

Thereupon the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:17 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BAYH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina is recognized. Mr. HELMS. I thank the Chair.

#### CONTINUATION OF AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I speak on some legislation filed by distinguished Senators relative to S. 1673 this past Friday. I am honored to join with my distinguished colleagues in offering legislation to provide the maximum flexibility and stability our farmers need to make proper business decisions based on market conditions.

I am mindful, of course, of agriculture's importance to our country's economy and to America's security. I might add that agriculture is the No. 1 industry in North Carolina. Our farmers rank third in the Nation behind California and Florida in agricultural diversification.

It is with genuine appreciation that I join Senator LINCOLN, Senator HUTCHINSON, and Senator MILLER in working together in crafting this bill. The farm bill we are introducing will be helpful in our guaranteeing that American farmers will continue to provide the American people with the safe and adequate food supply that too many take for granted.

The past several years have been a genuine challenge to farmers, whether their operations are large or small. Farmers and their families have long been the backbone of countless rural communities. Every day, farmers face new challenges by literally dozens of factors beyond their control, from weather to insect infestation, to overreaching regulations that unnecessarily increase the cost of production, to trade barriers imposed by other countries on our farm products.

All these factors make it especially difficult for farmers to earn a profit when prices are at such historic lows as they are today. As farmers begin preparing for a new planting cycle, meeting with their bankers to plan the financial future of their businesses and their families and making difficult decisions relating to capital improvement, they also face the uncertainty that comes with congressional consideration of a new farm bill. Farmers are already reeling from a string of especially difficult years, and this bill that was offered on Friday provides a balanced and bipartisan approach to provide the stability needed to better compete on a global playing field while allowing farmers the flexibility they must have in order to adjust to the world market.

I think the House of Representatives is to be commended for its leadership in so quickly passing a farm bill that is

a positive step toward bringing stability and predictability to American agriculture. The bill we offered Friday in the Senate is built on the concepts adopted by the House which, by the way, developed its bill by soliciting the input of farmers and farm organizations throughout the country for the better part of 2 years.

We believe this bill is particularly well crafted to clear all of the legislative hurdles necessary to present it to the President for his signature by the end of this year.

Although we have had many important national issues to deal with during this historic time, we must not forget the needs of America's farmers.

I appreciate the willingness of my colleagues to work together on a good piece of legislation, and I look forward to our continued cooperation with each other.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter endorsing the bill we introduced this past Friday be printed in the RECORD.

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

NORTH CAROLINA  
FARM BUREAU FEDERATION,  
Raleigh, NC, November 7, 2001.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,  
U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HELMS: The North Carolina Farm Bureau favors farm policy philosophies that were adopted in the House version (H.R. 2646) of the Farm Bill. We are also supporting your efforts along with Senators Hutchinson and Lincoln to draft a similar bill that includes a well-balanced funding approach among all titles.

All commodity groups were included in the writing of the House Farm Bill. The bill outlines the ideals of farmers by directly addressing farm programs while also making significant investments and improvements in conservation, rural development, export, research, and nutrition programs.

A Farm Bill that reflects the House version will result in a less contentious conference report. This hopefully should allow for a new Farm Bill to be signed into law this year.

Thank you for your hard work in offering a Farm Bill proposal that helps address the challenges that our farmers face today.

Sincerely,

LARRY B. WOOTEN,  
President.

The author of this letter, by the way, is the distinguished President of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation, Larry Wooten.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senator as in morning business.

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

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I am proud to rise to thank my colleague from North Carolina, having had the pleasure of working with him and his

staff on this issue. I thank him very much for the leadership he has provided the State of North Carolina and this great Nation and certainly this body. I have had a wonderful time working with him.

I join my colleagues in introducing a bill of the utmost importance to our farmers. Since the passage of the Freedom to Farm bill in 1996, our farmers have toiled under clouds of uncertainty. Quite simply stated, our Nation needs a farm policy that works for working farmers. That is why, along with Senator HUTCHINSON, Senator HELMS of North Carolina, Senator MILLER of Georgia, Senators BREAU and LANDRIEU of Louisiana, and Senator SESSIONS of Alabama, I am proud to offer a new alternative.

We have offered a farm bill that will ensure a strong safety net for America's farmers and ranchers. We have offered a farm bill that will increase investment in conservation programs by 80 percent. We have offered a farm bill that provides more effective support for disadvantaged working families through nutrition programs. We have offered a farm bill that will increase and improve our Nation's agricultural trade programs such as the Food Aid Program that sends food to the most needy of nations, many of which are aligned with us in our conflicts today against terrorism across the globe. We have offered a farm bill that will preserve and protect our Nation's forests and environment while investing in rural America.

