

Mr. DURBIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. STEVENS. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. STEVENS. Mr. President, for the information of Senators, there will be no further action on the Defense appropriations bill tonight.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. I ask unanimous consent that we go into a period for morning business.

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

Mr. STEVENS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, here we go again, yes, here we go again. The fiscal year ends tomorrow at midnight. Only two of the annual appropriations bills required to fund the Federal Government have been sent to the President. This is *deja vu* all over again.

As a result, the Congress is rushing through the stopgap money measure called a continuing resolution in order to prevent a massive shutdown of the departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

Is this the way to run a government?

This is no way to run a government.

The appropriations process is a very simple process, in reality. The President sends his recommendations to the Congress in the form of a budget, usually in early February. Subsequently, the House formulates reports, debates and passes 11 annual appropriations bills. To its credit, the House has done exactly that. It has done its job.

What is wrong with the Senate?

I commend the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. COCHRAN. Yes, I commend him. With his steady leadership, the Senate Appropriations Committee has formulated and reported all of the annual appropriations bills. Eight of those appropriations bills have been passed by the Senate. Four appropriations bills are now pending in the Senate. This includes the Defense appropriations bill, the Transportation-Treasury appropriations bill,

Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill, and the District of Columbia appropriations bill, which is likely to be added to the Transportation appropriations bill in order to conform to the House version.

That is where we stand today.

What is the problem?

Regrettably, the Senate Leadership has not seen fit to bring three of our appropriations bills to the floor. This is not the fault of the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. He has called upon the leadership, as did I, to give the appropriations bills high priority in the scheduling of floor time.

The Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, the Transportation-Treasury appropriations bill, and the District of Columbia appropriations bill were approved by our Appropriations Committee over 2 months ago. I simply do not understand why the leadership is dragging its feet! Why not debate legislation that will fund critical investments in our schools, in our healthcare systems, and for our Nation's transportation infrastructure? Are Senators not going to have the opportunity to debate bills that provide over \$211 billion?

We need to debate each of these funding bills individually. We need to conference them individually with our House counterparts—not just consider them as sub-parts of a large omnibus package. That is what I believe the chairman of the Appropriations Committee wants, and that is what I, too, would like to see happen. I urge my colleagues to work toward that goal.

It is unfortunate that most of the regular programs of the departments and agencies of Government will limp into the new fiscal year, which begins—when? this Saturday, the day after tomorrow, under the terms and conditions of a very restrictive continuing resolution. Here we are in the midst of one of the largest natural disasters to hit the United States, and only two regular appropriations bills have been enacted. One would think that the Congress would want to enact all of the annual appropriations bills before the beginning of the fiscal year so that the Federal agencies can hit the road running on October 1st and deal with the problems confronting the American people. Instead, we are enacting a very restrictive stop-gap measure that merely prevents the Government from shutting down. What a shame. It is very unfortunate that the House majority refused to fix the problem created by the continuing resolution for the Community Services Block Grant program, which provides critical healthcare and nutrition services to the neediest Americans. It is very unfortunate that, as we approach winter with fuel prices expected to grow dramatically, this continuing resolution reduces funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

In conclusion, I am disappointed that the appropriations bills have not been enacted on a timely basis. Having said

that, I urge my colleagues to support the continuing resolution. We have no other choice.

I urge the leadership to call up the remaining appropriations bills, debate them, and send them to conference with the House. We have an obligation to the American people to get our work done. Debate and deliberation is what the Senate is supposed to be about—debate and deliberation and amending. The American people expect us to debate these bills and to protect the power of the purse and, thereby, protect their hard-earned tax dollars. These matters should not be swept under a carpet somewhere. More, not less, transparency is needed in debating appropriations bills. The Congress should have completed action on all the appropriations bills—not just two—on all the appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year tomorrow night. Failing that, we should enact eleven individual, fiscally responsible annual appropriations bills before the termination of this continuing resolution on November 18th.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF SAM VOLPENTEST

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate and pay tribute to the life of a great Washingtonian, a great American, and someone that I know even in the Nation's Capital will be remembered for his great contributions. Yesterday, I learned of the death of Sam Volpentest, a resident of Washington State, who lived to be 101-year-old.

Sam has continued to play a leadership role in our State. We were all proud of the fact that we all attended his 100th birthday party last year and that for the last several months he has continued to play a vital role in the State of Washington on important economic issues.

I am proud to say that Sam was a friend, and I am grateful for his mentorship and his wisdom. My thoughts are with his family and the larger Tri-City community that mourn his loss. This is a man who had a list of unending accomplishments and literally touched thousands of lives of his fellow citizens. He changed the course of history in Washington State and left his mark on this Nation's history, as well.

Sam's legacy was one of generosity, of leadership, of commitment, of inspiration—important lessons for Washingtonians to still benefit from.