

That is the plea and the request of the people from Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. Send a clean bill to the President, one he can sign so that the relief can start to flow.

Now, the Washington Post this morning, in the Novak column, he reported, and I quote:

At a contentious meeting of Republican leaders after adjournment Thursday, Lott argued that this time, unlike 2 years ago, the GOP would win 'the PR battle.' He claimed Americans did not care much about the supplemental appropriations bill providing help for victims of Red River flooding in the Dakotas and Minnesota.

I do not know if that is really the position of the majority leader. I hope it is not. But if it is, let me just say that he is wrong. People do care. The outpouring from across the United States has been unprecedented.

People of the United States care a lot about helping people hit by a disaster. They have proven it time after time after time. The fact is, if the majority leader really believes that the American people do not care, he is wrong. The American people are better than that.

And for those who do not think it makes any difference, let me just quote from the Republican Governor from South Dakota. The Republican Governor says, "If you've got a disaster bill, you ought to deal with the disaster."

For those who say that delay does not matter, Janklow—

Again, the Republican Governor of South Dakota—

said the delay in the legislation is blocking reconstruction of sewage facilities, highways and a State-owned rail line in South Dakota.

It is not just the Republican Governor of South Dakota who understands that delay matters, but there is a Republican Congressman from Minnesota, JIM RAMSTAD, a former North Dakotan, by the way, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, who said over the weekend: "Those who argue that there is money in the pipeline are being disingenuous at best."

This is a Republican Congressman from Minnesota. He said, "There's no money for housing, no money for livestock, no money for sewage systems, no money for water supply, no money for housing buyouts. There is no money in the pipeline for those things. They can't really rebuild without the funds that are tied up in the disaster relief bill."

And he concluded by saying, "Let's end the Washington games."

Madam President, the people of North Dakota and Minnesota and South Dakota and the 30 other States that are affected by this disaster make one request. Send a disaster relief bill that is clean, that does not have these unrelated provisions, send it quickly so the relief can begin to flow. The people in our areas need it. As that woman said from a sweltering trailer, the time for these political games is over. People have been hurt and they need help. Now is the time to respond.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALBARD). The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. COVERDELL. Parliamentary inquiry. It is my understanding that the hour from 4 to 5 has been designated under my control, or any person that I shall delegate time to?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, in light of the presentation we have just heard and the recent veto of the emergency aid by the President, I am going to yield 10 minutes of my time to the distinguished Senator from Texas, and then I will return to the original content of the purpose of the hour from 4 to 5 after she has responded.

I yield 10 minutes to the distinguished Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized for 10 minutes.

THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank the distinguished Senator from Georgia, because I do want to respond and make sure that everyone is singing from the same page.

I appreciate very much what the distinguished Senators from North Dakota are feeling right now, and what they must feel every time they go home. I, too, have visited disaster areas in my home State in the last week, and it is a devastating situation.

Mr. President, I want to make it clear that all of us are going to make sure that the victims of disasters in all the 35 States that are covered will have all of the help they need, and they will have it in the absolute minimum time it takes to get that to them. In fact, the disaster victims in North Dakota and Minnesota and South Dakota are getting help right now. They are getting the SBA loans, they are getting the agriculture help, they are getting the assistance that they need, and it is there now, and we have \$2 billion in the pipeline waiting to come in to them, not waiting for us to act. That is in the pipeline now. So the money is there, make no mistake about it.

But it is very important that everyone know that this is a supplemental appropriations bill. It is the first appropriations bill that has gone through this year. There are many items that must be covered. We are covering the replenishment of FEMA funds, the Federal Emergency Management Agency funds, because they are being depleted right now as we speak, going to the victims of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, California and other States. We are giving that money to them, and we are going to replenish it with this supplemental bill.

But there are many other things covered in this bill. It is not as if this is

just a disaster relief bill for those areas. It is also a \$1.9 billion expenditure for overseas peacekeeping, to replenish the funds that have gone into the protection of Bosnia. There is \$928 million for veterans compensation and pensions, \$29.9 million for plane crash investigations, \$6.4 million to the FBI to reimburse New York State and local jurisdictions for assisting in the investigation of Flight 800, \$197 million for the National Park Service, \$103 million for the Fish and Wildlife Service, \$67 million for the Forest Service, \$20 million for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, \$585 million for the Army Corps of Engineers, \$510 million for the U.S. mission in Southwest Asia, \$58 million for the Women, Infants, and Children Program. Mr. President, it goes on.

This is a supplemental appropriations bill. These are funds that are to replenish funds that have already been spent. In addition to that, we are setting the process by which we do appropriations this year. That is why we have the Government Shutdown Prevention Act. That is why we are saying if we do not come to agreement on October 1 for all of the appropriations bills, that Government will continue to function, that people will not have to worry about their paychecks, that veterans will not have to worry about their pensions, that people going on vacation will not have to worry about it. We are saying right now, here is how we are going to proceed.

I think it has been portrayed that Congress is playing games. Congress has passed a bill. It is not absolving the President of all responsibility to veto anything he wants to veto, and then say, well, I didn't like it and it's your responsibility.

He has a responsibility. The President can sign this bill. I would like for the President to explain why he wants the ability to shut down Government. I would like the President to explain what is unreasonable about providing for the ongoing Government expenditures at today's levels while Congress and the President might continue to negotiate on an appropriations bill that has not been passed by September 30.

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Will the Senator yield for just a moment?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. COVERDELL. Is it not the Senator's understanding that the emergency appropriations Congress passed and sent to the President last week was voted for by the Senate majority leader?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I think that is correct, Mr. President.

Mr. COVERDELL. It was voted for by the Senate minority leader?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Absolutely.

Mr. COVERDELL. Voted for by a majority of the Republican Senators?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. In fact, the majority of the Republican Senators and two-thirds of the whole U.S. Senate.

