is quite a learning experience, for those of us who take the time to talk with them; I have often done that over the years—and to share with them his insight and his wisdom, to decipher for them the importance of what might be occurring on the floor, and to listen to their questions and their concerns.

His interest in them is genuine, and it has made him a favorite of generations of pages. This is yet another facet of the quiet but extraordinary legacy of courtesy and accomplishment bequeathed to the Senate and to the Nation by Senator PRYOR.

Mr. President, I thank Senator PRYOR for his service to the Senate and to the Nation. He has not trumpeted his ambitions, not made big noises like half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern, but has led by example, earning the genuine esteem and respect of his colleagues and the admiration of so many others whose lives he has touched. I wish him good health and happiness in his retirement. As he listens to the crickets chirping in the Arkansas dusk, raising their noisy chorus to the rising Arkansas moon, I hope that he remembers us as fondly as we will remember him.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. PRESSLER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. PRESSLER] is recognized.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I want to commend our former majority leader on his great remarks about DAVID PRYOR. His remarks have inspired me to say a few words about DAVID. I have been trying to say a few words about each retiring Senator. But DAVID PRYOR has been a friend of mine. In fact, I have been down to Arkansas to his charitable event that he has to raise money in Texarkana several times. I have also been down to Little Rock to speak at college events. I feel that I have gotten to know DAVID and Barbara Pryor quite well.

He is a legendary figure in this body because he is, I think, one of the President's best friends, and DAVID PRYOR can go straight to the President with certain information or projects. That is an unusual responsibility for a Senator to have.

But he is sort of a legendary U.S. Senator in that he came here as a page, I believe. He was in the House of Representatives when I was over in the House. I have followed his career for a number of years with great admiration.

I shall miss DAVID PRYOR a great deal. He has done a lot of legislation. I serve with him on the Senate Finance Committee. I serve with him on the Senate Committee on Aging. But more than that, he is my friend. I shall miss DAVID PRYOR. We all come and go. DAVID PRYOR is leaving a little early, in my opinion, and I shall miss him very much. I join in those wonderful remarks paying tribute to Senator DAVID PRYOR of Arkansas.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SNOWE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PRESSLER. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

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

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

Mr. PRESSLER. Madam President, I objected regarding the Pipeline Safety Act, which I am trying very hard to pass. I will not object if the Senator desires to discuss issues unrelated.

Mr. KENNEDY. I would like to discuss an unrelated matter. If it becomes apparent that you can move ahead in terms of final disposition, I will withhold further comments. If I could, I ask unanimous consent to proceed with what I expect to be 12 or 15 minutes on the issue of education.

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

EDUCATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, on Tuesday, the Republicans announced, with great fanfare, an education amendment that is a day late and $800 million short. It restores $2.3 billion of $3.1 billion necessary to meet the President's request for fiscal year 1997. But this amendment is hardly motivated by concern for the students of America. It is an election-eve conversion, and the American people should not be fooled.

As costs, student enrollments and college debts soar, the Republicans are offering ''education lite.'' The increase they offer falls well short of the funding needed just to keep pace with inflation and enrollment increases.

Senator LOTT himself admitted the amendment was designed to meet the political needs of the Republican Party, not the educational needs of American students. Senator LOTT said on Tuesday, ''We can either get our brains beat out politically, or we can get in there and mix it up with them, and that's what we are going to do.''

Republicans are running scared from the fact that the American people support education. Their change of heart is cynical and hypocritical, and it will not last past the November election.

What TRENT LOTT gives with one hand, NEWT GINGRICH is already planning to take away with the other. The Republican leaders in the House are telling their rank and file not to get excited because they can rescind the money later. House Republican conference member JOHN BOEHNER said, in appropriations —and BOB LIVINGSTONE agreed—that ''we can always have a rescissions bill in January.''

Senator LOTT and the Republicans are fleeing from their anti-education record, but they better not look back, because if they do, the sight of all their cuts in education might turn them into pillars of salt.

When the Dole-Gingrich Republican leadership took over in 1995, their education agenda was stark and severe: abolish the Department of Education and slash Federal support for schools and college students.

From January 1995 to the present, Republicans have proposed education cuts every chance they have had: on rescission bills, on budget resolutions, on appropriations bills and continuing resolutions. When Democrats refused to let these devastating cuts pass, Republicans shut down the Government because they could not get their way.

With the help of students and parents across the country, we turned back the worst of these anti-education funding measures for fiscal year 1996.

