

for a way to win as opposed to simply a way out? This should be part of the debate in the few weeks ahead.

I yield the floor. 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. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, if I may inquire about the situation, are we now considering the continuing resolution, the appropriations bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period for the transaction of morning business. The Senator is permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I will take advantage of the 10 minutes, then, to talk about the pending continuing resolution or, as others refer to it, the Omnibus appropriations bill. I have watched bills of this nature come and go over the years. Obviously, it is not the best way to do the job.

On occasion—I remember back in 1996 and two or three times since I have been in the Senate—we actually completed all of our appropriations by the end of the fiscal year, and that is the way it ought to be done. In order to get that done, we have to start working on it in May, not June, not July, and not in the fall. Regular order is the way it should be done, and I am pleased to hear our two leaders say that is the way they intend to proceed this year.

But for a variety of reasons, sometimes in spite of our best efforts, we don't often complete our work by the end of the fiscal year because it is quite difficult to get agreement as to what the figures will be in providing funds for the people's business in the Federal Government.

And so we pass these continuing resolutions. They always bother me because they pull in a huge number of agencies, bureaus, departments, and money into one big pile, and it is very hard to know all that is going to go on as a result of that kind of procedure. That is where we find ourselves.

This is a \$463 billion bill, as I am sure others have pointed out, and it funds most all of the discretionary programs of the Federal Government, from transportation and education to housing. The only thing it doesn't include is defense and homeland security. And so here we are trying to finish up that process for this year's funds, this fiscal year.

We can certainly exchange criticisms of how we got here, and I think there is some legitimate criticism that is due. But the way we handled things the last time we had a similar situation, in 2003, we did go through an amendment

process. According to Senator MCCONNELL, I think we had close to probably 100 amendments. We voted about 30 times, but we got through it in a reasonable period of time, and we can do that here, too.

I understand the leadership would like to go ahead and move through this as quickly as possible and get on to the regular business in the calendar year, so I can't be too critical about that. But I am very concerned about how we deal with some of the substantive issues in this legislation.

I have no doubt Democrats and Republicans have issues they think should have been funded that are not going to be funded by this bill, and others believe some of the things that are funded shouldn't be. One should never believe that there are not earmarks on an appropriations bill. I have tried to deal with earmarks. I have tried to out-wrestle appropriators ever since I have been in Congress, going back to when I was in the House. You always lose because they know where all the numbers are buried. So don't be fooled. There are some earmarks in here. Maybe they are justified. There are what we call anomalies, which are those situations where if we do not increase the funding it will create some problems.

The perfect example is the Federal Aviation Administration. We don't want the FAA furloughing air traffic controllers, so we have to add enough funds to make sure they have their straight-line funding or whatever is necessary to make sure they can continue their operations.

There are, however, two or three areas that specifically bother me. I am not a fan of the base closure procedure. I have voted against it every time it has come up while I have been in Congress. I did it in the House, and I have done so in the Senate. I have always opposed BRAC. I think it is an abrogation of responsibility of those serving in the Congress. We shouldn't hand off to some commission the decision as to whether we leave a base open or close it, or what troops are moved in and moved out.

Rightly or wrongly, we did it. As part of that package, we told our different communities that we were going to clean up the base facilities that were going to be closed and that we were going to have remediation so that when the community got it back they had something that was usable and not environmentally dangerous. We told communities in Kansas and in Georgia that we were going to move huge new numbers into their bases to take the place of bases that we were closing in Europe and other bases around the country.

We said we were going to provide additional funds to provide training facilities and living facilities to improve the quality of life for our troops and their families, so that when they do come back by the thousands—and 12,000 are being added to at least one of

the bases in the country—we will have the facilities to provide for proper housing and training.

