SOLICITING STAFF FOR RESEARCH DISCUSSION

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I want to take a minute of the Senate's time to comment on a recent solicitation made to one of my staff members.

I was very concerned to find out that a market research company is calling congressional staffers and offering them $150 to participate in a research discussion on the subject of spectrum allocation. My staff was told that for spending 2 hours discussing this subject, the individual would either be paid $150 or could direct the money to be given to the charity of his or her choosing. The meeting, which my staff has declined to attend, is currently scheduled for tomorrow.

Mr. President, I have asked the Ethics Committee to comment on this discussion group offer. They informed my staff that being paid to attend such an event is not allowed.

Based on the Ethics Committee decision, I hope no Senate staff from any office will attend this meeting. What is so disconcerting about this offer is the idea that staff would be paid by an outside source to discuss an issue that will soon be before this body.

As most Members of the Senate know, the broadcast industry has been running full-page ads on the subject and is expected to soon launch a multimillion-dollar media campaign to defeat any effort to mandate spectrum auctions. I support broadcast spectrum auctions and will continue to do that. Others oppose my efforts, and that is their right. In the public forum of the Senate, we will decide what is the right thing to do. As we debate this, we should be careful to live up to the letter and spirit of the gift ban.

I do not know who hired the research company and what games are being orchestrated, but this technique is an insult to the Senate. I hope we will not see this type of lobbying or information gathering again.

I ask unanimous consent that a fax from Shugoll Research Corp. be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SHUGOLL RESEARCH,
Bethesda, MD, February 26, 1996.

To: Grant Seiffert
Office: Senator McCain
From: Mrs. Day

We are inviting Capitol Hill staffers to attend a research discussion on behalf of KRC Research & Consulting, a national opinion research organization.

This study focuses on the spectrum allocation debate.

The purpose of this group discussion is purely information-gathering. All comments will be anonymous.

The group will consist of about eight other Hill staffers and a professional moderator who will lead the informal discussion.

The group is being held on Wednesday, February 28th.

Please call us ASAP so we can reserve a space for you.

Our number is (301) 215–7248.

Mr. McCAIN. In summary, I repeat that I am surprised that a company would offer staffers what would amount to $75 an hour for discussion of an issue that is going to be before this body. I hope we do not see a repetition of this kind of activity.

I intend to try to find out who hired the Shugoll Research organization to do this, and I intend to publicize that organization because I think it is an unethical act and one that is far beneath certainly the members of the staff of this body.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE PEOPLE'S MESSAGE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, being back in my home State of California is always a marvelous reality check for me. What an honor it is to represent the largest State in the Union, the most diversified State in the Union. We have in that State a tremendous farm community. We have in that State the Silicon Valley. We have more students, we have more seniors, we have more families, we have more working women. We have more of everything—the pluses and the minuses of America: the wealthy, the middle, the poor; the beautiful ocean, the need to preserve that resource, tourism.

Mr. President, what a reality check I got. I went home, I went to schools, from the little kindergarten to graduate schools, to the hospitals, to the chambers of commerce, downtown to the cities, to the suburbs, to meeting with community groups of all kinds, every race, color, and creed, to our beautiful Pacific Ocean, to our facilities in need of earthquake repair, to our farmlands, to our courts, to our young, to our old, to those in between. That is why it is so good to go home and stay in touch.

I hear one message from everyone. This cuts across party lines, it cuts across all lines. That is, ''Congress, get on with your work. Take care of this country. Do not play any more games with Government shutdown. Stop being radical. Be reasonable. Meet each other halfway, move forward, do not play games with defaulting. Get on with your work.''

It was an amen chorus for me. I agree with that. I told my California citizens, regardless of whether they are Democrats, Republicans, or independents, fighting the battles of the past is not what we ought to be doing. That is what we are doing around here; either fighting the battles of the past—and I will explain what I mean—or we are battling over Whitewater, when people want us to take care of business.

What do I mean when I say we tend to battle over past arguments? It was during the 1950's that a Republican President named Dwight David Eisenhower said there was an important role for the Federal Government to play in education. He wrote the National Defense Education Act. What it said is that we better make sure that our students are prepared in science, in research. At that time, the Soviet Union was getting ahead, pulling ahead in these arenas. This Republican President said to the Congress that there is a role for the Federal Government to play. It is important for our defense that we have an educated work force, that our young people are skilled.

