

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. For the information of all Senators, our Democratic colleagues are objecting today to permission for two committees to meet during the pendency of this session. The Agriculture Committee began meeting at 9 a.m. this morning to discuss rural and agriculture credit issues. Yet, as a result of that objection, or the objection we heard on that committee meeting, they had to abruptly end their meeting at 11:30 this morning.

The Environment and Public Works Committee is scheduled to meet at 2 p.m. today, and I want to take some action here momentarily that will allow them to, in fact, begin their hearing to discuss the Superfund Cleanup Act. Permission for them to meet was also objected to by the Democrats. It is my understanding that prominent witnesses have flown in from all over the country to appear before the Environment and Public Works Committee to discuss this vital environmental issue, what can we do to reform Superfund so the lawyers don't clean up but we clean up hazardous waste sites across America in most every State in this Nation.

Included in the group that was to come to testify is the Governor of Nebraska. He is scheduled to be introduced momentarily by one of the Senators from Nebraska. That testimony would certainly be key with respect to the Superfund Act in that State.

The objection lodged by the Democrats would deny that meeting from taking place unless the Senate were to recess. I regret that the Senate must recess in the middle of the day while discussing a very, very important piece of legislation, the Labor and Health and Human Services appropriations bill. We were, I thought, committed to working together in completing the appropriations process, especially a bill like this. While there are still some amendments pending that are of great interest and perhaps even controversial, we have made progress, and I think we could finish it up tonight with a little effort.

Unfortunately, this objection will only delay the consideration and passage of the Labor, HHS appropriations bill. Our colleagues from the other side of the aisle have stated that "there is no intention to interrupt the business of the Senate, which is to pass these appropriations bills. There is no one out there objecting to the work on those appropriations bills." Yet, the Democratic objection to the Environment Committee meeting today on Superfund in fact does interrupt the business of the Senate. I truly regret the action taken by our colleagues here today and hope this will not become a practice by Members on the minority side of the aisle.

Having said all of that, by consent a vote is scheduled at 4:30 p.m. today on

the D'Amato amendment to the Labor, HHS appropriations bill, and I now ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess until 4:30 p.m. today.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, it is with great reluctance that we come to this point, but I think it is important for us to remember from where it is we have come and how it is we got here. I will not elaborate in the detail at this point except to say this:

This was a bipartisan investigation during the first phase. I recall to my colleagues during that phase we asked the same attorneys who were involved in the last contested election—that is, Senator FEINSTEIN and her opponent, Mr. Huffington—to examine the circumstances of this particular race. They did. They recommended a certain course of action, and the majority on the Rules Committee chose to ignore it.

They then set in motion a second phase for investigation. That investigation also was bipartisan. That investigation took the course of a couple of months and came back again on a bipartisan basis with recommendations that again were ignored by the majority.

It was with increasing frustration that Democrats warned our Republican colleagues that we could not tolerate this endless abrogation of the regular order, this bipartisan effort to come to some conclusion on this investigation.

With some reluctance, we continued to work and ultimately indicated that beyond the end of July we were simply not in a position to tolerate unnecessary elongation and the increasingly partisan nature of this investigation and put our colleagues on notice that it must end. We indicated that if it had not ended by the time we came back after the August recess, we would have no recourse but to add increasing pressure to the process to bring about some end.

Now, this may or may not bring about an end. I am disappointed and somewhat alarmed that the chairman of the Rules Committee has now announced further hearings and further efforts to prolong this—in my view, completely unnecessarily. It would be one thing if evidence had been produced to suggest in some way some wrongdoing on the part of Senator LANDRIEU, but that has yet to be produced. In fact, just the opposite. If any wrongdoing, anything related to wrongdoing has been found, it has been with regard to her opponent, Mr. Jenkins. That is where the wrongdoing becomes increasingly evident as we look closer and closer at this case.

So, Mr. President, I must say we will continue to insist that committees meet for no longer than 2 hours as long as this situation continues. If it takes a month, I will put my colleagues on notice that we will use this selective

approach for committee meetings for however long it takes until it is resolved. We simply cannot tolerate the unnecessary and political effort to prolong this investigation further, and we have no other recourse but to take the action we have, and so for that reason I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I want to make sure that the—first of all, I do not think—

Mr. DASCHLE. I do not intend to object to the unanimous-consent request propounded by the majority leader, and I apologize for it. I object to this process. I do not want to have my objection construed as an objection to the UC propounded by the majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I regret that we have to take this action in order to get our business done on a very important environmental issue. This sort of selective hit certainly, I think, would not be in the best interests of the legislative process of the Senate. We want to get Superfund legislation considered by the committee to the floor. We want to hear from witnesses such as the Governor of Nebraska and citizens who are affected by this. It seems to me the normal way of doing business around here is that is allowed to happen.

Mr. President, the saber rattling has begun. After bipartisan cooperation by Senate Democrats and Republicans over the past several months, it seems as though the Democrats have now returned to the preening and posturing of politicians more interested in blocking and obstructing the other side than concern for the interests of the American people.

Senate Democrats have effectively withdrawn from the bipartisan spirit of negotiation and compromise that has been evidenced regarding the budget and tax bills recently enacted by the Congress. Mr. President, the minority is, in effect, threatening to shut down the effective operation of the Senate. Now, they can call it selective cooperation or some other slick phrase that seeks to skirt the truth of the matter, but the American people are too smart for these word games, or, in Washington speak, for deceptive political spin.

