

up on this appeal with every bit of leverage I have as a Senator—that all of us in office should hate this system. On the one hand, it is a bit like the play “Fiddler on the Roof”—you can argue that, well, no, people should not hate the system because in a way the current system is wired for incumbents. They can raise more money. But I really think all of us should hate this system, because even if you believe in your heart of hearts, even if you are absolutely convinced that the compelling need to raise money never has affected any position you have taken on any issue, even if you believe that, and hopefully it is the case, it sure does not look that way to people. If we want people to believe in this political process, and we want people to believe in our work, and we want people to believe in the Congress, and we want people to believe in us, then we better get this big money out of politics and we better turn this system not upside down—it is upside down right now—we better turn this system right side up.

It is just crystal clear. The spending continues to skyrocket, and in 1996 spending was up and participation down—more disillusionment, more indignation, more people in the country losing faith in the elections and losing faith in this political process.

There are any number of different approaches that can be taken, and I want to talk about three. I have for the better part of last year, year and a half, worked with Senators FEINGOLD and MCCAIN, Senator Kassebaum was involved in this—she will be sorely missed—Senator THOMPSON, Senator GRAHAM, and this effort, this piece of legislation, which still keeps too many big private dollars in politics, sure represents a very important and positive step forward: getting rid of all the soft money, all of the huge amounts of money that people can contribute in the name of party building, getting the costs of campaigns down, voluntary spending limits, some resources for candidates to help challengers. It goes in the right direction, and I will work hard with Senator MCCAIN and Senator FEINGOLD.

There is a separate issue of soft money and all the ways in which people can contribute huge amounts of money, way beyond any spending limit, again, all in the name of party building. With more time, I will go into all of this in specifics. We ought to abolish that. And that would be a focus of mine. I will have a bill on soft money.

In the best of all worlds, if you want to talk about desirability, I will tell you something. People in the country are in a downright anti-status-quo mood, and I really think we ought to model ourselves after what Maine has done. Maine led the Nation. Maine passed the clean money option. And I will be introducing a bill, I hope with other Senators, as well, that essentially says, look, we are going to get all of the interested money out, and what we are going to essentially say to

people in the country is, look, for around \$5 per person, how about a system where the people own the elections? It is your election. And because it is your capital, it becomes your Government and we move all of this interested, big, private money out. We really do have a level playing field between challengers and incumbents, and we really do have clean money politics.

I think that is the best system of all, and I look forward to introducing that bill with other Senators and pushing that forward as well.

A final point. It may be that none of these approaches in their entirety will pass the Senate. And other people will have other ideas.

But first, to people in the country who might be watching, and I will figure out other ways of having a wider forum: You have to turn up the heat, people. The citizens in this country have to turn up the heat. On February 22, in Minnesota, we are going to have a town meeting, hopefully with the whole congressional delegation. Lots of people are going to be there from Minnesota. They are going to come, and they are going to say: Senators and Representatives, we may not know all the specifics of each bill, but we want reform. We want you to change this system. We are tired of all the big money and we are tired of all the vicious attacks.

People need to turn up the heat. I think we need something like Earth Day. I think we need Reform Day. I think we need to have congressional delegations from every State meeting with people back in the States on the same day within the next couple of months, because this Congress has to take action. And anybody listening, citizens who are listening, it has to happen in the first 100 days, because if it does not happen at the beginning of this Congress, the atmosphere is going to become poisonous. There will be finger pointing and accusations on both sides. Everybody is going to try to figure out their own angle, and it will not get done. But this is the time for the reform. Let us move towards real grassroots citizen action.

Second, President Clinton, it is important for you to be outspoken. Presidential leadership, Presidential power—you need to push for the reform. Both parties have made plenty of mistakes. There have been plenty of transgressions. There is plenty of wrong, and the accusations can go back and forth in perpetuity. Why do we not, once and for all, change the system?

