

all played a major role and were significant participants in what we have accomplished today.

With that, I think I will stop. I am very excited about this particular bill. It accomplishes much in a way that I think will really set that track for the next several months as we consider other legislation. We do have a fresh start for education. It is a first step. It does not address all the problems, all the challenges in education, but it is a major first step.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

(The remarks of Mr. DOMENICI pertaining to the introduction of S. 595 are located in today's record under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I see the Senator from Pennsylvania may wish to make a statement in a moment also, but if I could just do a couple of things here.

First, before the Senators leave the Chamber, the Senator from Tennessee and the Senator from Oregon, I want to again thank them for their effort. It was bipartisan because the Senator from Oregon, Mr. WYDEN, made it so, stayed in there, worked with us, but I particularly wish to thank the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. FRIST, the doctor, who gave us an education. He took us to school. He used apples and information and examples. He acted like a good teacher should. I congratulate him for that. He even showed us how you could use a scalpel to cut the redtape, and that is what this Ed-Flex bill will do.

So to the two Senators, I thank them for their leadership, for their work, for their persistence because they both have been heckling me about this bill for a year, and I am glad it is done. I congratulate them for their effort.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE ACT OF 1999

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now turn to S. 257, the Missile Defense Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 257) to state the policy of the United States regarding the deployment of a missile defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, then, the Senate will be able to have the initial statement by Senator COCHRAN, the manager, tonight. We will resume the missile defense bill on Monday, and it is our hope that an agreement can be reached on a time agreement and that amendments will be offered during Monday's session.

I urge that Members be present on Monday to make their statements on

this legislation and to offer amendments, if they have them. This is a very important defense initiative. I am pleased that we are going to be able to go straight to the bill, and I hope that within short order next week we will be able to get to the conclusion of this very important national defense issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, let me thank the distinguished majority leader for calling up the national missile defense bill and also compliment the Democratic leader for refraining from objecting to proceeding to consider this bill at this time.

Senators may remember that this is the bill that was brought up on two occasions during the last session of the Senate and objections were made to considering the bill, a motion to proceed to consider the bill was filed, and then it was necessary to file a cloture motion to shut off debate to get to the bill. On both of those occasions we fell one vote short of invoking cloture on the motion to proceed to consider the bill. So this Senate has agreed to take up this legislation without objection. This is progress, and we are very proud to see this momentum to address this issue that is so important for the national security interests of the United States.

For the information of Senators, the operative part of this legislation is simply a statement of policy as follows:

It is the policy of the United States to deploy as soon as is technologically possible an effective National Missile Defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack (whether accidental, unauthorized, or deliberate).

I look forward to discussing questions that Senators might pose about this bill when we reconvene on Monday. The Armed Services Committee has considered it and reported it out without amendment, and we are ready to proceed to consider the bill. We look forward to discussing this important issue.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now have a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. SPECTER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY PARTNERSHIP ACT

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to comment on the important education bill which we passed on its substantive merits, and also to speak briefly on the politics,

where the bill might have appeared at some points to be partisan, with three votes on amendments being cast along party lines. I am convinced that we had a very strong bipartisan vote on final passage. At the same time that the Senate will pass this Education Flexibility Partnership Act, the House of Representatives is working on similar legislation, so it will be presented to the President for his signature, which we are optimistic of obtaining.

I think it is important to note that there were important provisions in amendments offered by Members on the other side of the aisle, where there were good programs which can be taken up in due course. The program for new teachers I think is a good idea. The program for dropout prevention is another good idea. The program for afterschool provisions I think, again, is sound and can be taken up at a later time. But had they been pressed on this bill, we would have had gridlock and this bill would not have been enacted.

Last year, the President proposed \$1.2 billion as a starter for 100,000 new teachers. That was accepted by the Congress. Before the President came forward with that proposal, in the subcommittee of Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education which I have the privilege to chair, we had put provisions in for some \$300 million which would have provided for as many new teachers as could have been hired during fiscal year 1999. The President came in with a bigger figure at a later date. That was ultimately accepted by the Congress.

But I do think the idea for new teachers is a good idea. The question of how to fund it is always the tough issue. Similarly, the proposals for dropout prevention and afterschool programs again are sound and it is a question of finding the adequate funding for these kinds of important programs.

I believe the Senate spoke very loudly and very emphatically on the question of giving local school districts the choice as to whether to use the money for special education, or whether to use the money for new teachers, or what to use the money for. The local education agencies were given that discretion on a vote of 61 to 38, where 6 Democrats voted with 55 Republicans on that choice issue. Funding special education is a very major problem in America today. The Federal Government has imposed a mandate on the States, and the Supreme Court in a recent decision has broadened the terms of that mandate.

In the subcommittee that I chair, which funds education, we have provided very substantial increases for special education, but the Federal Government has made a commitment for 40 percent funding and we are nowhere near that. So when you talk about the priorities of more new teachers or money for special education, that matter was put to the Senate for a vote and, not strictly along party lines, the Senate voted to have the option with

the local education agencies; with the vote being 61 to 38, some 6 Democrats joined the 55 Republicans.

When the choice issue was articulated along a slightly different line, the vote was 78 to 21, with some 23 Democrats joining 55 Republicans. That amendment also had provisions to keep the guns out of schools, which was doubtless an incentive to make that a stronger bipartisan vote than on some of the others.

Two of the other amendments were 59 to 40, with 4 Democrats joining the Republicans and, 57 to 42, 2 Democrats joining—and although we did have 3 votes along party lines, 55 to 44, there was a very definite bipartisan flavor to the votes on this matter.

