

make a down payment on the tank waste remediation program. Senators GORTON, DOMENICI, JOHNSTON, and I have sent a letter to the Department asking a number of questions about this approach to privatization. While I am a supporter of privatization, I believe sweeping changes must be well thought out and should not harm ongoing efforts to stabilize the tank farms.

Mr. President, this administration has done a terrific job of moving Hanford cleanup forward. For years, Hanford has been largely a money hole into which enormous Federal dollars were thrown, but little was accomplished. I want to recognize the accomplishments of Secretary O'Leary's Department of Energy and the people at Hanford who have done such an outstanding job of reducing costs and increasing results.

Let me share some of the latest results at Hanford.

There are several specific cleanup programs that have made significant progress recently. One of those is at the Plutonium Uranium Extraction [PUREX] Plant where the criticality system was shut off forever last month. The alarm is not necessary because there is no longer a chance of a nuclear accident at the 40-year-old plant. This shows tremendous progress and is evidence of the dedication of Hanford employees—who reached this goal 16 months ahead of schedule and \$47 million under budget.

The K-basin's spent fuel project is also on track. The canister storage building is 15 percent complete and the managers estimate they can begin large-scale spent fuel removal by December 1997. At that time, fuel will be removed from both K-basins to be cleaned, loaded into baskets, placed in multi-canister overpacks, dried in a cold vacuum, and placed in the canister storage building. Already, several hundred spent fuel canisters have been removed and cleaned; and the system is working as planned. Another point of interest is that project acceleration decisions made and implemented in 1995 have saved \$350 million and will allow the project to be completed 4 years early. This is great progress.

The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory is in the final stages of construction of the new Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory [EMSL]. The lab is a critical component of our efforts to develop the scientific understanding needed to create innovative and cost-effective technologies for environmental remediation. EMSL scientists will research soil and water quality, waste characterization, processing, and health effects. This state-of-the-art facility will complement the Hanford cleanup mission and make a positive contribution to many of our most troubling environmental and pollution problems.

Mr. President, I appreciate the commitment of this body and the administration to the cleanup of former defense production sites, like Hanford. I pledge to work with my colleagues to

see that progress continues and that the Federal Government fulfills its responsibility to the people of this Nation who fought and won the cold war.

I would also like to voice my strong support for an amendment offered by Senator JEFFORDS regarding funding for renewable energy. In the last 2 years, funding for wind, solar, and other renewable energy research and development programs has been cut by almost 40 percent. Last year, the Senate restored some of the funding for these important programs, but eventually the renewables program lost ground in conference with the House. I want to lend my voice to many of my colleagues who support renewable energy and see such programs as a critical component of the Federal Government's commitment to future generations and a healthy environment.

Again, I thank Senators DOMENICI and JOHNSTON for their work on this important bill and urge my colleagues to support final passage.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, with the consent of the manager, if no one is here to offer amendments or speak on the bill, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 10 minutes as in morning business, with the understanding that if someone comes to present an amendment, I will be happy to relinquish the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOMENICI. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. I appreciate the courtesy of the managers. Again, business on the bill itself takes precedence. I will not continue if someone comes to do business on this bill.

ELECTIONEERING VERSUS DAY-TO-DAY ISSUES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came to the floor today, however, because as has been the case on most days, we have had five Republicans come to the floor today to talk about President Clinton and the White House. I understand that and understand it is an even-numbered year, and the Constitution of the United States provides in even-numbered years that we have elections. On even numbered years when we have elections, clearly there is interest for one side or the other to try to gnaw away and chew away the foundation of the base of the others.

I watch from time to time, as organized groups come to the floor and we

try to respond to them sometimes, those of us on our side of the aisle, to try to set the record straight as best we can. It is pretty hard to keep up with them, because they come in significant waves.

I want to use the time for a couple of minutes to talk about the difference between what we confront in the electioneering, or the political efforts these days, and what the American people expect us to confront in terms of the issues they face day-to-day.

If one were to view the activities from time to time, especially when we get 1 hour or 2 hours set aside for a couple of my friends from the other side of the aisle who then recruit several others, as was the case today, and have five, six or seven people come and repeat a message to try to get that message out to the country, it is kind of like watching beavers build a dam: They slap their tails, they are out there gnawing, chewing and biting and knocking down trees.