Finally, for myself, at the beginning of this Congress—for a short period of time I had an interesting discussion with both leaders in which I maintained I did not know whether we should even go into recess. I thought between January 7 and January 20 we ought to focus just on reform. Now we have another recess period coming up in mid-February. I think we need to give very serious thought to focusing on reform at the very beginning. I am

going to try to use whatever leverage I have as a Senator to push in that direction.

In the Labor and Human Resources Committee the other day I suggested another possibility. Again, these are just proposals as we try to figure out how we can move this process forward. I suggested that maybe, until we have the reform, what we need to do in every committee is to have people come in and testify, file written testimony as to whether or not they have given contributions or the organizations they represent have given contributions to the members of the committee in the year prior to testimony and the year after testimony. I do not know whether that is something to push forward and have a vote on or not.

But I think, again, all of these approaches are not efforts to point the finger at a Senator or Representative. That is bashing. I want nothing to do with it. Or, for that matter, at anybody who is testifying. But I want to bring into sharp focus what is wrong with this process, the perceptions people have about it around the country, all the ways in which it has undercut democracy. You cannot have all of these huge amounts of money pouring into politics and elections and at the same time have real democracy where each person counts as one and no more than one. This is the compelling issue for this Congress.

Mr. President, we have to take action.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 200 are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

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

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. 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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask that I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes.

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

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEW CONGRESS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, it is sort of exciting to begin to move into a

new Congress, the 105th Congress. You and I and others came first here to the Senate 2 years ago with some dedication to principles that we still hold. Now, we have a new opportunity to continue to work toward the implementation of those things that we came away from the election 2 years ago thinking that people in our States wanted, and people in this country continue to want those things. So we have a great opportunity now.

I think we had success, particularly in the last few months of the last session, as we moved toward doing something with health care. We did something about a couple of Federal mandates, Federal programs that were in place, such as welfare and farm programs, which have been changed now—and I think are more useful and effective—moving them closer to the States. I think that is a good thing to do.

So I hope that we can continue to follow on our efforts in the 104th Congress, efforts that will lead us to a smaller Federal Government, a Federal Government that is more defined in terms of its role, a Federal Government that is more efficient and effective in delivering services, one that is closer to the people that are governed, closer to the people who receive the services and benefits, more efficient in the delivery of those services, less bureaucratic and more accountable. I think that's what all of us would like to do. These are principles that most of us agree to.

I am pleased that the President has, in the last year, as well as in his inaugural address and other statements, indicated his support for a Government that has a balanced budget, that is financially and fiscally responsible not only to taxpayers now, but, maybe even more important, to our children and grandchildren in the future. The President has spoken of the era of big Government being passed. I think we would find a lot of agreement to that in the country and here in the U.S. Senate. It is very easy to talk about those concepts, and it is something else to do it. It is something else to put it into place. We have seen and will continue to see—and, of course, I understand that this is the place of great debate, and frankly it is a place of differences of view. That is what the system is all about. That is what elections are about—to put out there alternative choices and voters choose what they support. So we will see that here, as we should—and I think we will debate, I hope, more civilly than we have sometimes those differences and come to an agreement. We will not have unanimous agreement, of course. But this place wasn't designed to have unanimous agreement. That is why we vote. That is what the system is all about. But it is very easy to talk about concepts, and, yet, you will see everyone say, "Yes, I am for a balanced budget. I want a balanced budget except for * * *" and then find many reasons why we can't do it.

So it is very difficult sometimes to move beyond the rhetoric, to move beyond the general principles and put it into place. That, I think, will be our challenge, and we are starting now to do that. So the challenge is, if these are the principles, if these are the philosophies, let us just do it. That is what I would like to talk about a little bit today. I would like to talk about doing some things within the Government that we have had as a policy for many years and really have not done, and that is more contracting in the private sector; some privatization of those kinds of functions of the Government that could well be carried on in the private sector.

