

Committee's information a list of "traditional communities" exceptions which may have been declared by a party to the Convention.

(2) SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION.—Nothing in the Convention requires or authorizes legislation or other action by the United States of America that is prohibited by the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the United States.

Mr. ENZI. I further ask unanimous consent that any statements be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as if read, and that the Senate take one vote on the resolutions of ratification to be considered as separate votes. Further, that when the resolutions of ratification are voted upon, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be notified of the Senate's action, and that following the disposition of the treaties, the Senate return to legislative session.

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

The understandings to the resolutions of ratification are agreed to.

Mr. ENZI. I ask for a division vote on the resolutions of ratification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A division has been requested.

Senators in favor of the resolutions of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolutions of ratification are agreed to.

LEGISLATION SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2000

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 21, 2000.

I further ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then begin a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m., with Senators speaking for up to 5 minutes each, with the following exceptions: Senator LOTT or his designee, 60 minutes; Senator DASCHLE or his designee, 60 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, when the Senate convenes at 9:30 a.m., the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m. Following morning

business, the Senate will resume postcloture debate on the motion to proceed to S. 2045, the H-1B visa bill. An agreement is being negotiated regarding the Water Resources Development Act, and it is hoped that the Senate can begin consideration of the bill this week. Therefore, Senators should be prepared to vote during tomorrow's session of the Senate.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, at the close of my remarks. I ask unanimous consent I be given such time as I might use.

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

THE BUDGET

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I have now been in the Senate almost 4 years. Some of the days have been extremely long, but the years have been extremely short. We work through a process here that I am sure, as people watch, seems extremely slow and cumbersome. That is probably because it is. It was designed that way by our forefathers. They intended that legislation that affects this Nation would be carefully considered in two separate bodies and then submitted to the executive branch for the possibility of a veto. That takes a long time.

The bodies have grown in size as a number of States came into the Nation, and that makes it more difficult. But it is a system that works better than that in any other country in the world, and it is working now. It is difficult, very difficult; long days, tough issues, tough choices.

When I first came to the Senate, the first issue I got to talk about was the balanced budget amendment. At that time, it was just a dream that at some point we could get the discipline to balance a budget. It had been years since a budget had been balanced around here. As we went through that debate, people said: Oh, this doesn't give us enough leeway. What if we would have a war? Technically, I guess, we have had a couple since that time, and we have still balanced the budget. Not only that, the economy has increased, and many will attribute that to the budget being balanced. In countries around the world, as they balance the budget, their economy improves. We balanced the budget, the economy improved. It gave us a lot more money to work with.

In fact, we have so much money, we have started talking about honesty with the Social Security surplus. That is music to my heart. I am the only accountant in the Senate. It was pretty obvious that, with our accounting techniques, we were spending the Social Security surplus. People pay into

Social Security, and the money that is paid in is, for the most part, paid in to the recipients of Social Security. It doesn't really flow into a trust fund and stay there with the portion of the trust fund for the person on retirement being used. No, the money flows in and the money flows out. But at the moment, there are more people working than receiving. As a result, there is a surplus in Social Security.

That is going to change pretty drastically in about 2013. At that point, we are going to have more people retiring than working, and there will be a deficit in Social Security. So it has been very important that we be honest on Social Security and start to put that Social Security away.

We also tried a motion to assure that would be put away. It is called a lockbox on Social Security. That has never passed around here—similar to the balanced budget amendment, which did not pass. But the American people understood how important that balanced budget amendment was, that the Federal Government couldn't spend money, just as they cannot spend more money than they have, and they insisted on a balanced budget, and we got it. We talked about a lockbox. I think we had seven different votes to end the filibuster to put that into law. It has not happened. But the message has been delivered by the people of this country that we are going to put a lockbox on Social Security; we are going to put that money away; we are not going to touch it, so the little bit that there is—this is just a surplus, the money that is flowing in and out—will be there later.

One of the things we are doing with that is we are paying down the national debt. You will hear a number of us around here say if you really look at the accounting on this, are we paying down the national debt? No, we are paying down the public national debt. We are taking that money that individuals across this country have invested in Treasury bills and we are buying their Treasury bills back. What that does is put IOUs into the Social Security trust fund—not money. We got rid of the money.