This bill, however, cuts out \$3.1 billion that was to go for that purpose, and it redistributes that money around social welfare spending. We can debate the value of those other programs, but my question is: Is that a wise thing to do right now when we are trying to bring some of our troops home from Europe? Who are they defending the Europeans against? The Soviet Union? It is gone. Eastern Europe is part of Europe now. So I really am concerned.

I do think we should have it paid for, and a .8-percent, across-the-board cut will take care of the funds so that it is revenue neutral. I just think it sends a terrible message, once again, to our troops, troops whom we have been fighting to bring home from these remote assignments, that when they get here there is going to be a problem. They are going to be living in World War II barracks in Fort Leavenworth, KS. I am sure Senator ROBERTS talked about that. And that is an issue we need to address.

Some people have said we will add the \$3.1 billion back with the appropriations supplemental bill, but that means it will be added to the deficit. I think we should provide the funds and make sure they are paid for.

There are a number of other areas to which others have referred. Education is one area. We can argue over our priorities, but I have every reason to believe that there are some areas in education where we need to be able to adjust the numbers a little bit.

So I wanted to talk about the substance, first of all. I think Republicans and Democrats should be able to have a reasonable number of amendments. I am not for an unlimited number. I don't think we should use it to be dilatory. But there has never been a bill written that was perfect, and neither is this one. We need to have a few opportunities for Democrats and Republicans to offer some relevant amendments.

I don't think we ought to get off and relitigate budget issues or budget process issues or issues with regard to Iraq but not directly related here, but I do think we should allow a few amendments. I would urge our leaders to come to that agreement. I would urge Senator REID to be amenable to that. The majority is never going to be able to force their way in the Senate. It doesn't make a difference how big the majority is or how much power they have. It doesn't work that way. How do I know? I found out the hard way, more than once.

I don't think we should have a permission slip in the Senate. We can't have a deal where in order to offer an amendment we have to have permission. No. This is the Senate. Senators are going to offer their amendments. Sooner or later, they are going to do it.

I even filled up the tree. I am tied for the record of filling up the tree. Senator George Mitchell and I are the

champs. I filled up the tree nine times, and I blocked amendments. What happened? They were all back on the next bill. If I out-maneuvered them and pushed them off from that bill, they were back on the next bill.

In fact, it seemed as though the same 100 amendments appeared on every bill. Sooner or later in the Senate the majority has to ante up and kick in. We have to just let out a little steam, just a little pressure, turn the spigot a tad. If you don't, it is going to blow up in your face.

We are all adjusting to our new roles. We are learning how, once again, to be in the minority. It is not the preferred role, but it is one where we can have an effect, and it can be fun. There is a new majority in town. Lots of power. They are going to run this thing.

No. This is a consensus body. We will adjust. We will learn our new role, the loyal opposition within the Senate, as will the majority.

The one thing I like about our leaders now in the Senate, these are experienced hands. These are not new kids on the block. They know what they are doing. They are naturally going to have to test each other out a bit, but I believe with time we are going to see the Senate make a little more progress.

I wish we could begin that on this bill. We are not going to agree to a deal where the majority leader says: OK, I give you a permission slip to offer an amendment, and by the way, I am also going to tell you what that amendment is. No. No. That is not going to happen. It might happen here, or it might happen there, but the majority cannot ultimately dictate things like this, especially when we are talking about things such as abandoning assistance for AIDS babies.

There are some things we can do with babies who have AIDS. There are drugs that can keep them from being born with AIDS, or to address their problems and they live a happy, normal life. So we don't want to eliminate that funding. That is just one example of where we need to have an amendment in order, and I hope that we will find a way to do that.

Madam President, \$460 billion is a lot of money, and most of it is for very good purposes, but this is the Senate, and I hope we can find order and a way to do this. We could probably get three or four amendments on each side, have some debate on those amendments, and be out of here by next Wednesday and feel as though we did the best we could. I think that would be a good idea. I think it would be good for the country.