Last year I introduced a bill called the Freedom From Government Competition Act. We supported that. As a matter of fact, the Senate voted 59 to 39 on an amendment which was offered as part of the Treasury-Postal bill which required, in the instance of activities that were not inherently governmental, that agency to test the alternative of doing it in the private sector and seeing if that would be cost efficient and cost effective.

The bill was not considered last year, but we intend this year to put it back in again. It will be something that I believe will move us toward the broader concepts that we are looking for. We can help save money. We can balance the budget. That is what it is all about. It will help eliminate some of the programs that are now there by the Government and bureaucracy that will help us move toward smaller government. The privatization of the contracting often can be done on a more local level, which moves it more, of course, toward the people who are, indeed, in the private sector. It strengthens the private sector and creates a broader tax base. These are the purposes of this kind of approach.

For some 40 years it has been the policy of government to contract wherever possible in the private sector. Unfortunately, that has not been done. CBO estimated that in 1987 nearly 1½ million Federal employees were engaged in the kinds of functions, the kinds of operations, that are commercial in nature. That is a lot of folks doing some things.

So what we need to do is to get this principle that has been there, this policy that has been in place but not implemented, I think, in some kind of statutory language which would be fairly simple. The bill simply requires that OMB, the Office of Management and Budget, go through all the functions of government and segregate those that are inherently government—and there are some, of course, which are only properly done by the Government and the bureaucracy but many that are not—and separate those and then have a system in place so that the work in those areas where it can be done easily be contracted or at least be offered for contract. And if they can be done more inexpensively and more effi-

ciently by contract, then that would be done.

Let me add that it is a little more difficult than that in that it will take some change of culture of the agency to adjust itself to the idea of putting together specifications of bidding, the bidding process, and overseeing and carrying out of the bidding process, and it will take some changes in the agency to do that. If the agency stays the same and simply takes some of these functions and contracts, there will be nothing gained. There will just be additional things. But it can be done, and in fact is being done. The agency that probably does the most of that and does it the best is the Department of Defense. They do a number of things of that kind.

This is not a new idea. It is an idea that was talked about and suggested in the Reagan Office of Privatization, Citizens Against Waste, Citizens for a Sound Economy, the Defense Science Board, and the Grace Commission. Interestingly enough, all three sessions of the White House Conference on Small Business, 1980, 1986, and 1994, listed unfair Government competition as one of the top issues impacting small business. So it is not new. We have worked during the last 6 months substantially with groups in the private sector who now are involved in this activity of promoting this bill, and we look forward to it.

Lots of things could easily be done. Let me give you some examples: janitorial services, printing, map making, engineering services, surveying, and laboratory. In our Wyoming Legislature a number of years ago when I was a member there, we did this kind of thing, and the focus was sort of on laboratories. We had private laboratories that were very capable of doing these kinds of things that government labs were set up to do, and we were able to do that, and we were able to move those activities from the bureaucratic activity to a private one, which creates more jobs, creates more tax base, and creates less cost. So these are the things that we look forward to doing.

So, Mr. President, we will have an opportunity certainly over the next number of months to look at the Government, to take the philosophy that most of us have and put it in place to decide how we can make some changes. Change is not easy to make, of course. There is great resistance to change. There will be resistance to this kind of change. There will be resistance largely from labor unions that represent some of the workers in the Government agencies. But I think that there is a reasonable and logical explanation and reasonable and logical reason for taking a look at saving money, smaller Government, more in the private sector, and more tax base. These are the kinds of benefits that will accrue to families and to America if we can move forward in this direction.

Mr. President, we look forward to introducing the bill. We look forward to

having the opportunity to implement the things that we have been talking about in general terms for the last several years.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. FORD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I send a bill to the desk and ask it be appropriately referred.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be received and appropriately referred.

(The remarks of Mr. FORD pertaining to the introduction of S. 201 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

BRINGING UTAH'S CENTENNIAL TREE TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I join the millions of Americans whose holidays were made just a little brighter this year by the sight of the magnificent 70-foot Engleman Spruce from Utah's Manti-LaSalle National Forest.

