

reserved, and the Senate then resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 1932 as under the previous order. I further ask consent that there be 10 minutes for each leader prior to the vote on the final action on S. 1932.

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

Mr. FRIST. I further ask consent that following the disposition of S. 1932, there then be 1 hour of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees for debate only and that following that time the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2863, the Defense appropriations bill; provided further that the live quorum be waived.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, tomorrow we are moving to finish our final business. We have several critical matters to dispose of before we break for the holidays, and there will be, as we said earlier, a series of rollcall votes on the deficit reduction conference report starting sometime around 9:15 in the morning. Senators should be prepared for votes throughout the day on the deficit reduction bill, the remaining appropriations conference reports, and other legislative and executive matters which must be disposed of before we adjourn.

Again, as we have said earlier, Senators should stay close to the Chamber throughout the day. It will be a very busy day, and I thank all of my colleagues in advance for their patience. I know this is a very challenging time of year as we juggle planning for the holidays, constituent work, as well as completing our business here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent in the hour that has been specified for debate following disposition of S. 1932 that the 30 minutes under the control of the Democrats be divided as follows: 2 minutes each for Senators FEINGOLD and BOXER, 3 minutes each for Senators BINGAMAN and LIEBERMAN; that Senator BYRD be extended 7½ minutes; Senator CANTWELL would have 12½ minutes under her control. That uses our 30 minutes.

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

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Louisiana be given 20 minutes, after which I will come back and close.

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

The Senator from Louisiana is recognized for 20 minutes.

HURRICANE KATRINA RELIEF

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, we do have some important work to finish to-

morrow. That is why I thought I would spend a few minutes tonight reminding my colleagues of a very significant part of that work.

Before I came to work this morning, I spent a little time with our two children, our 8-year-old precious little angel girl, Mary Shannon, and our 12-year-old little boy. We spent some time at breakfast, and then we started doing what a lot of families do around this holiday, and that is listen to some Christmas music and some holiday music and wrap a few gifts that they had actually, amazingly picked out themselves for their Kris Kringles. We talked about how important it was going to be to see family over the holidays. As they struggled to wrap the gifts, with their tape and their scissors, we tried to spend a little family time together before I came to work today.

It reminded me of how simple but wonderfully special those moments are with families at this time of year, as moms and dads make their regular cookies and traditional dinners and recipes and wrap packages the same way and decorate the trees the same way and put out the nativity scenes. And all over the country that is happening.

There is one place that that is not happening the way it usually does and that is along the gulf coast of this country, and particularly in Louisiana.

About 3 months ago, two fierce storms hit our coast. We basically survived through the night, only to wake up the next morning and find the levees had broken, and 200,000-plus homes and 18,000 businesses were destroyed literally in a matter of a few hours.

The devastation was so great and so expansive and so unprecedented that it has literally taken the Nation and this Congress and even officials in the region, major business operations in the region, 3 months or more to actually realize the extent of the devastation.

I have spent a lot of time on the Senate floor with my colleague, Senator VITTER, showing pictures and graphs to try to explain what actually happened. This one isn't fancy. It is simple, but it is pretty clear. When we come down here to try to explain how much help the people of Louisiana need, the people of Mississippi, and to some extent a little bit in Alabama and Texas because of two killer storms, Katrina and Rita, and the multiple levee breaks that ensued, one figure that helped my staff and our people to understand is this chart that shows Hurricane Andrew as the most expensive storm ever to hit the coast of the United States in 1992. They are still recovering from it in Florida.

In that massive storm, 28,000 homes were destroyed—28,000, in Homestead, FL, and in places around. People are still living in trailers after 10-plus, 14 years.

But I have to show my colleagues right here, in Katrina, 3 months ago, a storm and levee break came through and around 275,000 homes, 10 times the

amount of Hurricane Andrew, 10 times the amount of destruction.

I was sitting in my home just a few blocks from here with my children this morning, with three rolls of wrapping paper and a couple of pairs of scissors. And, thank goodness, we could find the Scotch tape which is always a challenge when you are wrapping gifts. I had to close my eyes and think about my mother's house that is not occupied now after 45 years of raising 9 children and 37 grandchildren. It had 7 feet of water in it.

And my sisters and our friends and people from all walks of life, rich and poor, Black and White, senior citizens and moms and dads who are looking forward to having their children and grandchildren with them, there are no homes to wrap these gifts or to put the tree or to hang the lights.

I just came tonight to tell my colleagues that while this bill looks like just sort of a regular package of lots of words and lines and fine print, what is in one of these bills tomorrow is a package of hope for the 275,000 families who lived in those homes that were completely destroyed—not a roof damaged, not a porch falling over, not a few steps missing but homes completely destroyed.

I want to show you what a home completely destroyed looks like; 275,000 homes along the gulf coast look something like this. Some of them look worse.

This picture was in the National Geographic a couple of weeks ago. This is what the homes along the gulf coast look like.