For too many years, while the American economy at large was posting astonishing and unprecedented gains, our agricultural producers have not benefited from our prosperity. It is not only our farmers who are suffering as a result of failed Government policy; the institutions of small-town and rural America—local banks and merchants, feed and supply stores, equipment dealers, even corner grocers and family-owned hardware stores—are all caught in the web of financial collapse in rural America.

From a letter I received from a young farmer in northeast Arkansas a few months ago, he said his family's farm is nearing "a point of no return," and if the crisis continues he will have to leave the land that his grandfather worked before him.

Our family farmers are farming away their equity. They are farming away their heritage. Their Government has not provided them the safety net they need to be competitive in a global marketplace in order to continue to provide us, the American people and people across the globe, the safest, most affordable and most abundant food supply in the world.

Here is a letter from a bank president in southeast Arkansas who notes that when he moved into his community in 1969, a new John Deere combine sold

for about \$15,000. Today, a comparable model sells for about \$220,000. Fuel for that combine was 15 cents per gallon in 1969, he writes, but today a gallon of diesel fuel costs about \$1.05. He goes on to note that while farmers could expect to receive \$3 for a bushel of rice 33 years ago, today he only gets \$2.70 for that same bushel.

As the costs continue to skyrocket—the input of resources demanded of farmers to be put into their crops—the return on these investments continues to fall below the levels they were paid over 40 years ago.

Here is a letter from a young woman in east Arkansas who works a 60-acre rice and soybean farm with her husband and child. Her husband is so depressed because of his lack of ability to be able to provide for his family he needs counseling and medication and she can't let her child participate in afterschool sports because of the additional costs that are entailed.

She writes that where she and her family once felt pride in their sense of independence and self-sufficiency, today they feel only shame because they have to rely on loans and supplemental income payments to survive.

These stories are not unusual. In many rural areas, they are becoming the norm.

We cannot afford to let our farmers continue to suffer this way. They can't wait another year; their problems are real and they are here today. Our bill will address their problems. Our bill will restore them to a better economic future. Our bill will restore to them their hope so they can build a better future for their children and for the rest of the children in this great Nation.

I am proud to be a coauthor of this bill, and I am proud to say I will take my stand to fight for its passage for the men and women who toil day in and day out as agricultural producers in this great land. We owe them no less.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MILLER. Mr. President, I am pleased to have joined with my colleagues to introduce a bipartisan farm bill—a farm bill that will secure American agriculture into the 21st century.

For the past 4 years, our farmers have experienced an agricultural crisis unlike anything seen since the Great Depression. As they say where I come from, it's been "hell on a holiday."

It has been particularly cruel because until the recent recession came along, our suffering farmers had watched the rest of our economy thrive with tremendous growth and prosperity.

The way we distribute disaster assistance cannot continue. Our farmers cannot wait any longer. The time for a new farm bill is now.

Our bill maintains the freedom for producers to plant the crops that best reflect market conditions. It provides

an adequate safety net during economic and weather disasters, and it allows an 80-percent increase in conservation spending. Let me repeat that: It provides an 80-percent increase in conservation spending. That is nearly double what it is now. In past farm bills that would be unheard of.

The bill also makes dramatic and needed improvements in nutrition programs, trade promotion programs, and forestry incentives. It also—and this is very important—provides greater funding for our nation's research institutions such as the University of Georgia.

I have heard from members of the administration and members of the Agriculture Committee that we must take this first farm bill of the new century in a new policy direction. I do not disagree. I believe that is true. Along those lines, I respectfully point out that our bill includes the most dramatic farm policy change in nearly 70 years. That favorite whipping boy of all farm subsidies, the peanut program, has been turned on its head.

Perhaps, a little history is in order, because where we are advocating going compared to where we have been is as different as night and day.

During the Great Depression, when the South I grew up in was that "one-third" of a nation, President Roosevelt spoke about, the peanut quota system was established for poor farmers.

Quotas eventually became based on poundage and were set each year on the projected needs of domestic manufacturers.

As years went by, they began to be rented sometimes from landowner to farmer. Whether you agree with the policy or not, the peanut quota became a commodity in our neck of the woods.

The quota was passed down in families from generation to generation, and sold much as Coca-Cola or some other stock owned by our city cousins.

