

with him on that and some other matters. As I understand it from our discussion, we would be prepared to move the nomination of the judge, the CFTC nominees—two of those—and then go to the health insurance conference report.

Mr. DASCHLE. If the distinguished majority leader will yield, as I understand it, our staffs have discussed the matter and the way in which it would come up. There would be a correcting resolution that would be offered, and we would consider that, and it is my understanding that we would then hold the bill until the House has passed the correcting resolution. But in that time we could take up the other legislation as well.

Mr. LOTT. I think there may be a problem with that, but I would like to discuss that some more in a moment.

After that—after we work through however we are going to handle the health insurance conference report and get a time agreement, I presume—and some Senators want to be heard on that, like Senator DOMENICI and Senator WELLSTONE, and Senator SPECTER has an interest there, too—then we would go to the safe drinking water conference report, and small business tax relief, which includes the minimum wage conference report.

I think we do need to talk further about how to handle the health insurance conference report with regard to the Con. Res.

I would like to ask specifically about the military nominations. I understand there is a lengthy list of generals, colonels, majors, whatever, but most importantly, the Chief of Naval Operations. I understand there is a real need for that to be filled.

Mr. NUNN. And the space command general, also.

Mr. LOTT. I would be glad to yield to the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. NUNN. I was going to inquire about the nominations. I see the chairman of the Armed Services Committee on the floor. I know we would both want to inquire about whether we would have the chance to pass the defense authorization conference report, passed by the House last evening, which I believe the Senator from South Carolina believes we can pass within an hour, maybe a shorter time than that.

Mr. THURMOND. Madam President, the House passed the defense authorization bill yesterday in one hour. I think we can pass it here in one hour. All I ask is that my colleagues not object to bringing it up. This is a matter of deep concern to the whole Nation, to those in the service, and to the defense of our country.

We need to take this bill up and pass it. It has a lot of things in it that need to be acted upon. We also have some military nominations, uniform people. There is no reason in the world to hold them up. These are nonpartisan matters. They don't affect anybody personally, but they affect the whole Nation. I hope we can get this bill up, pass it briefly, and send it on to the President.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, does the Senator wish to respond on the possibility of getting these nominations considered this afternoon?

Mr. DASCHLE. Well, Mr. President, I would be happy to respond. We want very much to be able to clear the calendar of all nominations. We would like very much to deal with all of the military nominees and promotions. They are nonpolitical. The majority leader has pledged that for the entire month of July he would like to deal with the nonpolitical nominations on the judiciary as well. I am sure we can work out an arrangement whereby the military and judiciary—all the nonpolitical nominations—can be dealt with. I look forward to working with him and both of you to see that that happens this afternoon.

It is also my hope that we can deal with a number of conference reports. Our desire is to try to accelerate these considerations. An hour would work very fine with us. If we can work out an arrangement where that can be done, I look forward to taking that up today.

Mr. THURMOND. Since defense is a nonpartisan matter, and Senator NUNN, the ranking member of the committee, favors going ahead, and I as chairman favor going ahead, and it is purely nonpartisan—that is the way we handle defense, and that is the way it should be handled—why not take it up and pass it? We can get through with it in an hour.

Mr. DASCHLE. I agree.

Mr. THURMOND. Do you object to bringing it up? Don't put it in the category of other things. Keep defense as a nonpartisan matter. That is what we are trying to assure that ought to be done.

Mr. DASCHLE. That is right. We want to keep it nonpartisan.

Mr. THURMOND. Everything is not nonpartisan. This affects the whole Nation. This affects the defense of this country.

Mr. DASCHLE. I understand, and the chairman knows that better than anyone does. He has worked admirably to get to the point where consideration of the conference report could be taken up this afternoon in a nonpartisan way. Both the ranking member and the chairman have done an excellent job. But I must say we have worked together all month long on a whole range of bills. A lot of what we have done this month he has cooperated on. We have cooperated in a nonpartisan way in getting the defense bill to this point.

Mr. THURMOND. Please do not put defense in the group of these other things. This is nonpartisan. This is for the good of the whole Nation. Everybody feels defense is nonpartisan. Why not bring it up now? We could pass it in 1 hour.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, if the distinguished chairman of the committee will allow me, we will continue to work on that. I am very much committed to getting the defense author-

ization conference report considered. It should be done. I want to have it done. I cannot allow it to be tied to political judges.

I cannot help but smile when my distinguished colleague and good friend, the minority leader, refers to judges as nonpolitical. Give me a break. But we have worked together through thick and thin for the last month. We will keep doing that.

