not have anything to do with philosophy, and it does not have anything to do with politics. It has to do with making sure the kids get the ideas. That is it. . . . To be able to read our language, you have to know the sounds. You have got to know how to map it onto the letters . . . you have got to do it quickly, and you have got to know why you are reading and have good vocabulary and the things that Dr. Snow spoke about. It is never an either/or.

This bill will prevent teachers from following that sound advice. Instead, teachers will be forced to follow a mandate from Washington requiring all teachers across the country to follow one formula to teach reading—regardless of local needs. Is this what the Republicans mean when they ask for more local control of education? Schools and communities already have control over education. The Federal Government shouldn't start micromanaging their reading programs.

We should be doing more, not less, to ensure that teachers and school districts are free to design programs to meet the unique local needs of the children. The Reading Excellence Act approved by the Senate Committee by a unanimous, bi-partisan vote would give local educators the flexibility and training the experts say they need.

This bill doesn't just take control away from public schools. It also takes money away from public schools. We all recognize that recruiting and training more tutors is an important goal. President Clinton began his effort two years ago, with his ''America Reads Challenge.'' The Senate Committee bill would build on the success of that program, so that local schools will benefit from available community resources.

The House bill is a detour away from these worthy goals. Instead of helping schools capitalize on volunteer tutors and community resources, it wastes funds on private tutoring programs. It denies support for successful school-based programs in which tutoring assistance is closely linked to a child's classroom instruction.

The bill also requires local schools to spend time, money, and other scarce resources overseeing private tutoring programs. Funneling scarce public dollars into these private programs will undermine accountability for academic results and expenditure of federal dollars.

This bill has major flaws. It does little or nothing to help public school children learn to read or improve their chance of receiving a good education. Other provisions in the bill are worthwhile, because they encourage better teaching, more trained volunteer tutors, and more support for community-based family literacy programs. These initiatives will ensure that many children get the extra assistance they need to learn to read well and early.

These issues are too important for us to leave this House bill as the final word. I will do all I can to pass a strong bipartisan bill in the Senate in the coming months—the nation's children deserve no less.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3717

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now turn to Calendar No. 361, H.R. 3717, prohibiting Federal funds for the distribution of needles; that there be 30 minutes for debate to be equally divided with no amendments or motions in order. I further ask that following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to third reading and final passage, all without intervening action or debate, and finally I ask unanimous consent it be in order for me to ask for the yeas and nays on passage at this time.

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I do object on behalf of this side.

Mr. LOTT. I now ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. FORD. I object.

Mr. LOTT. Again, Mr. President, I should note that if we could have gotten that agreement, since it has already passed the House, this bill would have gone directly to the President for his signature. It passed the House April 29th by a vote of 287 to 140. I would think that this is something we would want to do. I think for the Federal Government to be distributing needles encourages people to use needles for drug abuse, and I had hoped we could get it cleared. We had worked earlier to try to get some sort of agreement on how we could clear it, with maybe even some amendments being ordered. We could not do it.

Also, in order to get the President's signature, we would have to do it in this way.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2610

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we turn to Calendar No. 273, H.R. 2610, the reauthorization of the drug czar office, and immediately following the reporting by the clerk, the chairman be recognized to modify the amendment, the committee substitute; that there be 30 minutes for debate to be equally divided with no amendments or motions in order. I further ask that following the conclusion or yielding back of this time, the Senate proceed to immediate adoption of the committee substitute to be followed immediately by third reading and final passage, all without intervening action or debate. And, finally, I ask unanimous consent it be in order for me to ask for the yeas and nays on passage at this time.

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, there are some who had hoped to offer some amendments. They were in the process of trying to work these amendments out where they would be agreeable. That has not transpired yet. So, then, on behalf of this side, I object.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I must object. I object because what the majority leader proposes is to add a very significant piece of substantive drug legislation relating to the crack-powder cocaine sentencing issues.

I note that the Judiciary Committee has not reported this legislation. This legislation is subject to significant debate. For example, the costs of the most recent proposal offered by Senators ABRAHAM and ALLARD are very significant.

According to the Justice Department—the 5-year cost estimate to our federal prison budget is more than $790 million. The 10-year estimate—more than $1.9 billion.

This is just one example of the significant policy implications of this proposal. Frankly, the Judiciary Committee must be given the opportunity to report this legislation before we debate this on the floor.

In contrast, we have fully debated the drug director legislation introduced last summer. The Judiciary Committee has debated it, the committee held hearings, the committee developed a bipartisan re-authorization bill, the committee reported the bill last November, since then we have worked with Senator MCCAIN and the Armed Services Committee to work out their issues with this bill.

The bottom lines—we have a bipartisan, fully debated, bill; and we need to get the drug director's office re-authorized.

There are many particular, specific drug policy issues to debate. Crack-cocaine is just one of them. Youth drug abuse, youth violence, drug interdiction, and many more all need to be debated.

But, let's keep our eye on the ball, and let's re-authorize General McCaffrey's office. The General needs our support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I should note we had at least one very important amendment that a Senator wanted to offer on this side of the aisle to this bill, too, dealing with the penalties for the use of powder cocaine. Certainly, it is a very important issue, and I would like it to be considered, but I called upon that Senator—actually it was two Senators—and said you will have a chance to offer that on other legislation including State, Justice, Commerce. He was willing, then, to agree to put it aside.