This policy, again rightly or wrongly, had seen little change since the early days of the Depression. Many families came to rely on quota support as their only source of retirement. It was their 401k.

And then NAFTA and GATT were passed and the peanut farmers' world was turned upside down. Because then, in the name of globalization, our trade protections for peanuts were lowered, imports were increased, and as a result quotas were gradually reduced.

Many peanut farmers across the country, seeing firsthand that what was good for the goose was not always good for the gander, and realizing what the future would hold if the current policy remained, decided to follow a new path. A way of life for more than three generations was, to use a phrase we understand very well, "gone with the wind."

This policy was so entrenched, because it had lasted so long, that this

change has been difficult. It has not been easy to accept. Where I come from, a small problem that can be easily solved is known as "a short horse—soon curried." Well, this was a big horse, and it has taken a long time not only to curry but to break it.

For months, I, along with many others, called for the peanut community to unite and face reality—to get them to accept the fact that the peanut quota system as their daddies and granddaddies knew it, was gone, to understand that the people in Washington won't support it, and NAFTA and GATT are here to stay.

So, we, their representatives in Congress, urged them to accept this change and work to develop a new, comprehensive policy that would allow peanut farmers to be competitive in world markets and that would compensate those affected by the change. After a lot of discussion, I think that is exactly what we have crafted.

There are never many people happy at a shotgun marriage, and that is what this is. To make such a drastic reform took careful bridge-building to get across these troubled waters. We needed a transition. Anything else would have been unfair and not the American way.

We are willing to face the bad along with the good of fair and open trade. But we also want to maintain a peanut industry that will survive for future generations of peanut farm families.

The peanut program in this bill will be a tough row to hoe, but it is fair and the peanut community can say, "We are now like everyone else."

There is another important point that I wish to make, and it is an issue that strikes at the heart of the entire agricultural industry.

I recently met with a large group of Georgia agriculture leaders, and the message they expressed to me was one of great distress and crisis.

In this time of the lowest interest rates we have seen in years, in this time of generous credit, there are banks all over rural Georgia that will no longer finance a farmer on the basis of future crops or equipment value. It is not that they do not want to help their friend and neighbor, but it is simply too big a risk. The loan officer reluctantly points out that commodity prices are just too low, and they do not see much of a chance for the farmer to repay the loan, no matter how hard he and his family might work, not under our present trade policy.

They also point out that the agricultural economy is so distressed that equipment purchased by farmers for thousands of dollars only a short time ago now has little value because no other farmer can afford to buy it.

The current recession did not bring this on, nor did the events of September 11. Mother Nature and poor market conditions did, and it shows

that our farmers must have a stronger safety net.

In addition, disasters over the past 4 years have exhausted many life savings and left no collateral on which to finance anything. Those who say we ought to wait to pass a new farm bill ought to have to walk a mile in those farmers' shoes. They ought to have to be the ones on the farm who work from daylight to dark and from can to can't. They ought to have to be sitting at that kitchen table after supper when the kids are in bed and hear the discussion about having to give up a farm that has been in the family for generations. Then, when the family farm is put up on an auction block and it goes for pennies on the dollar, what do we say to them then? That is something we can't figure out over lunch at the Palm.

We are going to be talking this week about a stimulus package. We have proposals on stimuli coming out of our ears. It is *creme de la creme* that can be conceived only by those highly paid lobbyists, pushing and pulling, paying and pimping, and promising to get their clients the best breaks and the most generous incentives.

I learned a long time ago that when it comes to how legislation is written—especially here in Washington—it is kind of like that country music song by Freddie Hart about his girlfriend: "If fingerprints showed up on skin, I wonder whose I would find on you."

I am afraid both stimulus bills have a lot of questionable fingerprints on them, and we do not need the FBI to figure out whose they are. Their names, addresses, and their interests are in the top contributor list of both parties.

The legislation I am speaking on today also has fingerprints: Fingerprints from callused hands—the hands of the workers who feed us and clothe us, people who, like the family dog, we just take for granted.

Do I speak too harshly? I am sorry, but because I am not blind to what I see, I cannot be bland in what I say. Of course, we cannot continue to do things as we have always done, and we cannot continue to provide disaster assistance each and every year. But there has to be a transition, some "weaning time," as it is called down on the farm.

Mr. President, this farm bill sets a new policy, a sea change in conservation and peanuts. It addresses the critical needs facing America's farmers. It was written by Senators from both sides of the aisle. I hope that same bipartisan support will pass a new farm policy this year.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I have been discussing the schedule for the remainder of the day with the distin-

guished Republican leader. I want to propound a request. It is my understanding that there is an agreement with our colleagues, having consulted with the Republican leader.

