

Navy. Senator ROBB was always there to work with not only me but a strong bipartisan Virginia congressional delegation, Senate and House, on matters of national defense since our State is privileged to be preeminent in the field of national defense, having a number of the major bases and a number of men and women in uniform who are stationed there. Of course, the Pentagon is the core of this complex throughout Virginia. But there was Senator ROBB on all occasions, and particularly as it related to our naval shipbuilding program.

I am joined on the floor today by two very able members of my staff. Ann Loomis is the chief of our legislative staff; Susan Magill, with whom I consulted early this morning in preparing these remarks, is my chief of staff. They would want it known that, through the years, the staff working relationship between Senator ROBB's office and my office was always excellent. We looked upon our duties as serving the Commonwealth of Virginia and the people of that State; therefore, our staffs did everything they could to prepare the two Senators to meet that challenge and that responsibility.

He is a man of principle. I think that is unquestioned by those of us who watched him. Indeed, at times we differed on very fundamental policy issues, and that is reflected in our voting records. But he was always a man of principle and he stood by those principles. As I listened to him, my reaction sometimes bordered on disbelief because I so disagreed with him, but he stood by those principles no matter what the cost to his professional career as a public servant. He stood by what he believed.

So I say to my good friend, I shall remember him in many ways but above all for his friendship and his always senatorial courtesy. As we laugh around here and joke: The title senior Senator and perhaps a dollar or so will get you a cup of coffee. But he never tried one-upmanship and he always addressed me as his senior in the Senate. I thank him. I wish him and his family well in their next career. I am confident there are many challenges that await this distinguished American public servant.

I note my distinguished friend from Pennsylvania is on the floor. I yield the floor at this time, and I thank the Chair for his indulgence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

SENATOR ROBB

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I commend my distinguished colleague from Virginia for those fine remarks about Senator ROBB. I associate myself with Senator WARNER on his best wishes to Senator ROBB, acknowledging his very distinguished service in the Senate for

12 years. I might add, his distinguished wife, Lynda Johnson Robb, was a regular at the Old Testament Bible class conducted in my office over the past decade, presided over by a very distinguished Biblical scholar, Naomi Rosenblatt. But CHUCK and Lynda Robb will still be around and we will have the benefit of their company, although his Senate career, at least, is over at the moment.

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to comment about the pending appropriations bill on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, which comes from the appropriations subcommittee which I chair. There has been an extraordinarily rocky road for this bill this year. I think it is very regrettable that on December 15 we are still debating that bill and the entire package is as yet unsettled, although hopefully it will be resolved before the end of the day. But there have been many days when we have been hopeful about resolving matters before the end of the day and that has not occurred.

Without going into the background on prior years, it has been a very difficult matter to get the bill on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education to the President for signature and to resolve the controversies. This year, my ranking member on the subcommittee, Senator TOM HARKIN, and I have worked as partners on this matter. When he chaired the subcommittee, I was ranking, or when I have chaired the subcommittee, he has been ranking. Both of us understand—and have for a long time—that if you want to get something done in Washington, you have to cross party lines. That is more true today than ever. It will be even more true in the 107th Congress when we have a 50-50 split.

But we brought that bill to conclusion on the Senate vote on June 30 of this year, which tied the record going back to 1976. We completed a conference report on July 27, the last Thursday before we adjourned for the Republican convention and the August recess. We did that with a lot of extra effort, hard work by our staffs led by Bettilou Taylor on my staff, so we could get the bill to the President right after Labor Day. There is no use sending it in August, but we were prepared to submit it to the President the day after Labor Day.

We had met the President's figure of \$106 billion, which was a \$10 billion increase over the program authority from last year. We did that because the experience in the past had been that when we quarreled with the President about the total figure, invariably there were add-ons at the end when the issue went beyond September 30 into October or November.

Candidly, it was difficult to get the Republican caucus to agree to \$106 billion in the Senate and in the House, but we did that. But in presenting the bill, the conference report, we had some priorities which were somewhat different from those of the President. We had, for example, added \$2.7 billion for the National Institutes of Health because we thought that was a very high priority item. We had also made some changes on the \$2.7 billion which the President had requested for school construction and additional teachers, giving him that money but adding a provision that if the local boards of education wanted to use the money for something else after fulfilling very stringent requirements, that they could use it for local control.

When we sat down to negotiate with the White House, the President and the Democrats in the House upped the ante and asked for an additional \$6 billion. From my way of thinking, that was totally unacceptable because we had provided the \$106 billion which the President had initially requested. After all, it is the congressional prerogative to set the priorities on appropriations. That is spelled out in the Constitution. The President has to sign the bill but we have the lion's share of responsibility, in my view, to establish the priorities.

Those negotiations degenerated—at least in my opinion—until there was an inclination by some in the conference to pay \$114 billion. I refused to be a party to that amount of money because I had fought hard to raise the figure to \$106 billion and I felt there would be no credibility in what I would present as chairman of the subcommittee if I would be a will-o'-the-wisp and raise it to any figure to satisfy the demands of the White House and the House Democrats. There was a tentative agreement of \$114 billion and I declined to sign any conference report which reflected that figure.

Ultimately that arrangement broke down. Now we have come to the point where the negotiations have produced a figure of \$108.9 billion, which is still more than the \$106 billion we had originally projected, but in the spirit of accommodation, trying to finish the business of the Congress, I am prepared to go along with that figure although very reluctantly.

There have been changes in the bill which I find totally unacceptable. The National Institutes of Health has had an increase of \$2.7 billion over fiscal year 2000, which had been in all along, now cut by \$200 million to \$2.5 billion. I believe that the National Institutes of Health is the crown jewel of the Federal Government. It may be the only jewel of the Federal Government. We have added almost \$9 billion to the funding on NIH in the last five cycles. The Senate, in one of the first years under my chairmanship, came in at the