I really think we need to reauthorize the drug czar office. I am hoping this is not the final word on this. Maybe we can work out something in July to consider it. But our problem is, we are really running out of time. I think it is going to be unconscionable if we can't find some way to quickly reauthorize the drug czar's office. We will have to do it without it taking up more than just a couple or 3 hours, because we just don't have the time, when you look at the appropriations bills and everything else we are going to need to do.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I understand what the majority leader is saying, what he is trying to do. But if he continued to push these amendments over to a piece of legislation at a later time, then you are going to have all these amendments that are waiting, and your colleagues will want to bring them up, and then your colleagues will be asked not to bring it up on that one.

So we go through here with this constrained time that we find ourselves with, and the inability to bring amendments. I understand what the majority leader wants to do. I have no fault with what he is trying to do except we are trying to work out some amendments that we think are important. Just like your side, we are going to let ours try to work them out.

So I will object.

Mr. LOTT. I understand that. I know every individual Senator can demand his or her right to offer amendments. But I would have to say, I am very concerned that the Senate is getting more and more into a position where we try to rewrite or write bills on the floor of the Senate. One of the basic tenets I was told about when I came over to the Senate is, if you have a bad bill, don't think you are going to fix it on the floor of the Senate. When you have something like a drug czar reauthorization—I know there are a lot of drug-related amendments that are sort of pent up and Members want to offer them, but it seems to me we ought to just reauthorize that office—it is not a big, complicated bill—and allow the drug czar to do his job.

But we will keep working and hopefully find a way to get a limited amount of time and limited amendments on that issue.

PRODUCT LIABILITY REFORM ACT OF 1997

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent the Senate turn to Calendar No. 90, S. 648, the Product Liability Reform Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. I move to proceed to S. 648 and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 90, S. 648, the products liability bill:

Trent Lott, Don Nickles, Slade Gorton, Phil Gramm, John McCain, Spencer Abraham, Daniel Coats, Richard G. Lugar, Lauch Faircloth, John H. Chafee, Sam Brownback, Ted Stevens, Jon Kyl, Jeff Sessions, Michael B. Enzi, and Judd Gregg.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote occur at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 7, and the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

Mr. LOTT. Then, for the information of all Senators, this cloture vote will occur at 9:30 on Tuesday, July 7, when we return from the Fourth of July recess. It will be the first vote of that week back from the recess. If cloture is invoked, the Senate could be asked to remain in session into the night in order to reduce the 30 hours provided postcloture.

I now withdraw the motion.

TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, Senator DASCHLE and I have been talking about a task force to consider the question of economic sanctions, how they are put in place, how they are dealt with, both in the short term and over the long term. We have discussed this matter with Secretary of State Albright.

I think there is feeling on both sides of the aisle that perhaps the proclivity to place sanctions, economic sanctions on countries around the world repeatedly, and with not a clear way of ending those, has become a problem, at least one we should think very carefully about to see if there is a way we can deal with some of the pending legislation in this area, like, for instance, the Glenn amendment that was applicable in the case of India and, I believe, Pakistan with the Pressler amendment, and a number of other instances.

On the longer term, I think we need to have a task force to give thought, how we do this, when we do it, and even when we end it. I have discussed it with a number of Senators on our side of the aisle who work in this area of foreign policy and deal with the question of sanctions, and so I am satisfied we can have a good group and this will be a bipartisan group. So I want to announce we are agreeing to create a task force on economic sanctions to examine this whole area.

I wanted to have a short-term mandate, though, not just the broader policy questions, but to examine what we can do or what should be done about sanctions on India and Pakistan as a result of their nuclear programs. With the recent stories of nuclear tests in south Asia, it is important to look at the U.S. sanctions laws and how they affect our ability to de-escalate the nuclear arms race in the region.

I have asked the task force to make recommendations to the Senate leadership by July 15, 1998, on sanctions relating to these two countries—India and Pakistan. We will also ask this task force to examine overall issues related to sanctions, legislation, and implementation.

I have asked the task force to report back to the Senate leadership by September 1, 1998, on the following issues:

What constitutes a sanction?

There are many categories of legislative and executive branch action, using economic sanctions in an effort to support policy goals, including restrictions on U.S. Government funds, conditions on the export of sensitive technology, and limitations on normal commercial activity.

What sanctions are now in place? And what flexibility is provided in these different sanctions? That would be a second question.

Third: How should success be assessed in determining the effectiveness of these sanctions? When have we done what we wanted to achieve, and then can perhaps remove them?

Fourth: How should policy goals be defined in considering and implementing these sanctions?

Are effective procedures in place now to ensure coordination between the executive and legislative branches for the consideration and imposition of sanctions?

I have to say, I think the answer to that question is no; there is not adequate coordination and communication between the executive and legislative branches in this area of sanctions.

Are effective procedures in place for oversight and monitoring of the executive branch compliance and implementation of existing sanctions?

I have been stunned by some of the instances that I have seen with regard to Russia and with China where clearly sanctions were called for, should have been almost automatic by the administration, and it did not happen. Why not? And so we need to think about that.

Should there be a unique Senate floor or committee procedure for considering sanctions legislation?

Answering all of these questions in the limited timeframe will not be easy, but I am confident this very distinguished and qualified bipartisan group can come up with some very good recommendations. And I hope that the Senate will reserve its judgment and not act in this area until we see what will come out of the task force recommendations.

The task force will include 18 Members and will be chaired by the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Senator MCCONNELL. He is chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations. The cochair will be Senator BIDEN. The task force will also include Senators HELMS, BAUCUS, LUGAR, DODD, D'AMATO, GLENN, MACK, KERRY, KYL, LEAHY, WARNER, LEVIN, HUTCHINSON, LIEBERMAN, ROBERTS, and MOYNIHAN. I think you can see this is a very distinguished group. And I know they will have some very important recommendations to the Senate.

I will be glad to yield to the Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the leader.