year is out to provide more help as we go through the conference.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I know there are a lot of Senators on their feet, and I am trying not to be here before I move for regular order. I am going to withhold so the Senator from North Dakota can comment and then the Senator from Georgia, and then I will ask for the regular order.

Mr. DORGAN. I do not intend to object. I have no quarrel with this provision that is being proposed tonight.

Mr. LOTT. Didn't I call the Senator and ask if there was a problem?

Mr. DORGAN. You did call within the last hour or so. I indicated to you there was no problem with this provision, and I do not object to this provision.

But I do want to make the point that the Senate has debated and passed an emergency provision calling for $500 million of indemnity payments. That is the only new money available. It is the only new money around in the appropriations process. If it is completed by October 1, then perhaps we may get money into the pockets of some farmers, which services could be provided a bit further in recent weeks. It may get money into the hands of some farmers, perhaps in October—unlikely—perhaps November, maybe December.

My proposition is that to the extent that we have already debated the subject, the Senate, by 99 to nothing, has said we have an emergency in farm country. They have already passed a $500 million indemnity payment program. It makes eminent good sense to me that we would be able to pass that indemnity program this evening and move it to the House. Does the House want to deal with it? I don't know. But they won't have an opportunity to deal with it in any timely way if we don't proceed.

I have no objection at all to what the Senator is requesting. I simply ask that he consider, and we consider, taking the $500 million we have already decided upon and see if we can't move that to the hands of family farmers, many of whom are desperately strapped for cash.

As soon as the Senator has completed getting his unanimous consent and as soon as I am able to get the floor, I intend to ask unanimous consent the Senate will proceed to the bill. The $500 million of agriculture indemnity payments, that was agreed to as an amendment to the agricultural appropriations bill, and the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

If someone objects to that, fine. But I hope they would not object to it. We will not object to this. I think this may help. I hope you will not object to that, because I know it will help. It would help in a more timely way than will be the case if we wait until after recess, and farmers have to wait until November or December. Perhaps we can help farmers to get some help from that provision earlier.

Mr. LOTT. I yield to the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I have just returned from a disaster area in our State. It is the most emotional difficulty, I believe, with which I have ever dealt. And I have dealt with a 1000-year flood and a 500-year flood. Back-to-back crises like this are enormous.

I heard the exchange between the majority and minority leaders. I understand the tensions of the day. I appreciate the minority leader, in deference to the issue involved, removing his right to object. I appreciate that.

That removal of an objection will lead to the movement and option of farmers, in many States, to relieve their cash flow problem. They have an equity problem. The proposal that the minority leader has mentioned, about the $500 million indemnity payments, is something for the broader issue. There are many issues we are going to have to deal with this crisis. That is one idea. It is probably not near enough. It wouldn't take care of Georgia, South Carolina, much less Alabama and Texas and the Midwestern States.

We do have a major issue in front of us dealing with food and fiber and the Nation's security. I hope we could proceed the evening with that which does not require new funds and it is simply a logistical and administrative decision that will move money more rapidly.

I say to the leader, I appreciate the chance to speak on this. Again, I thank the minority leader for removing his objection.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that any statement relating to the bill appear at the appropriations process. If it is completed by October 1, then perhaps we may get money into the pockets of some farmers, perhaps in October—unlikely—perhaps November, maybe December.

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Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives the House bill relative to H.R. 18, the text of which I send to the desk, the bill be deemed agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table. I further ask that if the text of the House-passed bill is not identical to the text just sent to the desk, then the House bill will be appropriately referred.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, there are objections on our side.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I believe we are ready to go to final passage of the defense bill.