It is always difficult when we have votes which are 55 to 44, strictly along party lines, with the question being raised: Isn't there any independence among 55 Republicans or the 44 Democrats? But the party line was adhered to in order to get the bill passed, even though, as I say, in voting against new teachers, against dropout prevention programs, and against afterschool programs—those are good ideas, and on another day we will be able to take them up. But if we were to maintain these programs, I think this bill could not have been passed; if we had not drawn the line to focus on Ed-Flex in this bill.

The flexibility I think is a very good idea. The Federal Government funds some 7 to 8 percent of the total funding. Last year, again in the subcommittee, we increased the funding by about \$3.5 billion, about 10 percent, bringing the total Federal share to about \$34.5 billion. But the principle of federalism continues to be sound, and that is that we ought to leave as much to the States as we can and we ought to leave as much to the local education agencies as we can, with the people at the local level knowing best what their needs are. So if there is a limited amount of funding, let them make the choice among special education or new teachers or dropout prevention programs or afterschool programs; leave it to the people who are closest to the problems.

So, all in all, there was a bit of partisanship here but I think it was justified to get the bill passed—not too much, with only three votes being along party lines—and deferring to another day the important programs which were not enacted today, but maintaining a very important point of flexibility to allow local education agencies to have the dominant voice in meeting their needs as they see them, being closest to them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

ASSAULT ON WASHINGTON STATE'S CROWN JEWELS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, over the past few years, Vice President AL GORE

has made a series of trips to my home State of Washington. His goals on these trips are simple: to raise money for his political campaigns; to recruit supporters for his Presidential endeavors; and to distract Washington State voters from the administration's true agenda for the Pacific Northwest.

The Vice President's visits to Washington State are nothing new, but recently the administration, of which he is a vital leader, has chosen to adopt policies that pose a threat to the continued vitality of our economy. Those policies are aimed at the destruction of two of Washington State's economic crown jewels: our hydropower system and Microsoft.

During the past year, I have welcomed the Vice President to Washington State by repeatedly asking him two questions: The first, Will you commit to the preservation of each of the dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers unless Congress or the people of the Northwest agree to the removal of each or all of them? The second question: Mr. Vice President, if you are elected President, will you end the Justice Department's suit against Microsoft?

At first, these questions were answered with silence. Now the Vice President answers them with personal attacks. Whether it is silence or personal attacks, the Vice President makes clear that he does not intend to answer these two questions so fundamental to every family and community in the Northwest. These questions deserve and should receive straight answers from the Vice President, and I will continue to ask them until the Vice President does so.

His silence, of course, is eloquent. Vice President GORE's administration is responsible for the Microsoft lawsuit and for a flatout refusal to subject dam removal either to congressional authority or to the consent of the people of the Northwest. What is most illuminating is that the Vice President's silence and personal attacks in response to these questions about dams and Microsoft run counter to positions taken by top Democratic officeholders in Washington State. When it comes to protecting dams on the Columbia River, our Democratic Governor and Democratic U.S. Senator, two of the most powerful Democrats in Washington State, have already publicly opposed efforts by national environmental organizations to take out dams. But the Vice President is silent.

Last week I suggested that he had a political motive. That is my opinion, but, frankly, it doesn't matter why he pursues policies to dismantle our hydro system without being willing to say so openly. What matters is whether he will make his position clear. So who loses out on the equation? The people of Washington State, of course. And then there is Microsoft.

The good news is that most Democrats in Washington State have come forward to defend Microsoft's freedom to innovate, but the Vice President

won't stand with his fellow Democrats in Washington State in support of the company. When he answers this one, he is either silent or he attacks and then attempts to evade the question.

Here is a recent example of the Vice President's verbal dance when it comes to the issue of protecting Microsoft: Last week, I admonished the administration for its assault on that company. In responding to my statement, the Vice President's spokeswoman said that I am "suffering from a Y2K bug" and have forgotten all the wonderful things AL GORE has done for Washington State. Specifically, the spokeswoman cited hundreds of thousands of new jobs, higher home ownership rates and lower welfare rolls, as if he were responsible for them.

There was no answer to the central question—will you work to end the suit against Microsoft?

There was another troubling side to this statement. The Vice President, of course, was attempting to take credit for the booming economy in the State that I represent. He should understand that that success comes from the hundreds of thousands of hard-working Washingtonians, plus Microsoft and the amazing group of entrepreneurs who have developed new and better systems, plus our natural resources, not the least of which is our low-cost electricity, or all of the smaller high-tech companies that have sprung up overnight. This success does not come from the Vice President.

As to the specifics of the Justice Department's case against Microsoft, the so-called high-tech Vice President says he will not comment on or involve himself in the Justice Department's case against the company. Can we believe that as the administration's point man on high-tech issues, he has no opinion whatsoever on the highest profile high-tech issue before his administration—the future of Microsoft? I do not believe it, nor does anyone else.

To claim that he is not involved in an action spearheaded by his own administration is unbelievable. When the Vice President continually refuses to answer the question of whether or not he supports this attack, he has not been straight with the people of the State of Washington.

There is a simple answer to the Microsoft question. The answer is for the Vice President to tell us that if he is elected President, he will stop the Justice Department's pursuit of Microsoft. We Washingtonians are 3,000 miles away from the center of AL GORE's universe, but we know only too well that the actions of this administration can have a long and detrimental impact on our economy, our way of life and on our future. We deserve more from the Vice President than silence, distraction and personal attacks.

We will remember his silence on what are perhaps the most important Federal public policy questions to face our State in years. We will remember his evasive comments. We will remember