

from Massachusetts and Delaware who have just spoken, to thank the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and my revered friend, the ranking member, the Senator from West Virginia, and the majority leader.

May I say, sir—something we often lose sight of—this is a national issue and ought to be addressed by the Congress. We are the only major industrial state in the world that has not sought to recreate and revivify its rail system in the last generation.

The Committee on Environment and Public Works in the last 20 years has turned to this. In 1989, we passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, calling for just such measures—later the Transportation Efficiency Act. We created financial instruments and the possibility of investments to be involved.

We can do this. We are on the verge of it. To miss it at this moment would be to miss a moment in history for which I think we will not be happy. But I am so confident, from what I have heard today, that I leave the Senate yet more proud of having been here 24 years, thanking all—thanking particularly the Presiding Officer for his friendship and leadership in so many important matters.

I yield the floor with great satisfaction of what has just transpired. If this is the kind of mode we enter into in January, there is much to expect from the 107th.

Thanks to my friend from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New York.

The majority leader made a private statement to me, which I will state publicly. He said, as we ready for my departure, bipartisanship is breaking out all over. And I am not quite sure how that is meant. But I yield up to 3 minutes to the Senator from Pennsylvania, with the understanding I retain the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the distinguished Senator from New Jersey for yielding to me. I compliment him for his leadership on Amtrak generally and especially on this current plan for financing.

I support Amtrak and believe the proposal to provide this additional funding is very much in the national interest. I think it is a very salutary thing, as some have already commented, that we have people extending their hands across the aisle on a matter of great national importance.

The Senator from Delaware, I think, characterized the situation very aptly when he talked about federalism; and that is, one region helping another region.

There is no doubt that those of us who live in the eastern corridor—and I am a beneficiary of Amtrak. It is 1 hour and 37 civilized minutes from

Washington, DC, to 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. But it is more than my convenience; it is the infrastructure of the country.

I think this is very good for the country that we are going to be moving ahead with this legislation next year, and a very good sign for the 107th Congress that hands are being extended across the aisle to show bipartisanship. If this carries forward in the next year generally, it will be very good for the American people.

I, again, thank my colleague from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania for not only his comments but for his help. He is someone we counted on to work so closely with us, to bring seriously a bipartisan aspect to the protection that we are looking for to make sure that Amtrak—the national goal for railroading all across this country—will be able to continue.

It is obvious to me, as we have listened to the comments, that unless these investments are made now, or very soon, we will be unable to fulfill the objectives of having Amtrak as a self-sufficient entity operating with its operating budget met by the revenues that it derives. The funds that we will be able to get from this proposed bond issue will enable it to make the capital investment it so desperately needs.

SERVING IN THE SENATE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, one of the things I wanted to do, as I tried to plan my Senate objectives, was to make sure the children of our country were as protected as they could be by legislation that we developed in the Congress.

Under Republican leadership, when President Reagan was the President in 1984—Elizabeth Dole was the Secretary of Transportation—we were able to write a bill and create a law that made the 21-year-old drinking age the minimum drinking age for serving liquor across the country. Since that time, 17,000 families have been spared the need to mourn the loss of a child.

Mr. President, 17,000 youngsters, that is enough to fill a large arena. If one looked at the number of young people who would fill that arena, you would say: My Lord, are we lucky that these children have lived and will survive to their adulthood and through their full life because we were able to restrict their access to alcohol.

Therefore, it was appropriate, toward the later days of my career, that we were able to add another item of protection by lowering the blood-alcohol level to .08, a standard which will save an additional 500 to 700 lives a year. President Clinton recently signed that into law, as well. So I am pleased with the fact we were able to get that done. My team and I worked very hard to make that happen. It took several years for it to be accomplished, but accomplished it was.

A large part of that accomplishment, I must say, was because of our distinguished friend and leader—I think they would have a reference in totalitarian governments, but I mean it in the kindest way—as a leader for life, that Senator BYRD has brought to us, not only with his knowledge, his understanding of the process, but he is virtually the historian of the Senate. The thing that has always amazed me is he can do it virtually from memory, and bring us all to our senses about how we conduct ourselves and how we process legislation. I am not only so delighted and honored to have been able to serve with him as a mentor but as a friend as well.

We learn on a continuing basis in this place that Senator BYRD is someone to whom we can always turn, not only to understand his thinking on issues, and the decisions that he provides, but also his leadership.

We saw it manifest again this day because he wanted to help us out of the dilemma with which we were struggling, to find a way to get Amtrak the strength and resources that it needs, but reminding us at this moment there were so many things in front of us that it was not the time, but nevertheless was helpful in his reassurance that he, too, would help process this early in the next Congress. I just am sorry I will not be here to see the day when that takes place.

But I am grateful for the friendship and guidance that the distinguished senior Senator from West Virginia has given me, and all of us, over these many years.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the distinguished Senator yield?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I am happy to yield to the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator for his remarks. I shall miss him. We shall all miss him. He has served on the Appropriations Committee, and served well, served as chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, and served well.

He has the highest interests of the Nation always at heart. He has been a very capable Senator. He is never one to forget his obligations, his responsibilities, his duties to the people who have sent him here. I have considered it to be a great honor and high privilege to serve with the Senator. I shall miss him. I am sure he will continue to serve his country in some way.

But I do hope the Senator will come back and visit with us from time to time. May the Creator of the universe, Father of all of us, watch over and guide FRANK LAUTENBERG and his family. He is so proud of his family. He often speaks of his children, his grandchildren. I know they love him. He will always be in our recollection. May heavenly angels always attend him in whatever he endeavors.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia.

