

issues. For the information of all Senators, the Democratic leader and I have been negotiating on the minimum wage issue since Friday of last week. This Senator believes that we are making good progress and may yet today be able to reach an agreement that would satisfy all Senators.

With that in mind, I will now outline the agreement that we have been discussing. The agreement is as follows: On Monday, July 8, at a time to be determined later, the Senate would begin consideration of H.R. 3448, the House-passed minimum wage bill, which also contains the small business taxes, and at that time Senator KENNEDY would offer his amendment with a 1-hour time limit. The amendment would then be laid aside, and I would offer an amendment on behalf of Senator BOND, with an hour time limit. The Senate would then vote, first on the Bond amendment, to be followed by a vote on the Kennedy amendment.

Following the two minimum wage votes, the bill would then be opened to two tax-related amendments, one to be offered by each leader and debated separately and limited to 2 hours of debate each. I want to emphasize again that this has not been agreed to, but this is an outline of what we are talking about.

It seems to me this is a fair agreement; that it also offers a date specific that we would take these issues up and act on them. If the Democratic leader is optimistic some agreement along these lines can be reached, then it would be my intention to ask unanimous consent that no minimum wage amendments be in order during today's session in order to make progress on the DOD bill while negotiations are ongoing with respect to this minimum wage issue.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. I understand the Democratic leader has no objection to this, and therefore I ask unanimous consent that no minimum wage amendments be in order during the remainder of the session of the Senate today, Tuesday, June 18, 1996.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendments be set aside until the close of business today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. There was no objection heard?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There was no objection.

Mr. LOTT. Senator GRASSLEY has one on infrastructure; Senator BINGAMAN has one on ASAT; Senators SIMPSON and THOMAS have one with regard to a Wyoming project; Senator FORD, DOD/DOE chemical munitions. We are not asking at this time for any time agreement on these amendments, but these Members and amendments are ready to go. We need to get started on the amendment process.

It would be the intention of the leadership that we go ahead and take these amendments up and try to get agreement on a time where votes would be agreed to. Perhaps, even, we would stack some of them at a time certain. We will notify the Members as soon as we can get that agreed to.

At this time, we would like the committee members to go ahead and proceed with the DOD bill and amendments that are ready to go.

With that, Mr. President, I turn the floor back over to the distinguished chairman of the committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michael Montelongo, a fellow in Senator HUTCHISON's office, be granted the privilege of the floor during the consideration of S. 1745.

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

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Comdr. Thomas Vecchiolla, a Navy fellow in Senator COHEN's office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of the debate on the fiscal year 1997 national defense authorization bill.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. 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. LOTT. Mr. President, Senator GRASSLEY, I believe, will be here momentarily. I believe that Senator BINGAMAN is here ready to go.

I see Senator GRASSLEY is on the floor. We will be ready to go momentarily.

CHURCH BURNINGS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Senate Resolution 265, submitted earlier today by myself, the Democratic leader and others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 265) relating to church burnings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this Senate resolution condemns the arson and other acts of desecration against churches and other houses of worship.

Senator DASCHLE and I are joined in the cosponsorship of this resolution by Senator HUTCHISON, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN, Senator GRAMM, Senator HELMS, Senator FAIRCLOTH, and Senator D'AMATO. I hope Senators during today, if they have an opportunity, or later on this afternoon, and would like to speak on this issue, that they will feel free to do so.

Mr. President, my State of Mississippi was gravely wounded last night.

Two churches burned in Kossuth, a small town in the northeast corner of our State. The Mount Pleasant and the Central Grove Missionary Baptist Churches were lost to flames.

The fires, like several others that have hit churches elsewhere in the country in recent months, were, as the official reports say, of suspicious origin.

In time, the truth will be uncovered. And if these fires were not accidents, if they were set by the hand of evil, then justice must be done.

The good people of Kossuth will rebuild their churches.

Bill Dillworth, a deputy sheriff and a deacon at Mount Pleasant Church, affirmed, "We will always survive. You look to the Lord at times like this. He will be your guide."

I hope that same spirit prevails in the meeting President Clinton has scheduled for tomorrow with several of the Nation's Governors, to discuss ways to combat church arsons.