I speak not only of those fortunate enough to see the tree in Washington, but of others who saw this giant tree of the great American west pass through their cities and towns en route to Washington. Like the relay that brought the Olympic flame to Atlanta, the journey for Utah's centennial Christmas tree required no less in the way of planning and cooperation.

Many individuals and organizations contributed to this project. In a true holiday spirit, Mack trucks, which has a subsidiary in Pleasant Grove, UT, generously transported this special tree, along with 40 smaller trees to be displayed at other sites in the Nation's Capital, the 2,000 miles to Washington.

Stops along the way included Salt Lake City, UT; Cheyenne, WY; Spearfish, Rapid City, Pierre, and Sioux Falls, SD; LaCrosse, WI; South Bend, IN; Pittsburgh and Allentown, PA; and Hagerstown, MD. At each stop, people came out to see this great symbol of the season and to spread holiday cheer and good will.

At its final destination, in Washington, on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol, the tree was appropriately welcomed with holiday carols sung by the Salt Lake Symphonic Choir and the Congressional Chorus. Speaker GINGRICH's two nieces threw the switch that illuminated this spectacular Christmas tree. The staff of the Architect of the Capitol should be commended for the

wonderful job they did erecting the tree and decorating it with the ornaments made by Utah's children.

Mr. President, Utah takes special pride in having provided the national holiday tree from its soil, particularly during the year commemorating our centennial anniversary as a State. And, we were proud that Utah's history was also a part of this holiday display. Under the tree was a miniature railroad to commemorate another great Utah event: the joining of the Nation's railway system with a golden spike at Promontory, UT, in 1869. Those who conceived and constructed these railroad cars did a fantastic job.

Finally, Mr. President, I want to reiterate a special note of thanks to the organizations and companies that worked diligently to make the tree the great success that it became. They include the many local communities surrounding Orem, UT; Utah's U.S. Forest Service personnel; the Utah Automobile Club; and such corporate sponsors as Mack trucks, D.M. Bowman, Inc.; Poulan weedeater; and the Hale Brake and Wheel Co. Few efforts like this are successful without the support of the community, and these organizations among many others helped to make Utah's centennial tree to the District of Columbia project possible.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-841. A communication from the Director of the Defense Procurement, Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Defense Acquisition Regulation Supplement" received on January 21, 1997; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-842. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report entitled "Linking Legacies: Connecting the Cold War Nuclear Weapons Production Process to Their Environmental Consequences"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-843. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to brucellosis in cattle, received on January 21, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-844. A communication from the Administrator of the Agriculture Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to grapes, received on January 21, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-845. A communication from the Administrator of the Agriculture Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to olives, received on January 21, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-846. A communication from the Administrator of the Agriculture Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmit-

ting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to Florida grapefruit, received on January 21, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 200. A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a portion of the Columbia River as a recreational river, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. FORD:

S. 201. A bill to provide for the establishment of certain limitations on advertisements relating to, and the sale of, tobacco products, and to provide for the increased enforcement of laws relating to underage tobacco use, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LOTT:

S. 202. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 203. A bill to amend the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 to authorize the transfer to State and local government of certain surplus property for use for law enforcement or public safety purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN):

S.J. Res. 11. A joint resolution commemorating "Juneteenth Independence Day," June 19, 1865, the day on which slavery finally came to an end in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. BYRD):

S. Res. 23. A resolution designating Alan Scott Frumin as a Parliamentary Emeritus; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. INOUE:

S. Res. 24. A resolution to express the sense of the Senate reaffirming the cargo preference policy of the United States; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. SNOWE:

S. Res. 25. A resolution to express the sense of the Senate that the United States Postal Service should issue a series of stamps highlighting achievements of young Americans, including Samantha Smith of Manchester, Maine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 200. A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a portion of the Columbia River as a recreational river, and for other purposes;