I am committed to being here and helping in any way I can. There is nobody here who has ever been in leadership who has clean hands, but I think we ought to learn from the past, learn from the recent past and find a better way to get the job done.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and 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. COCHRAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

REMEMBERING LEWIS H. WHITE, JR.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, when most Americans were celebrating annual religious holidays and the beginning of a new year, my family was mourning the loss of one of our favorite and most outstanding relatives, Louis H. White, Jr. Louis White was the husband of my father's sister, Dale White. Their children, Charlotte and Curtis, in addition to being my first cousins, were good friends as well.

Louis White was a member of the famed "greatest generation," made up of those who left homes and families and volunteered to serve in the armed services during World War II. He left college at Mississippi State University and became an officer in the Army Air Corps. He was qualified soon as a pilot of a B-17 and flying combat missions over Germany. He and his crew were shot down eventually, and he spent several months in a prisoner of war camp before being liberated by the Russians as they moved into Germany from the east.

After the war, after completing his engineering studies, graduating from college, he became an outstanding engineer, enjoying a career of great success as a paper company executive, where he designed and managed the operation of several large paper mills in Florida, Alabama, and Texas.

My parents, my brother, and I often enjoyed visits with him and his family during holidays, particularly when they were living on Santa Rosa Island, near Pensacola, FL.

When Louis retired, he was a senior staff project engineer with BE&K, an engineering firm in Birmingham, AL, where he was involved for 11½ years at high levels of management in the paper industry. At his retirement celebration, it was said he should qualify for the "Guinness Book of World Records" because of 52 years of never missing a day of work because of illness or the weather.

His first job, incidentally, was at age 14, when he was a dairy delivery boy. He always was dutiful and dependable. In the German prison camp, for instance, he developed an exercise routine that helped save his life and the lives of those who decided to exercise with him every day. He once told me about a Red Cross package that would come with an assortment of things that would help the prisoners survive, that they included things such as vitamin pills, cigarettes, and other things. He would trade the cigarettes for vitamin pills, for those who wanted to swap.

His example of generosity with his voluntary contributions in the commu-

nities where he lived to the schools his children and grandchildren would attend, helping install, personally, the infrastructure of cables and wiring necessary for all the classrooms to have computers, for example, were marks of his contribution to his community.

The quality of his life, the patriotism he displayed, his courage in battle, his survivability under the most difficult and challenging circumstances in the prisoner of war camps, his loyalty to his family and the level of excellence of his career as an engineer in business and industry are worthy of emulation and high praise.

I extend my heartfelt compassion and love to his wife and family members who miss him greatly. We wish them well and thank them for the support they gave him throughout his life and his career.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR THAD COCHRAN ON HIS 10,000TH VOTE

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I sought recognition for a number of purposes. But first, let me congratulate my distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Mississippi, for casting his 10,000th vote today. Senator COCHRAN came to the Senate after the 1978 election, having served previously in the House of Representatives for 6 years, and has had an illustrious career. He served on the Judiciary Committee for 2 years and demonstrated, at an early point in his Senate career, his wisdom by leaving the Judiciary Committee after only 2 years. All those hot-button issues—school prayer, abortion, flag burning, et cetera—were not for Senator COCHRAN. He was on the big issues of the day and specialized in appropriations.

He has been the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee and has an outstanding record. I challenge anybody to search the record, 10,000 votes, and find any mistakes by Senator COCHRAN. It has been, truly, an outstanding career.

Beyond his extraordinary capability as a Senator, he is always of good cheer, always personable, always upbeat. He has made a great contribution to the Senate and to the House before that. He will have many more years of very distinguished service for the Senate.

SENATE RULES CHANGE

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, I turn to the subject of submitting a resolution which I spoke about yesterday, and I do formally submit the resolution at this time. This resolution will eliminate the practice of filling the tree, which means there is a procedure to eliminate the opportunity of a Senator to offer an amendment.

This is a particularly problematic week for the Senate. We are on Thursday, and twice this week action has