It will not help the situation to turn these tragedies into a racial or regional issue. Attacks on churches and synagogues are attacks on religion itself.

James Glassman's column in today's Washington Post lays out the sad statistics. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has investigated 123 church burnings over the last 5 years. Of those, 38 have been at black churches.

Attacks of any kind against any of our places of worship should unite Americans in outrage and in resolve. That is why, early this year, a coalition of pro-family organizations—the Christian Coalition, Eagle Forum, Family Research Council, and others—publicly appealed for action to protect churches—all churches.

In response to their petition, the House Judiciary Committee held hearings in May. And the Christian Coalition offered a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a church-burner.

Those were constructive steps in the right direction.

Perhaps additional legislation is needed to make it easier for Federal prosecutors to intervene in cases of church burnings.

On the other hand, perhaps the administration should take a closer look at the extraordinary powers to protect churches which congress gave the Justice Department 2 years ago in the clinic access bill.

That legislation, designed to protect only abortion clinics, was expanded, at

the insistence of Senator HATCH and other Republican Members of the House and Senate, to apply to religious institutions as well.

To date, however, the administration has failed to use its powers under that legislation to deal with attacks on churches. I urge the Attorney General to rethink her Department's approach.

I urge the President, as well, to rethink the approach he and some others associated with him have taken toward religious institutions, and in particular, toward their role in public affairs.

Every time Americans are denounced as extremists for standing up for their religious beliefs, every time persons of faith are stigmatized for intruding their values into politics, it becomes easier for those who wish evil to actually do evil.

That evil is all of one piece, whether it is a wooden church aflame in rural Mississippi or a synagogue defaced in California or a cathedral disrupted in New York City.

For persons of faith, those buildings are more than places we visit regularly. They are extensions of our own homes.

Whoever raised a hateful hand against our homes in Mississippi last night is going to learn an important lesson.

Along with the entire Nation, they will learn that the faithful people there are like the three young men of Israel who were cast into the fiery furnace. The raging flames could not harm them, and they were brought forth radiant with the protection of their God.

I am glad we are able to get this unanimous-consent agreement on this resolution. It is very important that the Senate express its outrage at these churches being burned.

Unfortunately, in my own State of Mississippi last night, we had two incidents in the northeastern part of the State that are of suspicious origin. There is no way that we can tolerate this type of activity.

We want to express our outrage and also assure our colleagues that our intent is to take a quick, serious look at House-passed legislation and hope we will be able to pass their bill, which provides some additional authority for law enforcement investigations and activity with regard to these church and other religious buildings burnings.

I am very pleased we have this resolution, and I am glad it was done in a bipartisan way.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my State colleague and other Senators in cosponsoring this resolution condemning recent church burnings and urging that all appropriate Federal authority be used to investigate these incidents and bring to justice those who are responsible for them.

I suggest, in addition to passing this bipartisan leadership resolution, that we hold at the desk the bill that will be passed by the House and call it up for

passage as soon as possible, without amendment, and send it to the President for his signature.

Taking this action should serve notice on all concerned that this kind of conduct will not be tolerated in our society, and those who engage in this terrorism will be caught and they will be punished.

Mr. KEMPTHORNE. Mr. President, I am proud to cosponsor this resolution by Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN and Senator LOTT which places the Senate firmly on record against the recent incidents of church burnings in our Southern States.

Church burning is religious persecution at its worst. It denies Americans their right to worship their God as they see fit.

Our Southern States are witnessing the worst number of black church bombings and fires since the 1960's civil rights era. Mount Zion AME Church in Greeleyville, SC, was burned to the ground last year by an arsonist. Church bombings are occurring in Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. For well over 18 months, communities in these States have been held hostage by cowardly and intolerant individuals threatening their inalienable right to pray and praise. This is simply unacceptable. America is a land of toleration and acceptance; not of prejudice and fear.

What do these criminals hate that makes them act so miserably? If their goal is racial prejudice, they should think again. Burning a church is not just a crime against people of different ethnic origins. It is an attack on the House of God. Surely God knows and will remember those who commit these crimes. Church arsonists are playing with fire, the fire of judgment day.

