

the workplace in a manner that might threaten the opportunity for those who want and need the overtime pay, especially those at the bottom of the pay scale, boy, that is not moving in the right direction in terms of providing flexibility.

Is it the case that the preponderance of people getting overtime in the workplace are people below \$28,000 a year?

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, my colleague from North Dakota is absolutely correct. That is why I said earlier that I would want to point to the critical distinction between coming out here on the floor with a piece of legislation that you know threatens the labor standards of working people, that you know doesn't provide the flexibility, that you know is not going to get the votes to pass, that you know the President is going to veto, and doing what should be done, if, in fact, we care about working people and children, which is to come out with a piece of legislation that really does provide the comptime, the flexibility, without threatening people who really rely on that overtime pay.

Mr. DORGAN. Isn't it the case that the bill that was brought to the floor says to you, if you are an employer and you have somebody working for you making \$14,000 a year, working hard, working two 40-hour weeks, "By the way, we will give you some flexibility; you can tell that worker next week that they are going to work 60 hours, and that you can let them work fewer hours the week after, so as long as it adds up to 80 hours, whatever the requirement of work for the first time?"

Mr. WELLSTONE. Absolutely. It takes the Fair Labor Standards Act, which, as I said the other day, is based on a lot of sweat and tears of a lot of working families, and turns the whole idea of fairness on its head. That is absolutely right.

That is why that piece of legislation went nowhere on the floor of the Senate, nor should it.

That is absolutely correct.

Mr. DORGAN. One additional question: There is a way to do what people have said needs doing, and what, I think, needs doing; that is, honestly provide greater flexibility. If people want to take comptime instead of overtime, there certainly is a way to do that without potentially hurting people at the lower end of the economic ladder. Isn't that the case?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I would say to my colleague that he is correct. I think the key issues are, when you have proposals in here, first, what you do, if you are serious about passing a piece of legislation that is going to help working families, is you take the extreme and harsh parts out, like overturning the 40-hour week.

Second of all, you make sure you don't have a lot of coercion at the workplace, and that employees really do have a choice, whether it be a woman or a man. And, if so, they get either that at time-and-a-half pay or

they get that time-and-a-half off when they want and need to take it.

If you can make sure that happens, if you make sure that you have the important provisions to make sure that happens, and if you make sure there isn't exploitation, then it is absolutely the right direction to go.

That would be, I hope, the common ground.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized to use the time reserved for the leader.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I came to the floor, and was interested in the comments offered by my colleague from Minnesota. I agree with his comments. That has been the issue on the floor of the Senate for the last couple of weeks. I expect we will have more debate on it. But I came to talk about several other issues, and I would like to take the time to make some points to my colleagues that are important to me, to my home State of North Dakota, and to others.

So let me begin talking about the first of the three issues.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RESCISSIONS ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, first is the disaster appropriations bill.

Last week the Senate passed an appropriations bill to provide supplemental appropriations for the disasters that have occurred in our country, and it is especially important to me and to our region.

This bill would provide substantial amounts of resources and money for people who have been victims of the disaster in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.

I am enormously impressed that the House of Representatives last evening passed a disaster bill that contains almost identical amounts of money for the disaster relief that we put in here in the Senate. We added \$500 million to the bill—\$100 million that the President requested be added, and \$400 million above that for what is called community development block grants. That represents the most flexible of Federal spending that goes to State and local governments. It provides great flexibility for them. It is packaged in a way that helps them resolve their problems and help their people who are victims of the disaster.

While I am very pleased of the actions of the House last evening, we now go to conference. I will be a conferee because I am on the Senate Appropriations Committee. But we go to conference with a bill that has awfully good news in it for victims of the disaster in our region of the country. But the bill also contains a very controversial amendment that has nothing to do

with this bill. This is an amendment that has to do with ending Government shutdowns at the end of the fiscal year if the appropriations bills are not passed on time. They are called continuing resolutions. CR's, they are called.

This disaster appropriations bill contains an amendment, dealing with the continuing resolution which is very controversial. The President said long ago would this amendment require him to veto the bill, if it is in the bill. And, nonetheless, the Senate has passed the bill and the House has passed a bill that constrains this very controversial amendment.

I hope very much that this weekend, and in the early days of next week, as we work through this conference, that we can convince all of the people who are interested in this bill that the best interest of the people of the region who are victims of the disaster will be served by removing from this bill these amendments that have nothing to do with the disaster appropriations bill.

We should not in any way attempt to delay or derail a disaster bill with extraneous amendments. It just shouldn't be done. I have not done it in the past. I have voted for disaster funds to help people who have been victims of floods, fires, tornadoes, blizzards, earthquakes, and I have been pleased to vote for those because I think it is important for people all over this country to extend a helping hand to those who are victims of a disaster. But I don't think it is appropriate for Members of Congress to decide this is a bill which is critical and important, that provides needed help to victims, and, therefore, because it is a bill that the President somehow must sign, they should put a controversial amendment on it that has nothing to do with the bill. That is exactly what has happened.

