

Mr. WELLSTONE. Thank you, Mr. President. I say to my colleagues that I will take only 2 minutes.

Look, the Senator from Missouri—we know each other. We work together on the Small Business Committee. If we want to talk about being held hostage, we have a judge who is being held hostage. The Senator knows—he was up here earlier—that there are a lot of discussions going on. And I think the majority leader is confident that this can be worked out very soon.

Nobody is trying to stop everything. This all started with a wonderful judge. You would think she is wonderful. She thought she was going through the other night. Everybody had given their word. It was going to be by unanimous consent. And then, all of a sudden, for a variety of different reasons, it did not.

It does not do any good for anybody to get angry at anybody any longer. It did happen. We are now trying to work this out. Believe me, this really was the judge that was held hostage. But we are beyond that now. We are working hard on an agreement, and that is going to happen.

That is all I would say to my colleague. I think he knows that.

Mr. BOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I would say simply that the effect of what has been done is to hold this bill hostage. I am not in here to fight about judges. I have had judges held up before. I sympathize with people who want to move things forward that are held up. I am simply pointing that out for whatever reason. I am not here to judge whether this judge may or may not be important in all the measures and all of the provisions that I have cited.

I want to call attention to everybody in this body the likely consequences of holding up this bill. It was held hostage last night, and until we hear differently, I regret that it apparently is being held hostage, and the consequences.

I yield the floor.

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, let me just take 1 minute, and then I will sit down.

The Senator from Missouri is fussing quite eloquently here about not getting his bill up and giving a lot of reasons. The objection this morning came from your side, not from this side. It came from your side to bringing things up over a bill that is in the House, not in the Senate.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Will the Senator yield? There has been no objection this morning. There has been no offer. There has been no objection. The objection was last night by the Senator from Minnesota on a judgeship.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I know what the objection would be. The reason it has been brought up is because there would be an objection, and the objection was made last night.

The finger pointing has gone too far here. I think we need to call a quorum, wipe the sweat off, and try to work things out instead of pointing fingers at each other. We are getting too harsh.

The majority leader is working hard, trying to make this thing work, and then we have people jumping up and down fussing back and forth. It is time it stopped. It is time it stopped.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. The Senator is correct. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. DORGAN. I want to make the same point. The Senator from Missouri makes an appropriate point about the urgency, and we need to move this legislation. I understand that. I accept that. I hope we can do that.

To suggest somehow that one Senator, the Senator from Minnesota, or anyone else in the Chamber is deliberately holding something hostage is not appropriate.

What has happened here is there are a series of issues that get done by consent and by agreement, and the majority leader and minority leader and others have worked hard to put these things together. Some of them become unraveled, and there are a number of reasons that they become unraveled.

The fact is when you start talking about taking hostages, if we wanted to spend some time we could talk about hostages here for a while, but I do not think it would serve your interests or mine. I just think it is not appropriate to suggest that the Senator from Minnesota or anyone else is holding up this bill. There is a whole series of things that have to be done by agreement here, and when they are done all these things are going to work and happen.

Again, I say that it is appropriate to talk about the urgency of this bill. I do not want to go back and talk about how this started, but I know how it started and so does the Senator from Missouri, and it needs to get unraveled, which includes a whole series of issues including this bill.

I appreciate the Senator yielding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise to raise the awareness of the Senate as to the importance of being able to pass the D.C. appropriations bill today.

The reason for that is that we have in this city a serious problem with the drinking water. And I will mention that in a little more detail in a moment. The bill is at the desk. It has passed the House. There is an appropriation in that bill to provide for immediate efforts to clean up the serious circumstances with the city's drinking water. I do not want to alarm anyone too much, but it is a health hazard to certain individuals who have immune problems as well as elderly people.

In order to correct it, it is going to take some effort from private contractors, and it is going to take funds in order to contract with respect to certain pumps that may be broken in the efforts to flush the pumps out.

In addition to that, we also have serious problems right now which need attention immediately, that is, we have public safety funds which have been increased in this bill. We have police cars right now on the blocks; we have fire engines in the shop and computer systems in chaos. There are funds in the bill which will allow us to do that and to get started immediately upon passage of the D.C. appropriations bill.

Let me read to you from the report on the drinking water matter so that everybody is fully aware of the situation the city finds itself in:

The conferees are deeply concerned about recent violations of Federal drinking water standards and continuing problems that beset the drinking water supply and the distribution systems in District of Columbia. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency recently completed a preliminary investigation of the water quality problems attributed to the District water distribution system and concluded that there is an urgent and immediate need for the District to implement steps to assure the integrity of drinking water quality in the District. Among the most important of these recommended actions is that the District hire a private contractor or contractors to flush the drinking water distribution system completely and to inspect and repair water valves. The conferees agree that there is a strong Federal interest in assuring that those who visit, live, and work in the Nation's Capital have safe drinking water. Accordingly, the conference agreement includes \$1 million in Federal funds for this purpose under Amendment No. 2. These funds are provided to the Financial Control Board to contract with a private entity or entities to conduct an inspection, the flushing and repair work recommended by the EPA. The conferees direct the Control Board to consult with the Department of Public Works, D.C. Water and Sewer Authority, and EPA in implementing this activity. Further, the conferees encourage the Control Board to move expeditiously to contract for the work in anticipation of the funds provided.

I just want to point out that if this bill passes, an immediate action will be taken to be able to correct the serious problems we have with the water in the city. So I hope that it would come to a point where we can pass that expeditiously today. The majority leader may or may not wish to call it up, but I want to let everyone know I am ready. It has passed the House. I want to assure all of the citizens of the District as well as those who visit us that we are doing everything possible and any delay would, again, impair the safety of certain individuals in the District, and I hope that does not occur.