In this case, however, it is interesting. These are, it seems to me, political beavers building a dam where there is no water, which I find interesting. Slapping the water and chewing on dead wood seems hardly productive to me, but it is a way to pass the day for some, I suppose.

Most people sitting at home these days look at this political system of ours and say, "Why can't you all work together?" We have an Olympics going on, and in the Olympics, what is interesting is they all wear jerseys, and the jerseys identify one team versus another team.

I particularly have enjoyed watching various sports in the Olympics and, I must confess, I root for all the athletes. I think it is a wonderful thing to see these young men and women, in some cases older men and women, compete, but I, like most others, especially want those people who wear the red, white and blue jerseys to do very well, because they compete with a little logo that says "USA." They are all on the same team.

The American people elect different kinds of men and women to the U.S. House and Senate. My guess is they expect us to all be on the same team. We might all have different techniques, different strengths, and different approaches, but they really do, in the long term, at the end of the day expect us to be working for the same ends.

We can, I suppose, spend most of our energy being critical and chewing away and gnawing away and flailing away, but it hardly seems very productive.

We have been working on a number of things in this Congress which I think are interesting. The Federal deficit: Some say unless you put something in the Constitution, you have not addressed the Federal deficit issue. Yet, the Federal deficit has been coming down, way down, and that is good news.

We have some people who rush to the floor to explain why one person or

someone else should not gain credit for that. But nonetheless, the Federal budget deficit has come down very, very substantially.

We have been working on health care issues, the need for the American people to have Congress address the issue of being able to take your health care from one job to another and not lose coverage because you change jobs or find you can't get health care because your child or your spouse or someone in your family has a preexisting condition. Those are very important issues, and I think we finally made progress. It has taken a long, long while, but I think we are going to have a health care bill that finally gets done and gets signed by the President.

That would be a significant accomplishment. I hope we don't have much foot dragging in the coming weeks with respect to that issue, because that is something the American people want and need.

We have been working on the issue of the minimum wage. Some say there shouldn't even be a minimum wage. If you believe that, why don't you bring a bill to the floor to repeal the minimum wage?

There are some around here who say we do not want a minimum wage, let the market system set the wage; let 12-year-olds work for 12 cents an hour. I heard some people suggest that, by the way, not here on the floor of the Senate. But there are some people in this political debate who believe there should be no minimum wage at all. If you believe that, bring a bill to the floor. Why don't you represent a position that harkens back to half a century ago and say, in your judgment, there ought not be a minimum wage?

Some of us think that there ought to be a minimum wage. We have had one now for some 60 years. The question is, when should it be adjusted?

The last time the people at the bottom rung of the economic ladder got a raise was 7 years ago, in 1989, when the Congress last enacted legislation adjusting the minimum wage.

There are some who say, "Well, if you adjust the minimum wage, it is going to cost a lot of lost jobs." The interesting thing about that is, I have not heard anyone suggest when the CEO's of major U.S. corporations get a 23-percent increase in their salaries in 1 year—a 23-percent increase in 1 year—I have never heard someone say, "Gee, that's going to cost lost jobs." But take someone at the bottom of the economic ladder working at minimum wage and suggest after 7 years they get a very small increase—not 23 percent in 1 year, but a freeze for 7 years and then a small increase—and all of a sudden the sky is falling.

We have worked on that, and I am pleased to say, finally, that those who were holding that bill hostage have seen the light. We are moving that. I hope maybe by the end of this week we can have a bill passed that addresses that issue.

Let me mention one other thing that is in that piece of legislation. We attached to that piece of legislation something helpful to small business, and I am for that. There are a series of tax changes helpful to small business, but there is a provision—and I bet there are not five Members of the Senate who know it is there—a provision that comes from the House, and here it is:

It is a provision called 956(A) dealing with the Tax Code. That provision says, "Let's make it easier for companies to invest in jobs overseas." The Congress already passed that once, by the way, and the President vetoed that in a larger bill. But let's make it easier for American companies to create jobs overseas as opposed to jobs here.

I am interested to know whether the Senate conferees will accept that provision of the House, which is a terrible provision. I have no idea how anyone thinking clearly could believe that repealing this provision, 956(A), which we did 3 years ago to try to tighten up on the loophole that exists to encourage people to move their jobs overseas, I have no idea how people believe it is in this country's interest to make it more attractive for companies to move their jobs overseas.

