the hour of 3:30 this afternoon. Then, following morning business—it could be extended, of course—we will recess until 8:35 this evening, at which time the Members will gather in the Senate Chamber so the Senate may proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the State of the Union Address.

It is hoped that we can reach an agreement regarding the consideration of the continuing resolution and the DOD authorization conference report for either Thursday or Friday. I am not certain when the House is going to take up the CR, and if it requires a rollcall vote, we have sort of indicated we would give Members some notice to get back here. So we would at least give them the opportunity to come back if there is going to be debate, amendments, and votes on the continuing resolution.

If an agreement is reached on these two items today, the Senate will adjourn until this Friday, January 26, to complete action on those matters.

Also, to inform all Members, if both of these items are completed on Friday as well as the D.C. appropriations or Interior appropriations conference reports, if available, then it may be that the Senate would not be in session until February 26. But, again, that depends on what may develop tonight in the President's State of the Union Message and what may develop during the day in our discussions with the Republican leadership on when we may want to proceed to another budget resolution to send the President another balanced budget. But we do hope to complete action on all the previously mentioned items by unanimous consent.

I might say, on the other side of the aisle, if someone indicates now that

they will not give us consent, then I think we could give notice as quickly as we can that Members would have to be back here on Friday.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 3:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for not to exceed 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

PASSAGE OF ANOTHER CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I intend to use my time to address where we are as a nation in terms of the impact of the continuing resolution at 75 percent, but I see the majority leader still here. It is a little difficult to state at this time whether there would be objection to a continuing resolution since we are not informed at this time as to what would be in the continuing resolution. And I know that there is a desire among some of our colleagues to be able to introduce clean budget ceiling legislation to move toward addressing one of the critical issues before the Nation.

So I, just for one, want to work in cooperation with the leadership, the majority leader and the minority leader, but I do think it is probably premature to try to make a judgment of whether we are going to be able to get agreements on no votes at all, because we at this time do not have a continuing resolution. We saw the changes that were made in the continuing resolution at the final hours the last time. We do not know where we are going to be on the debt ceiling issue. And I, for one, feel that we ought to be around here doing

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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the Nation's business between now and the end of February.

With all respect to those who have different schedules, I find it somewhat difficult to understand why we are not here dealing with the Nation's business on the range of different issues that have not been addressed in the Senate. We have a number of those. One of the most important is the whole issue of what is going to be the future for the young people in this country with a continuing resolution that just funds education at some 75 percent of what it was a year ago, with all of the implications that that has in higher education and also K through 12.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT OF SHORT-TERM FUNDING MEASURES

Mr. KENNEDY. On Friday, January 26, the continuing resolution that has kept the Government operating for the last 3 weeks will expire. Once again, it will be necessary to enact a temporary funding measure to avoid shutting down the Government.

Although I understand the need to make certain accommodations while we attempt to negotiate an acceptable budget agreement, many of the areas we are fighting to protect, especially education, are facing increasing risk from this series of short-term measures.

A new continuing resolution, even for a few weeks, will take us past critical budget, planning, and teacher contract dates in school districts and will wreak havoc on the college admissions and financial aid process for high school students making critical college decisions. Furthermore, it will take us through half this fiscal year at funding levels that cut education by 13 percent overall and many programs by much more. This is no way to run a Government or to indicate the support for education from kindergarten through high school and to the colleges.

Mr. President, in the case of colleges, they cannot complete financial aid packages for the spring admissions cycle. By February 1, the Federal Government is required by statute to supply colleges with the numbers showing their Pell grant allocations and tables showing how much students of different need levels will receive in Pell grants. As of now, there are four different Pell grant appropriations numbers—the House, the Senate, the President's, and the continuing resolution—and there are different minimum and maximum award levels.

Likewise, by February 1, the Government is required to supply colleges with their allocation of campus-based aid—college work study, supplemental education opportunity grants, and Perkins loans.

In February, March, and April, when high school students are admitted to college for next fall, they receive a detailed financial aid offer showing how much each college will cost and how much aid they will get from each

source—Federal, State, or college. Colleges cannot do this packaging for individual students without 1996 numbers for each type of financial aid.

