

of our committees on a bipartisan basis is a harbinger of good things ahead. I hope we can work on the other bills the way we have on this one and demonstrate our commitment to catch up on the appropriations process and deliver on the request of the majority leader: that we report out and get to conference prior to the time we leave for the August recess the nine bills that have been outlined by the chairman.

Again, I am grateful and humbled by the comments of my friend from West Virginia, having been my mentor for so many years. To have him make the comments he did concerning me is a humbling matter. It is more than a privilege to serve with Senator BYRD. It is really a great honor. To be able to stand here now as the ranking Republican is something I wasn't sure would ever occur to me, just as I am not sure I would become chairman, but I fervently hope some day I might become chairman again.

(Ms. STABENOW assumed the chair.)

Mr. BYRD. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. STEVENS. Yes.

Mr. BYRD. Upon his completing his statement, the Senate will have acted on this conference report.

Let me refer to some things I inadvertently overlooked. One is the splendid staff work that was demonstrated in bringing this conference report to the floor and bringing the meeting of the minds of conferees in both Houses, the meeting of the minds together. It was the most remarkable display of statecraft that I have seen in my service on committees in the Senate, the way our staffs worked.

The Senate appropriations staff on both sides is a class act, a class act.

I thank Terry Sauvain and Chuck Kieffer and Steve Cortese. These are remarkable men in the way they worked together and the way they worked in the House. I want to extend the same expressions of thanks and admiration to the House staff, Jim Dyer and Scott Lily. It is remarkable. This is a real class act to watch. I also want to thank our ranking members, Mr. STEVENS and others on that side of the aisle, THAD COCHRAN and the other Members on the Republican side of the aisle in committee. These are fine people to work with, never a hint of partisanship. None.

In closing, I also inadvertently omitted the name of Senator BINGAMAN when I spoke about the authority to make payments during fiscal year 2001 from the reparation exposure trust fund.

I mentioned the leadership of Senator STEVENS and Senator DOMENICI in this area. I inadvertently overlooked the name of Senator BINGAMAN. He was an original Senate sponsor of this effort. He is not on the committee, but he certainly attends to his duties and responsibilities toward the people of

New Mexico. In this instance they can be proud of him, likewise.

Madam President, I thank the Chair. My, "how sweet it is," as Jackie Gleason used to say, how sweet it is to serve with men and women like we have on our Appropriations Committee.

I yield the floor.

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, I thank Senator BYRD for his comments in honor of Terry Sauvain who is now staff director of the full committee. This is his first bill in that capacity. This demonstrates his basic approach, and we are blessed by his presence and knowledge, that he also has decided to proceed, as Senator BYRD and I have, on a bipartisan basis. He has been very gracious to all Members on our side. I thank Senator BYRD for commenting about Steve Cortese, a brilliant former staff director, now staff director for the minority. He really is a key man in the Senate as far as I am concerned; and Andy Givens here, working with me along with Lisa Sutherland; and I am pleased Senator BYRD mentioned Senator THAD COCHRAN, who is here, who was a member of our conference and has really contributed greatly to the outcome of this bill.

It is my understanding when I yield the floor the bill will pass; is that correct, Madam President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. BYRD. Will the Senator yield. Forgive me for asking him to yield one more time. In speaking of our ranking member, I must not overlook the splendid work of the paradigm of patriotism that is constantly and consistently and always and never-endingly shown by DANNY INOUE, the ranking member of our committee on this side of the aisle, and how fortunate we are to have, in this particular bill which deals mostly with defense, how fortunate we are to have the guidance and the leadership of the chairman, TED STEVENS, and the ranking member, DANNY INOUE of the Defense Appropriations Committee subcommittee.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BYRD. Yes.

Mr. STEVENS. Turn that over. We have just changed seats.

Mr. BYRD. Yes. OK.

Mr. STEVENS. Chairman INOUE and Ranking Member STEVENS.

Mr. BYRD. The Senator is correct. But those two, TED STEVENS and DANNY INOUE, are just like TED STEVENS and ROBERT BYRD. It really doesn't make a difference. If it weren't for the fact that I am expected, if I leave the Chair momentarily, to call on a Democrat, I would just be as sure and as confident and secure if I turned it over to TED STEVENS. It would not make a bit of difference to me personally. I would say: TED, I have to go out for a moment to see some constituents. Would you take over?

We are fortunate, though, in having TED STEVENS and DANNY as the two key members on national defense, active at the helm in our development and managing of this supplemental. I thank the Senator.

Mr. STEVENS. I was going to mention Senator INOUE because he mentioned to me earlier we ought to do something to try to see if we can get this bill finished today. So we have met Senator INOUE's request.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the conference report?

If not, under the previous order, the conference report is agreed to. The motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

The Senator from West Virginia.

#### COMPLIMENTING SENATOR STABENOW AND HER FRESHMEN COLLEAGUES

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I would not want this beautiful July afternoon to pass without my paying compliments to the Senator who is presiding over the Senate at this point. She presides with a dignity and bearing and manner and presence that are so rare as a day in June.

Just look at that smile. I have never seen a more beautiful smile than that the Presiding Officer today constantly wears.

Walt Whitman said:

A man is a great thing upon the earth and throughout eternity, but every jot of the greatness of man is unfolded out of woman. . . .