That is something we are going to have to watch, because if it comes back to the Senate, some of us are going to be very upset and very aggressive.

Let me, Mr. President, say those are the issues that make sense. I mean, those are the issues we ought to be dealing with—health care, minimum wage, economic growth, the deficit.

There will be economic growth figures out at the end of this week, both unemployment and GDP figures. The interesting thing about our country today is if it shows that the country is growing well and has a robust economic growth figure for the last quarter, if it shows that more people are working, we have fewer unemployed, what is going to happen? Well, if what has happened in the last year will happen again, Wall Street will have an apocalyptic seizure and look for windows to jump out of. They will want to find a doorway to the roof, I suppose.

The slightest bit of good economic news creates, on Wall Street, some kind of enormous sense of sadness and sorrow and concern, and all of a sudden, we see stock prices drop, bond prices drop. I do not have any idea why they seem to be out of step with the interests of the rest of the country. I guess they think if we have any kind of good economic news at all, they are worried that over the horizon we will have more inflation. They are wrong about that.

The fact is, wages in this country are going down, not coming up, have been going down consistently for about 20 years. So we do not have the threat of more inflation. What we have is a threat of our economy not producing enough, not growing enough in order to produce the kind of robust opportunity

that we want for the American people. But those are the central issues. Those are the issues we ought to be dealing with.

You know, the reason I came over today, after five people have talked about the subject of President Clinton again, is, we have, it seems to me, created in American politics an infection of sorts, an infection that suggests that we always have to be sawing away, always have to be chipping away and sawing away and gnawing away and biting away, or somehow we are not doing the public's work. That is not the public's work at all. That is the newly defined vision of American politics that I think is fundamentally wrong.

There was, a couple of years ago, something put out by this new wave of politicians who took control in the last year or so, last couple of years. There was a primer put out by an organization called GOPAC, and they put out tapes. They had instructional sessions for candidates. They put out a primer: "Here is how you talk. Here is what you say. Here is how you appeal to people." In it, they did something that I basically consider reprehensible. They said, "When you talk about yourself, you use contrasting words for yourself. Always try to use the words like 'hard work, toughness, flag, family, country.'" They said, "When you talk about your opponent, whenever you are talking about your opponent, you need to use the terms 'sick, permissive, pathetic, traitor.'"

This is an organization, incidentally, that has been winning. They won the last election. This organization trained the candidates that won the last election. The training manual says: "If you're dealing with your opponents, call them sick, pathetic, traitor," fundamentally corrupting the American process, I say. That is not what the political process ought to be about.

Calling your opponents traitors, sick, pathetic—what is sick and pathetic is the new style and the new brand of politics that believes this advances the public interest in this country.

What advances the public interest in this country is, if and when both sides in the two major political parties finally come to the same point and are addressing the same central issues, even in different ways—jobs, education, health care, the environment, family farming. When both sides are addressing them, even if they have substantially different views, they are at least addressing the public's business, at least addressing the things that most American families want to see the Congress address.

But when they are off always sawing away at the bottom of the tree, always biting and nibbling, always trying to figure out how you can simply destroy the base somehow, it seems to me you can hardly be called builders, you can hardly be called—in the tradition of those who always believed there would be enough people to make this system

work—hardly be called constructive builders who participate in helping build the political system that the American people want.

My hope is that in the coming weeks—we have just 1 week left before there is an August break, and then about 4 or 5 weeks left before we will adjourn for the election—my hope is that during that time we will see substantially more cooperation, substantially less confrontation, and legislation enacted by the House and the Senate that addresses the central questions of people's concerns. I mentioned a few of them. Are they safe? Can they walk the streets? What about crime? Do they have jobs for themselves and their children? Does the education system work? Are our schools good enough? If not, what will make them better?

Can we fix the health care system to deal with preexisting conditions and portability of health care coverage, and make health care affordable for all people? Can we address the issue of those frozen at the bottom of the economic ladder working for very low wages who have been frozen for 7 years? Can we adjust the minimum wage?

Those are the central kinds of questions that if the Congress does address, will, I think, relate to the concerns of most of the American people.

Mr. President, I will yield the floor. My hope is that, although we are going to run through some appropriations bills this week, my hope is that a number of these other issues coming out of conference will be addressed as well.

