

And in my judgment, this Congress would do well to decide to stand on principle and not entertain any longer the idea of selling the power marketing agencies.

Mr. President, I know there will be a substantial amount of debate and discussion about this in the Energy Committee on Wednesday, and I hope that when the dust settles, we will find a way to defeat this proposal.

#### RESTRUCTURING THE FARM PROGRAM

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me address one other quick item as long as no one is seeking the floor. A group of us just had a press conference about an hour ago to introduce a piece of legislation that calls for restructuring the Farm Program. That is not very important to most people if you are not involved in farming or do not live in a rural county or do not live in a rural State. It may not matter to you what kind of a Farm Program this country has. But if you are a family farmer trying to raise some kids and raise a crop and keep things together and make a decent living, the question of whether this country has a Farm Program is critical to your survival.

We have two different approaches to the Farm Program these days: One embodied in the most recent budget that says, let us cut \$14 billion out of the agricultural function, that says we should increase defense spending, build star wars, but we cannot afford a decent farm program; let us cut \$14 billion. The President, by contrast, said, let us cut \$4 billion.

Well, I accept that Agriculture should have some budget cuts and I supported budget cuts in the past for them. They have taken more than their share in the past than they should have, but more is to come. But not \$14 billion, \$4 billion to \$4.2 billion the President suggested is in the range that makes some sense.

But what is interesting to me is that now that this budget requirement is out there, one which I do not support by the way, we are discovering that the chairs of both committees in the House and the Senate in the agricultural area cannot write a farm plan. They cannot get a consensus on a farm plan. They cannot find 10 votes in the Senate committee for a farm plan apparently, because they paint themselves in a corner with a \$14 billion budget deficit reduction number in agriculture. You cannot write a decent farm plan with that.

Some say, well, we have a new approach called the freedom to farm bill. The freedom to farm bill, as my colleague, TOM HARKIN, said, is the "welcome to welfare" bill that disconnects in every single way an opportunity to have a long-term price support that is beneficial to family size farms.

I will not apologize for a minute to anybody for believing that investing in family farmers with a safety net that

makes sense is worthwhile for this country. Nobody in this Chamber ever ought to stand up and claim to be pro-family if you are not pro-family farmer. Nobody under any condition ought to talk about being pro-family unless they are willing to stand for the interests of maintaining a network of family farms in this country. That is where the nurturing and caring and sharing and the kind of development of family values in this country has always begun for 200 years and rolled across this country to our small towns and cities.

The fact is, it makes a difference in our future whether we have an inventory of agri-factories producing America's food or whether we have families out there living on the land where the yard light is on at night and sending kids to school and buying tractors in town. It makes a difference the kind of agriculture we have.

Family farm-based agriculture is critically important to this country's future. I know a group of us introduced legislation today that says you can create a better farm program and save money if you simply disconnect from the giant agri-factories and decide to focus a targeted price support on the family size farms.

People say, "What is a family-size farm?" I do not know the answer to that. We do not have a statistical definition of a family size farm. But we do not have enough money anyway, so you try to layer in the best price support you can for the first increment of production; and the effect of that is to provide the bulk of the benefits to family sized operations.

Now, we hope in the coming 3 or 4 weeks, in the time that is critical for the future of the new 5-year farm bill, that we can find a critical mass between Republicans and Democrats, all of whom, hopefully, will come together to get a network of family farms in this farm bill. And we hope we can do that.

There are some in this Congress who are willing to wave the white flag of surrender and say, "We give up. It cannot be done." What they do is consign rural counties in this country to economic despair and economic depression. My home county lost 20 percent of its population in the 1980's and 10 percent in the first half of the 1990's. It is shrinking like a prune. The current farm program does not work. And it is not going to help a thing by deciding to surrender and pass something called a freedom to farm act, which, as I said, is nothing more than a welcome to welfare act.

There is a better way to do this. Senator DASCHLE, myself, Senator CONRAD, Senator EXON, Senator HARKIN, and others introduced legislation today that we think puts us on the road, the right track, to deal with this country's farm problems. I hope all Members of the Senate will be able to review it and consider it as we evaluate what direction this country takes with respect to farm policy in the coming 5 years.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I make the point that there is not a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ABRAHAM). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, let me again remind my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, the managers of the Agriculture appropriations bill are on the floor. They have been on the floor throughout the day.

There are Members here who have amendments who, for some reason, are holding back offering those amendments. Let me repeat what I tried to indicate this morning, that if we can complete action on the six remaining appropriations bills this week and by the 30th of next week, by next Saturday, a week from this coming Saturday, we would, I think, be prepared to take the next week off, plus Columbus Day.

That is if we complete action on the appropriations. I do not mean complete the conference but complete action in the Senate Chamber so that either will be ready for conference as soon as we return.

We are trying to avoid the so-called train wreck come October 1, which I think can be avoided fairly easily.

I know some of my colleagues are around but they just have not come to the floor. It is very difficult for the managers to proceed with the bill.

If we finish this bill, this will be No. 8 out of 13. Then we will move to another appropriations bill, hopefully do three this week and three next week. But the managers of the bill cannot move unless they have the cooperation from Members.

Members sometimes are hard to move, but if you intend to offer an amendment to this bill, I would say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, please cooperate. We are only trying to accommodate the requests of many, many Senators the week of October 1. But we cannot accommodate those Senators unless we have the cooperation of all of our colleagues. There will be a vote sometime this afternoon, about 5:30.

Mr. COCHRAN. If the distinguished leader would yield, I can say that we are trying to reach an agreement on a vote at a time certain later this afternoon, certainly not before 5:30.