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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

God of power and providence, we begin this day of work in this Senate with the assurance that You will be with us, You will never leave us or forsake us, and we remember Your assurance to Joshua, "Be strong and of good courage."

You have chosen to be our God and elected us to be Your servants. You are the Sovereign Lord of this Nation and have destined us to be a land of righteousness, justice, and freedom. Now Your glory fills this historic Chamber.

Through Your grace, You never give up on us. With Your judgment, You hold us accountable to the absolutes of Your Ten Commandments. In Your mercy, You forgive us when we fail. By Your spirit, You give us strength and courage.

You also call us to maintain unity in the midst of diversity of differing solutions to the problems that we must address together. So, today, guide us in our discussion of the issues of the Budget Reconciliation Act and lead us to solutions that maintain our oneness. When the debate is ended and the votes are counted, enable us to press on to the work ahead with unity. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I do not believe that the bill has been laid down yet this morning.

I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed as in morning business for no more than 5 minutes.

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

THE BRIDGE CONNECTING KENTUCKY AND INDIANA

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, in 1987, a study was made of a major bridge connecting my State of Kentucky and the State of Indiana. It was determined—this was on a major highway—that the bridge's life would be no more than 15 years as it related to the ability to carry major loads. At that time, Gov. Wallace Wilkinson decided that he would do everything he could to replace that bridge, and \$10 million of Kentucky money was put up front.

To make a long story short, the people of that area approached then Congressman William H. Natcher, who was on the Appropriations Committee in the House, and was chairman a little bit later of the Appropriations Committee in the House. And after much study and discussion, in order to speed up the ability to have the funds as it related to that particular bridge, it was decided that it should become a demonstration project. Otherwise, it could have been delayed for a long, long time. The bridge was then designated, through Congressman Natcher's effort, as a demonstration project, and the construction started through the design, and almost 7 miles of road now has been built. That road has been built up to the river bank. The approach has been built on the Indiana side. And two piers have been built in the middle of the Ohio River.

Mr. President, Congressman Natcher was an unusual individual. Using his influence in the Appropriations Committee, he could have funded this

bridge up front, some \$80 million, the State paying the balance. But instead of doing that, Congressman Natcher would only take what was necessary for that one 12-month period, leaving the balance of the money then for his colleagues on the committee to use as they saw necessary.

Unfortunately, the death of Congressman Natcher eliminated a powerful voice and one who could be depended upon to fund the bridge. After the demonstration projects were eliminated on the House side and on the Senate side, Congressman Natcher was able to get some money in the bill as it related to appropriations and directed a line item for this particular bridge. After Congressman Natcher's untimely and unfortunate death, no funds were included on the House side as it related to the bridge.

I worked with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee here in the Senate. We were able to make a modest contribution to the construction.

Now we have a budget going through the House and Senate with not one thin dime in there for that bridge.

As I said, there has been a lot of work done, four lanes now, for 7 miles on the Kentucky side, right up to the river bank. On the other side, the approach has been constructed by the State of Indiana. Two piers stick out of the Ohio River. We say, no, we are not going to finish or complete that bridge, with \$58 million already expended.

I have an amendment I wanted to put on reconciliation to fund the bridge because it is a very necessary bridge because we are getting close to the day when the present bridge will not be able to carry traffic. That means trucks will have to go at least 100 miles out of their way in order to make deliveries in order to serve our area.

It is very important to the economic development of both the northern part of western Kentucky and the southern

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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part of Indiana, a very key economic development tool, the life of that particular area.

In checking, Mr. President, on this particular amendment, I understand that the Budget Committee—which has the right to do so—would make a point of order against my amendment and that it would require 60 votes, a supermajority, in order for me to pass the amendment. Of course, I know I cannot do that.

There are things in this life that you realize cannot be done. You accept that and move on. Well, I accept this for the moment. I accept this for the moment. We are going to revisit this question time and time again because it is an abomination for a major highway to have a major bridge constructed to a point—two piers sticking out of the Ohio River—and not a dime to complete it.

My State is not a wealthy State, but the money is available by the State to pay for its part, and it has paid more than its part in the designation of the highway to the bridge and the four-lane facility, and the bridge will be a four-lane facility and has been recognized as one of the outstanding designs for not only design but safety that we have had in this country.

Mr. President, I regret the attitude of the Budget Committee. At least I thought I might have a fighting chance to be able to secure the funds for this bridge. However, if the Members on the other side stick together, then I have no chance.

I just wanted the record to reflect this morning that my constituents and those in Indiana are being denied infrastructure, that \$58 million of our tax dollars have been spent, and they say, "No, we will not build the rest of it." It seems to me that it is no longer a demonstration project, with \$58 million having been spent, the piers being built in the river, and the span now is all that is lacking.

This new majority here in the Congress has said to my people, "We are not going to finish it. It is up to you." They even reduced the funds to my State by some \$45 million for this fiscal year compared to last fiscal year, and they say, "Just take it out of your funds and build it."

Well, that is not easy to swallow. I do not intend to see my people denied something that is real, something that is necessary, and something I do not think you could hold fault with, take umbrage with, because of its need, and we are in the position which we are in.

Mr. President, I will file my amendment. I will not call it up. I want it to be on record. It will be there. I will offer it this afternoon, at least file it at the desk and let my colleagues know of my interest and how much damage they are doing to the commerce from south to north that goes through Tennessee, Kentucky, on into Indiana, that hooks up with interstate highways.

It will cause major economic devastation to our area. Many companies that have built there, that have come

there, have been depending on this mode of transportation because trucks are important to the new development of new businesses that have come into that area.

Mr. President, again, I regret that the majority has said to my people and those in southern Indiana that we are just going to let the piers stick out of the river like two sore spots and not complete the bridge.

Mr. President, I imagine my 5 minutes are up. I know the Chair is patient, and I appreciate that, but I did want the record to reflect that I am very disappointed in the way that the constituents in Indiana and Kentucky have been treated in this particular budget for this particular item.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The Senator from North Dakota.

RECONCILIATION

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will begin deliberating something called the budget reconciliation bill, which for most Americans is a term that does not mean very much. The reconciliation bill means reconciling spending on Federal programs to the terms of the budget agreement that was agreed to earlier this year by the Congress.

The reconciliation bill is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation that has been considered in this Chamber in several decades. Yet we were provided with the reconciliation bill late yesterday afternoon.

For purposes of illustrating what the Senate is going to be considering, this bill is contained in these two volumes, about 2,000 pages of legislation. It is 1,949 pages, to be exact, and was delivered late yesterday to our desks.

Because there was a World Series game last night and I was preoccupied, unfortunately, until the 11th inning of that game—until quarter to 1 in the morning—I did try to muddle my way through these 2,000 pages but without great success. This is not a very good way to legislate.

However, I want to make two points about this bill. First, even though there will be a lot of criticism back and forth, and much of it justifiable, we should recognize that there are some provisions in this bill on which both political parties agree. There are things in this reconciliation bill that make a lot of sense, and I commend the majority party for a number of things that they intend to do. For instance, we do need to cut spending.

There are a number of areas of spending cuts offered by the majority party for which I say to them, "Good job; I support you." There are areas here where there is agreement. The American people in most cases hear only about where we disagree—for good reason, because there is no need to stand up and debate for hours about an issue where there's already agreement. In

those areas where we agree, I think we should recognize there has been some good work done, bringing some of this to the floor of the Senate. I commend the people who worked to do that.

I do note, however, that some of the proposals in this bill are very troublesome and those are the ones that will engender a substantial amount of debate.

One of my colleagues took to the floor yesterday, and I am sure it took a fair amount of courage to do so. Senator SPECTER spoke at length about this reconciliation bill, and one thing he said struck me. He said, and I am paraphrasing, "I have concern that the tax cuts are unfair or at least give the perception of unfairness." Senator SPECTER said, "I express this concern because much of the pain of the spending cuts goes to the elderly, the young, the infirm, while allowing tax cuts for corporate America and those in higher brackets."

It is not often that someone in the Chamber speaks in such an unvarnished way. I am sure it was not easy for Senator SPECTER to do, because I do not think that is the prevailing message on that side of the aisle. Yet that is what is in these 2,000 pages.

It seems to me that, while containing some good recommendations and some commendable work, this bill is also a vehicle making profound changes in Medicare and Medicaid. It is also going to make it harder for middle-income parents to send their kids to college. It represents a set of priorities that I think Senator SPECTER properly says will impose most of the burden on lower income folks and will bestow most of the benefits on those who are very privileged in our country.

There is reason for us to be having a disagreement if we each believe in a different approach. I happen to agree that we should cut spending, but I do think there are some areas of spending that are more important than others. I personally do not support the star wars program. I do not think we have to build 20 more B-2 bombers at \$30 billion. I could go through a whole list of items I think we should cut. But I do think it is valuable to keep the Head Start Program running and fully funded. I do not think it is wise to kick 55,000 kids off Head Start. I think it is valuable to keep kids in Head Start. That is a priority of mine. This is going to be a debate over the next 3 or 4 days about priorities.

Again, I have said this several times in the last couple of weeks, but people should not lament the fact that we are debating and aggressively disagreeing in this Chamber. The way you reach compromise is to take different positions that you might believe in very strongly, debate them aggressively, and from that debate comes compromise. My hope is that there will be a compromise on this reconciliation bill after these 2,000 pages are most likely passed by the Congress without