So we decided in the 1950's that there is, in fact, a place for the Federal Government in education. Does that mean controlling what goes on in the classroom? Of course not. What it means is coming in as a partner where there is a critical need. An example of this today certainly would be continuing Head Start, the title I program, and putting more computers in the schools. These are some areas.

In the 1950's, this role was determined. What is happening now, we have radical elements in the Congress who want to do away with the Department of Education. We would be the only leading power not to have a Department of Education, a place in a national government where this is the focus.

We have people in this body who believe in cutting aid to education, and, in fact, in the last continuing resolution that we passed, if you annualized those cuts, they would be $3 billion plus. I have to say, as I went around to the schools, they are very upset about this, from the young ones to those in universities. There we are, fighting the battles of the 1950's on education.

Then what happened in the 1960's? In the 1960's, we decided as a nation to start Medicare. It was very controversial at first. The doctors opposed it and said it would be socialized medicine. What is Medicare? It is insurance for our elderly. It took our elderly and gave them health insurance. Now our system is the envy of the world as it relates to seniors—99 percent of our seniors have health insurance. Why are we opening up that battle now in the 1990's? You cannot take $270 billion out of Medicare and expect it to survive. You cannot get a way out for people to say, ''I don't need it. I will set up a medical savings account, drop out of Medicare,'' and the wealthiest and healthiest will be gone and the system will go under. But we are battling the fight over Medicare.

In the 1970's, under a Republican President, Richard Nixon, we set up the Environmental Protection Agency because the country believed it was important to stand up and protect our heritage. The Environmental Protection Agency—this crowd running this Congress wants to cut enforcement by over a third; some even two-thirds. So we are now battling the fight over

whether or not there should be a national role in environmental protection.

Now, in the 1980's, we had a big debate over nursing home standards. There were stories that came into the Congress—and I was on the House side—horror stories of abuse of senior citizens; frail elderly tragically being abused in nursing homes, whether it was scalded in hot tubs or sexually abused and mistreated. We decided to set up national nursing home standards, and finally those are being implemented. This crowd in this Congress does not think there ought to be Federal nursing home standards.

In the 1990's, we all came together behind the concept of community policing, that crime was a problem, and we thought it was a good idea—and criminologists joined us, and police joined us—to put the police in the neighborhoods, in the communities, let them be a role model for the kids and reflect the communities. Crime will go down. We are beginning to see it work. There is a move to repeal the crime bill that has the money for community policing, that banned assault weapons.

What I have done, just looking back to my lifetime that I can remember, is go through the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, 1980's, 1990's, show you education, Medicare, the environment, community policing, the EPA, and show you how this Republican Congress is bogged down in the battles of the past. We do not have to refight these battles, my friends. What we need to do is meet each other halfway when we disagree on budget issues and move forward.

Now, here is another area that is being brought up for a new battle. It is a painful issue. It is a difficult issue. And it is yet another that is dragging us back to the future and stopping us from getting ready for the next century—that my people in California want us to get ready for.

In 1973 the Supreme Court decided Roe versus Wade. It basically said a woman has a right to choose, it falls into the privacy provisions of the Constitution, and in the beginning of her pregnancy it is her right and her choice. Roe versus Wade goes on to say that later on in the pregnancy the State has an interest and can legislate. Why are we reopening that issue? Day in and day out, it is holding up bills on this floor. Why not let Roe versus Wade be the law of the land and move on? We are never going to agree on every detail. But get the Government out of this and let the American people, in the privacy of their own homes and their own communities and their own churches and their own families, decide this difficult issue. But, no, we bring it up here, day after day, and it stops us from moving forward what we really need to do here, which is to agree on how to balance this budget, how to do it in a fair way, and get ready for the next century.

Now we have a major Presidential candidate vowing to make abortion illegal—illegal—in cases of rape. In the 1980's, I wrote an amendment on the House side that passed. It was a close vote. It was the Boxer amendment, and it said that States in fact would pay for abortions of women in poverty who were the victims of rape or incest. I mean, if we cannot agree on anything else, can we not agree as human beings, men and women together, reasonable people with a conscience, that we should not force a woman to bear the child of a rapist? How radical are we going to get?

I remember the Willie Horton ads that were used against a Democratic candidate for President. Are these candidates saying force a woman to have that rapist's child? Is that where we are heading? And why are we bringing this up, day after day? It is even an issue on the D.C. bill that we just refused to end debate on. That is one of the reasons. We have work to do. Why are we reopening these tough battles of the past when we should, in fact, move on and do our work? We can have the most successful America ever because we are the greatest country in the world. We have the most productive workers in the world. If we can stop these battles of the past.

