

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator will state it.

Mr. DOMENICI. What is the situation in the Senate now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair indicates to the Senator that we are acting on a unanimous-consent request that the Senate go into recess subject to the call of the Chair immediately after the remarks of the Senator from Arkansas, and those have just finished.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have not had an opportunity this morning to speak because I had to be elsewhere, which you might suspect.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a quorum call for 5 minutes after which I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes and then the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator can ask for a quorum call but cannot predetermine what takes place after that. The Senator can ask unanimous consent to speak or put in a quorum call and then state that request, and the Chair would consider that.

Mr. DOMENICI. The quorum call needs to run before I make the request?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. SARBANES. If the Senator will withhold for a moment, is the Senator prepared to proceed now?

Mr. DOMENICI. I need that 5 minutes that I was seeking.

Mr. SARBANES. Senator NUNN would also seek 10 minutes. Why do we not take a quorum call and then see if we can work that out.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SARBANES. Reserving the right to object. Could we have 3 minutes on this side, as well? We have been doing an equilibrium thing here all day.

I amend the request to ask unanimous consent that this side of the aisle have 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

THE NEED FOR A LIMITED CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I have been in the chair listening for some time, and I wanted to make a couple of observations. First of all, I agree thoroughly with Senator DOLE and the

Members of this body in seeking to have a resolution which would put the Government back in place. It seems to me that that is what we should do. We ought to have a limited CR in which there is time to proceed with what I hope are useful negotiations that are going on. We need to put this thing behind us and get on with resolving the problems.

There are, however, I think, a couple of other things that we also ought to be able to expect. One is that the White House and the President should deliver what they said they would. We did this on November 19, I believe. We had an agreement that we would have a CR, that during that time there would be a balanced budget based on CBO numbers, over 7 years. It did not happen. That did not happen. Then we had an opportunity—the White House did—to pass appropriations bills, to put almost all those back to work who are now furloughed. They did not do that. He vetoed it.

Mr. President, there is another difficulty that we have had in Wyoming. It has to do with Yellowstone Park. There was an article in the paper this morning about it. Our Governor sought to negotiate with the Secretary of the Interior so that the State would take responsibility for part of Yellowstone Park. There was no real effort on the part of the Secretary to do that. Promise to return calls, promise to do something to consider a proposition by the State, did not do that. So not only are the employees of the National Park Service in this case not working, but neither are the concessionaires, neither are those who had contracted to do work, because the Department of Interior did not, frankly, make the real effort to do anything about that. So there has to be some responsibility assigned there in terms of doing what we said we would do.

Second, Mr. President, it seems to me that those who are doing the negotiating, if they really wanted to find a solution, if there was a real, honest-to-goodness effort on the part of the parties to find a solution, they could do that. It is time to do that.

Frankly, I suggest that the three principles sit down, the President, the majority leader, and the Speaker of the House—eliminate all the observers, eliminate the staff—and come to some agreement, come to the snubbing post on what we ought to do. There is a lot of leeway within this outline, and we can do that. Mr. President, that is our job.

Our job is to find solutions. That is what we are here for. That is why we are the trustees for the American people. Our job is to keep the Government functioning in as effective way as we know how. Our job is to make decisions and to move forward. We have great opportunities to do that, great opportunities in this place to do that. There are opportunities in the White House.

There is not much point in assigning blame, but there is plenty to go

around. We ought to come to the snubbing post and make some decisions. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. 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. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the previous order, I be recognized to speak for not more than 10 minutes, Senator NUNN be recognized thereafter for up to 15 minutes, and following those remarks, I ask that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

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

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, there has been a rather lengthy discussion this morning about the continuing resolution and the status of our public employees. I very much wanted to be here this morning to talk about it, but obviously I had some other things I had to do as we seek to get a balanced budget.

I thought I might take just a few minutes and talk about the fact that the situation that we are in today is the result of both the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States having certain rights and certain responsibilities. In a sense, it is a two-way street, not a one-way street like everybody has been talking about, including the President, who used the words "cynical strategy" to talk about the Republican Congress, albeit he chose to say it was the Republican House rather than both of us. "Cynical strategy" seemed to indicate that the entire blame for where we are today should be borne by the U.S. House Republicans, or a combination of the House Republicans and the Senate Republicans.

Mr. President, and fellow Americans, that is not true. Let me state what Republicans have done and what I perceive that the President has not done that put us in this situation that we are in today. Before I begin that, I would like very much to state once again that I hope we can resolve the issue of Federal employees who have not been paid and who have been relying upon their paychecks while they work without pay or relying upon them because we promise to pay them. I think we ought to solve that issue and solve it quickly. They are not responsible for the problem.

Having said that, Republicans in both Houses produced a balanced budget using real numbers and using the Congressional Budget Office estimates. We already did that. The President of the United States, in his capacity as the Chief Executive, chose to veto that.

Had that been signed, obviously we would not be in this mess.

I am not standing here saying the President has no prerogative to veto that. He vetoed it. Nonetheless, we had already passed many of the appropriations bills, and the President got on television yesterday and enumerated a whole series of things that were situations where either people are suffering because we have not passed certain appropriations bills, or the Government cannot do certain things like issue visas, so many foreigners cannot get in the country. And the President is critical of the Congress—in particular, the Republicans in the House—because he says they are to blame for this.