That is why I am not going home this Christmas while we will be working as many hours and days as it takes until people like this have some hope that they can get back to their home. It is not just Christmas, which would be impossible in this situation, but at least by next Christmas.

I am going to say again, for the one-hundredth time, FEMA is not sufficient to get us back to our homes, to build our churches again, to rebuild our schools and to rebuild our communities. It is an insufficient mechanism, and on its best day it could not accomplish this goal.

In this package tomorrow in the Defense appropriations bill, because of political concerns of the Congress, we find our \$29 billion hope package in there that finally moves money from an agency that can't manage to spend it well into the hands of competent local officials and local entities and private businesses and faith-based organizations and individual Americans who show a lot of grit and a lot of heart to build their State and their community again.

We are not going home without the hope package. It is not fair and America can do better.

This is what the inside of many homes in New Orleans looks like because the water was so high in many of our neighborhoods, even neighborhoods

that had never flooded, neighborhoods that had never had a drop of water before. After several weeks and finally the water went down, this is what families saw all throughout south Louisiana and in New Orleans, St. Bernard Parish, parts of Jefferson Parish, in neighborhoods in some places where the average home is valued at \$50,000 to \$75,000. But there are also some neighborhoods where the average home is worth \$1 million.

In all homes, large and small, rich and poor, this is what families are doing this holiday season. They come up here to Senator VITTER's office and to my office. "Senator, does anybody know we are down here? Does anybody know we have lost our churches, our schools, our community? Does anybody care? What is Congress doing?"

Because of the good work of many Members of this body, particularly I have to say Senator THAD COCHRAN from Mississippi, who basically refused to accept an anemic and incomplete proposal from the administration that basically sent money to fix a few Federal buildings—I don't see a Federal building anywhere in this picture. I see a family's home. I see everything that they owned destroyed, impossible to reclaim. While you can buy a few sofas—let me assure you that there are many you can choose from—I promise you that the wedding album which was lost is irreplaceable. The pictures of the children are irreplaceable. The special mementos handed down from grandmother to mother to daughter are gone, are priceless and can't be replaced. And no insurance company can provide you sufficient funding for those things that have been lost.

This is what 250,000 homes in Louisiana look like. It is bad enough to lose your home. But I also want to try to impress upon the Members of Congress that losing your home is pretty bad because it is where most people have equity. Most of the net worth of Americans is in their homes. We pride ourselves on being homeowners and a nation of homeowners and middle-class families.

But let me show you what this hurricane and flood did. It destroyed 18,752 businesses, catastrophically destroyed, gone in Louisiana, compared to 1,912 in Mississippi, 295 in Texas, and 20 in Alabama; 18,700 businesses gone, no more; restaurants, cleaners, manufacturers, law firms, doctors' offices, clinics, just gone.

People who are cleaning out their houses are also cleaning out their businesses, and insurance checks are slow to come, and this hope package is stuck right here in Congress.

Last week we had some, I guess, good news about the economic front in America. I think you can read statistics many different ways. But for the RECORD tonight—this came out yesterday—I saw one or two submitted for the RECORD. The Bureau of Economic Analysis in the U.S. Department of Commerce, which issued the growth

rate of State personal income, says the hurricane slowed personal income growth.

You can see in a different case, but there is an absolutely dead, stop, halt, reverse taking place in Louisiana. There is a 25 percent reduction in personal income growth in Louisiana. There is no State in the Nation even close.

Mississippi was hard hit, and I do not underestimate the destruction along that gulf coast which we love, as I have said as many times as I can, almost as much as we love Louisiana because many people in Louisiana grew up on the gulf coast and spent many happy days on those beaches. Mississippi has grown .8 percent. The national average was something closer to 1.8 percent. Look at the dramatic fall in Louisiana. There is nothing close: 25 percent reduction.

What we are trying to say is it was not just a regular hurricane. It was not just the second hurricane. It was a multiple break of Federal levees that this Congress had the responsibility to build, to design, and to maintain, which we utterly failed to do, and we lost 250,000 homes.

What do we tell those people? You are on your own? Go gather up your church members and see if you can raise a roof? The churches are not there, either. Go to your school and gather up your community and let's just be self-reliant and raise ourselves up by our bootstraps. The school is gone. There is no cafeteria. There is no multipurpose room. There is no auditorium.

Least week, I went home and attended a church service briefly. It was amazing to walk into a church where the roof was still sort of caved in halfway—not dangerous but hanging; you could see the top of the roof, the inside of the roof was damaged—with 1,500 people in this church. You look out the front door of the church, and there are no homes anywhere around that are inhabitable. You wonder, Where did the people come from? People drove, from what Father Vien told me, 2 and 3 hours to come to Mass. People are driving half a day to go back to their church to say Mass and to be in church with their community—that is how meaningful it is—with the hope that maybe someday they can get back to their neighborhood.

