

and user empowerment tools to control the information that children may access on-line. I applaud the efforts already underway to bring concerned groups together to define steps we can take to make the on-line world a comfortable one for families.

Also, we should now remove the unconstitutional CDA provisions from our law books. At the beginning of this Congress, Senators FEINGOLD, JEFFORDS, KERRY and I introduced a bill, S. 213, to repeal the Internet censorship provisions of the CDA. We should move promptly to pass that measure.

One of the continuing challenges we will face in making the best use of our burgeoning information technologies is in adding value to all that they offer. Anyone who uses the Internet knows that there is a lot of junk out there. For example, student searching for background on the Holocaust may easily come across diatribes on the Internet claiming that the Holocaust never happened. In our classrooms, in our homes, in our libraries, we must teach our children to be discerning users of this powerful new tool.

We are blessed in the United States to enjoy the oldest and most effective constitutional protections of free speech anywhere. The struggle facing succeeding generations of Americans in preserving free speech liberties often is difficult, and it means standing firm in the face of sometimes fleeting but usually intense political pressures, and I am proud of the 15 Senators who joined with me to vote against the CDA. This is a vindication of that effort.

We have the technology and the temperament to show the world how the Internet can be used to its fullest. This decision has prevented us from succumbing to short-sighted political pressures by adopting a model of censorship instead.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, June 25, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,339,644,139,769.58. (Five trillion, three hundred thirty-nine billion, six hundred forty-four million, one hundred thirty-nine thousand, seven hundred sixty-nine dollars and fifty-eight cents)

One year ago, June 25, 1996, the federal debt stood at \$5,114,149,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred fourteen billion, one hundred forty-nine million)

Five years ago, June 25, 1992, the federal debt stood at \$3,944,282,000,000. (Three trillion, nine hundred forty-four billion, two hundred eighty-two million)

Ten years ago, June 25, 1987, the federal debt stood at \$2,292,504,000,000. (Two trillion, two hundred ninety-two billion, five hundred four million)

Fifteen years ago, June 25, 1982, the federal debt stood at \$1,070,485,000,000. (One trillion, seventy billion, four hundred eighty-five million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 tril-

lion—\$4,269,159,139,769.58 (Four trillion, two hundred sixty-nine billion, one hundred fifty-nine million, one hundred thirty-nine thousand, seven hundred sixty-nine dollars and fifty-eight cents) during the past 15 years.

DELAYING THE LOAN TO CROATIA

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of delaying a World Bank loan to Croatia until that country fully meets the obligations it agreed to when it signed the Dayton Accords in November 1995.

Two days ago, the Clinton administration announced that it would attempt to block a \$30 million World Bank loan to Croatia until Zagreb extradites Croats indicted on war crimes charges and allows Serbian refugees to return to their homes in Croatian territory.

It appears that we may have difficulty in persuading other countries on the World Bank's board to go along with this postponement, but I believe that the United States should stick to its principles.

Mr. President, the horrifying wars that took place in Bosnia and Croatia from 1991 to 1995 had many and complex causes. One of them was the thinly disguised desire of Serbian President Milosevic and Croatian President Tudjman to carve up Bosnia and Herzegovina. The revolt and temporary secession from Croatia by the Krajina Serbs—who themselves were led by extremely unsavory individuals who also carried out atrocities—interrupted the planned cooperation of the two rapacious strongmen in Belgrade and Zagreb.

There is also no doubt, Mr. President, that the Croatian army—trained by private Americans—played a valuable role in turning the tide in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the summer and fall of 1995 as part of its successful campaign to oust the Krajina Serbs from Croatia.

But, Mr. President, the behavior of President Tudjman since then has been deplorable. He has knowingly coddled indicted war criminals, despite his obligation under Dayton to turn them over to the International Tribunal at The Hague. On numerous other occasions, I have spoken out in this Chamber against the atrocities—murder, rape, and vile “ethnic cleansing”—that were perpetrated against innocent civilians in Bosnia.

Most expert observers believe that Bosnian Serbs were responsible for the majority of these heinous acts. But several Bosnian Croats and some Croats from Croatia apparently were among the sadists, as were a few Muslims. That President Tudjman refuses to hand over the indicted who are living in Croatia is an affront to civilized people everywhere, and a direct slap in the face of the United States, which brokered the Dayton Accords.