So let me try this for now. Perhaps we could go ahead and do the judge, the CFTC, and go ahead and go to the safe drinking water conference report, because everybody is for that. We can get started. And we will talk about these other two during that time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. LOTT. With that agreement then, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on the Executive Calendar: No. 512, the nomination of Ann Montgomery to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

Further, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination was considered and confirmed as follows:

THE JUDICIARY

Ann D. Montgomery, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to consider the following nominations on the Executive Calendar: Calendar Nos. 596 and 597, Brooksley Elizabeth Born to be chairman of the CFTC, and Calendar No. 598, David D. Spears to be a commissioner of the CFTC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senate proceeded to consider the nominations.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I just want to note here on that one that it has been pending for a long, long time. A lot of cooperation was involved in the CFTC. I am glad we finally have been able to work through the problems that we had.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements related to the nominations appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD, that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

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

The nominations were considered and confirmed as follows:

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Brooksley Elizabeth Born, of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the remainder of the term expiring April 13, 1999.

Brooksley Elizabeth Born, of the District of Columbia, to be Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

David D. Spears, of Kansas, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the term expiring April 13, 2000.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1996—CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to the conference report to accompany S. 1316, the safe drinking water bill, that the conference report be considered as having been read, and it be in order for me to order the yeas and nays on the adoption of the conference report at this time.

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

The report will be stated.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee on conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 1316) to reauthorize and amend title XIV of the Public Health Service Act (commonly known as the "Safe Drinking Water Act"), and for other purposes; having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of August 1, 1996.)

Mr. LOTT. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur on the adoption of the conference report at—

Mr. DASCHLE. If the majority leader will yield, I think we need to check with our colleagues for a brief period of time to determine the length of time that may be required to talk on this bill. I know of little opposition, if any, but I do know of a number of Senators who have expressed a desire to speak for the legislation. And so we would not be prepared to enter into a time agreement, but I do not think it will be that long.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, let me say then that the time for vote will be announced later on today after consultation between the minority leader

and myself, and I ask unanimous consent that whatever time is taken up, that it be equally divided between Senators CHAFEE and BAUCUS or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, while we are waiting for the managers of this bill to come to the floor, we will work on these other issues.

I am glad to yield to the Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Senator.

Madam President, I would like to thank the Chair, and I would like to thank the majority leader for discussions and bargaining in good faith. I very much appreciate the action taken. I thank you.

Mr. LOTT. I observe the absence of a quorum, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, could I ask what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The conference report on the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I am prepared to enter into a time agreement of 1 hour equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none. The agreement is 1 hour equally divided.

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I will control the time on our side.

I ask the Chair that I be notified when I have used 8 minutes of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COVERDELL). The Chair will notify the Senator when 8 minutes has expired.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with my colleagues in the Environment and Public Works Committee in bringing the conference report of the Safe Drinking Water Act before the Senate. The committee has been working on this since 1993, and our efforts have received broad, bipartisan support at every step. I particularly pay tribute to the ranking member of this committee, who was the chairman of it during the prior 2 years, the senior Senator from Montana, Senator BAUCUS. He has done an excellent job and has been a real stalwart in achieving reforms to the Safe Drinking Water Act. What we have before us is, to a considerable extent, based upon the fine work he did while he was chairman and the committee was under his guidance.

We all agree reform of the Safe Drinking Water Act is necessary. Public health has been strengthened, there is no question, over the standards that have been issued over the past several

years. But these new standards and new treatment have put a strain on the water suppliers. This bill includes many provisions to ease that burden.

What is in the bill? There is a drinking water revolving loan fund that the President first recommended. In addition to all that, the States are authorized to reduce monitoring costs by developing their own testing requirements. The States may grant variances to small systems that cannot afford to comply with the national standard. We are not rolling back any health protection that is now provided. No existing standard will be weakened.

In addition to the SRF grants, there are new programs to prevent pollution at the source. This program lets the cities and towns go to the headwaters and see if they cannot clean up the pollution there, rather than permitting the pollution to come down the river and then the city has to invest in a very, very expensive water purification plant. All of that makes sense.

The bill pushes hard for more and better science, including research programs to determine whether some groups, like children or pregnant women or people with particular illnesses, are likely to experience adverse affects from drinking water contaminants.

Before describing the major provisions in detail, I wish to thank our colleagues for the hard work they have done. Particularly, I thank Senator KEMPTHORNE, who was chairman of the subcommittee that dealt with this bill. Senator KEMPTHORNE, over many months with great patience and superb knowledge of this bill, brought forward this legislation which we now have before us, in essence. His efforts in behalf of State and local governments and others is widely recognized. The trust that Senator KEMPTHORNE had built up with local officials was, I believe, essential in achieving the compromise that is always necessary when you sign a bill into law.

Senator REID, the ranking member of that subcommittee, was a partner in that effort and did excellent work. I mentioned the fine work that Senator BAUCUS has done, and Senator WARNER, likewise, and others.

I also want to thank the House leadership that we worked with, Chairman BLILEY and Congressman DINGELL and WAXMAN and others who are, obviously, members of the conference committee.

We had help from the office of water at the EPA, including Bob Perciasepe, who heads the drinking water office.

Mr. President, if somebody were to ask what is the one thing we can do that will most improve the safety of drinking water in the United States, I think the answer would be help the small systems. There are 54,000 small drinking water systems in the United States, in trailer parks, in villages, in small communities. There are thousands of these systems that are operated by very small towns. Many of these very small systems do not have,