I ask, with great respect to all of those involved in that effort to decide to do something different, to withdraw that amendment from this bill. Let's pass this bill out of conference, send it back to the House and to the Senate, and then to the President in a manner so that he can sign it.

Why on Earth would the Congress include something in a bill that they know the President is going to veto, and thereby just create a delay in the aid to victims?

There are thousands of North Dakotans and Minnesotans who woke up this morning not in their own beds and not in their own homes. They are homeless. It has been weeks since this flood of a 500-year level hit the Red River and evacuated 95 percent of the people in the city of 50,000, Grand Forks, ND. On the other side of the river, 100 percent of the city of East Grand Forks, MN, some 9,000 people were evacuated from their homes.

In Grand Forks, ND, alone, somewhere between 600 and 800 homes are destroyed. No one will move back into those homes. They are destroyed. Another perhaps 1,000 homes are severely

damaged. Where are those families today? They are not home today. They are victims living with relatives, some in shelters, many in other towns struggling to try to figure out what they do and how they put together the pieces. Many people live paycheck to paycheck, struggling to try to figure out how they pay the bills.

Many businesses are not open in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks because much of the town is still uninhabited. People do not have jobs. People do not know how they are going to pay their bills. Yes, FEMA is helping. FEMA is writing checks and helping people with their immediate needs. But these are victims of a disaster. They need help, and they don't need people to play a game with a disaster appropriations bill by adding an extraneous amendment that has nothing to do with the bill in a way that will delay and jeopardize the bill.

I ask all of those who are involved in that, don't do that. Bring your proposal up next week or the week after. It doesn't matter to me. Let's debate it. You have every right to bring any idea to the floor of the Senate and have a debate on it. But don't delay or jeopardize the disaster bill. It is fundamentally unfair to people this morning who still woke up without a home and without a job wondering what their future holds and looking to us for some hope.

I have shown the pictures before. But I think it is important to do it again. Let me explain how we got where we are so that you understand the dimensions of it.

We had 3 years' worth of snow in 3 months in my State. This is a snowbank. This happens to be flat ground. There is a farmer in front of a snowbank. It gives you a little idea of how high those snowbanks became in the middle of our blizzards in North Dakota. That is about an 18-foot snowbank.

There were anywhere from six to nine serious blizzards, most of which closed down most of the roads in North Dakota. Some of them closed down every road in North Dakota. We had whiteout conditions. You could not see your hand in front of your face. The last blizzard, incidentally, was anywhere from 18 to 24 inches of snow dumped in about 48 hours on top of the record snowfall we had previously. So we had about 9 to 10 feet of snow in North Dakota during this winter. Then what we had was a rapid spring melt in which all of this snowpack melted down. The Red River on the eastern side of our State is one of the few rivers that runs north. This river ran right into an ice pack up in Canada. We had this massive melt that created not a river but created a lake out of the Red River. And, this lake was 150 miles long by about 20 to 30 miles wide.

The result was that a massive quantity of water became a giant, coursing stream through Wahpeton, Breckenridge, Fargo, Moorhead, Grand Forks, and East Grand Forks. They

were fighting floods in 80 locations in our region. The head of the Corps of Engineers said that he has never seen that kind of effort by local people to fight a flood. It was the most extraordinary effort he had ever seen.

Down in Wahpeton and Breckenridge, they won some and lost some battles. Up in Fargo, they largely won the battle after very tense nights and days. In Grand Forks, the flood prediction was set at 49 feet, the highest flood in the history of the Red River in Grand Forks. But the flood that came was 54 feet. It broke the dike and inundated the town.

I traveled throughout Grand Forks. I viewed Main Street, downtown Grand Forks, and all of the neighborhoods in a Coast Guard boat.

Take a look at the farms in the Red River Valley. This is a picture of a farm. It does not look like it. It looks like a building surrounded by a lake but it is farmland. We had 1.7 million acres under water.

Then there were dead cattle. We lost somewhere around 150,000 head of cattle. A fellow who had just come from North Dakota told me yesterday. He was in town the day before and visiting with a fellow rancher, and the rancher said he had to go home and shoot some more calves. These young calves were born during calving season. Now their hooves were falling off. Their feet were falling off because they had been frozen. Farmers and ranchers lost some 150,000 head of cattle that were killed as a result of these storms.

We had farmers calling radio stations saying they had lost their entire herd of cattle. They asked if anybody had seen their herd of cattle. There were dairy cows with udders frozen. In the last storm, which was the worst storm in 50 years, came in the middle of calving season. The Senator from Kansas knows very well about weather problems during calving season.