I also think, if we could hold off on tax cuts to the wealthiest among us, the fight over balancing the budget would be easy. We would have much less to disagree about. Why can we not agree that people who earn over $200,000, who do fine, thank you very much, can wait until the budget is actually in balance and then we will look at tax cuts for the very wealthiest? You hear so much today about the average worker falling behind, and this crowd wants to give huge tax breaks to the richest. They cannot even wait until the budget is balanced. Set that aside. Then let us take our spending issues, meet each other halfway, and move on.

Let us address the issues of worker insecurity. President Clinton and Secretary Robert Reich have been speaking about worker insecurity for years. I remember the President telling workers in California, several years ago, that many of them will have as many as seven or eight jobs in a lifetime, and why it is so crucial for them to have the very best education, so they would get the very best jobs and have a chance at the very best worker retraining and be able to get health insurance that is portable, meaning they can take it with them from job to job, and make sure the companies cannot raid their pensions, that they can have portable pensions as well.

Senator KENNEDY has talked about solid financial incentives to those who keep good jobs in this Nation. In other words, companies that keep the jobs here, give them incentives. We should move on that now. President Clinton has said let us give a break to families to help them educate their children. We have the ability. Senator DOLE has recently, on the campaign trail, talked about the average worker falling behind. We have the elements of being able to put together a package here that can make life better for our people if we stop battling the battles of the past, wasting our time on a political witch hunt in Whitewater, and get on with our work. We have trade agreements that need to be enforced. Exports are crucial. And, as President Clinton once told me, America needs new customers. That is what we need. But we have to be very strong. We have to stand up to whatever nation would put barriers in the way of our exports.

We are the most creative in the workplace, from farm exports to semiconductors to entertainment to pharmaceuticals—even cars. We are beginning to see our car exports go up. All of our exports are growing. To put a barrier around our country would be the wrong thing to do. It is acting like a frightened person. We have nothing to be afraid of with our country sporting the best and most productive work force in the world and all the business that we need to really move out.

I agree with our President that in between unfettered free trade and isolationism there is fair trade, which our country must aggressively pursue. I am the ranking member on a committee that Senator BOND chairs on international finance. We know how important it is, how crucial it is that we stand behind our trade agreements. We have problems going on in China, where they are pirating our CD's and our laser discs. This is a problem. The way to resolve it is to enforce that agreement. Enforce that agreement, not decide we are going to give up on exporting to China where, by the way, the Chinese buy 5 billion movie tickets a year compared to 1.2 billion a year in America.

So we have much to do. I get very excited about coming back to work when I have come back from my State because the people are telling me what they need from us and I know we can do it. I am so disappointed we are now moving into this Whitewater matter instead of some things we ought to have on our plate. We ought to agree, close down that Whitewater investigation. Give it a reasonable amount of time, take it out of the realm of politics, and let the special counsel do his work. There is no limit on him. He can go on as long as he wants. He has 100 agents on the case and 30 lawyers. The fact of the matter is we are just duplicating the work of the special counsel because somebody over there thinks they are going to bring the President down with something embarrassing or hurt the First Lady.

The country is disgusted with it. I am not saying everybody, but I think the vast majority of people when asked say it has turned into a political witch hunt. We should be better than that. We have so much to do. We have to get computers into the classrooms and into the homes of America. I am working on a bill, a bipartisan effort to get that done.

We should increase the minimum wage that is at a 40-year low, if we want to do something to help working people stop falling behind. And people who think it is just teenagers who hold those jobs, I want to correct the record. People support their families on the minimum wage. That is the fact. And they cannot live at this minimum wage.

Yesterday, it may have been the day before, in California, construction workers rallied in the streets of Los Angeles by the thousands. Our Governor in California has decided to refigure the way construction workers are paid. They are supposed to be paid prevailing wages on State contracts. That means the average of the wages in the area. He wishes to mess with that formula, if you will. He has directed a committee to change that formula so that construction workers get 20 percent less pay.

Is that what we ought to be doing at a time when we are all growing to the realization that workers are stagnating? We should be supporting prevailing wage laws. One of the reasons many of us voted against this D.C. bill is not only because it attacks a woman's right to choose, but it would in fact walk away from prevailing wages, and it would say to the city of the District of Columbia forget it; just pay whatever the going will bear. And that will thrust people into poverty.