Mr. COVERDELL. And a majority of the other side of the aisle?

Mrs. HUTCHISON. That is correct.

Mr. COVERDELL. My point is, how much more bipartisan? We don't see that happening here very often. So the emergency relief and all of its provisions, the guarantee you talk about to keep the Government from shutting down, was voted for by the leadership, Republican, Democrat, by the majority of both sides of the aisle, and the President says the Congress is playing games with emergency relief? It seems a little incongruous to me.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I can certainly understand why the Senator from Georgia would be a little confused, when Republicans produced a bill that gave the President everything he asked for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for Bosnia, and for all these other programs that are being replenished for the administration. I can understand why he would be confused that the President would veto the bill and accuse Republicans of playing political games. That is confusing.

In fact, I have to say I think the President needs to step up to the line and say what is unreasonable about providing for the orderly process of Government, the orderly appropriations process, telling people what to expect if there is not an agreement on September 30 between the President and Congress. There are no hammers, there is no fear on the part of Government employees or veterans or people who are counting on paychecks coming on time. What is wrong with providing for that? We are not cutting back on what people are getting now. We are just saying, let's provide a level playing field here. Let's negotiate in good faith. And if the President does not want to do that, if the President wants to shut down Government or wants to have a hammer over Congress' head, wants to have some artificial shutdown of Government at his disposal, I would like for the President to explain to the American people why. Why? Because if we do not pass this now, then people will not know what to expect. Government employees will not know what to expect, veterans will not know what to expect. We may not pass an appropriations bill on which this could be put, as a matter of process, for months to come.

I think this is the responsible approach to take so everyone understands. If the President disagrees, tell us why. Tell us why you want to shut down Government, Mr. President, or you want people to be in fear of shutting down Government, or you want a hammer over Congress' head in order to have some sort of advantage. I mean, what is it? What is it that would cause you to veto a bill that you say is so important to you, for disaster relief and other supplemental appropriations, when, in fact, all you have to do is sign the bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I think the responsibility lies in the White House. The Congress has done its job. I would appreciate the President stepping up to the line and saying what is so bad about having a process which everyone knows, right now, and can plan for, an orderly, responsible transfer between fiscal years. I would just like the President to step up and say what's wrong with that. We ask him to do that today.

We want him to provide the relief he has asked for. And, Mr. President, Congress has done its job.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Texas. I think she is absolutely on point. Getting the emergency relief where it needs to go, protecting its ability to do its work, is in the President's hands now because Congress—particularly here in the Senate, but the House as well—has sent a broadly based, broadly agreed-to document to the President. So, if it doesn't move on to the people who need it, the President will have to accept that responsibility.

THE FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACT

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, for the next 15 minutes or so, since we are talking about vetoes, I would like to talk about the Family Friendly Workplace Act, S. 4. This is a piece of legislation that has been authored by the good Senator from Missouri, Senator ASHCROFT, myself, and others. It is designed to make the workplace a friendlier place, a more flexible place. Lo and behold, in the middle of the debate, the President has announced to the country he would have to veto this bill, which is as puzzling as his veto of this emergency relief. He has said he would have to veto the act. We have had a filibuster underway on this Family Friendly Workplace Act. We have tried to break the filibuster twice and have failed to do so because of the supporters of the President on the other side of the aisle.

If you want to know what the American public thinks about this kind of legislation, you just need to go talk to them. In a survey for Money magazine in May of this year, 64 percent of the public and 68 percent of women would prefer time off to overtime pay if they had the choice, which they do not. The Federal workers, since 1978, have had this choice, but not these hourly laborers. If they had the choice, they would prefer time off to overtime pay. That is what the Family Friendly Workplace Act is about. It is about giving employees and their employers the voluntary—underscore voluntary—option to design programs to meet this desire.

A Penn & Schoen survey found that 75 percent support the choice of time off in lieu of overtime pay. President

Clinton's own Labor Department has reported that help in balancing the needs of work and family is the No. 1 need among working American women. You would think, given what we have seen and the stress that is being pounded upon the average American family, we would be stepping forward with legislation such as S. 4, and trying to create a system in the workplace that allows these working families to meet their special needs and to adjust the time they need to juggle between family and the workplace.

Mr. President, I see we have been joined by the distinguished Senator from Wyoming, who has been an advocate of the Family Friendly Workplace Act. I yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator from Wyoming, to share his thoughts on this legislation with us.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I thank my colleague for arranging this special order.

It seems to me that this is something that is very important. I have watched this discussion with great interest, having had some experience in small business, and, I must confess, I have been very surprised by it. It seems to me that over the years, particularly the last 2½ years, we have spent in this body a great deal of time talking about making things more family friendly. We have talked about how we could provide more time for families to share in the schooling of their youngsters, to share in their communities, to share in the things that make communities strong, and to work that in to our professional lives.

Then comes a proposal to do that which allows for flextime, which allows for comptime, and we find suddenly a great deal of opposition. That is a puzzle to me. As I mentioned, I have been in a small business where you don't have many employees, and I recognize from the employer side that there has to be some communication, because you may not be able to spare someone for a certain length of time. On the other side, I think it is equally or perhaps even more important that the employee is not forced by the employer to take the time differently than they would like to. But it is my understanding and my belief that in this bill those things are protected, that it is a cooperative agreement between the employer and the employee, to come to these conclusions.

So I was very disappointed. Even though I haven't spoken a great deal on it, I was very disappointed last week when we didn't get enough votes to vote cloture. There certainly are enough votes to pass the bill. I am disappointed that the White House has apparently indicated the President will not sign the bill, largely as a result of the labor unions to which the White House is so sensitive. This Family Friendly Workplace Act would help working Americans do the things—the