At the moment, if you have a Treasury bill, you are paid interest periodically. We have to pay the interest if the public owns the debt. So what do we achieve by taking Social Security money and buying up this public debt? I will tell you what we achieve. We achieve the ability to spend more money because we do not pay Social Security interest in cash at the moment that it is due. We take a little bit of IOU and we use it to make the Social Security trust fund a little bit bigger. But it is not real money. If we wanted to spend it, we would have to put in money in order to take money out. How would we do that? We would increase the public debt.

If you call the Treasury and they tell you the national debt at the moment—that is, the total, public and private—

is bigger than it was a year ago, then we really have not paid off any of the national debt. But we have made the country a little more secure for Social Security.

One of the things we need to do now, the new push—for some of us, this is not a new push. The Presiding Officer, since he came here, has been adamant on paying down the national debt honestly. Senator ALLARD of Colorado and I got together our first year and talked about how this country ought to commit to paying down the national debt. There is not anybody in my State who does not understand that debts come due, and if we have a debt—and we talked about having a surplus—maybe we ought to take care of that debt a little bit. We put together a bill that put the national debt on a system like a house payment. We figured out how you could pay off the national debt in 30 years. That is about the time you normally pay a house down; it works similar to a house payment.

You start with a fixed payment. This number still seems to be an awfully big number to me, but around Washington it is not a big number. You just start with a measly \$10 billion. You pay that \$10 billion in, and it saves you some interest—genuinely saves you interest. What you do is you take that interest that you save and, instead of spending it or putting phony IOUs in a box, you take that actual cash and you add it to the \$10 billion. That is your next year's payment.

So each year the \$10 billion grows by the amount of interest you save, so that the final payment is huge—kind of the way a house payment works. The amount of principal that gets paid off in the 30th year on your house is practically the whole payment. With some discipline and a steady plan, that is the same thing as anybody in this country does when they are buying a house: We can pay off the national debt in 30 years.

You will hear a lot of rhetoric around here about how we might have a war; what would we do? Some unusual expenditures might come up. That is an excuse for not paying a normal payment to pay off the debt. It is just an excuse. If we were really serious about paying off the national debt, we would enter into that kind of agreement and then we would say: Here is how it works if we have a war. People who have a home sometimes outgrow their home, it is kind of an emergency, and they decide they will add to their home a little bit.

What do they do? They take out a second mortgage. That is what we ought to be doing, figuring out the lifespan of how we pay for that U.S. purchase and adding it to the payment so we stretch the payment out over a little period of time. That is money we borrowed from our kids. They are the ones who will have to pay that back.

I have to tell you, we have not gotten a single Democrat to sign onto the debt reduction in any of the forms that we have proposed it.

This year, we tried a little different approach because the surplus is growing so fast that, evidently, those estimating it cannot keep up with the estimations because every time there is a new estimation, it is greater than the one before. So what we have done in the appropriations bills this year is put in a little provision—in almost all of them, as another announcement is made of this huge new surplus—that half of that surplus has to genuinely go to the national debt. We have been successful in putting that in almost every bill.

Now we have a third plan. We are still trying to get some people in this body to sign on to debt reduction. There isn't anybody in this body who does not talk about the importance of debt reduction for this country. For some, that is a code word for, "We could spend it, and we ought to spend, and it is more fun to spend it." But that is not the right thing to do with it.

So we have said, OK, this year, for the fiscal year for which we are appropriating, we are going to have about \$280 billion in surplus. The \$280 billion is part Social Security surplus and part real surplus. But we made a proposal that 90 percent of that \$280 billion ought to go to debt reduction—part of it the way we have been doing it with the Social Security and part of it with the real money. That still leaves us an increase of 10 percent, which actually works out to a little more than 10 percent. It is 10 percent of the surplus, but it is a bigger increase in spending.

We have said, how about if we save that other 10 percent, and, at the most, allocate half of it to tax reduction and half of it to spending? That is a proposal we are still putting forth. It has a lot of popularity across the country. Again, people recognize the need to pay down the debt, but people also realize that that puts a tremendous safety mechanism in our budget process at the moment.

But you will not see much on that in the papers. The papers don't carry debt reduction very much. People do not really carry it around as a code word. I guess it is kind of an accounting thing. But I have to tell you, I travel back to Wyoming almost every weekend, and we drive 300 to 500 miles and go to all the towns—the big ones and the little ones—and the people out there understand it. They say: That is a top priority. Pay down that debt. We got into that debt. We need to get out of that debt. And we need to take care of our kids.