Republicans did not learn. In this year's budget resolution, they again propose to slash education, this time by 20 percent over the next 6 years.

The record of the past 2 years is clear. It is clear that Republicans are no friends of education, and it is equally clear that the American people do not want education cut. The current election-eve Republican ''education lite'' amendment has no credibility. It is written in disappearing ink. NEWT GINGRICH, Bob Dole, and their allies have an irresistible impulse to slash education to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy. And Democrats will not let that happen.

Madam President, this chart illustrates clearly exactly where we are on the issue of education. The black line going back to 1995 is President Clinton's request. That line represents inflation plus expanded enrollment. We have expanded enrollment in the elementary and secondary schools, going up to 52 million or 53 million, and expanded enrollment as well in higher education. This particular line reflects the increase that is necessary to deal with the problems of inflation, expanded student population in the K–12 well as in higher education.

This line here reflects what was actually the fiscal year 1995 level of funding in terms of constant dollars. This $600 million loss represents the figure that was effectively agreed to after the proposal by the Republicans of $1.7 billion in rescissions in 1995. Their proposal was to cut $1.7 billion. We were able to resist that, and the final figure that was set was $600 million in rescissions. These were moneys already going out to schools all across the country, K–12—also available, some of the funding, in terms of higher education appropriated in previous years. Their proposal reduced this by $1.7 billion.

We see that this $3.9 billion cut represents the House appropriations in 1995. The continuing resolution brought it back to $3.1 billion. Finally, just before the Government shutdown

that took place here, there was an add-on of $2.7 billion, and the negotiation which took place at that time brought us to $400 million less than level funding—in absolute dollars. There is a significant reduction here in terms of the real purchasing power in education. We see, once again, in this year's House appropriations, a cut of $1.5 billion. The Senate cuts in appropriations are not as severe as in the House appropriations.

The press asked us why we are bringing this up at this particular time. The fact is that the Senate Appropriations Committee met last week and finally resolved the dollar figure that was reached by that committee. Within a day, under the leadership of Senator DASCHLE, Senator HARKIN, Senator KERRY, Senator LEVIN, Senator WELLSTONE, and others, we announced that we would be offering an amendment that would restore the $3.1 billion difference between the President's request and what was actually coming out of the Senate Appropriations Committee. So we did that at the end of last week. We tried to offer the amendment earlier this week. We were denied that opportunity, and we were notified then that the Republicans had decided to an add-on of some $2.3 billion.

Mr. President, of course, if they had made that add-on last week, for a good chunk of these education programs, we would not have this kind of difference. So I say election year conversion because what a difference a week makes. What a difference a week makes in terms of the Republican position.

The fact of the matter is, on each and every occasion since 1995, on any budget, any appropriation, any reconciliation, any continuing resolution, any time the issue of funding for education has been out there, there has been a reduction.

I want to take notice here, Madam President, and say that there have been some notable exceptions among our Republican friends. I acknowledge the Senator from Maine, who has placed a high priority in education, and Senator HATFIELD, and a few others. But this chart represents the ongoing and continuing record that has taken place.

Basically, we are talking about the rescissions of 1995, where it was $1.7 billion. In the 7-year budget resolution of 1996, they proposed a Federal slash of one-third over 7 years in Federal investment in education. The deep cuts came in college aid, $10.6 billion in student loan cuts, and a freeze on Pell grants, which reduces their value by 40 percent, or effectively eliminates grants to 1 million students. You can have it either way. That is the effect of their recommendation in terms of funding the Pell grant. Cutbacks in other education—and this is in 1996—such as 350,000 preschool children who would lose Head Start, 2 million children who would lose title I, reading and math, and programs to keep schools safe and drug-free would be cut back for 39 million students. That was in 1996.

On the budget reconciliation, listen to what was recommended. The Republican majority carried out of our Labor Committee a 2-percent student loan tax on every college and university in the country. Do we understand that? A 2-percent tax on every college. That 2-percent tax would be on the amount of scholarship aid and assistance. So when you take a school like Northeastern University, 80 percent of the kids that go there, their parents never have completed college; 85 percent are working 25 hours a week or more. These are individuals who are hungry, they are gifted, but they don't have great resources and they are trying to make it to enhance their own opportunities for advancement in our society. This 2-percent tax would have particularly hit Boston University by $750,000 to $800,000 a year, which meant anywhere from 18 to 20 students' scholarship help that the university would not have been able to provide. That was one aspect. They raised interest rates on the Plus Loan. The Plus Loans are basically for middle-income, working families. It gives them additional opportunity at a somewhat lower rate for educational loans to supplement their children who are in college. The Republicans eliminated the interest-free grace period for students beginning to repay after graduation. We now have a 6-month period.