Let me state, positively, that we are more than willing to continue the spirit of bipartisanship to achieve significant accomplishments on subjects of importance to the American people. For example, we are more than willing to work through the Appropriations bills, through ISTEA, and through debate on the many other matters pending before the Senate. But it is going to take cooperation and good faith on both sides, including the Members of the minority.

That good faith and cooperation is now missing on the part of the minority. The subject of the investigation into the election in Louisiana involves a duty of the Senate—of every Member of the Senate—to fully, thoroughly,

and completely investigate the conduct of such elections where the integrity and result of the election is legitimately called into question. The minority is refusing to allow—in fact, is actively obstructing—the Senate from conducting a thorough and complete investigation of the election in Louisiana.

If the minority wishes to prevent the Senate from living up to its duty regarding this election contest, and wishes to prevent the Senate from considering these important matters that I have noted and to shut down the Senate, then the minority must assume the responsibility for the consequences. Mr. President, good faith and cooperation is a two-way street. We believe that it is important to conduct and complete this election investigation in a thorough and complete manner. We are bound and determined that the investigation will be completed despite obstructionist tactics. I urge the minority to recognize the importance of this subject and the essential place that good faith plays in this legislative process. I urge the minority to assist us in completing this important investigation and to work together with us in good faith to address the many other subjects which are important to the American people.

I will sum it up this way. This is not the way to get the investigation by the Rules Committee concluded. In fact, it will cause difficulty and will probably delay it. The goal is not—there is no way we could just say, OK, it is over right now. The intent of the chairman is to have a hearing, to see what evidence they have found during the August recess, and I presume to have a meeting at some point to decide what action, if any or none, is to be taken. We will conclude this. We have had to proceed, frankly, without the cooperation of the Democrats. I have been in Congress 25 years. I have never, never, ever before seen one party or the other, either party, walk out on a committee's investigation or activities, even though there have been many, many investigations, several in which I was involved.

When I can look my colleagues in the Senate and the American people in the eye and say we have looked at this and we have found out as best we could—with the lack of help from the FBI, for instance, in most instances—we have concluded what happened or did not happen, and we in good conscience can say that, when I can do that, then we will conclude it. I can't do that right now.

But rather than engaging in extended debate at this time, there will obviously be other opportunities to do that and—

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, could I have, say, a minute and a half?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I will yield the floor at this point, but I do hope we can be brief so we can get the committee started.

Mr. WARNER. I will be brief. I thank the majority leader. I thank both leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANTORUM). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I want to assure the Senate that I said in Louisiana, as I concluded the second hearing—and we had a total of 4 days of hearings—it would be my intention to come back and recommend to the Rules Committee and the leadership of the Senate that I have another hearing, at which time we will assess in specific the voluminous amount of record material now in our possession from the gambling industry and that within a period of perhaps a week after that I would schedule a second meeting, at which time I would give to the full Committee on Rules all of the evidence, my own assessment, and then entertain such resolutions as I or other members may wish to submit.

That I think can be done within a 3-week period of time, as I roughly outlined this morning to my distinguished leader. But I decided on that schedule 10 days ago.

Now, I say to you that thus far there has been no evidence which, in the judgment of this Senator, has impugned Senator LANDRIEU, but that is not the underlying issue. It is whether or not there were other factors in this election which could have affected the outcome as a consequence of criminal fraud. And I have said, much to the discouragement of many, that thus far, after the first hearing in Louisiana, there was no body of evidence which I felt could meet that burden.

I cannot make the same statement after the second hearing in Louisiana, because I haven't had the opportunity to assess four boxes of information. But we are proceeding, although handicapped, as expeditiously as we can. I have always been absolutely objective and fair about my pronouncements in this case and my assessment of the evidence. But until such time as we have looked in every area where potentially that quantum of fraud which could have affected the outcome of the election might have occurred, I cannot say this investigation would be complete. I do believe the work that needs to be done under my leadership can be concluded in the third week of September.

RECESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I renew my request that the Senate recess until the hour of 4:30.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:12 p.m., recessed until 4:30 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. HAGEL].

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 1079, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators STEVENS and GRAMS be added as cosponsors to amendment No. 1079 to S. 1061.

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

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes on the pending D'Amato amendment.

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

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I support the amendment by Senator D'AMATO to add funding for the support services for seniors to the additional funding. They perform a very vital service as places for seniors to gather and to have their meals and to carry out the purposes of the legislation to improve the quality of life in the golden years; and especially in the context where senior benefits have come under such attack, so much concern that I heard, for example, in my travels through Pennsylvania, where there is concern about the solidity of Social Security and what is happening with Medicare. I believe it is a wise course to make an allocation from administrative costs across the board, to add the funding in the D'Amato amendment.

We have funded, last year, some \$300,556,000. The administration made a request to cut that funding to \$291,375,000. Our Senate markup, agreed to by Senator HARKIN and myself in our committee and in the full committee, was \$305,556,000. So, instead of dropping the amount by more than \$9 million as the administration had requested, we put an additional \$5 million in. On reflection, hearing the arguments of the Senator from New York, Senator D'AMATO, I think that the addition of this \$40 million is well placed, so I lend my voice in support of the pending amendment.

Mr. President, I note the presence of the Senator from New York on the floor. I see him reaching for the microphone.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, let me thank the chairman of this committee, Senator SPECTER. As I indicated before, this is a most difficult, difficult task, the management of scarce resources for Labor, Health, and Human Services, with the demands from the various communities for additional funding for medical research, the scarceness of resources, and the difficult time in the allocations. His support is greatly welcomed in this area. I am deeply appreciative.