How fortunate we are to have had a degree of presiding professionalism as we see in the new Members of this Senate as they are called upon to preside every day. It is a chore. They have to take their valuable time away from their office and desk where they may be reading letters from constituents, signing letters to constituents, dictating letters to constituents, or working in a hundred other ways every day in the service of the Nation, the service of the people of their State. Yet they give their time to come here and preside.

This group of Presiding Officers in this new class of Senators is the best overall group I have seen in my 43 years of service in the foremost upper body in the world today. This is a good example.

The Presiding Officer, DEBBIE STABENOW from Michigan, is not reading a magazine. She is not sitting up there reading the newspapers. She is not sitting up there signing mail. There used to be a telephone up there. When I became majority leader, I yanked that telephone out so people who are presiding cannot sit there and talk on the telephone. I urge all new Members when they sit up there and preside to pay attention to the Senate. Please don't be signing your mail up there. Please don't be reading a magazine. Please don't be reading newspapers. Be alert to what is being done on the Senate floor.

It is a suggestion that goes over very well at first, but then so many times I have noticed they lapse into the same old habit of reading and signing their mail. It just kind of makes my spirit fall. But I do not see these new Senators doing that. They do not bring their mail up there. They sit there, very alert. And when they ask for order, they get it.

I will have more to say about this on Monday, I promise you. But I just couldn't let this occasion pass or this fleeting moment go by without complimenting the Senator from Michigan, DEBBIE STABENOW, who sets a fine example as a Senator and as a Presiding Officer.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### COMMENDATION OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I know the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee just complimented the Presiding Officer, and I, too, want to add my commendation. She is an outstanding Presiding Officer, and she is willing to spend the time and make the commitment to preside over the Senate. As the chairman has indicated, we have a number of extraordinary Senators who are spending the time and making that kind of commitment. I applaud all of them and I appreciate the way in which they are presiding. I commend especially the distinguished Senator from Michigan.

I am disappointed that beginning next week we will not have bipartisan Presiding Officers. I appreciate the importance of the job of the Presiding Officer, especially late in the day on a Friday.

#### ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 1024

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment found on page 56 of the managers' amendment numbered 1024 to H.R. 2311, the energy and water appropriations bill, be modified with the technical correction to the instruction line which I now send to the desk.

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

The modification is as follows:

On page 11, after line 16, insert the following:

#### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

AMENDMENT NO. 1029, AS MODIFIED

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the previously agreed to amendment numbered 1029 be modified with the language at the desk in order to vitiate action on the last division of the amendment.

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

The amendment (No. 1029), as modified, was agreed to, as follows:

On page 20, line 16, strike the numeral and all that follows through the word "Code" on page 18 and insert in lieu thereof the following: "\$3,348,128 shall be set aside for the program authorized under section 1101(a)(11) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, as amended and section 162 of title 23, United States Code."

On page 33, line 12, strike the word "together" and all that follows through the semi-colon on line 14.

#### LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, my amendment intends to restore a lost capability to assess the effects of science and technology on our Congressional policymaking process.

Mr. DURBIN. Is the Senator proposing to restart the former Office of Technology Assessment?

Mr. BINGAMAN. I am not proposing to restart Office of Technology Assessment (or OTA). But, I feel that today we lack the analytical insight of its technology assessment process.

Mr. DURBIN. How is the Senator proposing that these funds be used?

Mr. BINGAMAN. I am proposing a one year pilot program to utilize technology assessment methodology to analyze current science and technology issues affecting our Congress. I am proposing to implement this by contracting with outside non-profit agencies such as the National Academy of Sciences. My intent was for the Congressional Research Service to manage

this activity as I feel they are better suited to conduct and oversee this type of long term research activity. In doing so. I was hoping that oversight would be provided by the Senate Rules and House Administration Committees and through these Committees, the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress.

Mr. DURBIN. Who is the Senator now proposing to manage this activity?

Mr. BINGAMAN. It has been suggested that the General Accounting Office can better serve this function. I feel that the General Accounting Office may not be suited for such a long term research activity. The GAO is investigative in nature. However, it is better to start an initial pilot program utilizing the OTA technology assessment method rather than no pilot program at all. So, I offer this amendment to use the General Accounting Office. But, I ask the Chairman that during conference, serious consideration be given to my request of having the Congressional Research Service manage this pilot program.

Mr. DURBIN. How will the initial studies be chosen for the pilot program and how will it be reported?

Mr. BINGAMAN. The General Accounting Office should submit a listing of Congressionally relevant technology assessment studies to its oversight committees, the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs and the House Committee on Government Reform. From this list, two projects should be chosen, one by each Committee no later than October 31st, 2001. The technology assessment studies should then begin with a report given to both Committees, and the House and Senate Appropriations Committee, no later than June 15, 2002. At that time the decision can be made as to whether this technology assessment process was beneficial enough to continue it a second year. If this pilot program is to continue, I recommend that the funding be executed using the Office of Technology Assessment authorization language. Rather than OTA's 200 person, \$20 million budget, the organization would be a small legislative branch staff using outside non-profit groups to perform the in-depth research.

#### ACCESS TO VA HEALTH CARE IN WEST VIRGINIA

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, as chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I want to share with my colleagues some of the concerns voiced by veterans at a recent field hearing in my state of West Virginia.

On July 16, the Committee held a hearing in Huntington, West Virginia, to examine the challenges facing veterans from rural areas who receive health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Committee held its last West Virginia field hearing on access to rural VA health care in 1993.