SENATOR BENNETT JOHNSTON

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me make one final observation. The Senator who is on the Democratic side of the aisle working on this bill, Senator BENNETT JOHNSTON, as was mentioned by Senator KEMPTHORNE and others today, is one of, I think, the most admired Senators in this country.

He does it the right way. He addresses public issues in a thoughtful and responsible way. He is going to leave the Congress. I believe Members from both political parties would look at Senator JOHNSTON's public record and, with admiration, say this is someone who has served long and well in public service in this country and someone to whom we owe a debt of thanks and gratitude.

I know this will likely be the last bill that he is involved in managing with the Senator from New Mexico on the floor of the Senate. I did want to take the opportunity to wish him well in whatever new career he chooses. I am sure there are many opportunities ahead of him.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I make a point of order that a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JEFFORDS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

LAKE TRAVERSE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to take just a couple of minutes, I will be very brief, to make a point to those managing this legislation.

My understanding is an amendment has been noticed dealing with the issue of Lake Traverse. I want it to be clear that if an amendment is offered on Lake Traverse, I will oppose that amendment.

The issue is a lake in South Dakota. There is some concern about the water level in that lake. The water level and the amount of water held for flood control disadvantages people around Lake Traverse. It is also true, that Lake Traverse is used less for flood control and as the lake water level is lowered, more water would be flushed out of the lake and into the Red River, adversely affecting a good number of communities along the Red River.

We did have a meeting with the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers folks and the staffs of a number of congressional delegations about what kind of collaborative effort could be developed to make sure the interests of all parties are resolved in an appropriate way.

Legislation introduced here in the Senate, if such an amendment is introduced, would represent a unilateral way to do this. I will not support that.

It seems to me we have a circumstance where a lake project was authorized many, many years ago for the purpose of flood control. I understand some of the controversy about it. If the Congress is going to instruct the Corps to manage that lake in a way that diminishes opportunity for flood control, then the question is, who is going to bear the cost of that?

There will be a number of communities in North Dakota and Minnesota up on the Red River that will bear the cost of it. To the extent this problem is addressed and resolved, it must be resolved in a collaborative way, not through this kind of legislation.

If such an amendment is offered and I understand one has been referenced, I intend to oppose it. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 5101

Mr. JOHNSTON. Mr. President, I am sending to the desk a sense-of-the-Senate resolution on behalf of the distin-

guished Senator from West Virginia, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and others regarding the United States-Japan semiconductor trade agreement which is set to expire on July 31 of this year.

His resolution, after recounting the history of this agreement, resolves that: It is the sense of the Senate that, if a new United States-Japan semiconductor agreement is not concluded by July 31 of this year, that, first, it ensures continued calculation of foreign market share in Japan according to the formula set forth in the current agreement, and, second, provides for continuation of current measures to deter renewed dumping of semiconductors in the United States and in third country markets, the President shall do three things: First, direct the Office of the Trade Representative to provide for unilateral United States Government calculation and publication of the foreign share of the Japanese semiconductor market, according to the formula set forth in the current agreement; second, report to the Congress on a quarterly basis regarding the progress, or lack thereof, in increasing foreign market access to the Japanese semiconductor market; and, third, take all necessary and appropriate actions to ensure that all United States trade laws with respect to foreign market access and injurious dumping are expeditiously and vigorously enforced with respect to the United States-Japan semiconductor trade.

I send the amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSTON), for Mr. ROCKEFELLER, for himself, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. BYRD, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, and Mr. DOMENICI, proposes an amendment numbered 5101.

Mr. JOHNSTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The U.S.-Japan Semiconductor Trade Agreement is set to expire on July 31, 1996;

The Governments of the United States and Japan are currently engaged in negotiations over the terms of a new U.S.-Japan agreement on semiconductors;

The President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Japan agreed to the G-7 Summit in June that their two governments should conclude a mutually acceptable outcome of the semiconductor dispute by July 31, 1996, and that there should be a continuing role for the two governments in the new agreement;

The current U.S.-Japan Semiconductor Trade Agreement has put in place both government-to-government and industry-to-industry mechanisms which have played a vital role in allowing cooperation in replace conflict in these important high technology sector such as by providing for joint calculation of foreign market share in Japan, deterrence of dumping, and promotion of industrial cooperation in the designing of foreign semiconductor devices;