

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Democratic leader is recognized.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I know we are about to go out. Before we do, I wanted to call attention to the fact that I wish we could have taken up the ESEA bill again this afternoon. The fact is that we have amendments that could have been offered on either side. We have indicated a willingness to even offer time agreements on virtually all amendments. There are a number of amendments that are pending. We are told that we just do not have time on the schedule to revisit ESEA this week. I really question that. The fact is that we have been in morning business all afternoon. We are not going to be in session tomorrow. We will be in debate only scheduled on Monday for the military construction bill. We are not overworked here.

It seems to me that on an issue as important as ESEA needs to be addressed. The fact is, it should have been reauthorized last year. It wasn't. It needs to be reauthorized this year.

We have fewer than 40 legislative days left between now and the time that we are scheduled to adjourn. With appropriations bills, the China debate, and a number of other issues unfinished—bankruptcy we hope, and other issues—there is very little time.

So it seems to me that we ought to be using what time we have available to us to our best advantage. Being in morning business for most of the day is not my concept of utilization of time in an appropriate way.

Again, I express the regret that we haven't had more of a chance this week to deal with this very, very critical bill. The education bill ought to be finished. We worked on it in a very constructive way, I have felt. There has been progress—limited, but, nonetheless, progress. We could have had a lot more progress. There is no reason why we can't finish this bill. There is no reason why we couldn't have done another bloc of amendments today and some amendments tomorrow. In fact, I think maybe we could have finished the bill this week. That is now impossible. And there is no prospect of bringing the bill up at least for the foreseeable future, given what the majority leader has indicated is his intention with regard to appropriations bills. I am troubled and disappointed by that.

I make note of that as we end the day today. Hopefully, we will have more productive weeks and more opportunities to debate this issue. But time is going by quickly. We don't have that much more time. I hope we can better use the time we have.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. I have had the privilege for the last hour of sitting in that chair and hearing our colleagues debate the issue of NATO and our place in Europe and the broader national security issues and the specific issue of whether or not we should remain in Kosovo. It is entirely appropriate that this body debate this issue. No one should criticize any Senator for bringing that up or for crafting a piece of legislation designed to focus this Government on an exit strategy. Everyone knows we need one.

I add my voice to that of Senator LUGAR, Senator LEVIN, and others, who have expressed concern that while it is appropriate to debate, it is not appropriate to leave at this moment. I wish I could say it is time to leave, but I believe America still has a place in Europe. I believe if we set in motion the wheels to leave Kosovo, we will set in motion the mechanism to decouple the United States and NATO with Europe. I think we need to be very thoughtful about that.

I wish Mr. Putin and the new Russian Federation well, and I hope they join the democratic nations of Europe. I hope we can include them in more ways than ever imaginable throughout all of my lifetime. But I think the jury is still out. I hear from their neighbors, still, they are afraid of what happened in Chechnya. The Nation of Georgia trembles. I know Moldovians do, I know Ukrainians do, I know Romanians do. They have all been in my office this week, worried that the United States would pull out its stabilizing influence, an influence that, frankly, these emerging democracies look to, count on, and still need. I know we are tired of it. I know we are tired of funding it. I know our fighting men and women don't like being in a police operation.

But I also know the cost of leaving Europe is a cost that is much larger than the one we are paying now to stay in Europe. I hope President Clinton and Madeleine Albright and others in our executive branch can figure out how we can get out of there, but get out in a way that does not destroy this institution called NATO, which the world still needs. As Senator LUGAR said, that day may come, that we can go home and the Europeans say goodbye, but that day is not now.

I think we should have a vigorous debate, but I think we should be exceedingly careful before we say to our European allies and to everyone watching the United States and counting on the United States, that we are pulling out of Dodge. I don't think we can say that yet. I hope we can say it soon. But I know we can't say it now.

PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES IN OREGON

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I have come to talk to citizens of my State who have a rare privilege in the next few days: The two leading candidates for the highest office in our land will be in the State of Oregon. Vice President GORE will be there tomorrow, and Governor Bush will be there on Tuesday. I will have occasion to be with Governor Bush, and my friend and colleague, RON WYDEN, will have occasion to be with Vice President GORE tomorrow.

Oregonians need to ask a lot of questions to find out where these men are on issues that affect their lives. I came to speak in terms similar to those of Senator GORTON, who wants Washingtonians to ask what I want Oregonians to ask; that is, Mr. Vice President, where are you on the issue of hydroelectric power on the four Snake River dams in the State of Washington? I am not sure I know of an issue of greater importance to our State's environment and our State's economy. As a background to this question, Mr. GORE, where are you on the question of breaching these dams?

I would like to talk a little bit about our energy policy in this country. So I say to any Oregonians that may be watching, I want to share a memo which I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ENERGY SECRETARY RICHARDSON ANNOUNCES SIX SHORT-TERM ACTIONS TO HELP PREVENT POWER OUTAGES

STRESSES NEED FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE TO PROTECT RELIABILITY IN THE LONG TERM

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson today announced a series of short-term actions that the Department of Energy will take to help ensure the reliability of the nation's power supply in the coming months. Several regions across the country have experienced reliability problems in recent summers and there are concerns about the reliability of the nation's grid this summer.

These short-term actions by the Department of Energy, while not a cure-all, are designed to help keep the lights on this summer," said Secretary Richardson. "To protect reliability in the long term, we need new policies and passage of federal electricity legislation to keep pace with rapidly changing market developments.

The Department of Energy will work with other agencies to identify opportunities to reduce electric consumption at federal water projects during times of peak demand; urge the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and state utility commissions to solicit and approve tariffs that will help reduce electricity demands during peak time periods. For instance, large industrial consumers could find it to their advantage to sell their power entitlement back to their utility if it would be profitable; explore opportunities for the use of existing backup generators during power supply emergencies to reduce the strain on electric systems and help avoid blackouts; conduct an emergency exercise