So that is what people were confronted with. When the flood came, it inundated Grand Forks and East Grand Forks, and the towns were evacuated. In the midst of the flood, the downtown section of Grand Forks caught on fire. We had fire fighters in Grand Forks, as you can see from this picture, waist deep in ice cold water, some suffering hypothermia, fighting a fire. In the early stages they were fighting with fire extinguishers because they could not get pumper trucks in because of the flood. These are heroes. These folks who fought that fire are true heroes. We lost parts of three blocks of downtown Grand Forks, including 11 of the wonderful old historic buildings. That part of the historic city of Grand Forks burned to the ground.

That is what was faced in this set of disasters. These are the victims up and down the Red River Valley who today wait for a message of hope from the Congress. They wait for the disaster bill that both the House and the Senate have now enacted that will go to conference. They wait for the President's

signature on a bill that provides much-needed help to these victims.

It is critically important that those who have now added an amendment, which has nothing to do with this bill and that is very controversial, decide to withdraw it.

Mr. President, all of us are proud of our States, all of us are proud of where we come from. I am enormously proud to be a North Dakotan, and I feel privileged every day I get up and come to work to represent North Dakota in the Senate. The most important thing I have done in my life, I guess, is representing North Dakotans in the Senate. It will undoubtedly be one of the most wonderful privileges I will have had in my lifetime when my service here is through.

I do not, and have not in my years in both the House and Senate come to the Chambers of Congress asking for special help for our region. But, if ever a region needed help, our region does now. It is almost unprecedented that major communities in our country had to be evacuated. Now weeks after the evacuation, the communities are still not very functional. People are still homeless. People are still jobless.

None of us quite knows the menu of exactly how you put all this back together. How do you restart an economy that was stopped dead still? How do you give hope to men and women who had a small business somewhere and have now lost all their inventory, and lost their building? Their business is gone and they have no money. How do you restore their hopes and dreams?

How about a rancher or a farmer whose land is totally under water and who lost their entire herd of cows and calves? They wonder what will they do next? This is a case where our region needs help.

We are a generous people in North Dakota, and we have always been the first to help. Just as America is a generous nation, and been the first almost anywhere in the world to offer help to people who need help. We have done the same in North Dakota to offer help to victims of hurricanes and earthquakes and floods elsewhere.

This is a time that I am proud of Members of Congress for standing up in the Senate and in the House saying that we want to offer a package of help that in the bill passed by the Senate totaled somewhere close to \$1.2-\$1.3 billion of help for that region. It included \$500 million of community development block grants which are the most flexible kind of resources available. I am enormously proud that Members of the House and Senate have done that. Now if we can do one more thing that will make me proud, it will be for those who have offered the controversial amendment that will attract a veto to this bill to decide it is not the right thing to do. This is not the right bill to do it on. It is not fair for the people of this region to do it now. It is time for them to decide to withdraw this amendment. Then we can have the conference, and get a bill we can send to

the President and have the President sign it. Then this critically needed assistance can flow to people of our region. It will be, I think, a very proud moment for all of Congress. I hope that will be the case in the coming days.

FAST-TRACK TRADE AUTHORITY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to mention quickly two other subjects. The first is a letter that I have sent to the President with my colleague from Maine, Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE, about the issue of fast-track trade authority, and then, second, I would like to offer a comment about the budget agreement.

First, on the issue of fast-track trade authority, Mr. President, Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE and I have sent a letter to President Clinton indicating to him that we do not believe it is appropriate to extend fast-track trade authority and that we would oppose the extension of fast-track trade authority.

This may not mean much to a lot of folks. Fast-track trade authority is a kind of inside baseball term, I suppose, for Members of Congress. What is fast-track authority? Fast track is a trade procedure by which the Congress says to an administration, any administration, you go out and negotiate a trade agreement with some other country or group of countries, and then the trade agreement is brought back to the Senate or the House and must be considered on something called fast track. This means the Senate and House must vote on it up or down with no opportunity to amend it. Fast track means no opportunity to amend it. You bring it to the Senate. The Senate votes yes or no, and that is the end of it.

We do not use fast-track authority on the arms control agreements. We did not have fast-track authority on the chemical weapons treaty that this Senate passed a couple of weeks ago. Only on trade agreements do we have what is called fast track. It is fundamentally undemocratic, in my judgment.

The reason I do not support fast track and the extension of fast-track authority is fast track has been the wrong track for this country. I urge my colleagues to take a look at our trade deficit. We talk about eliminating the budget deficit, and there is great merit in that, and I am going to be supportive of that.

