

chairman of the committee, and I anticipate the arrival very shortly of the distinguished Senator from Montana, the comanager of the bill.

Mr. President, at the conclusion of the session last night, the Senate gave unanimous consent to a list of amendments. They are printed in today's RECORD, and the managers are very anxious to work with Members to resolve these amendments. I think several of them can be accepted. At this time, I cannot predict whether or not there will be further rollcall votes other than final passage associated with this bill.

The leadership is quite anxious to finish this bill today, and I indicate to all Members a willingness to deal with these amendments, and I am hopeful that Members will shortly come to the floor to work with us.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I wish to echo what the distinguished Senator from Virginia has said. We are here to do business. The shop is open. If people have amendments, bring them on over. We are working on several now to resolve them. But others who have problems, now is the time.

The schedule is such that between now and 11:30 there is time for discussion and debate. There will be no votes before 11:30. At 11:30, we have a chance to vote. I would like to see us move to final passage and vote then. But if not, at 12 o'clock, we go back on the cloture motion. And the vote on that, as I understand, is at 2 o'clock. At the conclusion of that vote, if we have not finished this bill, we will be back on it again. But I know the leadership is very anxious to get this over with because there is a host of other measures with which they want to deal.

So I say to all within listening and viewing distance, come over, bring your amendments and let us dispose of them.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, for the ready reference of Senators, the list of amendments adopted by unanimous consent last night appears on page 2 of today's Calendar of Business.

Mr. President, seeing no Senator seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COVERDELL). The absence of a quorum having been suggested, the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning business for a period of not more than 10 minutes.

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

#### HELP FOR THE FARMERS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, during the most recent recess, I had the privilege

of meeting with 36 farmers, who make up an agriculture advisory board from across the State of Tennessee. We actually met in Knoxville, TN. The women and men on that board are real farmers, not just representatives of farmers, but people who personally earn their living on a farm.

One gentleman, exhausted from the dawn-to-dusk pace of a farm in early summer, told my staff quite candidly that he simply would not have time to meet with a Senator unless it turned out to be a rainy day. That kind of humble feedback is in itself an important reason for us in the U.S. Senate, as elected representatives, to go home and talk to real people. Some members of this agriculture board from the western part of my State could not join me at that meeting because that very day they were struggling with the floodwaters that were destroying and threatening to destroy their crops. Nothing—nothing—could have served to make the need for Federal disaster relief more concrete and more real for me than the voice of a good man on the phone near panic over the rising waters.

It was a fascinating day. When I had asked these 30 farmers to tell me what they would like their duly elected Senator to know today about agriculture, they were forthright and firm in their advice and their counsel. On two points they were very clear. Sam Worley of Hampshire, TN, said:

We want a smaller Federal Government that thinks not short term but long term.

He went on and expressed that they wanted to be treated fairly in the spending reductions that they expect and that they know are necessary for the long-term health of this country for that next generation.

These hard-working Tennesseans resent the media portraying them as parasites. They are willing to sacrifice, each and every one, as long as all Americans do, to balance the budget. They shuddered when I shared with them the fact that a child born today acquires an \$18,000 share in the Federal debt—a share of the Federal debt that they will be expected to pay the interest on over the course of a lifetime. They made it very clear to me that they are ready to do their part, as long as we do not try to balance the budget on the backs of the farmers.

What else did these men and women have to tell me? They are frustrated with the perverse incentives of our welfare system. Mike Vaught of Lacassas, TN, told me of being unable to find an overseer to live on his farm because he could not provide the cable TV that was available in the public housing just miles away. They are frustrated with the intrusive Federal agencies that often act at cross purposes with each other. The Environmental Protection Agency orders action that the Soil Conservation Service prohibits. Jimmy Shellabarger of Jackson, TN, told me that he is frustrated by the huge fines for minor infractions of complicated

rules. David Robinson of Jonesboro said,

We are tired of being held to expensive standards of production when our global competitors are allowed to ignore these same standards.

These farmers also asked for tax relief. This may surprise some of my colleagues across the aisle, but the tax relief that they asked me for, that they spoke about, was a cut in the capital gains tax rate. These are mainly middle-class Tennesseans. Some have experienced or been very close to bankruptcy, riding the roller coaster of commodity prices. But they fully understand what seems to elude so many of my colleagues, that a cut in the capital gains tax rate is critical to middle-income Americans; that it will stimulate the economy to the benefit of everyone in America.

In closing, I want to tell you what James Wooden of South Pittsburg, TN, said. He said, "I am going to talk to you just like we do under the shade tree." I will remember those words of James Wooden when the 700-page farm bill, full of Washington lingo, comes by my way. We all need to go out under the shade tree and listen to the people across this country and let the people, firsthand, tell us what they know.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. DOLE. Will the Senator withhold?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the majority leader.

#### NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM DESIGNATION ACT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, first I want to remind my colleagues the two managers are here on the highway bill and have been here since 9:30 and would very much like to complete action on this bill by noon today because at noon we have 2 hours of debate on the Foster nomination and then another vote. And then hopefully after that we would go to securities litigation legislation.

I have just talked with Virginia Senator, Senator WARNER. Maybe many of these amendments will never be called up, but it will be helpful if our colleagues on either side will let the managers know. If we are not going to call up the amendments or if you have an amendment, it would certainly be better to offer it at 10:30 in the morning rather than 10:30 tonight. The reason we are here every night until 10 o'clock, 11 o'clock, is because people will not cooperate during the daytime. They are the same ones who complain in the evening after 7 or 8 o'clock. So I would tell my colleagues, if you have an amendment, the managers are here.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if I might say to the distinguished leader, half of these amendments are not matters related to the bill. They are not matters either the Senator from Montana nor I can really settle out because