I mentioned the media probably will not carry much about that. I have not seen it in the eastern media. I am often disturbed at what the eastern media puts in the paper. Right now, of course, what they are doing is trying to generate some interest in the political races, particularly the Presidential race. The media isn't really being fair on that issue.

I attended the Republican convention. That was on television, and I no-

ticed there were 48 hours of it that were broadcast across the country. Then the Democratic convention happened later in the month, and evidently there was not anything else happening because they got 80 hours. That is not quite equal time. It is nowhere near equal time. It is almost twice as much time.

I also noticed that the people covering the conventions were the same at both conventions, and their political colors showed. When they were at the Republican convention, they criticized everything. When they were at the Democratic convention, they lauded everything. That does not sound like United States good, old American fairness to me.

The closest I have seen in fairness is in today's Washington Post editorial, which is entitled "Al Gore vs. Business." It offers us a glimpse of the skin-deep approach to many policies, but particularly health care policies. Those are important in this country right now.

We, through the media, have elevated that to a higher level than it has ever been before. Even the Washington Post speculates that: "the candidate"—by candidate, they mean Vice President GORE—"plans to go after, in the same vein, a different industry every day, each target undoubtedly poll-tested."

I would like to read the closing of their editorial and then offer some facts for your consideration on these health care things we are talking about. This is the Washington Post. This is not me.

There are fair points to be made about the right balance between free enterprise and regulation, and useful debates to be had. Mr. Gore seems more intent upon telling us that he's for the people, not the powerful. Given his history, the slogan seems about as sincere as it is useful.

Not me—the Washington Post, that doesn't carry the stuff I really like to read about. But he is going to take on a different industry.

I am not concerned about big industry in this country. Big industry came about because of big government. If you are going to handle the bureaucracy, you have to have specialists. Big business has grown to take care of some of the specialists needed to handle the bureaucracy. The folks I am worried about are the small businesses.

When I first came to the Senate, again, one of the early debates we had on the Small Business Committee—which is one of the really joyful committees for Wyoming because all of our businesses are small businesses—one of the first discussions we had was: What is a small business? The Federal definition says: Under 500 employees. I guess we don't have any big business in Wyoming—not one. I contend that a small business is the one where the owner of the business sweeps the sidewalk, cleans the toilets, does the book-keeping, and waits on customers.

In this country, if it is going to succeed, we need to get to a situation

where that small business can deal with the bureaucracy and the forms and all of the things we put on them because that is where the entrepreneurship in this country starts. That is where the businesses start.

One of the things we are talking about with businesses, of course, is health insurance. We are trying to encourage the businesses to provide health insurance. But at the same time, here we come up with a lot of complicated situations for how we are going to handle that, that make it necessary for businesses to be bigger and have specialists.

We are also talking about Medicare and Social Security and how we are going to keep them solvent. One of the things we are good at doing here is trying to outbid everything. We have a Medicare system that is going broke. We have a Medicare system that everybody admits needs to be fixed. The President, in his State of the Union speech, mentioned the importance of fixing Medicare.

Plans for fixing Medicare? There is a bipartisan plan. It came out of a commission. Senator BREAUX and Senator FRIST headed up this commission. They have a plan that will save it.

Are we working on that plan? No. It doesn't generate enough publicity. We have gone to something that is a little catchier than that, and that is prescription drugs, and we are concerned about how people in this country can afford their prescription drugs and how nobody in this country should have to make a choice between food and prescription drugs. There isn't anybody here who thinks that kind of a choice ought to be made.

What kind of a plan do we have? I know of six of them among Members here in this body. I know of four that are on this side. And then there are a couple more because in the Presidential election this has been poll-tested as an important feature and both candidates have a plan.

The Washington Post has been covering the plans. I want to show you a little bit about how they are covering it.

The biggest secret out there is the details of Mr. Gore's plan. But the Washington Post has delved into them a little bit and given us a little bit of information. Again, this isn't what I have written. But the Washington Post does give Bush some credit for detailing a Medicare plan. They say:

Texas Gov. George W. Bush today proposed spending \$198 billion to enhance Medicare over the next 10 years, including covering the full cost of prescription drugs for seniors with low incomes.

Bush's plan was modeled on a [bipartisan] proposal by Sen. John Breaux (D-LA) and Sen. Bill Frist (R-TN).