What about the other deficit? What about the trade deficit, which is the largest merchandise trade deficit in the history of this country right now? This is the largest merchandise trade deficit in the history of this country, and you do not hear a word about it, not a word. We have had trade agreement after trade agreement, and guess what. After every trade agreement, we have greater hemorrhaging of red ink and greater trade deficits.

This is a chart that shows those trade deficits. We had the Tokyo round in 1981. That year we had a \$28 billion

merchandise trade deficit. Then we went out and we added the United States-Canada Free-Trade Agreement, and that year we had a \$115 billion trade deficit. Then there was NAFTA. Then it was the Uruguay round. Every time we have a new trade agreement, our trade deficit increases.

I would like to get the names and pictures of those folks who are negotiating these things and ask them, by what standard do you view success? Is it successful to have successive trade agreements that mean this country goes deeper into merchandise trade debt? I do not think so. That is not how I would define success.

This is a chart which shows what has happened with our two neighbors. First we had the United States-Canada Free-Trade Agreement. Then we had the North American Free-Trade Agreement, called NAFTA, with Canada and Mexico, and the Mexico Free Trade Agreement.

Guess what has happened. Before we had the trade agreement with our neighbors, we had a trade surplus with Mexico. Then we go off and negotiate a trade agreement with the Mexicans and the Canadians. Now we have a combined deficit that totals nearly \$40 billion.

Look what has happened to the trade deficit with Mexico and Canada. We had a \$2 billion surplus with Mexico in 1993. Now we have a \$16 billion deficit. We had all these economists who said, if we would just do this, we would get 250,000 new jobs. Well, guess what. In fact, the major economist who pledged the 250,000 new jobs said, "Whoops, I was wrong. I guess there are no 250,000 new jobs; there is more trade debt."

Harry Truman once said: I want to get a one-armed economist. I am getting tired of economists saying "on this hand" and "on the other hand." We do not need economists who give us this kind of advice.

What about the trade deficit? Where is this trade deficit? Well, 92 percent of the trade deficit is with six countries. First there is Japan. Then there is China, and this one is growing to beat the band, by the way. Then we have Canada and Mexico where the deficits have been growing substantially. Finally, there are Germany and Taiwan.

I want to remind those who want to extend fast track about the Constitution. The Constitution of the United States, article I, section 8, says "The Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations." It does not say anything about fast track. It does not say anything about handcuffs or straitjackets. It does not say anything about having some nameless negotiator run off to foreign shores someplace and negotiate a bad agreement and then come back to the Congress and say, by the way, vote on this, and you have no opportunity to amend it.

I wonder how many in this Chamber know what kind of tariff exists on a T-bone steak you send to Tokyo. I bet

not many. Not too many years ago we negotiated with Japan, with whom we have a very large, abiding continual trade deficit. We negotiated a beef agreement. We wanted to get more United States beef into Japan. So our negotiators went out on behalf of our beef producers and others and negotiated with Japan.

All of a sudden one day in the newspapers we see in a big headline that we have reached agreement with Japan on a beef agreement. They were having a day of feasting and rejoicing. You would have thought all these negotiators just won the gold medal in the Olympics. Then we find out that, yes, we have a new agreement with Japan and, yes, we are getting more American beef into Japan. But, guess what? Try sending a T-bone steak to Tokyo. What is the tariff to get T-bone into Tokyo? It's up to a 50-percent tariff on beef to Japan.

Would that be considered successful in any area of the world in international trade? No. That would be defined as a colossal failure in every set of circumstances except when our negotiators are negotiating an agreement with Japan. They define that as success. They line up to get their blue ribbons.

It's like they had a steer at the county fair and had just won blue ribbons and want to get congratulated for it. Yes, we got more beef in Japan. Just think what we take into our marketplace from Japan in exchange for that. And we hit a 50-percent tariff.

I could talk about potatoes from Mexico, I could talk about Durum wheat flooding our markets from Canada. I could talk forever about these trade problems. I don't want to do that today. I only want to say this to the President, to the administration, and to the Members of Congress: Don't talk about fast track until we have straightened out the trade agreements that we have had in recent years that have put our producers and our workers at a disadvantage. Don't talk about fast track until you have negotiated the problems dealing with Canada and grain.

I was in a little orange truck going up to the Canadian border one day with 200 bushels of Durum wheat. That little orange truck couldn't get over the border into Canada. Do you know why? They stopped us at the border and said you couldn't take Durum wheat into Canada. All the way up to the border we found truck after truck, semi-loads, dozens of them, hauling Canadian grain south, but we couldn't get a harmless little orange truck north.

In fact, one North Dakotan couldn't get a grocery sack of wheat into Canada. She married a Canadian and was back home visiting, and wanted to take a grocery sack of wheat into Canada to grind it and make whole wheat bread, and guess what, they wouldn't let her take a grocery sack of wheat north. All the while, hundreds of semi-trucks full of Canadian wheat come south.