

this aviation security bill, which is so important.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
H.R. 2506

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to Calendar No. 147, H.R. 2506, the foreign operations appropriations bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I admonish the body that we are ready to go forward and, as the distinguished assistant majority leader points out, we ought to be using the time available to conduct other business, if we cannot go forward with the airline security bill. I have been talking with Senator MCCAIN to coordinate this effort. While the managers' amendment is yet to be finalized, we have other amendments. It seems to me we could get some kind of agreement with respect to relevant amendments and consider these measures. It would not be time wasted.

This procedure of moving to another bill puts airport security in limbo. We are not having votes tomorrow or Monday, and certainly not on the weekend.

Reagan National is up and running again, and we have shuttles going to New York and Boston and otherwise, but the holdup in ensuring the security of our airports is now on the part of the Senate.

Mr. REID. I say to the chairman of the Commerce Committee, who has worked so hard on this issue and is our leader on this issue, the Senator is right. Once we get agreement to be able to proceed to this bill, which we wanted to do yesterday, of course, we could do that. In the meantime, whether it is an hour, 2 hours, or 3 hours, whatever Senator LEAHY could do would be time well spent.

Once there is any agreement that has been reached by the Senator from South Carolina with the minority, we would be happy to immediately move off of that.

The point we are making, I say to my friend from South Carolina, there is no need we be in morning business all day. We have things to do. The Senator can be assured that once there is any agreement on this vital legislation, airport security, we will get off of this. I have spoken with Senator LEAHY. He agrees. The Senator does not have to worry; We want to keep full focus on this legislation.

Mr. HOLLINGS. I thank the distinguished leader.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. THOMAS. I object to the unanimous consent request.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I am very disappointed. We need to move forward on this legislation. We had an

objection yesterday on airport security. Now we have one on this appropriations bill. We have worked so well these past 3 weeks together. We need to continue. That is the reason I went through the list of work we are doing on the judges. We are working as hard as we can. We have been consulting with the majority leader and assistant minority leader on how to move forward. We are doing our level best to do that.

I am very disappointed there has been an objection by the minority to moving forward on an unfinished appropriations bill. It is too bad. I would, of course, ask we go to the Agriculture appropriations bill, but there would be the same objection, so that is a waste of the Senate's time. That is too bad.

The President has reached out to the majority in the Senate. We have done our best to work with the President. I am very disappointed. I am confident the President would like us to move forward on these appropriations bills. I think the President himself knows how hard we are working on these nominations. As I said, if you compare what we have done to the early years of the Clinton administration, we are doing just fine.

Madam President, this is not payback time for the fact that we didn't get many of our judges approved. This is not payback time. We are working through the process as quickly as we can. These judges have been nominated in an appropriate fashion. A lot of them were late getting here, but we are moving through them as quickly as we can. I think it is unfortunate we cannot move forward on these appropriations bills.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AVIATION SECURITY ACT—MOTION
TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1447, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1447, a bill to improve the aviation security, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator withhold for a unanimous consent?

Mr. THOMAS. Certainly.

Mr. REID. It is my understanding the minority is having a party conference. If I could ask my friend, for the next hour or so perhaps we should go into morning business. Any objection to that?

Mr. THOMAS. No objection.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent until the hour of 11:30 today we be in a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period of up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIORITIZING

Mr. THOMAS. Madam President, I say to my friend from Nevada, all Members are anxious to move forward with this airport security bill. Unfortunately, the impediment basically has been the threat to bring up amendments that are unrelated. This ought to be held to moving that. There will be a conference going on designed to come to an agreement with regard to this bill. Hopefully, we will be back on the floor with it today.

I am pleased to hear the Judiciary Committee is finally moving on the judges. We have a total of 6 that have been confirmed. There are 107 vacancies; that is a 12½-percent vacancy. The total of nominees not yet dealt with is almost 50, 49. We certainly have an obligation to move forward on that issue.

I hope as we are working through all the items that are of such priority that we can set some priorities and take those that obviously are most important, those that deal with terrorism, those that deal with security. They have to be the highest priority. Those that deal with the economy have to be priorities. And of course we have to do our normal duties. I have been talking about this for several weeks. We have not moved very quickly.

Hopefully we will be able to come back to this bill very soon today.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, we are in morning business; is that correct?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. KERRY. I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to proceed for such time as I may consume.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.