Mr. STEVENS. I ask we proceed with the unanimous consent agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Shall the bill, H.R. 4103, as amended, pass? On this question, the yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HEMS) is absent because of illness.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HEMS) would vote "aye."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 252 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Mr. Abraham
Mr. Akaka
Mr. Allard
Mr. Ashcroft
Mr. Baucus
Mr. Bayh
Mr. Biden
Mr. Bingaman
Mr. Bond
Mr. Boxer
Mr. Breaux
Mr. Brownback
Mr. Bryan
Mr. Bumpers
Mr. Burns
Mr. Byrd
Mr. Campbell
Mr. Chafee
Mr. Cleland
Mr. Craig
Mr. Cochran
Mr. Collins
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Coverdale
Mr. Craig
Mr. D'Amato
Mr. Daschle
Mr. DeWine
Mr. Domenici
Mr. Dorgan
Mr. Durbin
Mr. Enzi
Mr. Feingold
Mr. Feingold
Mr. Frist
Mr. Gramm
Mr. Graham
Mr. Grassley
Mr. Gore
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hagel
Mr. Harkin
Mr. Hatch
Mr. Hollings
Mr. Hollings
Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Inhofe
Mr. Inouye
Mr. Jeffords
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Johnston
Mr. Kennedy
Mr. Kerrey
Mr. Klain
Mr. Kohl
Mr. Kyl
Mr. Landrieu
Mr. Leahy
Mr. Levin
Mr. Lieberman
Mr. Lott
Mr. Lott
Mr. McCain
Mr. McConnel
Mr. Mikulski
Mr. Moynihan
Mr. Murray
Mr. Nickles
Mr. Robb
Mr. Roberts
Mr. Rockefeller
Mr. Roth
Mr. Santorum
Mr. Sarbanes
Mr. Sessions
Mr. Shelby
Mr. Smith (OR)
Mr. Smith (NH)
Mr. Santorum
Mr. Santorum
Mr. Smith (NH)
Mr. Smith (OR)
Mr. Snowe
Mr. Specter
Mr. Stevens
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Thompson
Mr. Thurmond
Mr. Voinovich
Mr. Warner
Mr. Wyden
Mr. Yeager

NOT VOTING—1

Mr. Byrd

The bill (H.R. 4103), as amended, was passed.
Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as I indicated to the majority leader, it is my intent to ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the bill which provides $500 million in agricultural indemnity payments which was agreed to as an amendment to the agricultural appropriations bill, and the bill be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

Mr. GREGG. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I heard on the other side of the aisle a chorus of “I object.” I am not quite sure why.

I was on a show this morning, WCCO Radio, in Minnesota. It is hard to explain to farmers why we can't take the action right now on the indemnity payment, the $500 million. We passed it. The correction would be made later on, but we can get assistance to farmers right now.

Why can't we send this over to the House? I say to my colleagues.

Mr. CRAIG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. WELLSTONE. I am pleased to yield.

Mr. CRAIG. I helped craft that indemnity payment. It is very important we do work with the House. Senator CONRAD, I, and others, deserve to go to conference. Senator DORGAN was a part of that.

I can understand a rush to immediacy. That is in the next fiscal cycle. I think it is important we deal with it in a fair and balanced way. As it is written, already the circumstances of agriculture have changed significantly enough. We deserve to look at it in a broader spectrum.

We, the Senate, tonight acted to bring some immediacy to the difficulty you are expressing. There may be more to be done in the coming weeks as this whole difficulty with production agriculture can increase across the country and we appreciate the effort we are making.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, let the Record show I am speaking for myself, but let the Record show that there was no objection to moving forward on advance payments for this “freedom to fail” bill, which is just an admission what an awful piece of legislation it was on our side. In addition, we could have gotten a $500 million indemnity payment out to farmers.

People are asking, when are we going to see this? People are talking about a lifetime of 2 months or 3 months.

I hear this discussion that we need to take a broader view, it needs to go over to the House. If we are going to work it in the conference committee, we have not had a chance to meet yet in conference committee. Do you know how ridiculous that sounds to the people whom we represent?

Mr. President, I will just say I don't think it is just that simple. Obviously, I am not going to change the course of events tonight.

My colleague from Iowa came out here earlier and spoke about this. First, the minority leader asked whether or not we would have unanimous consent to get this indemnity payment out to the countryside, out to families in rural America. Then the Senator from Iowa spoke about it. Then the Senator from North Dakota, certainly, that same effort made tonight to get some additional help to people above and beyond the current payment, which will help only a little.

It is a desperate situation. Many people are going to go under this spring. There is an effort tonight to get $500 million passed, over to the House, and out to farmers all across the country to know that there was an effort made tonight to get some additional help to people above and beyond these advance payments, which will help only a little.

Mr. DORGAN. Almost a month ago.

Mr. WELLSTONE. About a month ago. We get this last out now, over to the House of Representatives; they take action this week or next week, and then we get the assistance out to farmers.

And what I hear on this side is this chorus of “No.” And then everyone leaves. With all due respect, it is not that simple. I want the farmers in Minnesota and everywhere to know there is a帮助 gets assistance into the pocket of family farmers, I am for that. So I don't object to that. I told folks this evening I wouldn't object to that.

But, this is not new money at all. This is just a payment that they are supposed to get later on. Now, they missed this payment earlier or at least they will have the option to get it earlier.

I was thinking about the farmer who testified yesterday at our farm policy hearing. This was young fellow from South Dakota who testified. When he talked about putting the crop in this spring, he could barely continue. His chin was quivering, and he had tears in his eyes. He talked about having to find something on his farm to sell in order to get the money. We certainly put it in his pocket. Then things were not good for him and he was out of money again. He had to sell some of the feed for his cattle that he put aside for this winter. He