Regrettably, religious persecution is not limited to the South. Illinois citizens are waking up to crosses burning in their yards. Idahoans, especially Idaho Mormons, have suffered as well. Three years ago, on the campus of Idaho State University in Pocatello, the LDS Institute was burned to the ground. Arson was the cause. And that's not the only incident. Random acts of vandalism to the Boise and Idaho Falls Temples, as well as to churches and seminaries unfortunately continue today.

Religious persecution has no place in Birmingham, AL, or Boise, ID.

Our Founding Fathers enshrined religious freedom in the first amendment. They knew worship strengthens our daily lives. They knew that Americans held, and would continue to hold, differing religious convictions. They also knew America stands for freedom and that thousands of immigrants had come to these shores seeking refuge from religious persecution.

My prayers go out to those parishioners whose churches have been bombed, burned, or threatened. The faith that helped their forefathers

through the worst days of slavery and suffering will carry them through now. Already God is at work opening the hearts of Americans all across the Nation who are helping rebuild these houses of worship.

These random acts of kindness show America will not move back to a time of fear, ignorance, and prejudice. We will move forward to a world of racial and religious tolerance, acceptance, and respect.

All Americans are entitled to the right to worship their God. Let us renew our faith and remember what a privilege it is to freely be able to practice our religion according to the dictates of our own conscience. This resolution recognizes and reinforces that right. I fully support it and want it to pass.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, my heart goes out to the victims of the recent rash of church burnings. Like so many Americans, I have watched with great dismay and real sadness as one after another African-American house of worship has gone up in flames. There have been at least 35 fires of suspicious origin at these churches in the last 18 months. As a nation, we will not tolerate this attack on African-Americans and their right to exercise their religion freely and in peace. I know that the vast majority of Americans joins with us today in condemning these acts of destruction and recognizing that we cannot allow a small number of hate-filled people to derail the progress we have made toward ending racial discrimination and intolerance.

We have seen in recent years the destruction of well over 100 houses of worship serving people of different faiths and different races. This resolution rightfully condemns all those acts of destruction and desecration.

The burning of these churches—which constitute the heart and soul of the communities they serve—is a national tragedy that requires a strong and swift response. I commend President Clinton both for his moral leadership on this issue and his commitment of all possible Federal resources to the investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of these vicious crimes. I hope we will be able to help these Federal law enforcement efforts by passing legislation introduced by Senators KENNEDY and FAIRCLOTH that gives Federal officials more tools to fight these terrible acts. Bringing these arsonists to justice must be one of our highest national priorities.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, the continued spate of burnings of African-American churches in the South is a national tragedy. I commend Attorney General Reno for redoubling the efforts of the Department of Justice to catch the perpetrators of these most heinous crimes. I have also joined with Senator FAIRCLOTH in cosponsoring legislation which reiterates that burning of a church is a Federal crime and lowers the damages threshold to bring Federal enforcement.

One of our most precious freedoms is to practice our religious beliefs. To have that freedom abridged because of racist acts is doubly troubling.

I know that substantial efforts have been made to investigate these fires. But it is clear that more must be done because the fires, some 30 in all over the past year and a half, keep happening. The leadership of my Commonwealth is responding. The attorney general of Virginia, Jim Gilmore, was recently elected as chairman of the southern region of the National Association of Attorneys General. One of his first acts was to organize a coordinated effort among southern attorneys general to combat hate crimes such as church burnings. His leadership on this issue will bring results, and I commend him and the organization for taking this action.

Everybody concerned with the rash of church burnings wants to know whether these crimes are the work of an organized group or isolated instances of violence. I hope that the efforts of the State attorneys general and of the Department of Justice will answer this question. Just as importantly, I hope that whomever is committing these horrible crimes will see that law enforcement across the country is committed to solving and preventing these despicable acts. Even one instance of church arson is too many—to have dozens of church burnings is a crisis that must be solved.

Unfortunately, as disturbing as these cases of arson are, they are not the only instances of racist violence intruding on the right to worship. Yesterday, a church in Charles County, VA, was defaced with racist words and symbols. The Mount Zion Baptist Church has served the Charles City community since 1812 and is celebrating its 100th year at its present location.