Today I received a letter from the American Council on Education urging Congress to approve a full-year budget for education. Otherwise, they say, "The confusion that all students will face as a result of this uncertainty will have its most profound impact on high school seniors." This is what they say, " * * * profound impact on high school seniors. As these students sit down with their parents to negotiate the process of selecting a college to attend next fall, or determining whether they will even be able to enroll, their decisions will be influenced heavily by the level and types of aid for which they may be eligible in a particular school."

Mr. President, just as it affects higher education, let me just mention what happens in many of the K-12 programs.

School districts across the country face needless uncertainty as they struggle to prepare budgets for next year and enter into teacher contracts. The Committee for Education Funding, a coalition of 90 education groups representing education at all levels, calls the funding levels in the continuing resolution "a setback for education unprecedented in our nation's history," that will force "layoffs of thousands of school employees and cutbacks in services to millions of children."

Boston, for example, is required by State law to submit its school budget for the next year to its school committee by the first Wednesday in February. The school committee must submit its budget to the mayor by the last Wednesday in March.

Teacher union contracts require teachers to be notified of any layoffs for the next school year by May 15, or else teachers must be paid for the next year regardless.

Because there are no 1996 figures for key Federal education programs, Boston feels that it must adopt a budget based on the worst-case—House—level of funding for the title I Program, there would be a 15-percent cut for Boston schools. The city will have to eliminate title I services at 14 of their 79 title I schools, and they will also have to lay off teachers.

In Framingham, MA, Superintendent Eugene Thayer tells me that they will have to eliminate all title I reading programs in all middle schools, and severely cut back the support in elementary schools.

The Philadelphia public schools estimate that they will lose \$13.5 million in title I funds under the current continuing resolution. At these levels, they will be forced to eliminate services in 62 schools serving 48,000 children. They will also have to lay off 100 teachers and 200 aides.

In New York, even if a final budget is passed by March 15, school districts may not be able to learn their allocations before the beginning of May—far beyond the April 1 deadline for teacher contract negotiations.

Based on past experience, New York educators say that it will take the Federal Government a few weeks, once a budget is passed, to determine State allocations for title I. These allocations are based on counties, and it takes New York 2 to 3 weeks to determine sub-allocations to its 700 school districts. This timetable would put school districts far behind their required budget schedules to comply with teacher contracts.

Mr. President, if you look at what we are doing, it is that effectively we will be cutting \$3.1 billion, the largest cut in the Nation's history, in education. Last year, with the rescissions program, it was more than \$600 million, and we are adding to that \$3.1 billion in cuts. Those education programs would be cut basically by some 13 percent overall; the title I by 17 percent, and the list goes on.

We should oppose education cuts whenever and wherever they occur. President Clinton has demonstrated we can balance the budget in 7 years and protect education. We should not allow education to be slashed through the back door when those cuts would not be accepted through the front door.

That is the problem. We are going to be asked, on a continuing resolution, to fund it at 75 percent on this, with all of the disruption that it is going to be having for hundreds of thousands of young people who have graduated from high school and who want to go to colleges, with all the disruption it will have for the parents and those young people, with all the disruption it will have for hundreds of thousands of young people who will be going, either from Head Start through kindergarten and all the way up through high school, with all the disruption it will have in the classrooms for the teachers, the parents and the students.

Effectively, now, we have gone from holding hostage the Federal employees to holding hostage the schoolchildren in this country. That will be the effect and the impact of the continuing resolution, even at the 75 percent.

So, Mr. President, when we hear the majority leader talk about whether we can get an agreement, we know what they are saying: You better take the 75 percent or take responsibility for closing down the Government. That is the policy which is being announced here on the floor of the Senate this afternoon. That is an intolerable policy. It is, in terms of the young people of this country. Why should they, effectively, be held hostage? The education policy in this country will be held hostage because of the small minority of Members in this body or in the other body who refuse to permit an orderly processing of the education programs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent letters from the American Council on Education and the Committee for Education Funding be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: