

mentioned, holds the honor of having served as the longest Director of the Peace Corps, which was during the 8 years of the Reagan administration. I respected Paul Coverdell enormously. I worked closely with him on Peace Corps issues when he was the Director between 1989 and 1991. I actually chaired his confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

He and I continued to work together on Peace Corps matters when he joined the Senate in 1993, and served, as he did then, as the ranking member. I was then chairman of the subcommittee having jurisdiction over the Peace Corps. Whenever he would discuss any legislation related to the Peace Corps, the first thing Paul Coverdell would ask was, is it good for the Peace Corps? Is it going to create problems? Is it going to fracture the bipartisan consensus that has existed for 40 years with respect to this organization?

Paul always put the interests of the organization, and particularly the volunteers, first. I believe we should do so as well. That is our responsibility, in my view.

This year the Peace Corps will celebrate its 40th anniversary since being established by President Kennedy in 1961. The Peace Corps stands as a living embodiment of the well-remembered challenge that President Kennedy posed to all Americans more than four decades ago: It is not what your country can do for you but, rather, what you can do for your Nation.

The Peace Corps was first established by Executive order during the early days of the Kennedy administration. Sargent Shriver was named as its first Director. Soon thereafter Congress enacted legislation to codify it into law.

The legislation is quite simple. It set forth three goals for the organization: to help the people of interested nations in meeting their need for trained men and women, to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served, and to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

As the first Director of the Peace Corps, Sargent Shriver confronted the special challenge of transforming President Kennedy's challenge to America's young adults into an operation program that would meet the three goals established by this organization.

During the 5 years of his tenure as Director, Sargent Shriver gave form to the dream of voluntary service. The 14 Directors who followed in his footsteps benefitted from the foundation that he had established for the organization. However, each succeeding Director, in his or her own way, has also made significant contributions, which has kept the Peace Corps strong and vibrant over these past 40 years.

The heart and soul of the organization, however, is not the Directors of

the Peace Corps, or the Peace Corps staff in Washington, or the buildings; it is the volunteers—past, present, and future.

Over the past 40 years, more than 161,000 Americans, young and old, men and women, have given up at least 2 years of their lives in service to our Nation, and in far flung corners of the world. I was privileged, as I said at the outset of these remarks, to be one of those volunteers.

Peace Corps volunteers have served in 130 nations, working to bring clean water to communities, teaching their children, helping start small businesses, and more recently joining in the international efforts to stop the spread of AIDS.

Today, there are more than 7,000 volunteers serving in 76 nations, working to put a living face on America for those people in developing countries who might never otherwise have any contact with America or her values. Through the Peace Corps, the United States has shared its most valuable resource in the promotion of peace and development—its people. That is our greatest resource, and volunteers are the very embodiment of our best values.

The men and women who have served and answered the call of the Peace Corps reflect the rich diversity of our Nation, but they have one thing in common; namely, a common spirit of service, of dedication, and of idealism. We should not let politics or partisan bickering ever in any way diminish that spirit. Let us continue to respect the unique nature of the Peace Corps and show deference to the tens of thousands of volunteers who have given their time to make the Peace Corps the internationally respected organization that it is today. It is more than one director. It is more than any one volunteer. In fact, the sum total of the Peace Corps is larger than all of its parts. That is why we should not try to embody the spirit of the organization by placing one of its elements above the others.

For those reasons, I raised the objections and the reservations about this resolution. I withdrew those reservations in the spirit of cooperation, knowing it is important that the Peace Corps not be embroiled in this kind of battle.

I hope in the future more patience will be demonstrated, more consultation involved, before we move ahead at the pace we did with this particular proposal. My respect and admiration to Paul and his family, to his wife, and to his staff and others who have worked with him over the years. Please understand that my objections raised here today, my reservations raised here today, have nothing whatsoever to do with my deep admiration for him, his work as Senator, or his work as Director of the Peace Corps during his 2 years of service.

I thank my colleague from West Virginia and yield the floor.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, on behalf of the majority leader, that the Senate now enter into a period for the transaction of morning business and Senators be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the exception of my own statement.

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

#### RECONCILIATION PROCESS REFORM

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever enacted by Congress was the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. In my capacity as Majority Whip, as well as Chairman of the Senate Rules Committee's Subcommittee on the Standing Rules of the Senate, I was deeply involved in the preparation of the Senate version of that bill, S. 1541. I assembled a staff working group to make extensive revisions to a bill that had been reported out of the Committee on Government Operations. That staff group consisted of representatives of the chairmen of the ten standing committees of the Senate, four joint committees, the House Appropriations Committee, the Congressional Research Service, and the Office of Senate Legislative Counsel, and the parliamentarian of the Senate—at that time, Robert Dove.

On March 19, 1974, we took S. 1541 to the Senate Floor. At that time I stated that, "when Senators look back some years in the future, many may be able to say that this was among the most important measures acted upon during our entire service in Congress."

As I pointed out in my remarks on March 19, 1974, "In the fifty years subsequent to the enactment of the Budget and Accounting Act, Congress had permitted its 'power of the purse' under The Constitution to slip away, or diminish." That trend, as I further pointed out, had been magnified during the previous five years. While presidents over many decades had occasionally seen fit to withhold funds appropriated by Congress, in the years leading up to the enactment of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the President had expanded this practice to cover programs throughout the Government. Many billions of dollars had been withheld, not because of any changes in circumstances after the action of the Congress in approving the funding, but merely because the President did not agree with the priorities or the judgments made by the Congress. As a consequence, the confidence of the public in its Government processes had been diminished.