

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period for the transaction of routine morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I want to announce that the Appropriations Committee will hold a meeting at 2 o'clock to discuss ISTEAA, and until that meeting is over, I will object to any proceedings on ISTEAA.

Mr. LOTT. Let me say, because I know everyone is interested in this, this is a critical moment on a very important bill. The managers of the ISTEAA II legislation have labored late into the night and all morning trying to make sure Members are aware of what is in the bill. I think they have done a good job. It might not be perfect in anybody's eyes, but we need to get it done. We need to get it done this afternoon.

There will be an opportunity for Members to express themselves, but I believe for all concerned the wise thing to do is to go to this bill as soon as we can, have a limited debate, and vote. It won't be easier on Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. It won't be easier in a week or a month.

I think we need to complete this legislation. We will work on both sides, as we have all along, to make sure that Members are satisfied with what we try to do.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I concur with the remarks just made by the majority leader. We have 20 or 25 Senators, all of whom have planes to catch this afternoon, who don't want to miss this vote. I certainly hope that we wouldn't inconvenience a third to half of the Senate as we get to this crucial time.

I hope everybody will cooperate and work with us. We have to get this legislation done. My hope is that we won't leave until we get it done. I hope we could seek cooperation on both sides.

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. LOTT. I am happy to yield.

Mr. STEVENS. Where is the report?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have the managers here on the floor that have worked on this legislation who are prepared to begin to discuss the legislation, to answer questions, and be prepared to go to a vote when the Senators are ready to do that.

I don't know the physical location. I presume that will be available.

Mr. STEVENS. As I understand, no one lives further from the Senate than I do and I have a wife waiting for me halfway home.

However, I am also a conferee. I have not seen the conference report. I was not given even the privilege of deciding whether I should sign the conference

report. I do not know for sure what is in the bill as far as the jurisdiction of the committee I happened to chair at the time. I have not waited almost 30 years to be the chairman of this committee to see it emasculated in 5 minutes because people have to get a plane home.

Mr. LOTT. In response to the Senator from Alaska, I understand that he wants to see what is in it. I think he will like what he sees in it, both for him and his constituency and the country as a whole.

This is over a \$200 billion bill that is needed in this country for safe, decent roads, bridges, and mass transit. We have drug it out for weeks and months and it is time to act.

Now, does every Senator deserve a right and an opportunity to see the formula and see how each State does and look at what it means for the Appropriations Committee and every committee? Yes, let's do it. Let's do it now. You will have an opportunity to look at this, and others should. But it is time that we get serious and get it done in a reasonable time in the best interest of America.

My father died on a narrow, two-lane road that wasn't safe and I am not going to stand any longer for us having inadequate roads and bridges in this country and for money to be sometimes spent in other places.

I am bending a little bit here, but I think everybody in this Chamber knows I tried to listen to everybody's needs, concerns on both sides, on tough legislation this week and this year. I am sympathetic. I wanted to look at the numbers. I have. I haven't seen the report. I don't know whether it is perfect. But it has been a laborious, tough, involvement and it is time that we bring it to a conclusion. Help me do that.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. Leader, I regret deeply the death of your father. I have similar feelings when cancer comes before the Senate because my grandfather, father and brother all died from cancer. I understand those feelings.

However, I also understand that our committee has responsibility for the controllable expenses. This bill reduces controllable expenses, if I am told right, by at least 2½ to 3 percent. It further will require, if I am informed right, that if there is an increase in the highway tax revenues, we must spend them, even if it means changing the budgets for other subcommittees. If there is a decrease and the estimates are not met, I am told we will take the money from controllable accounts and put it in this account to pay for highways at the cost of all the other functions that are controllable.

Now, I think that is something that I have a right to look at and Senators have a right to debate if they want to do that. I regret deeply being in a position of apparently opposing my leader who I do support and am committed to, but I feel this process needs to be understood.

Again, I am only reporting what I have been told because I have not been privileged to have a copy of this yet, despite the fact that I am on that conference committee. Now, I have been here almost 30 years, and I have never seen this happen before. Never.

Mr. LOTT. If I could respond.

Mr. STEVENS. And it is not going to happen now without me seeing that report.

Mr. LOTT. I have been here 25 years as a Member of the House and Senate and 4 years before that as a staff member. I have never seen a highway bill that was done any differently than this. Maybe this one is even a little better.

I was getting calls at my home last night until 11:30. Senators were involved, Congressmen—negotiations going on right downstairs. There have been staff members and Senators and Congressmen coming in and out of there.

I know the Senator from Alaska, as chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has seen the computer runs previously.

Mr. STEVENS. Not one. You had my staff's estimate of that run. I asked repeatedly for a copy of it and the Senator from Rhode Island will tell you, he told me the other day they were not available yet. We had an estimate of the run, and it was run on our own computers.

Mr. LOTT. I would like you to meet Senator CHAFEE.

Mr. STEVENS. I met him at Harvard Law School in 1947.

Mr. LOTT. And Senator WARNER. We would like you to get together and look at the numbers and the language and I believe you will be happy.

Mr. STEVENS. Respectfully, Mr. Leader, there have been meetings all over this Congress for the last 2 weeks and I have tried to get into them and I was not allowed in. Now, we are going to have a meeting of our committee to find out how this affects the appropriations process. Until we know how it does, I hope you will understand, I respectfully object to proceeding with this bill until we have seen a copy of the report.

Mr. LOTT. I think the easiest thing to do to resolve this problem is for you all to go meet, stop talking about it, get what you need, and then we can go ahead.

Mr. STEVENS. Parliamentary inquiry. Is the report before the Senate yet?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The report is not before the Senate.

Mr. CHAFEE. Will the majority leader yield?

Mr. LOTT. This applies to the Senator from Rhode Island. While the appropriators are meeting and having a chance to review the documents, I think this would be a good time for the managers to begin to talk about and explain what is in the bill, what the policies may be, answer questions of Senators. We can begin the process