

If we wait, we are going to end up doing what our colleague accuses us of today. But the truth is, by doing it now, for those who will have to wait an additional 2 years, they will have 30 years to adjust. This is the responsible way to do it. It is the way it should be done, and I hope it will be done. If we don't do it, we will be back here in 3 or 4 years doing it under crisis circumstances and doing it immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from Texas has expired.

Mr. ROTH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we set aside temporarily the motion before us to consider a technical amendment that has been cleared on both sides.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 431

(Purpose: To provide for managers' amendments)

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk on behalf of Senator MOYNIHAN and myself and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Delaware [Mr. ROTH], for himself and Mr. MOYNIHAN, proposes an amendment numbered 431.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator object?

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. The clerk will read the amendment.

The legislative clerk proceeded to read the amendment.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, I withdraw my objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is withdrawn.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, none of this time is charged, I assume, to the waiver amendment that the Senator from Delaware has proposed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, as you can imagine, drafting a piece of legislation this large in such a short timeframe and having to incorporate over 50 amendments resulted in some technical errors and omissions. The items contained in this amendment are those which are technical in nature, and replace inadvertent omissions or are necessary to bring the legislation into compliance with the committee's budget instructions.

The amendments accepted or adopted in the committee markup were done so

with the proviso they would not bring the committee out of compliance with its instruction.

Therefore, now that the Congressional Budget Office has completed scoring of the entire package, certain revisions to these amendments are necessary. A description of the items contained in this amendment is located on each Senator's desk.

I ask this amendment be adopted and be considered original text for the purpose of amendment.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 431) was agreed to.

Mr. ROTH. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I move to lay it on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:32 p.m., recessed until 2:19 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. COATS].

BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

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

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, approximately 6 hours remain for debate with respect to the Balanced Budget Act, basically equally divided. There are approximately 30 minutes remaining on the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the Medicare age increase issue. Therefore, a vote will occur on that motion to waive around 3 o'clock, or maybe shortly before that.

As was mentioned in both luncheons today, the Senate will remain in session this evening until all time is consumed. If any Senator intends to offer an amendment after the time has expired, they will be required to do so this evening. It will then be my intention to stack all votes on the amendments and the final passage, after the time has expired this evening, until approximately 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

So all debate time and all amendments will be offered tonight, and then we will begin a series of votes at 9:30. We don't know exactly how many amendments that could entail. It could

be as few as five, I hope. It could be many more than that. We will begin voting at 9:30 and continue voting until we complete all the amendment votes and final passage. Then, of course, we will go to the taxpayers' relief act.

Senators can expect additional votes today and a series of votes beginning at 9:30 on Wednesday, the last of the series being final passage of the Balanced Budget Act.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I would like to ask the majority leader a question. As I understand it, suppose somebody has an amendment this afternoon and is prepared to go to a vote this afternoon; would there be a vote this afternoon?

Mr. LOTT. Yes, there can certainly be votes this afternoon. In fact, we expect votes throughout the afternoon, probably until all time has expired, or around 8:30 this evening. So you could have votes at least until 7 or 7:30, and then we will put the rest of the votes over until 9:30.

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mrs. BOXER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

MOTION TO WAIVE THE BUDGET ACT

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I would like to address the matter before us, and I believe the time is running anyway, is it not?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is being charged against the motion to waive the Budget Act, which is the pending business.

Mr. CHAFEE. I ask that I might have 5 minutes on Senator ROTH's time on this matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized to speak for up to 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, there is an organization set up to report to the Congress every year on the status of Social Security and the status of Medicare. This group is a very distinguished group. It consists of the Secretary of the Treasury; the Secretary of Health and Human Services; the Secretary of Labor, or Acting Secretary of Labor; and the Commissioner of Social Security, or the Acting Commissioner of Social Security. These are the people, plus two members of the public. I might say, of the first four—and there are six in all—four of these are Democrats. They are not Republicans; they are Democrats. They submitted a report to us in the Congress in April of this year. What did they say?

As we have reported for the last several years, one of the Medicare trust funds, the Hospital Insurance—

The HI, the so called part A.

will be exhausted in 4 years without legislation that addresses its fiscal imbalance.

This isn't a bunch of right wing Republicans saying there is trouble