The fact remains that that 6 months is a key period for the student to get a decent job. They wanted to eliminate it and start repayment at the time of graduation, which would have put additional pressure on the students to become employed because they would have had to start repaying their debt. If you ask Secretary Riley what is the impact of that grace period on students repaying their debt, his testimony, and all the testimony, is that if you give them a grace period, they have more time to get a good job, one that they want to stay with and one where they will have an enhanced opportunity for repayment.

So those are some of the areas of the cuts, as well as cutting back and putting a cap of 10 percent on the direct loan program. That direct loan program, which moved us up toward a division of total student aid so that we would have competition between the guarantee and direct loan programs, was agreed to by Republicans and Democrats in the previous Congress. Nonetheless, this was closed down, and it would only be 10 percent.

The amendment that was offered here on the floor of the U.S. Senate to permit each college to make its own judgment whether it wanted to go to direct loan or guaranteed loan was overwhelmingly defeated by those who want to continue the guaranteed loan program, which will mean that $127 billion will go through the guaranteed agencies over a 6- to 7-year period. It means anywhere from $7 to $10 billion in profits to those agencies, which is basically money that is coming out of the pockets and pocketbooks of working families.

The 1996 appropriations bill is cutting education 16 percent. It terminated Perkins loans and student initiative grants for the neediest students. It raised the Pell minimum grant to $600. The effect of that is that you eliminate awards to 175,000 low-income students. The bill cuts back title I by $1.1 billion to deny reading and math to over a million children. It cuts back Head Start by $140 million, denying preschool to 48,000 children.

Then we come to the continuing resolution of January 26, 1996. That cut education by $3.1 billion from 1995 levels, a 13-percent cut.

The final omnibus resolution reduced education $400 million, after the Senate adopted the Specter-Harkin amendment, which restored $2.7 billion in education. That amendment passed 84 to 16.

So during this national debate about how there is a distortion and misrepresentation about who is for education, even when we had the principal instrument to recover and restore some of that education, supported at that time by a number of Republicans—there were 16 Republican Members of the Senate who said ''no.''

Now, a 6-year budget resolution, which was passed in May and June 1996, cuts Pell grants by $6.2 billion over 6 years. It cuts work study for 800,000 students. It cuts title I for over 300,000 children. The list goes on.

The final point I make, Mr. President—and I will include this analysis as part of the RECORD—is that the Republican platform, in August, said, ''We will abolish the Department of Education.''

Maybe there have to be adjustments in some of the agencies of Government. But I would suggest that most American families want to have the Secretary of Education at the President's elbow every single day of the year saying, ''What about the education of the children of this country? What are we going to do about that?''

Money can't solve all of the problems. But what changes are necessary to make academic achievement and accomplishment, enhanced standards, and improved quality education available? I think most Americans would say of all the agencies of Government, certainly you need Defense, certainly you need the Secretary of State and maybe the Treasury. But I tell you. The Secretary of Education is right up there among American priorities.

So why do the Republicans want to abolish the Department of Education, and now in the final hours come back and say, ''Oh, well, we are really for education—we are the education Congress?'' It is something that I have difficulty understanding.

Earlier in the day we were asked, ''What about the Republicans' proposal, the Lott amendment?'' I just

point out very briefly that this amendment does not meet critical needs—no increase in the Head Start Program, and no increase in teacher training.

We just had the Carnegie Commission report a week ago that one of the principal deficiencies in our educational system is that we are not getting enough teachers that are well trained, nor are teachers getting enhanced training. We have tried to restore the administration's request in this area. The Republicans offer no additional funding for teacher training; no money for the TRIO Program, which is academic support for disadvantaged students; and no money for School to Work. These are crucial programs. Twenty years ago, if you graduated from high school you were making 65 or 70 percent of what a college graduate was making. That percentage has dropped to about 55 percent—the growing income gap that is taking place.

We tried with School to Work to move three out of four kids that do not go on to college into the private sector. It has been strongly supported by Republicans in a number of States.

Again, I refer to the distinguished Governor of Maine, the husband of our chair, who is one of the very innovative Governors in moving toward the School to Work Program, and other Republican Governors and Democratic Governors as well.