Let us reach across party lines and work for the American people. They deserve it, and they expect it from us. So I think instead of us coming together on the next thing on our agenda, fighting over Whitewater, we should be sitting here debating how we can make sure that as we go into the next century we have the most educated kids, the strongest families, the lowest amount of crime that we can bring to our communities, the best environmental protection, and cleaning up Superfund sites.

I visited a site, Mr. President, San Bernardino, CA, that got caught in this continuing resolution because the funds were frozen. If we do not move soon on that Superfund site, the drinking water of 600,000 San Bernardino residents is going to be poisoned. It is called the Newmark Superfund site.

We should stop playing games here. Now, I heard that there is some progress, that in fact the appropriations committee leaders on both sides of the aisle got together and they are working to resolve these matters. But my message today is let us reach across those party lines and get our work done. The people who drink out of the water in San Bernardino, they are of every political party. This is not about politics. This is about doing our job.

So we need to pass a balanced budget, to meet each other halfway and get it done. Put off the tax cut to the wealthiest, and we can get it done.

We need a clean debt ceiling so we make sure that the greatest country in the world does not default on its debt.

We need a trade strategy, an economic strategy to lift our people up. We are hearing now across party lines that this is something we should be doing. Let us not let this moment pass. We can do it. You and I have worked on some things in the farm bill where we crossed over our divisions on a number of issues, joining together. What we did is going to make life better for family farmers. I think we can do that.

Transportation and infrastructure is required to move goods through our Nation. I went down to the San Diego border. There is tremendous trade as a result of NAFTA. Now, I was not a NAFTA fan, and I have a lot of problems with NAFTA. But I vowed, even though I did not support it because of the wage disparity and environmental problems and labor standards I did not like, that I was going to make it work. We know there are ways to make it work. We need an infrastructure bill so that we can stand behind trade and make it work, because to get the goods into our country or shipping them out, they have to be able to move.

A lot of our local governments want loan guarantees from us. They will raise the money. Loan guarantees can make it work without putting taxpayers unduly at risk.

So, in any event, Mr. President, I wanted to use this opportunity to kind of give to the Senate and for the RECORD my state of mind at this point as I come back from a very in-depth visit to my home State, to give a reality check for all of us.

To sum it up very succinctly, the people want us to meet each other halfway on our differences and move forward, because a lot of people in today's economy are not moving forward. They are standing still.

If we have the will, we can turn it around. I think there is enough sentiment in this body across party lines that I have heard from the majority leader, the Democratic leader, and others in this body, from Senator KENNEDY to Senator JEFFORDS to others, that we can reach out to make life better for our people. Instead of taking up these issues that divide us, that are political, that everyone knows have political motivation, let us start working for the people we represent.

I thank the Chair very much. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The gallery will refrain from making comment on Members' speeches.

Mr. FRIST addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent to speak for what time is necessary as if in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. FRIST and Mr. HARKIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1578 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—WHITEWATER EXTENSION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to a resolution extending the Special Committee To Investigate Whitewater Development Corporation, which I now send to the desk, and it be considered under the following time agreement: One amendment in order to be offered by Senator D'AMATO, limited to 2 hours, to be equally divided in the usual form, and that no amendment be in order to the D'Amato amendment; further, I ask that following debate on the D'Amato amendment, the amendment be laid aside and the Democratic leader or his designee be recognized to offer an amendment, under the same restraints as the D'Amato amendment, and following the debate the Senate proceed to vote first on the D'Amato amendment, to be followed immediately by a vote on the Daschle or his designee amendment, and that following those votes, the resolution be advanced to third reading and passage occur immediately without further action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I shall object in just a moment, I just want to point out that the Democratic leader has made a proposal with respect to continuing the Whitewater inquiry for a limited period of time. We think at a minimum, as a courtesy, that proposal needs to be responded to and addressed.

Second, we have no idea what the D'Amato amendment is that is contained in this proposal.

Third, this provides for moving to immediate passage without an opportunity for sufficient debate, in our view, to explore all of the implications.

Therefore, for all of these reasons, but particularly because of the proposal put forward by the Democratic leader earlier this afternoon, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I note that under the consent that was sought, the distinguished Democratic leader or his designee would be recognized to offer an amendment, and I am sure under this arrangement he would have done so and we would have had a way to have both points of view considered.

However, I understand the objection, and I know there will continue to be discussion between the leaders on how this matter can be addressed. That would be considered further.