Now the Federal Government cannot protect every church in America. I hope, however, that by finding and prosecuting arsonists and by encouraging law enforcement efforts such as those led by Attorney General Gilmore, the Federal authorities can make a difference in protecting America's houses of worship.

The wife of the pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church was quoted that the church will survive this racist incident. She said that the "membership is just going to bind closer together." I wish them well, and my thoughts go out to all who have suffered at the hands of cowardly attacks on our churches.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and the preamble be agreed to; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 265) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is as follows:

S. RES. 265

Whereas there have been at least 156 fires in houses of worship across the Nation since October 1991;

Whereas there have been at least 35 fires of suspicious origin at churches serving African-American communities in the last 18 months;

Whereas these churches and houses of worship are a vital part of the life of these communities;

Whereas intentionally burning churches or other houses of worship is a very heinous crime;

Whereas intentionally burning churches, when done to intimidate any American from the free exercise of his or her rights as an American, is inconsistent with the first amendment of the United States Constitution, which guarantees every American the right to the free exercise of his or her religion, and which ensures that Americans can freely and peaceably assemble together; and,

Whereas intentionally burning churches, when done to intimidate any American from the free exercise of his or her rights, is a serious national problem that must be expeditiously and vigorously addressed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate condemns arson and other acts of desecration against churches and other houses of worship as being totally inconsistent with fundamental American values; and

(2) The Senate believes investigation and prosecution of those who are responsible for fires at churches or other houses of worship, and especially any incidents of arson whose purpose is to divide communities or to intimidate any Americans, should be a high national priority.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator COCHRAN's name be added as a cosponsor of this Senate resolution.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 4047

(Purpose: To freeze at the level programmed for fiscal year 1998 the amount that may be expended for infrastructure programs of the Department of Defense in order to increase funding for force modernization)

Mr. GRASSLEY. My purpose for rising is to introduce an amendment. I am not going to send the amendment to the desk quite yet. Also, I inform the leadership on both sides of the aisle that I do not have any intention of speaking for an extra long period of time. But before I agree to a time limit, I want to make some opening remarks in regard to my amendment. After that, I will have an opportunity to sit down and probably work something out with the leadership on the time.

Mr. President, we are at a point in the defense authorization bill where I

want to bring up the point that we ought to be saving some money in infrastructure costs, but we are not. We ought to be saving some money in infrastructure costs because it is just natural that infrastructure ought to be somewhat less as we downsize the military, both from the standpoint of personnel and from the standpoint of the number of bases we have, and a lot of other factors. The fact that we really are not, the point of my amendment is to drive that point home, but also to offer a plan that will allow us to guarantee that when we are told that money should be saved, that it is in fact saved.

We are in a situation here, Mr. President, where from a political standpoint we ought to have the votes to accomplish what I want to accomplish. I do not anticipate that we do. I anticipate that we are in a long process of educating the people of this country and the Members of this body to the fact of what I have already stated, that if we are going to close bases to save money, somewhere we ought to be able to show the American people that here is X numbers of dollars we saved. Because that is what we were told would happen; if we closed bases, we would save money. But we have had even experts like the General Accounting Office audit to identify the savings, and they have issued reports that it is not saved.

But we are also in a political environment here where—in past years, it has been very easy for us to make some points on saving money from the standpoint of my being a conservative Republican. Leading the efforts to cut the defense budget or to save money, I would almost have the full support of Members on the Democratic side of the aisle because they were generally of the opinion that Republican Presidents were spending too much on defense, even wasting money on defense, so fiscally minded Republicans, joining together with Democrats, would have enough votes to actually win the battle and to save the taxpayers money.

But now we have a political situation in the last 3 years where we have a Democrat President and a Republican Congress, and we find people on the Democratic side of the aisle, even though that President may be spending money above and beyond the level he should be doing it as Commander in Chief, they seem to be in a position where they want to get behind their President even if they might disagree with him on the amount of money he is spending. So we have a divided Democratic Party more so than usual on the issue of saving defense money.

As is typical on this side of the aisle, my Republican side of the aisle, it seems that there is a willingness just to give more money to defense because somehow by giving more money you get more defense.

The point that I try to drive home so often to my colleagues and I think it is legitimate; and I am speaking now just about people in this body who consider