Moreover, despite pretty rhetoric and laws on the books, Tudjman has thrown up practical roadblocks to the

resettlement of ethnic Serb refugees, preferring instead to govern a Croatia that is now much more ethnically homogeneous. I should add, Mr. President, that ethnic Croats who were displaced by Serbs earlier in this decade should also be allowed to return to their homes. Our goal is a peaceful, multi-ethnic, democratic Croatia.

In Herzegovina, President Tudjman continues to rule through thuggish ethnic Croatian proxies headquartered in Mostar. These lawless types have refused all international attempts to integrate Mostar and have resorted to deadly violence against Muslims.

In addition, despite their Bosnian citizenship, the Croats of Herzegovina were allowed to vote in Croatia's national elections earlier this month, providing much of the support by which Tudjman was re-elected in a campaign distinguished by his nearly one-sided access to the media and violence against opposition candidates.

Mr. President, I firmly believe that Croatia will some day re-enter the Western European community to which it alleges it belongs. But Croatia cannot even think of becoming a member of Western institutions like the European Union or NATO until it lives up to its moral and legal commitments.

Postponing the World Bank loan to Croatia would serve as a useful warning to President Tudjman that he cannot escape the consequences of his authoritarian and duplicitous behavior.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

JUDICIAL VACANCIES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last week I spoke at some length about the crisis being created by our failure to move forward expeditiously to fill longstanding judicial vacancies. This week, we have the opportunity to double our confirmations by taking up and approving the five judicial nominees on the Senate Executive Calendar. As the Senate approaches its fifth extended recess, it have found time to confirm only five Federal judges of the 38 nominees the President has sent to us. That is less than one judge per month.

We continue to fall farther and farther behind the pace established by Senator Dole and Senator HATCH in the last Congress. By this time 2 years ago, Senator HATCH had held six confirmation hearings involving 26 judicial nominees and the Senate had proceeded to confirm 26 Federal judges by the end of June—during one of the busiest periods ever, during the first 100 days of the Republicans' Contract with America.

I have spoken often about the crisis being created by the 100 vacancies that are being perpetuated on the Federal courts around the country, as has the Chief Justice of the United States. At the rate that we are currently going more and more vacancies are continuing to mount over longer and longer times to the detriment of greater numbers of Americans and the national cause of prompt justice.

There are another five highly-qualified judicial nominees on the Senate calendar. They should not be held hostage to the resolution of other disputes. I urge the Republican leadership not to use the judiciary as a political pressure point or to involve the judiciary in disagreement over other matters. I would hope that the Senate would move to confirm these five additional judges this week before we adjourn for the 4th of July.

OCEAN SHIPPING REFORM ACT OF 1997

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 1997 is a continuation and extension of work initiated in the last Congress by Representative BUD SHUSTER and former Senator Larry Pressler. Their goal was to build a fair and responsible balance in America's international container shipping maritime policy. The purpose was to better reflect the modern maritime marketplace. Unfortunately, it was not achieved because we ran out of time.

In the 105th Congress, a bipartisan group of Senators from the Commerce Committee introduced a modified version of the Ocean Shipping Reform bill. It addressed many of the concerns with last year's bill identified by affected stakeholders. Our plan to move this shipping reform legislation forward has been inclusive, simple, and direct. Under the leadership of Senator HUTCHISON, and working in a bipartisan way, we have developed a bill that reflects a broad consensus. Most stakeholders in this industry are comfortable with it. This doesn't mean they each got everything they wanted. It does mean that a balance was achieved between what they desired and what the other stakeholders would accept. A real compromise. In this Congress, we have worked hard to achieve a consensus, and we will work even harder to keep it.

This bill is not perfect. But the process has been excellent. The Commerce Committee held a hearing and a markup, and innumerable meetings with all affected parties. And throughout the process Senator MCCAIN's staff has made the various iterations of the legislation publicly available. This transparency was important to reaching the compromise.