There is no money for summer jobs, even though about 40 percent of all the summer job programs have academic provisions. There were funds in terms of other education programs. I had hoped that we would take those increases and put them in for increases to the President's request here on the floor of the Senate, or in the continuing resolution. We would get a positive response—an overwhelming response—in favor of those measures.

Madam President, 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.

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

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

FUNDING EDUCATION

Mrs. KASSEBAUM. Madam President, I am here to answer some of the statements made by the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, Senator KENNEDY. Unfortunately, I did not hear all of the comments but some that I heard made by Senator KENNEDY regarding education need to be answered.

It just is not the case that education has been slashed by Republicans over the last 6 to 8 years, and I really find it very disappointing that somehow this keeps coming up. It is easy to make a statement saying education has been slashed and decimated by Republicans without any real understanding of the programs under discussion, what has been debated and what resolutions have been made because, actually, education budgets have continued to climb.

I think nearly all of us at least would acknowledge that money alone is not the answer to quality education. It certainly has been important for us to have a support system when we are asked to help with special education moneys, moneys for disadvantaged students, moneys for disabled students, for the student loan program. But money alone is not the answer.

We are now spending more than $25 billion in our budget for education, and there has to be some understanding of what it is all about. For one thing, we have dramatically increased money for Head Start programs, which are preschool programs for those young children who need most to have that assistance.

At the time we worked on the legislation to increase Head Start funding, we also incorporated changes in the program which were designed to enhance the quality of delivery of Head Start programs. Some States have outstanding Head Start programs. Other States have not pulled together the network that I think is necessary for quality preschool education. But that money has been increased.

As for student loans, I think it is exceptionally misleading to claim that the student loan program has been decimated. For one thing, all eligible students applying for a student loan receive a student loan. In 1993, the volume of student loans was $16.1 billion; 3 years later, it is $26.6 billion. Students are not being denied student loans.

The Pell grant program and the other grant and work-study programs have not been appropriated to the level that has been authorized, and that has always been a concern. But it is also a fact that funding for those programs has not been reduced. Whether it has grown to the level it should grow perhaps should be the question. I think it is very important for us to debate these issues in the context of understanding what is, and is not, occurring in education.

We have figures which show, as I pointed out earlier, that we are increasing, and have continued to increase every year, the budget for our education programs. Whether it should be increased more or less has been a subject of debate.

I particularly would like to address the student loan program because the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, attacked the efforts to cut the student loan program. When we debated whether to have direct lending for student loans, the intent was to help if students wanted to get their student loan money immediately when they registered for postsecondary education. It did not in any way mean a student was going to pay less on their student loan, and in fact, it was through Republican initiatives in trying to reduce some of the bureaucracy and some of the requirements on the student loan that did produce what savings could be achieved for students.

Direct lending, as such, in no way changed the amount of funding that is available to students. This has been, I think, poorly understood. Somehow it has been portrayed as a choice between supposedly greedy banks or the Federal Government that would handle student loans. We missed completely, I think, the part of the debate regarding who should be responsible for cutting the checks for the student loan program, who can do it the best, and who should bear the responsibility for those loans and for payments that have not been collected.

I, myself, thought it was something we should go somewhat slowly on, so that we could understand the effects of the Federal Government totally handling the student loan program, or whether we should continue to let it also be an initiative in which the banks and the student lending guaranty agencies could be involved, believing they were going to be better able to collect on the loans than the Federal Government. I believe it is something we can and should continue to debate. But that program has not been decimated by efforts of Republicans to somehow cut student loans.

I think it is interesting that, in the first half of President Clinton's administration, when the Democrats controlled the Congress, actual spending for education programs fell on the average of $1 billion below the President's request. I do not intend to get into a tit for tat on educational spending, however. Being a member of a local school board at one time before I came to the Senate, and as chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee responsible for education funding, there is nothing that I care more about than being certain that we do have quality education in this country. That is something everyone is dedicated to. How much of that can be guaranteed by moneys we spend here in Washington is another matter. In some cases it is clearly something we need to do, particularly when we mandate certain requirements on schools. Then, we must be willing to be a participant in helping to pay for those mandates. That, I think, has been particularly true with initiatives such as the education for disabled students. We mandated the inclusion of those students in public schools, and I think we should be willing to help continue to fund the needs of that mandate.

But I suggest that, as we debate education today, most citizens in this country realize the success of excellence in education really depends on our local communities, our local school boards, and students and parents who will recognize the importance of quality education and are willing to invest the time and the resources to see that