

move to the bill if we could have a full debate on bankruptcy and relevant amendments to that. We could probably even work out an agreement that would include consideration of the small businessman's and small businesswoman's needs, and minimum wage needs. But I do not think it is fair the bankruptcy reform legislation, which should be considered in and of and by itself, should become an out-basket for every amendment to be offered on every subject that has already, in many instances, been considered this year, and that it become a Christmas tree for all kinds of unrelated amendments.

That is why I moved to a cloture vote because I wanted to get up bankruptcy reform. I would like to go to that. I will be glad to work out some sort of agreement as to how that bill will be considered. But I do not think we have the time right now, with the appropriations bills we have to complete before the end of the fiscal year. Hopefully, the last one, the 13th one, will be up—it will be up on Wednesday. We will be on that bill until we complete it. Hopefully, we will complete it by midnight on Thursday night, which would be the 13th bill. It would be only about the third time in the last 15 or 20 years we will have passed all appropriations bills through the Senate by the end of the fiscal year.

So that has been our focus. We have been focusing on the appropriations bills. We will have a conference report in the morning we will need to vote on, the Energy and Water appropriations bill. We will continue to move those bills and the conference reports through. When we get through with that process, then we will look back to what the legislative schedule is going to be. I hope we can come to agreement on how that would be considered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Just further reserving the right to object, of course, we did not give a clear indication whether we would have the opportunity to vote on an increase in the minimum wage. We have seen Members vote for an increase in their own pay, their salaries, for some \$4,400. We have doubled the President's salary. We voted for an increase for the military, which I strongly support, and also for Government employees.

I wonder when we will be able to enter into some kind of agreement on the minimum wage. I do not think it will take a great deal of time. We will be glad to do it of an evening, if it would be more convenient for the leadership, working out the schedule. But we have not had the opportunity for the Senate to express its will. We would like to at least get some indication from the leader as to when we might be able to do this, since the days are moving along and still many workers, who are working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, have not partici-

pated in the very substantial economic progress and are looking to the Senate to see whether we will address this issue.

Can the leader help us at all, in terms of indicating when we might have some chance to address that?

Mr. LOTT. I can't at this time because we must focus on the appropriations bills through the remainder of this week. I will need to discuss this with Senator DASCHLE and Senator KENNEDY and see if we can come up with a way we can handle that issue without it opening up the door to all kinds of other issues that, in many instances, for instance, we may have already considered in the Senate.

Having said that, whatever we do, I want to make sure we do it in such a way that entry-level workers, people who do come into restaurants and other small businesses, don't wind up losing their jobs. That is important to them. Also, that we do not wind up doing it in such a way that small businessmen and small businesswomen cannot continue to stay in business.

So I think we have to find a way to offset the costs, particularly for small businessmen and small businesswomen who are working on a very small margin of profit. I know I have heard from some. I remember one lady in particular, outside of Atlanta—I think maybe in Marietta—who had a sweet shop. She basically said: If you do this again without some sort of offsets, I cannot make up the difference anymore myself.

So we have to make sure it is a balanced approach when we do consider this and however we consider it.

However, the answer to your question is any time you and Senator DASCHLE want to sit down and seriously discuss a way to get this done, I will be ready to do it, once we get through the appropriations process, which will be done, hopefully, at the end of this week.

Mr. KENNEDY. I have no objection.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ANNIVERSARY OF SUBMISSION OF COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY TO SENATE FOR RATIFICATION

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, as many of my colleagues know, September 23rd was the 2-year anniversary of submission of the Comprehensive

Test Ban Treaty to the US Senate for ratification.

Both Republican and Democratic presidents over the span of 4 decades have worked to enhance our national security by negotiating limits on nuclear testing. Progress has been slow and halting, but the inescapable logic of improving security by banning nuclear tests has prevailed. The successful negotiation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, signed by 152 countries, was the culmination of these decades of effort on the part of the United States. Ratification and entry into force of this treaty is in our best interest and in the best interest of nuclear non-proliferation and international stability.

Mr. President, I have urged the Committee on Foreign Relations to hold hearings on this treaty. I know the Chairman has concerns about the treaty. I hope he will air them in a forum that will allow discussion of his concerns and those of other Members of the Committee. And I urge the Majority Leader to bring this treaty to the Senate floor. Time is of the essence on this matter. America has been the world leader on this issue and was the primary architect of this treaty. We have an obligation to take up this treaty in the Senate, to educate ourselves on its provisions and to debate the merits of its ratification. The eyes of the world are on our actions as the 44 countries who have ratified the treaty prepare to meet on October 6th in Vienna, Austria, to discuss implementation of the treaty. I would vastly prefer that the United States were sitting as a party at that meeting. But at a minimum, we should use this opportunity to make progress on the treaty here in the Senate.