Mr. President, I believe that it implements real change that will benefit America's ocean shipping industry. When passed and signed into law, S. 414 will help foster the many benefits of increased competition that this industry sorely needs and wants.

Mr. President, it will also merge the Federal Maritime Commission with the Surface Transportation Board to create the United States Transportation Board (USTB) which will ultimately provide an independent federal transportation regulatory board which thinks and acts on intermodal issues.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I appreciate the Majority Leader's efforts to

work with me on this important legislation. I also want to thank him for his efforts to address the concerns of all the interested parties involved in the ocean shipping industry. I identified three areas in the bill we passed in Committee that were of particular concern to me and that I wanted addressed before the bill was taken to the full Senate. The Leader has worked diligently to address my concerns. I too believe this reform is desperately needed. I am pleased that the committee took the extra time after the markup to complete the work on this bill. An agreement was reached that the majority of America's shipping stakeholders can accept: the ports, longshore labor, shippers, and carriers.

Mr. LOTT. The stakeholders wanted more. I wanted more. I know my colleagues wanted more. My friend Mr. GORTON was explicit in his desire for more reform.

Mr. GORTON. I agree with the Leader. This bill is not perfect and it does not accomplish every reform that I want to see for this industry. But I believe it is a significant improvement over the status quo. I do recognize that Mrs. HUTCHISON's approach was to make change incrementally and accept compromises to successfully move this bill forward and bring it to the floor.

Mr. LOTT. I appreciate Senator GORTON's candor and his support for both the process and the bill. And, I appreciated Senator GORTON's willingness to accept compromise in order to reach a consensus which enables this bill to move forward.

Mr. President, I know that during the markup, Senator GORTON expressed strong reservations about the bill. He made it clear that three issues needed to be addressed prior to a vote on the floor. And, a collaborative effort was used to try to accommodate these changes. Mr. President, two of the three issues were incorporated into the bill. The negotiations were tough, but all stakeholders worked together in an open and honest fashion to reach a consensus on this reform legislation.

Mr. GORTON. Let me take a moment to briefly review my concerns. First, I requested that certain discrimination prohibitions concerning service contracts be applied to carriers only when they are working together, not when they are operating as individual companies.

Second, I sought to amend the forest products definition to incorporate certain products, such as laminated beams or panels.

And third, I wanted shippers and carriers to be able to keep confidential the essential terms of their service contracts. Since the markup, there has been a sincere effort by all parties to work with me.

Mr. President, throughout this consensus building process, the Committee was dedicated to working through my concerns, and I believe that the Majority Leader did his best.

Common ground was found on the first two of my concerns. I appreciate

the modification of the service contract discrimination provisions so that they apply only to carriers when they work collectively. This modification is particularly important to me and to my shippers in Washington state.

I also appreciate that the definition of forest products was modified as I requested.

Regrettably, we were unable to reach an agreement on the confidentiality for service contracts. We explored the idea of not requiring carriers to publish information regarding volume, but this, unfortunately, was rejected.

Mr. President, I would like to reserve the right to address the confidentiality issue in an amendment when the full Senate considers this bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I appreciate Senator GORTON's kind words, and recognize his right to continue to advocate for the confidentiality provision. However, I am convinced that any further reduction in service contract reporting provisions would erode the broad consensus achieved by the Committee for this bill.

Mr. President, we must remember that when the Committee set out to develop this legislation, we agreed to move forward incrementally and work to keep a broad consensus.

And, I want more reform, but I also want a bill.

I look forward to a vigorous debate on the service contract reporting provision if Senator GORTON decides to bring an amendment to the floor. Let me be clear. I will not support such an amendment because I believe that in the end, it would erode support for final passage of this important maritime legislation.

Mr. President, I want all our colleagues to thank Senator GORTON for his fine work on this bill. He has challenged us to improve the bill, and in doing so, he has expanded the reforms it provides. This is good for America. This is good for America's container shipping industry. This is good for the great state of Washington.

Mr. President, I ask our colleagues to support our bill to accomplish meaningful reform in this important maritime industry.

Mr. President, one final comment, I pledge to bring this bill to the floor in this session of the 105th Congress. It is overdue. It is bipartisan. It is supported by all stakeholders of the maritime industry.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)