In addition, we are ready to move on this, and it is important for the city to get into a position where they know where they stand. There are significant

differences that have been reconciled in favor of the city with respect to the amount of funds that will be available and to other matters.

So I am hopeful that we will be able to take this bill up. It is ready to go. We are ready to act on it now and we could have this down to the President for his signature this afternoon if and when it is brought up there is no objection, and I hope that would be the case.

Mr. President, I just hope that everybody is aware of the serious problem we are dealing with and that any attempt to forestall this would imperil people and I hope that will not occur.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BURNS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, last night the House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate the conference report on military construction, and that bill, too, is at the desk to be considered today. We have worked very, very hard with both sides of the aisle to work out our differences—and sometimes on the same side of the aisle.

I applaud my good friend from Vermont, with whom I used to serve on D.C. Appropriations, on the work they have done on the D.C. appropriations bill. And the work that Senator BOND has done in his committee as far as VA-HUD.

We have worked very hard, too, on the thrust of military construction in this particular year, not only dealing with less dollars but also dealing with some very important items which have always been put on the shelf. One of them is the environment because of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, and the other one is family housing and support services for families that serve this country on our posts around the world.

This bill provides the necessary funding for the planning, the design, the construction, the alteration, and the improvement of military facilities around the world, and included in that, of course, is the appropriation that keeps us strong, the NATO Security Investment Program. It also provides the funding to implement base closures and realignment as called for by law.

Again, let me emphasize that in this bill there is included child development centers. We worry about children. We hear speeches made about children. Repairs are needed also for the damage that was done by Hurricane Bertha. In this bill is funding for family support centers on our bases and environmental compliance projects. I think one of the most important parts of the funding in this bill is environmental cleanup when these bases are closed and, of course, taking new actions where active bases are still in operation; hospitals, public safety such as fire stations.

There is \$1.2 billion for the implementation of BRAC, \$4 billion for family housing. Out of a \$9 billion appropriation, \$4 billion will be spent on families and family housing to improve the life of our military people. Just to give you an idea on that: Yuma Marine Air Station in Yuma, AR; Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base, 202 units, spending \$29 million; Lenmoore Naval Air Station in California; Florida, Mayport Naval Station; in Hawaii, almost \$60 million being spent for family support and housing; in Maryland, just outside of Washington here, the Naval Testing Center at Patuxent River; Camp Lejeune, community centers; family centers in Texas, Corpus Christi Naval Complex; Kingsville Naval Air Station; in Virginia, Chesapeake, Wallops Island; State of Washington, at Bangor Naval Submarine Base, and Everett Naval Air Station, Puget Sound.

The list goes on of those projects that are started or being planned and started, and all of them in support of families that serve this country. One has to remember that they, too, have to live, and we have started a new project, the Secretary of Defense working with the corporate sector in partnership for private housing off base, which is a new approach. By the way, there is funding in the bill for his program. There is certain types of community impact assistance that has to be provided for our military who face the loss of a sale of private residences due to installation realignments and due to some closures.

So, Mr. President, that is what is in limbo here whenever we start talking about gumming up the process. Here is a bill that we have worked very hard to overcome the objections on both sides of the aisle, to make it through not only committee, subcommittee and full committee and, yes, on the floor to pass a bill, send it to the House and then conference and bring it back and it is ready to pass this body because the House passed it last night and it is ready to be sent to the President for his signature to implement what we think is very important in support of our military families around the globe.

So, I ask, if we could work out this so-called flap and get the process back on the move again, lay aside some of our emotions and do the right thing and allow us to bring the conference report of the military construction to this floor, pass it, and let us send it to the President.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I think we had some good discussion this morning and I believe we made some progress in talking to Senators on both sides of the aisle, working out problems.

I know several Senators are going to need an opportunity to talk to the minority leader. I know the minority whip will be doing that here in a few minutes. So, hopefully, after those conversations we can get an understanding of how we can move on these very important issues. So, at this time, rather than just keeping the Senate here, what I propose to do is to have the Senate stand in recess until 2:30 p.m., at which time I will again enter into a colloquy with the Senator from Texas and the Senator from New Jersey about how we will deal with the stalking issue and the Lautenberg amendment; and then I would move to get unanimous-consent agreement on Judge Montgomery; and then I would move the CFTC nominees, and then the military nominations, including the new Chief of Naval Operations, which is needed very badly to be on duty. Then I would move to take up the health care issue.

In the meantime, I understand there will be some efforts made to deal with the drug patent issue in a way that, hopefully, is acceptable. And then we would go to the small business tax relief and minimum wage issue, and the safe drinking water conference report; all three of those conference reports.

I would also go to the DOD authorization and I would—of course, we would need to talk to the minority leader about exactly how we deal with that.

I would also attempt to move the three noncontroversial, universally supported military construction appropriations, legislative appropriations and D.C. appropriations. If we could get those issues worked out and completed, we would have made tremendous achievement here today.

If at 2:30 we cannot get an agreement on these, or an agreement on a package of these items, it would be my intent to take the Senate out for the balance of the day and come back tomorrow morning. I see no sense in standing around here waiting or going in and out on recess. So we will have 2½ hours now in which we can consider the situation, decide if we want to pass health insurance reform that so many people labored so hard on, that every voting representative in the House but two voted for just yesterday, the small business tax relief, minimum wage—everybody wants to get this done—and the safe drinking water. Everybody wants these three bills done.

I understand the White House is very anxious for us to get that done. There is no reason why we should not do these three appropriations conference reports. So we will have some time here to work through that and have a chance to talk to the minority leader. I hope to hear from him in the next hour or two. And we will see if we can