[Bush's plan proposes] fully subsidizing people with incomes less than 135 percent of the poverty level and creating a sliding scale for people with slightly more money. But Gore would stop the sliding scale at 150 percent of the poverty level, while Bush would extend it to 175 percent.

I do appreciate them also going through the work of drawing up a little comparison and putting that in the paper. If you remember, on the other

side it said it was going to cost \$198 billion. They did the courtesy of adding up the columns for the two different proposals; the Gore proposal, the Bush proposal. The Gore proposal shows \$158 billion by 2010. Why did he say \$198 billion on the other page? Mystery. It also sounds as if he is spending an awful lot of money. When we total up this column, it comes to \$253 billion. That is a little more than \$158 billion.

They also do a comparison of how it is supposed to work. The biggest difference on the two sides of this chart is how it is handled, two different philosophies on how it is handled. One philosophy says the Government knows best. Send your money to Washington. Washington will handle it.

On the other side, Governor Bush says, we have a lot of things in place in this country, and they have been working well. Let's encourage them to work better and provide for more. Let's definitely not turn this thing over to HCFA.

HCFA is one of those acronyms we use around here. All you have to do is mention HCFA to any medical provider and see the grimace they get on their face. It is a system that isn't working for the things they have already been assigned, and now we are talking about assigning them more work.

Federal plan—Government knows best—as opposed to use what we have—distribute it to the States, have the States use it through the plans that have been providing health care to the people already.

I will go into the details of this at another time. I hope all of you do pay attention to what is being suggested out there because people think there is going to be a prescription drug plan that is going to be done between now and the time we adjourn this year, during this time of volatile politics.

That isn't how we do any of the bills. That is how I started this out, mentioning how our process works slowly and pretty well. It goes through a committee process usually. That is where the "bipartisan" is supposed to come in. That is where both sides suggest amendments to a good plan. But that takes time. We have limits on how long in advance before a markup, which is where they insert amendments into the bill, that you have to turn these amendments in. And then often the markup, particularly if it is a complicated issue, one as far reaching as prescription drugs, might take several different days of working through the amendments, meeting and compromising and trying to come up with the plan that will work best for our country.

That is where we need to go now. We need to have that process; we need to do that process. We should not latch on to any particular plan that is out there, unless, of course, we do the one that came out of the commission, that evolved in a bipartisan way over a long process. But that is not going to happen when the two sides have two plans.

I know the hour is getting late. I have already done my part on an education program. I want to emphasize, again, we need to pay down the na-

tional debt. I want to emphasize, again, the need to have a prescription drug plan for this country but to have the right one, not a flash-in-the-pan program, particularly not one that takes people who already have a prescription benefit and shoves them into a Federal plan against their will, taking away the right to choose that they have now. I hope we have a situation where we can work together and come up with a plan where those who are happy with their situation can continue to do it that way, and those who aren't can have a new opportunity.

That is a commitment Governor Bush has already made. He has outlined the plan. He has a plan. He has a policy. We are a little short on policies around here, but it is something that could be worked through.

One of the things I was impressed with when he became the Governor of Texas was the legislature was Democrat. He was Republican. He sat down with each and every legislator, face to face, one on one, and talked about what needed to be done for Texas. Then they did it.

Every time a new President is elected, I grab a biography that particular President likes and I read it. One of the things I found is that people repeat successes. I am sure the next President will be no different than any other President. If it is Governor Bush, I expect the opportunity to sit down with him—I look forward to it—face to face, one on one, and talk about the things that I see as necessary for this country and that he sees as necessary for this country. But more importantly, he will sit down with the people on the other side of the aisle.

One of the things we are missing in this country right now is more of a bipartisan effort, that time of sitting down and working things out. That is how it starts, with the leadership, with the President. I will be expecting him to visit with each and every person here and all 435 on the other end of this building. A tremendous effort? Absolutely. It is the most essential thing I can think of. It is the way to get things done in a bipartisan manner. That is how we will get a prescription drug plan. That is how we will improve the medical plans we already have in this country that are recognized internationally as being some of the best.

One of the great things about America is that we say we have the best, but we are always looking for ways to make it better. That is how our economy works. That is how the Government works. That is how free enterprise works.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 21, 2000.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:24 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 21, 2000, at 9:30 a.m.