

Mr. BYRD. I think we are ships going past one another in the dark, the Senator and I, on this. I am for having full debate, having Senators offer their amendments. Whether or not bills sent to the President are clean, to me, I think, is not a matter of great import. I think the framers contemplated that each House, the House in the beginning on revenue bills and then the Senate on revenue bills by amendment and the House and Senate on other bills, sometimes one House would go first, sometimes the other House would go first except on revenue bills, by practice, appropriations bills.

To me, in the legislative process, the people are getting their just rights, the people are getting what they are entitled to, and the Republic will flourish and the liberties of the people will endure if Senators have an opportunity to debate fully—disagree, agree, offer amendments, have them tabled, have them voted up or down. This Republic will be in a much safer position and in a much better condition if the Senate is allowed to be what the Senate was intended to be by the framers.

I hope the Senator will join with me in protecting this Senate and in doing so will protect the liberties of the people. Protect the Senate. Forget about party once in a while. George Washington warned us against factions and about parties. I have never been such a great party man myself, and the Senator will not find me criticizing the “other side” very often, or the “Republicans” very often. I can do that and have been known to do it, but there are other things more important, and the Senate is one of the other things that is more important. We are talking about the Senate. We are talking about the cornerstone of the Republic. As long as we have freedom to debate in the Senate and freedom to amend, the people’s liberties will be secured. I thank the Senator.

Mr. CRAIG. I thank the Senator for yielding.

Mr. BYRD. I yield the floor.

NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question now pending is the motion to proceed to S. 2557.

The Senator from North Dakota.

SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I was listening to the discussion among my colleagues, Senator CRAIG, Senator BYRD, and Senator DASCHLE was here earlier. I thought it would be useful to discuss the concept that has been discussed. In the end, it does not matter what is said one way or the other about who is at fault for this or for delaying that. The question people ask at the

end of a legislative session is, Are things a little better in this country because those folks met and discussed things in the United States, what works, what does not, what we can do and cannot do?

If the answer to that is yes, none of this matters much. But the Senator from West Virginia, in responding to some discussions earlier by the Senator from Idaho, makes a very interesting point. I have not been here nearly as long as the Senator from West Virginia has been.

This is a calendar which shows this year, the year 2000. The red days on this calendar are the days the Senate was not in session. We will see the Senate was not in session a fair part of the year. In fact, another chart will show the number of days we have been in session. It is now the end of September, and we have been in session 115 days out of all of this year. Of those 115 days we were in session, on 34 of them, there were no votes at all. So we have been in session 115 days, but on 34 of those days, there have been no votes.

There have been only two Mondays in this entire year in which the Senate has voted, and if I may continue with this chart presentation, there have been only six Fridays in all of this year on which the Senate has voted. Out of 13 appropriations bills, only two have been signed into law by the President. In the month of September, when we must try to finish the remaining 11 appropriations bills, we have not had any votes on Mondays, except for possibly today if we have a vote later today. And there have been no votes on Fridays in the month of September.

I thought it would be useful to describe what is going on here. Let me read this statement from my friend and colleague, the Senate majority leader, earlier in the year. He said:

We were out of town two months and our approval rating went up 11 points. I think I’ve got this thing figured out.

I know Senator LOTT wants this place to work and work well. I mentioned the other day to Senator LOTT that there is a television commercial about these grizzled, leather-faced cowboys on horseback herding cats. It is actually a funny commercial because they even get those cats in a river and try to move them across the river. These big cowboys with these leather coats, the big dusters they wear for storms, are holding these little stray cats.

I said to the Senate majority leader: That reminds me a little perhaps of the job you and others have of keeping things moving around here.

The Senator from West Virginia makes a very important point, and I want to outline it. We have had plenty of time to get to work to pass this legislation. We just have not been in session in the Senate much of the year. Frankly, most people run for the privi-

lege of serving in the Senate because they have an agenda, too, and they want to offer amendments. They want to offer ideas that come from their constituencies that say: Here is what we think should be done to improve life in this country; here is what we think should be done to deal with education, health care, crime, and a whole range of issues.

When there are circumstances like we have seen this year where legislation does not even, in some cases, come to the floor of the Senate, but instead goes right to conference, it says to Senators: You have no right to offer any amendments. That does not make sense.

The reason I came over, I say to the Senator from West Virginia, is that I heard the discussion by my colleague from Idaho saying Senator DASCHLE is to blame for all of this. Nonsense. Winston Churchill used to say the greatest thrill in the world is to be shot at and missed. The Senator from Idaho has just given all of us a thrill. But Senator DASCHLE is at fault?

Senator DASCHLE does not schedule this Senate. We are not in charge. I wish we were, but we are not in charge. We are the minority party, not the majority party. I hope that will change very soon.

What Senator DASCHLE said is clear. In fact, he said it again last week: If I had been majority leader, and I am not, today would be a day in which we take up an appropriations bill and we would be in session until we finish that bill and everybody has a chance to offer amendments. If it takes 24 hours, then we will not get a lot of sleep, but we will finish that bill.

Senator DASCHLE said: My preference is to take these bills up individually. I would be willing to do an appropriations bill a day—long days, sure; tough days, absolutely. But he said let’s do them. Bring them to the floor. Open them up for amendment. Let’s have debates, offer amendments, and then let’s vote. Democracy, after all, is about voting. It is not always convenient.

The Senator from West Virginia had a reputation for not always making it very convenient for people because he has insisted that appropriations bills be brought to the Senate floor and that they be debated fully and that everybody have the opportunity to bring their amendments to the floor of the Senate, have a debate, and then have a vote.

Again, sometimes that is difficult. People want to be here and there and everywhere else on Fridays and Mondays and parts of the week. But the fact is, we are now in September, towards the end of the month, and 11 of the 13 appropriations bills are not yet signed. I am a conferee on at least two of them for which no conference has been held.

I might mention to the Senator from West Virginia, I think perhaps you