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Senate

The Senate met at 2:15 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Father Paul Lavin, pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC, will now lead us in prayer.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. Paul Lavin offered the following prayer:

In the words of Saint Paul's letter to the Romans we hear:

For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure to faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let us pray.

Direct, O Lord all our actions by Your inspiration and carry them on by Your assistance so that every prayer and action may begin in You and by You be happily ended. Glory and praise to You for ever and ever. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JAMES INHOFE, a Senator from the State of Oklahoma, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The Senator from Utah, Mr. BENNETT, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m. Under a previous order, the time between 4:15 and 5:30 is equally divided between Senators HATCH and TORRICELLI.

DIVISION OF TIME

I now ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided between Senators HATCH and LEAHY.

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

Mr. BENNETT. There will be at least one vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the bankruptcy bill, with the possibility of a second vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the judicial nomination of Ted Stewart.

Following the votes, the Senate may begin consideration of the Department of Defense authorization conference report. Under the order, there are 2 hours of debate which may begin tonight, with a vote occurring tomorrow morning.

For the remainder of the week, the Senate will begin consideration of the HUD-VA appropriations bill and complete action on the Interior appropriations bill.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 17) to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to require the President to

report to Congress on any selective embargo on agricultural commodities, to provide a termination date for the embargo, to provide greater assurances for contract sanctity, and for other purposes.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on the bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will go to the calendar.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 5:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the time until 3:15 shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee.

Who seeks recognition?

Mr. DORGAN. 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. HARKIN. 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. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator from Iowa yield for a moment to allow me to propound a unanimous consent request?

Mr. HARKIN. I yield.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 625

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on the bankruptcy bill which is before the Senate

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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all first-degree amendments must be filed by 3:15 p.m. and second-degree amendments be filed by 5:30 p.m. My understanding is both the majority and minority have cleared this unanimous consent request.

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

The Senator from Iowa.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, on January 6 of this year, the majority leader stood on the Senate floor and told us that education would be a high priority for the Senate. This is exactly what he said:

Education is going to be a central issue this year. Democrats say it is important and it will be a high priority. Republicans say it will be a high priority.

I am sorry to say Republicans cannot make that claim today. I want to take a few moments this afternoon, along with some of my colleagues, to assess where education is on the leadership's priority list.

We have less than 7 legislative days, and that is counting Mondays and Fridays—we do not do much on Mondays and Fridays—before the end of the fiscal year. There is one Education bill that must be enacted, and that is the Education appropriations bill.

Despite proclamations that education will be a top priority, the Senate has been working on all but 1 of the 13 appropriations bills. We have done at least some work on 12 appropriations bills. We have 1 left. Dead last: education. This is a list of all of the appropriations bills:

Military construction, No. 1 on the list—the President has already signed that—leg branch; Treasury; District of Columbia; Transportation; Defense; energy and water; Commerce-Justice-State; Interior; Agriculture; and VA-HUD, the full committee approved VA-HUD last week, and it will be on the floor this week. Education, no action taken. It is dead last on that list, and education is supposed to be a high priority with the leadership in the Senate? Those are wrong priorities. Education should be at the top of this list, not at the bottom of the list.

Despite a valiant effort by the chairman of our subcommittee, Senator SPECTER, the Education appropriations bill has not even been written. Senator SPECTER has fought every day to move this bill forward. He tried in June, July, August, and September. He tried again last week, and we cannot even meet to mark up the bill.

If that is not bad enough, the leadership has robbed the Education bill to pay for other bills. As a result, we are looking at deep cuts in all of the programs funded by the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

Not only is education dead last on the calendar, it is dead last for resources. Our subcommittee started with an allocation, an allocation we re-

ceived earlier this year, substantially below a freeze from last year. If that is not bad enough, it is even worse now.

Last week, the leadership staged another raid on education and took \$7.276 billion in budget authority, \$4.969 billion in outlays, from education and other essential priorities in the bill so they can get the VA-HUD bill to committee.