All of us look to him for his guidance and wisdom.

I have said about Senator BYRD in the past that he is a model for what a computer might do, and he does it without all of the transistors and switches and chips, and all of that. If anyone doubts Senator BYRD's capacity, let them attend one of his lectures on the kings of England or the development of government in the Roman Empire. One will be astounded. I have always felt a little bit like a student when I listened to Senator BYRD. I thank him for his warm comments.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, will the Senator from New Jersey yield to me for a question of him?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I am happy to yield to our colleague from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. First of all, I thank the Senator from New Jersey for his advocacy and his strong and heartfelt support about the need for a viable railway system in the Northeast and around America. There has been no one in this body who has been more committed to that proposition than the Senator from New Jersey. I congratulate him. As I said before, we will miss him very much in this body.

I would like to make one additional comment, if I may, to the Senator from New Jersey.

We will go through a regular process next year to bring up an authorization bill for Amtrak which would then be followed by appropriations.

I objected to an appropriation this year because it was \$10 billion over 10 years stuck into an appropriations bill for which there had never been a hearing. I hope the Senator from New Jersey can understand that.

The second point is, I urge the Senator from New Jersey to consider that we have to make a fundamental choice about the national rail system in America—not just an east coast rail system but a national rail system.

There are many countries in the world, including European countries, that regularly subsidize their railway systems. I understand that. I don't dispute it. Perhaps that decision has to be made in the United States of America and in the Congress of the United States with the cooperation of the administration.

I remind the Senator from New Jersey that a few short years ago the decision was made to make Amtrak completely independent. Maybe that was not a wise decision.

Last year, Amtrak lost, I think, 900 million and some dollars, and will lose another \$900 million, or so.

I think we need to make a fundamental decision: Is it a high enough national priority?

I am not prepared to make a decision yet that the taxpayers of America should subsidize a rail system for America. I think the Senator from New Jersey would agree with me that the west coast needs one probably almost as much as the east coast does.

We need to make a fundamental decision about what the Government's role

will be in a national railway system, and then we need to decide to what degree it is subsidized.

I think a strong argument can be made by anyone who has tried to fly to Newark, or to LaGuardia, or Kennedy lately that they recognize the difficulties in relying simply on air transportation. I think an argument can be made. But I think it deserves full debate and discussion.

I thank the Senator from New Jersey. I understand his disappointment on this issue. But I would like to make a personal commitment that his spirit will live on, and we will fully examine and fully ventilate this issue and try to come up with a proposal that will satisfy the needs of his constituents and Americans all over this country. Again, I say that with profound admiration and respect for the Senator from New Jersey.

Could I make one final comment? I hope to get a recorded vote on this bill. I will be recorded as voting against it for the usual reasons, and will have a statement included in the RECORD.

I thank the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Arizona for his laudatory comments. It is nice to hear that one will be missed. We haven't discussed the degree, but nevertheless being missed counts.

I wish to say one thing in response to the thoughtful statement of the Senator from Arizona about Amtrak and a national railroad. I am glad that he did it because I misunderstood. Frankly, perhaps it is something I thought I heard the Senator from Arizona say in times past about the fact that he would resist advancing resources to Amtrak. I think it was described in terms of a "cash guzzler," if I am correct in that recognition. But I am glad to hear the Senator from Arizona.

Let it not ever be mistaken that Senator JOHN MCCAIN and I have had some differences on the floor and off the floor, but the fact is that I believe there is mutual respect. Certainly, I respect him for his contributions to America and for his contributions to this body.

If anyone has any doubts about JOHN MCCAIN's capacity to deliver a message, one only need to look at the recent election to see that with very limited resources JOHN MCCAIN was able to influence the direction of policy that we are going to be witnessing in the next administration.

But I also hope that Senator JOHN MCCAIN, the Senator from Arizona, and the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. FEINGOLD, will be able to accomplish something that has been lingering over this place. It is overdue. It has been talked about forever, and it has never been accomplished. The reason I made a decision to leave this body that I love dearly was because I didn't want to go out and raise that money.

The Senator from Arizona and the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. FEINGOLD,

have done a masterful job in working inch by inch to get to the place where we examine as a proposal for the near future, I hope, how we ought to finance Senate races. I think the moment is near at hand. I hope that examination, frankly, obviously without my participation, will be taken. I will be encouraging you from the sidelines.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, will the Senator yield again?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Boy, I could really carve out a few chips if I were going to remain here. I am happy to yield, provided I recover the floor.

Mr. LOTT. I thank the Senator.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now have a list of Executive nominations which have been cleared on both sides.

We have been working on this for several days. A number of these nominations were running the risk of not being confirmed, or possibly having recess appointments, which we would like to avoid. This list includes Executive calendar nominations and nominations to be discharged from several committees and confirmed.

In executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the nominations I send to the desk be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

I add that this list is comprised of approximately 41 nominations, plus an additional list of almost 400 Foreign Service career officers.

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

The nominations were considered and confirmed en bloc, as follows:

Claude A. Allen, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 22, 2005.

Willie Grace Campbell, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 22, 2005.

Foreign Service nominations beginning Avis T. Bohlen, and ending Mark Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 6, 2000.

John M. Reich, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for a term of six years.

Robert S. LaRussa, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade.

Marjory E. Searing, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service.

Michael Prescott Goldwater, of Arizona, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation for a term expiring October 13, 2005.

Frederick G. Slabach, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation for a term expiring December 10, 2005.