

this afternoon whether we can finish tonight or we will go over to tomorrow. I think we need to go ahead and tell our colleagues they should plan on being in and having votes in the morning because at this point, with some 60 amendments pending, I do not see how we can finish it tonight by any kind of reasonable hour.

I will stay in touch with Senator DOMENICI and Senator LAUTENBERG, the floor managers, and Senator REID and Senator NICKLES on our side, to assess the additional time that might be needed. Senators should adjust their schedules accordingly.

I know there is an event tonight, a dinner. But we can finish tonight or we can finish tomorrow, or whatever it takes. We have to complete our work. There are only about 8½ hours remaining of time, so we should be able to finish that all right today. The remainder of the time will be determined by how many amendments we have remaining.

I will be glad to yield to Senator DOMENICI.

Mr. DOMENICI. Let me just verify, as the one who is working with these amendments, Senators should not assume it is very likely that we finish tonight. I reported that to the leader earlier this morning. I do not know how many amendments are pending on the other side. We are working with our people who have about 31 amendments, most of them sense-of-the-Senate amendments. I will give my colleague that list soon and see if he can help us. I will work at it and talk some Senators into understanding they would not have to offer them; they could offer them some other time when the Senate is considering another matter.

If you just look at 8½ hours plus whatever it is going to take for half those amendments in vote-arama, I assume we will be in tomorrow.

Mr. LOTT. I have been urging Senators, and I know Senator DASCHLE has also, to prepare to be in session on this Friday, knowing the budget resolution was headed for this date for at least a couple of weeks. So we should proceed with that in mind. If we get a lot of cooperation and something could be worked out, that would be different, but I do not see how we can predict anything at this point but having votes on Friday morning.

I yield the floor.

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#### RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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#### FISCAL YEAR 2001 BUDGET— Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 101, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 101) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 and revising the budgetary levels for fiscal year 2000.

Pending:

Stevens amendment No. 2931, to strike certain provisions relating to emergency designation spending point of order.

Stevens amendment No. 2932, to strike certain provisions to congressional firewall for defense and nondefense spending.

Byrd/Warner amendment No. 2943, to express the sense of the Senate on the continued use of Federal fuel taxes for the construction and rehabilitation of our Nation's highways, bridges, and transit systems.

Roth amendment No. 2955, to strike the revenue assumption for Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) receipts in fiscal year 2005.

Robb amendment No. 2965, to reduce revenue cuts by \$5.9 billion over the next 5 years to help fund school modernization projects.

Durbin amendment No. 2953, to provide for debt reduction and to protect the Social Security trust fund.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2953

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending amendment is the Durbin amendment, amendment No. 2953. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. The minority yields 20 minutes off the resolution to the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized for 20 minutes, with the time coming off the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator REID and Senator LAUTENBERG for yielding me this time.

The amendment I have offered is a straightforward opportunity for Members of the Senate to go on record in reference to the proposed tax cut by George W. Bush, the nominal candidate for President on the Republican side.

The reason I am offering this amendment is I believe it offers a clear choice to the Members of the Senate and certainly to the people of this Nation. Every one of us understands we have been going through a period of unprecedented prosperity in America. In fact, I believe we have set records in terms of the period of economic growth without recession. This is not an accident. It is by design of an administration that has been determined to continue to bring Federal spending under control, to keep interest rates manageable, and to encourage growth in the economy. This policy of the administration is complemented by the policies of the Federal Reserve Board under Chairman Alan Greenspan.

We are now at an unusual point in our history where we are considering the possibility of surpluses. That is something that would have been unthinkable a few years ago in Washington when we were drowning in red ink with deficit after deficit piling on to our national debt. It reached such a point of desperation that a proposal

was made in the Congress to amend the Constitution of the United States and give to the Federal judiciary the power to rein in the spending of Congress.

It was an unprecedented transfer of power to the judiciary away from the legislative branch of Government. Some people were so despondent and so desperate, they were prepared to back such a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. It is hard to imagine that was only about 4 years ago.

Today in the course of debating the budget resolution, our focus is the use of the surplus, the revenues we will generate from our economy far and above what is necessary for the needs of Government and current programs. There is a difference of opinion about what to do with this surplus.

On the Democratic side, we believe the first priority should be the reduction of our national debt. We collect each day in America \$1 billion in taxes from individuals, businesses, and families, and that money is used for the sole purpose of paying interest on our national debt. That \$1 billion does not educate a child; it does not build a road; it does not make America any safer. It pays interest on debt, a debt primarily held by foreign bond holders.

We believe on the Democratic side that our first priority should be to bring down this debt and reduce these interest costs so we can say to our children: You are not going to inherit our mortgage, a mortgage which we incurred for our needs in our generation. We are going to give you a better chance to build your America in the vision of your future instead of being saddled with our old debt.

That is the highest priority on the Democratic side, and my colleagues will hear it expounded by the Democratic leader, Senator LAUTENBERG, when he offers his Democratic alternative to the budget.

The way we reduce this debt is by investing money in Social Security so that system will be available for seniors and the disabled for decades to come and also, of course, and by investing in Medicare. Medicare is a word which many people in this Chamber fear to use. They are afraid on the other side of the aisle to even make reference to Medicare and its future. But for 40 million-plus Americans, Medicare is an important word in their everyday life. That Medicare system provides health insurance for the elderly and disabled of America. It has been, frankly, one of the most successful programs in the modern era because it represents a commitment by the Federal Government that no one, when they have reached a certain age, will go wanting when it comes to quality health care, and it has worked.

In the 40 years since the institution of Medicare, our seniors have lived longer; they have had a better life; they are more independent; they are