Our subcommittee allocation is \$15.5 billion below a freeze. That means we are facing a whopping 17-percent cut in education.

This chart illustrates that. In fiscal year 1999, the year we are in right now, we had slightly more than \$89 billion. This year, where we stand right now, we have \$73.6 billion. That is a 17.3-percent cut that will be across the board.

What does that impact? A lot of things. Here is one: That cut will impact reducing class size and improving teacher quality. This cut will force communities to lay off 5,246 newly hired teachers. These are the teachers hired this year, for whom we put money in, for reducing class size. They will have to be let go after just 1 year.

Funding will be cut for the Teacher Quality Enhancement Program for 24 States and 52 partnerships to improve recruitment and training of teachers. That is where we are right now.

We came to the Chamber last Thursday and talked about this issue. Later on in the day, the assistant majority leader, Senator NICKLES, came to the Chamber and said:

I would like to correct the record, because I know I heard a number of my colleagues say the Republican budget is slashing education, it's at the lowest end, it's the last appropriation bill we are taking up. Let me correct the record.

He says:

One, the budget the Republicans passed earlier this year had an increase for education. . . .

The budget. We are not talking about the budget. We are talking about actual money. I do not care what the budget said. I want to know where the real money is. When that budget got to our appropriations bill, we were cut below a freeze for last year, and certainly the leadership ought to know that.

Then he said:

The Appropriations Committee has yet to mark up the Labor-HHS bill.

Our Education bill. Not that we have not tried. Senator SPECTER tried in June, July, August, and September to bring it up, and we are not allowed to bring it up. We are not allowed to mark it up.

Mr. NICKLES said:

I understand from Senator SPECTER and others they plan on appropriating \$90 billion. The amount of money we have in the current fiscal year is \$83.8 billion.

That is off a little bit.

He says:

So that is an increase of about \$6.2 billion. . . . That is an increase of about 9 percent. That is well over inflation.

I am quoting Senator NICKLES. Our assistant majority leader says:

I think it is too much. I think we should be freezing spending.

He is talking about education. He says it is too much. He says we have \$90 billion. That is not so. Right now we have a total of \$73.6 billion for our committee. That is it. If Mr. NICKLES has \$90 billion, I wish he would show me the money. We would love to mark it up. We would love to give education an increase.

With all due respect to my friend from Oklahoma, the assistant majority leader, I wholeheartedly disagree with him that we freeze at last year's level of funding for education. I will go into that a little bit later, but we need an increase in education because of what is happening around the country.

Mr. NICKLES said:

I think we should be freezing spending.

That says it all. The leadership is not committed to increased investments in education. If they had their way, according to the assistant majority leader, they would freeze funding for education.

We need additional investments in education. Why? Let's look at it this way: The average school building in the United States is 42 years old; 14 million children attend classes in buildings that are unsafe or inadequate. Enrollment is booming. There are more children in U.S. schools than at any time in our history. Class sizes are expanding. It is not unusual for elementary schools to have 30 to 35 kids in a class.

Our schools are literally bursting at the seams to accommodate the 53.2 million students enrolled in public schools. These students need teachers; they need the latest technology; they need computers in the classrooms if we are going to compete in the next century, in the next millennium.

So when the assistant majority leader says he wants to freeze education funding at last year's level, that says it all. They are not going to make education a priority. They do not care what is happening with the burgeoning classroom sizes.

There are priorities and there are priorities. The leadership found \$16 billion more for the Pentagon. It is interesting that this is \$4 billion even more than what the Pentagon asked for. Having spent a number of years myself in the military and having been on the Appropriations Committee for a number of years, I can say, without any fear of contradiction, I have never seen, nor do I think I will live long enough to ever see, the Pentagon ask for less money than they actually need. They always ask for more money than they need. Yet the leadership said that is not even enough; we are going to give you \$4 billion more.

I have heard one plan after another for how we are going to fund education. The assistant majority leader said we have \$90 billion, but we only have \$73