I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 today the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 223, H.R. 3090, the economic recovery/stimulus legislation for debate only until 5 p.m., with no amendments in order during this period; that this time be equally divided and controlled between the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee or their designees.

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

Mr. DASCHLE. I yield the floor.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND ASSISTANCE FOR AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3090) to provide tax incentives for economic recovery.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

##### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; ETC.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "Economic Recovery and Assistance for American Workers Act of 2001".

(b) *REFERENCES TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.*—Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(c) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—

Sec. 1. Short title; etc.

##### TITLE I—SUPPLEMENTAL REBATE FOR INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYERS

Sec. 101. Supplemental rebate.

##### TITLE II—TEMPORARY BUSINESS RELIEF PROVISIONS

Sec. 201. Special depreciation allowance for certain property.

Sec. 202. Increase in section 179 expensing.

Sec. 203. Carryback of certain net operating losses allowed for 5 years.

##### TITLE III—TAX INCENTIVES AND RELIEF FOR VICTIMS OF TERRORISM, DISASTERS, AND DISTRESSED CONDITIONS

###### Subtitle A—Tax Incentives for New York City and Distressed Areas

Sec. 301. Expansion of work opportunity tax credit targeted categories to include certain employees in New York City.

Sec. 302. Tax-exempt private activity bonds for rebuilding portion of New York City damaged in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack.

Sec. 303. Gain or loss from property damaged or destroyed in New York Recovery Zone.

Sec. 304. Reenactment of exceptions for qualified-mortgage-bond-financed loans to victims of Presidentially declared disasters.

Sec. 305. One-year expansion of authority for Indian tribes to issue tax-exempt private activity bonds.

###### Subtitle B—Victims of Terrorism Tax Relief

Sec. 310. Short title.

##### PART I—RELIEF PROVISIONS FOR VICTIMS OF APRIL 19, 1995, AND SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, TERRORIST ATTACKS

Sec. 311. Income and employment taxes of victims of terrorist attacks.

Sec. 312. Estate tax reduction.

Sec. 313. Payments by charitable organizations treated as exempt payments.

Sec. 314. Exclusion of certain cancellations of indebtedness.

##### PART II—GENERAL RELIEF FOR VICTIMS OF DISASTERS AND TERRORISTIC OR MILITARY ACTIONS

Sec. 321. Exclusion for disaster relief payments.

Sec. 322. Authority to postpone certain deadlines and required actions.

Sec. 323. Internal Revenue Service disaster response team.

Sec. 324. Application of certain provisions to terroristic or military actions.

Sec. 325. Clarification of due date for airline excise tax deposits.

Sec. 326. Coordination with Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act.

##### PART III—DISCLOSURE OF TAX INFORMATION IN TERRORISM AND NATIONAL SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

Sec. 331. Disclosure of tax information in terrorism and national security investigations.

##### TITLE IV—EXTENSIONS OF CERTAIN EXPIRING TAX PROVISIONS

Sec. 401. Allowance of nonrefundable personal credits against regular and minimum tax liability.

Sec. 402. Work opportunity credit.

Sec. 403. Welfare-to-work credit.

Sec. 404. Credit for electricity produced from renewable resources.

Sec. 405. Taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas produced from marginal properties.

Sec. 406. Qualified zone academy bonds.

Sec. 407. Subpart F exemption for active financing.

Sec. 408. Cover over of tax on distilled spirits.

Sec. 409. Delay in effective date of requirement for approved diesel or kerosene terminals.

Sec. 410. Deduction for clean-fuel vehicles and certain refueling property.

Sec. 411. Credit for qualified electric vehicles.

Sec. 412. Parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits.

Sec. 413. Combined employment tax reporting.

##### TITLE V—EXTENSION OF CERTAIN TRADE PROVISIONS EXPIRING IN 2001.

Sec. 501. Generalized System of Preferences.

Sec. 502. Andean Trade Preference Act.

Sec. 503. Reauthorization of trade adjustment assistance.

##### TITLE VI—HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE OPTIONS FOR RECENTLY UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Sec. 601. Premium assistance for COBRA continuation coverage for individuals and their families.

Sec. 602. State option to provide temporary medicaid coverage for certain uninsured individuals.

Sec. 603. State option to provide temporary coverage under medicaid for the unsubsidized portion of COBRA continuation premiums.