I am not saying that Members of this Congress individually have not tried. There have been heroic efforts made, I believe, with what Senator ENZI has done in our education package; Senator KENNEDY. Senator COCHRAN and Senator LOTT have worked tirelessly. Senator VITTER has been in this Senate and in many meetings and has taken Senators to Louisiana.

We cannot go home without help. We cannot go home without help. If this package is not passed tomorrow—and I didn't package it in the bill it is packaged in, which is Defense—we cannot go home without our \$29 billion hope

package, moving money from FEMA, finally, thank goodness; not adding money to the deficit but moving that money to community development block grants to use in an expanded way; \$3 billion to protect our levee system, to give people hope and security that as we begin the plan for rebuilding, they will not be flooded again; help for our universities; help for our medical schools; help for the infrastructure, the major highways that have been destroyed. We cannot go home without that hope package.

I hope my colleagues know what is at stake. I know everyone is anxious to get home to their families and to their children. I am looking forward to spending some off time with my family. We cannot leave without passing that package of hope for the people on the gulf coast. I am prepared to work through Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and into Christmas on Sunday if we have to until we can get this package done. If I thought we could wait until January, we could take a break and come back—we cannot. People are holding on by a thread.

Banks are threatening to foreclose on people's houses. Having given them forbearance for 3 months, they are now sending people notices that they will have to pay their mortgage in January. But not just the January mortgage; they have to pay four mortgages in the month of January. So the people who have lost 1 of the 18,000 businesses, the people whose homes look like this, they are being asked to pay 4 months of a mortgage on this home. This family is having trouble getting a trailer to live in. Meanwhile, they have to pay mortgages on this home. If not, they will be foreclosed. All the equity they built up, which could be considerable—several hundred thousand in some cases, sometimes more, maybe even over \$1 billion of equity—lost, not because there isn't a solution to their dilemma but because this Congress and this administration haven't figured out, haven't worked hard enough to give them a helping hand.

These people aren't looking for charity. They give to charity. Most of the people in Louisiana who have lost their homes have never asked for a penny from anybody. All they have been doing is digging in their pocket for the last 50 years as a family. They make a little bit of money and give to people in more need. Now the middle-class families who never asked for a thing need help from us, and we can't figure out how to get their hope package through?

I express that I am prepared to stay through Christmas day, if need be, and beyond, to get this package through. I will read into the record a beautifully written paragraph from a new book that is out which is written by Tom Pizzanza, "Why New Orleans Matters."

I am the Senator for the whole State, and I love all 64 parishes. It is quite a special place and one we will fight hard to restore. The southern part of our

State has been very hard hit. Thank goodness our capital city of Baton Rouge is standing up very strongly. They have grown from a city of 350,000 to a city of 500,000 over the weekend, 3 months ago. The mayor of that city, "Kip" Holden, has now had to take on an additional 150,000 citizens and is managing very well under the circumstances. Lafayette is in the southwest and is part of Cajun Country. They have probably increased 50,000 or 60,000. New Orleans is my hometown, and it is something we will fight hard to restore. It is representative of the spirit of all of Louisiana.

I will read into the record in closing why this fight is worth having and why we are not going to give up until we get the help, the money, the tools, and the support.

He writes:

New Orleans is not just a list of attractions or restaurants or ceremonies, no matter how sublime and subtle. New Orleans is the interaction among all these things and countless more. It gains its character from the spirit that is summoned, like a hologram, in the midst all these elements, and that comes, ultimately, from the people who live there, and from those whose parents and grandparents and ancestors lived there. That spirit, as much as, or more than, the city's physical and economic infrastructure, is what is in jeopardy right now. In the wake of the worst natural disaster in this country's history, one from which New Orleans, and the rest of the country, will be digging out for years, it may be good to remember what has been

lost, and to think hard about what is worth fighting to save.

I plan to fight with all of my strength and energy and commitment to save this wonderful city, to save south Louisiana, which has given so much, and to fight hard for people who only ever expected their Government to meet them halfway, for this Federal Government to be what it was created to be, which is a help to people in time of need. We are going to be here through Christmas if we have to.

I thank all of my colleagues for their patience and forbearance. Many of them have stepped up beyond the call of duty to help a State they do not even represent. But, of course, as Senators, they know the need of people in times like these.

I look forward to the debate tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands in adjournment until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:59 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, December 21, 2005, at 9 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate December 20, 2005:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JAMES I. FINLEY, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND TECHNOLOGY, VICE MICHAEL W. WYNNE.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

STEPHEN GOLDSMITH, OF INDIANA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2010. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SHAREE M. FREEMAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE, FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL FOR APPOINTMENT AS A PERMANENT COMMISSIONED REGULAR OFFICER IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 211:

To be lieutenant commander

CONNIE M. ROOKE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF OF THE COAST GUARD ACADEMY IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 188:

To be lieutenant

JOSEPH T. BENIN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

MICHAEL J. OSBURN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MARGARETT E. BARNES
DAVID E. UPCHURCH