

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator will state it.

Mr. DOMENICI. What is the situation in the Senate now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair indicates to the Senator that we are acting on a unanimous-consent request that the Senate go into recess subject to the call of the Chair immediately after the remarks of the Senator from Arkansas, and those have just finished.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have not had an opportunity this morning to speak because I had to be elsewhere, which you might suspect.

I ask unanimous consent that there be a quorum call for 5 minutes after which I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes and then the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator can ask for a quorum call but cannot predetermine what takes place after that. The Senator can ask unanimous consent to speak or put in a quorum call and then state that request, and the Chair would consider that.

Mr. DOMENICI. The quorum call needs to run before I make the request?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. SARBANES. If the Senator will withhold for a moment, is the Senator prepared to proceed now?

Mr. DOMENICI. I need that 5 minutes that I was seeking.

Mr. SARBANES. Senator NUNN would also seek 10 minutes. Why do we not take a quorum call and then see if we can work that out.

Mr. DOMENICI. 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. THOMAS. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SARBANES. Reserving the right to object. Could we have 3 minutes on this side, as well? We have been doing an equilibrium thing here all day.

I amend the request to ask unanimous consent that this side of the aisle have 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

THE NEED FOR A LIMITED CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I have been in the chair listening for some time, and I wanted to make a couple of observations. First of all, I agree thoroughly with Senator DOLE and the

Members of this body in seeking to have a resolution which would put the Government back in place. It seems to me that that is what we should do. We ought to have a limited CR in which there is time to proceed with what I hope are useful negotiations that are going on. We need to put this thing behind us and get on with resolving the problems.

There are, however, I think, a couple of other things that we also ought to be able to expect. One is that the White House and the President should deliver what they said they would. We did this on November 19, I believe. We had an agreement that we would have a CR, that during that time there would be a balanced budget based on CBO numbers, over 7 years. It did not happen. That did not happen. Then we had an opportunity—the White House did—to pass appropriations bills, to put almost all those back to work who are now furloughed. They did not do that. He vetoed it.

Mr. President, there is another difficulty that we have had in Wyoming. It has to do with Yellowstone Park. There was an article in the paper this morning about it. Our Governor sought to negotiate with the Secretary of the Interior so that the State would take responsibility for part of Yellowstone Park. There was no real effort on the part of the Secretary to do that. Promise to return calls, promise to do something to consider a proposition by the State, did not do that. So not only are the employees of the National Park Service in this case not working, but neither are the concessionaires, neither are those who had contracted to do work, because the Department of Interior did not, frankly, make the real effort to do anything about that. So there has to be some responsibility assigned there in terms of doing what we said we would do.

Second, Mr. President, it seems to me that those who are doing the negotiating, if they really wanted to find a solution, if there was a real, honest-to-goodness effort on the part of the parties to find a solution, they could do that. It is time to do that.

Frankly, I suggest that the three principles sit down, the President, the majority leader, and the Speaker of the House—eliminate all the observers, eliminate the staff—and come to some agreement, come to the snubbing post on what we ought to do. There is a lot of leeway within this outline, and we can do that. Mr. President, that is our job.

Our job is to find solutions. That is what we are here for. That is why we are the trustees for the American people. Our job is to keep the Government functioning in as effective way as we know how. Our job is to make decisions and to move forward. We have great opportunities to do that, great opportunities in this place to do that. There are opportunities in the White House.

There is not much point in assigning blame, but there is plenty to go

around. We ought to come to the snubbing post and make some decisions. I yield the floor.

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. DOMENICI. 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. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the previous order, I be recognized to speak for not more than 10 minutes, Senator NUNN be recognized thereafter for up to 15 minutes, and following those remarks, I ask that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

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

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, there has been a rather lengthy discussion this morning about the continuing resolution and the status of our public employees. I very much wanted to be here this morning to talk about it, but obviously I had some other things I had to do as we seek to get a balanced budget.

I thought I might take just a few minutes and talk about the fact that the situation that we are in today is the result of both the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States having certain rights and certain responsibilities. In a sense, it is a two-way street, not a one-way street like everybody has been talking about, including the President, who used the words "cynical strategy" to talk about the Republican Congress, albeit he chose to say it was the Republican House rather than both of us. "Cynical strategy" seemed to indicate that the entire blame for where we are today should be borne by the U.S. House Republicans, or a combination of the House Republicans and the Senate Republicans.

Mr. President, and fellow Americans, that is not true. Let me state what Republicans have done and what I perceive that the President has not done that put us in this situation that we are in today. Before I begin that, I would like very much to state once again that I hope we can resolve the issue of Federal employees who have not been paid and who have been relying upon their paychecks while they work without pay or relying upon them because we promise to pay them. I think we ought to solve that issue and solve it quickly. They are not responsible for the problem.

Having said that, Republicans in both Houses produced a balanced budget using real numbers and using the Congressional Budget Office estimates. We already did that. The President of the United States, in his capacity as the Chief Executive, chose to veto that.