We have an obligation to future generations to improve the national security of our nation. It would be irresponsible of us to let slip out of our grasp a very important tool in the fight against nuclear proliferation.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, September 24, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,638,915,059,997.81 (Five trillion, six hundred thirty-eight billion, nine hundred fifteen million, fifty-nine thousand, nine hundred ninety-seven dollars and eighty-one cents).

One year ago, September 24, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,523,268,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-three billion, two hundred sixty-eight million).

Fifteen years ago, September 24, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,566,734,000,000 (One trillion, five hundred sixty-six billion, seven hundred thirty-four million).

Twenty-five years ago, September 24, 1974, the Federal debt stood at

\$480,939,000,000 (Four hundred eighty billion, nine hundred thirty-nine million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,157,976,059,997.81 (Five trillion, one hundred fifty-seven billion, nine hundred seventy-six million, fifty-nine thousand, nine hundred ninety-seven dollars and eighty-one cents) during the past 25 years.

THE VA/HUD APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to express my support for the amendment offered last Friday by Senator KERRY to fund 50,000 new Section 8 vouchers. Had the Senate voted on this amendment, I would have voted in favor of it. I am pleased that Senator MIKULSKI and others have committed to work on this issue in conference.

The Kerry amendment is particularly important to my home state in light of the current affordable housing crisis in California. Eleven of the twenty-five least affordable metropolitan areas are located in California. The homeownership rate is 47th among the 50 states. More than one-third of homeowners and one-half of renters pay more than thirty percent of their income for housing in California. On average, it takes more than three years to receive a Section 8 voucher in California. In Los Angeles, approximately 8,000 families are currently on the Section 8 waiting list and it can take as long as eight years to get a voucher. That is just too long for a family to wait for affordable housing.

It is clear that in California, and indeed throughout the country, there is a definite need for further housing assistance.

Section 8 housing assistance serves the poorest of the poor, persons with incomes averaging approximately \$7,500 per year. Last year, Congress made available almost 100,000 new Section 8 vouchers. No new vouchers had been made available in the past five years. That was an important first step—but it is time to do more. In my own state of California, almost 13,000 families would receive Section 8 assistance under the Kerry amendment.

Our economy is booming: unemployment is at historically low levels, nearly 18 million jobs have been created since 1993, and the inflation rate has averaged just 2.5 percent since 1993—the lowest rate since the Kennedy Administration.

In these economic good times, however, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. We must continue to assure that everyone in this country has affordable housing.

I urge my colleagues on the conference committee to provide additional Section 8 vouchers to America's families in need of housing assistance.

Mr. President, I also want to talk about the provision in this bill that

would eliminate HUD's Community Builder program.

Community Builders act as liaison between HUD and local governments and non-profit organizations. They help local authorities identify the programs in HUD that best serve the needs of their neighborhoods.

Many experts have affirmed that HUD is becoming the model of reinvention. I believe that HUD's Community Builder program has been a key component of HUD's reinvention efforts.

The Community Builder program is working. Ernst & Young's initial audit found that the Builders are knowledgeable about HUD programs, are making customer service more efficient, assisting communities, and using their expertise to make government work better. A similar survey by Andersen Consulting found that "Community Builders have had a positive effect on the ability of [HUD] customers . . . to conduct business."—and recommended an expansion of the Community Builder program to cover more communities. In addition, I have received numerous letters from elected officials and non-profit organizations throughout California expressing support for the Community Builder program.

Approximately twenty HUD offices would be forced to close if the Community Builder program were eliminated—including one in Fresno, California.

I ask that my colleagues on the conference committee work together to find funding for this important program.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE NATIONAL UNION FOR THE TOTAL INDEPENDENCE OF ANGOLA (UNITA)—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 61

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 27, 1999.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:14 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1487. An act to provide for public participation in the declaration of national monuments under the Act popularly known as the Antiquities Act of 1906.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1487. An act to provide for public participation in the declaration of national monuments under the Act popularly known as the Antiquities Act of 1906; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on September 23, 1999, he had presented to the President of the United States, the following enrolled bill:

S. 1059. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2000 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-5365. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dudin v. Commissioner" (99 T.C. 325 (1992)), received September 23, 1999; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5366. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "James J. and Sandra A. Gales v. Commissioner" (T.C. Memo 1999-27), received September 23, 1999; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5367. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service,