Let me remind the American people this is a two-way street. Had the President of the United States signed three bills which he vetoed—Commerce, State, Justice; Interior appropriations; VA-HUD appropriations—many of the long list and litany of things that have gone wrong in America would not have gone wrong. They would have been taken care of by these bills.

Now, there are some who took to the floor this morning and said the President has this absolute right to veto but Congress has no rights; they must respond and either give him what he wants or suffer the consequences of partial closure of Government. Not so. No student of our Constitution is going to tell you that. When he vetoes them, he bears some responsibility for vetoing them. We certainly have a responsibility to say, well, if he vetoed them, try something else and see if we can get through this.

I understand that is being tried and some targeted appropriations are being worked on. I hope it works. I hope the President understands the next time we send him something that is targeted that he does not have the absolute right to veto them and then claim it is our responsibility because the Government is closed. We have a right to stand up and say, "Mr. President, these are tough times. We do not agree on a lot of things, but you do not have the absolute immunity to veto bills and blame us because the Government is closed."

You might have to look at the next Interior bill. Mr. President, there was not very much money involved in that Interior bill. Frankly, you got some bad advice on the Interior bill, yet you get up and talk about cynicism when most of those U.S. monuments, the museums, would have all been opened if you had signed that bill. You look at your list, Mr. President, of why you vetoed it—pretty flimsy stuff. If you have some responsibility in this, then the public ought to look at why you vetoed them and what were your reasons.

Let me also suggest that the President used some very, very strained—strained—words when he spoke of cynical strategy. I am working in good faith with this President to try to get a balanced budget, but I believe he and his entire administration have been en-

gaged in a cynical strategy since June of this year when they produced a budget allegedly in balance that did not use the Congressional Budget Office numbers and economics but used their own, concocted by their own economists, by their own OMB personnel, and have never to this day produced a balanced budget using the Congressional Budget Office numbers. That is a strategy. It is a beautiful strategy. Since the word "cynical" is battered around, it is a cynical strategy because never to this day—while blaming Republicans for all kinds of things—never to this day has the President of the United States had to put a balanced budget on the table. We are negotiating with him and he still has never put one on. He has not put it on in the negotiations. And I am breaching nothing there, everybody understands he has not. He did not when we asked him to, and he signed a continuing resolution that said we would be bound by the Congressional Budget Office economics and numbers, and the conclusion on that is that means the final agreement will be judged that way, not that I have to produce one. Is that not interesting?

So, to this date, no balanced budget in 7 years using the CBO numbers has been produced by this White House, by this President, by his Cabinet. And they are now engaged in blaming this whole episode on Republicans.

At least it is a two-way street from here to Pennsylvania Avenue, and when Presidents veto bills that fund Government, they take a bit of the responsibility of what will happen if Congress chooses not to fund some of those. After all, I do not advocate this, but the truth of the matter is the Constitution is eminently clear. Congress has the purse strings of the U.S. Government. We decide how to spend the taxpayers' money, and that is not a shared responsibility, I regret to say. That is a singular responsibility, and we have been choosing not to fund what the President wants.

We are also trying to get a balanced budget, which the President either does not want or wants something different on. These are difficult political and philosophical times. What is at stake is big. For some of us what is at stake is whether future generations have to pay for our bills or whether we will pay for them ourselves.

So, whenever we have stories about things going wrong because Government is closed, none of us like that. But the big reason for all this, it all starts because Republicans have come to the conclusion that we want to live up to our commitment to use real numbers, no phony numbers, use Congressional Budget Office numbers and produce significant change in Government so as to produce a balanced budget.

So I wish I could have done this earlier in the day, but I think I have made my case. I think I have made my case that the reason we are in this mess is

not just because Republicans have not sent bills to the President to fund Government; the President bears some of the blame, and I have elaborated that as best I could here today. It is a two-way street, and bantering around words like cynicism, and a cynical strategy, deserves a response. Or it is not too far-fetched to conclude that their strategy in the White House has been a cynical strategy of rather significant proportions.

I yield the floor.

Mr. NUNN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator from Georgia yield me 30 seconds?

Mr. NUNN. I yield the 30 seconds.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I think it is important at this point to have printed in the RECORD a quote from Investor's Business Daily, November 8 of 1995.

Gingrich has said he would force the government to miss interest and principal payments for the first time ever to force Democratic Clinton's administration to agree to his seven-year deficit reductions.

And a quote from Representative SHERWOOD BOEHLERT, a quote from the Los Angeles Times of November 14:

You have a group in our conference who could not care less if the government shuts down. . . . They will be cheering.

I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

BUDGET IMPASSE AND CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I have made it clear in previous remarks and other public statements that I oppose shutting down portions of the Federal Government as a tactic in the budget debate. I have supported the continuing resolutions that would restore funding for full Government operations as we continue to move toward the objective of a balanced budget.

I applaud the leadership of Senator DOLE, Senator DASCHLE, and others in this body who have concluded that the current situation is artificially created, it is unnecessary and is a wasteful burden on Federal workers and on the taxpayers they serve.

Mr. President, I recall here over the last 20 years, several debates on holidays, whether we ought to add another holiday to the overall holidays the Federal Government observes. I remember people totaling up the amount of money it costs to have one holiday and projecting that over 20 years and talking about the astounding cost when you pay people for a holiday. If anyone stops and thinks about what we are doing now, I believe we are about on day No. 20—there may be a few more days in that counting the previous shutdown—we really have had 20 to 25 additional holidays this year where the taxpayers of this country are paying for people who want to work but who are not allowed to work, but they are