

of these issues that must be bipartisan. But in return, from this administration and from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I am going to look for a little help and a little cooperation on issues that I think are important also.

So I hope that we can find a way to do that, and I believe we will. But it does take cooperation as we get through these difficult shoals on education, on NATO enlargement, on the budget for the year, on the emergency funding, the supplemental appropriations bill for Bosnia, the Persian Gulf, for disasters, and maybe even for IMF. Some of these issues I don't even agree with, but I feel an obligation to call them up.

So since there has been an objection, I now move that the Senate—

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader has the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the NATO treaty.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Do I hear an objection?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I believe—

Mr. WELLSTONE. I object.

Mr. LOTT. We made a motion to proceed to executive session to consider the NATO treaty. I believe the question will be on the motion, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The absence of a quorum has been suggested at this time. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. DASCHLE. Mr. President, we will not object to the rollcall vote as proposed in the motion offered by the majority leader. Let me just say, after consultation with a number of my colleagues, I think it is clear that many of us yesterday voted on the motion to proceed with an expectation we would be able to go to the bill. I voted that way and encouraged my Democratic colleagues to vote that way, even though, as the leader indicated, because of unrelated questions, not related to education, more related to judicial nominations, some of our colleagues understandably voted in frustration about their inability to move through the judicial process and the confirmation of judges as was expressed by my colleagues yesterday.

Our desire, our hope, is that we can move ahead with this bill. Our hope is that we can offer amendments. As I have noted, we would be willing to take time agreements on most, if not all, of them. I would be willing to work into an agreement with the leader on that matter on these amendments. Unfortunately, we will not have that opportunity if we go to the NATO resolution.

So while we will certainly comply with the vote and have the vote at this moment, it is not my desire to support it and I would hope my Democratic colleagues would not either.

I yield the floor, and I thank the majority leader for his consideration.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is now on agreeing to the motion put forth by the majority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, we ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are requested.

Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 36 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Abraham	Frist	McConnell
Allard	Gorton	Murkowski
Ashcroft	Gramm	Nickles
Bennett	Grams	Roberts
Bond	Grassley	Roth
Brownback	Gregg	Santorum
Burns	Hagel	Sessions
Campbell	Hatch	Shelby
Chafee	Helms	Smith (NH)
Coats	Hutchinson	Smith (OR)
Cochran	Hutchison	Snowe
Collins	Inhofe	Specter
Coverdell	Jeffords	Stevens
Craig	Kempthorne	Thomas
D'Amato	Kyl	Thompson
DeWine	Lott	Thurmond
Domenici	Lugar	Warner
Enzi	Mack	
Faircloth	McCain	

NAYS—44

Akaka	Feingold	Levin
Baucus	Feinstein	Lieberman
Biden	Ford	Mikulski
Bingaman	Glenn	Moseley-Braun
Boxer	Graham	Moynihan
Breaux	Harkin	Murray
Bryan	Hollings	Reed
Bumpers	Johnson	Reid
Byrd	Kennedy	Robb
Cleland	Kerrey	Rockefeller
Conrad	Kerry	Sarbanes
Daschle	Kohl	Torricelli
Dodd	Landrieu	Wellstone
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Wyden
Durbin	Leahy	

NOT VOTING—1

Inouye Inouye

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PROTOCOLS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON ACCESSION OF POLAND, HUNGARY AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The clerk will now report the treaty.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty document 105-36. Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

The Senate resumed consideration of the treaty.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, first of all, I ask for order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I have 10 minutes to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair for his courtesy.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACT FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I want to briefly speak about this vote.

What has just happened on the floor—and I do take exception to this, especially with the majority leader—is we had the Coverdell bill—I said to Senator COVERDELL yesterday that I do not necessarily agree with the bill, but I said to him, "PAUL, I look forward to the debate. I am really ready for this debate. I have a lot of amendments; other Senators have prepared amendments. I think this is probably the most important thing we can do in the U.S. Senate is to have a really substantive debate about education."

What has now happened is the majority leader filed cloture and said we are not going to have an opportunity over the next 2 days to offer any amendments. The proposal, as I understand it, was that if we would accept some kind of an arrangement where we could offer germane amendments, that would be acceptable, but not necessarily relevant amendments. It is just an outrageous proposition, because the test of germaneness is, if you offer an amendment on the education bill that expands education, expands educational opportunities for children, it is relevant.

The Presiding Officer has had some very interesting hearings—I have been at those—dealing with early childhood development. If we want to come out with amendments and make the connection between early childhood development and education for children, that would not be viewed as germane.

I have said to people in Minnesota, based on meetings with community college students and people in my State, "Yes, I will come out here and try to make sure this Hope tax credit will be refundable," because right now if you come from a family with an income under \$27,000 or \$28,000 a year, it doesn't help you at all. The very students who need the help in being able to afford higher education—the Coverdell bill was about how to afford either

K through 12 or higher education. Many students in Minnesota from working families cannot afford it. That would not meet the germaneness test.

I have an amendment that deals with this awful problem—I think I can get good support—that too many welfare mothers are not able to complete their 2 years of college. They are told they have to leave school. They are on the path to self-sufficiency. It is a big mistake. It deals with the parent and child. Children do well in school when their parents are able to do well.

My point is that what has happened, I think, on the floor really is a bit outrageous. We wanted to have a debate on education. I am ready to debate education with my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike. I had amendments; other Senators had amendments. We were ready to bring those amendments out here. From my point of view, I would have agreed to time limits on these amendments. Instead, what has happened is the majority leader has come out, filed cloture, basically is saying he is not going to let us offer any amendments that are relevant and important to children's lives in America.

Instead, he now moves to NATO. This vote on NATO—I asked for the yeas and nays, the minority leader asked for the yeas and nays—is not about what our position is on NATO. It is about saying we thought we were going to have a debate on education. We thought we were going to have an opportunity as Senators to speak to perhaps the most important issue or set of issues in our States, which has to do with expanding educational opportunities for children and for young people in America. That is what we thought this was about.

Now what we have seen happen on the floor of the Senate is the majority leader basically comes out, files for cloture and says, "I will only entertain the amendments that are germane." Do you know what? No one Senator, not even the majority leader, gets to decide before we have the debate what amendments are relevant and important when it comes to expanding educational opportunities for children. I would love to debate the majority leader, I would love to debate members of the Republican Party and Democratic Party on this. It looks right now like we won't have that debate.

On the Democratic side—I am not the minority leader; he can speak better for Democrats—I think we are going to have unanimity on this and we are going to keep coming back and we are, I say to my colleague from North Dakota, going to insist on a debate. In order to be responsible Senators, in order for the U.S. Senate to be responsible, we should have a substantive, thoughtful, important debate about what we need to do to expand educational opportunities for all of our children. That is what this should be about.

Now we move away from the bill. The idea is, the majority leader says, we

will only take the amendments that are germane. That is it. That is not acceptable. That is not acceptable. We will come back over and over and over again and we will have a debate on the Coverdell bill. We should have that debate. I said that to Senator COVERDELL yesterday. And it should be a good debate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me say that I agree with much of the comments just offered by the Senator from Minnesota. While I am not a supporter of the Coverdell bill, I think it is an interesting proposal to bring to the floor of the Senate only because we will be debating the subject that ought to be one of the priorities of this country, and that is the subject of education. While I was not prepared to support the underlying bill, there are a number of amendments I was prepared to support that I think address the central questions that confront us in the area of education.

I noticed that the New York Times this morning describes where we are in the Senate and why we are where we are. I guess that now should be amended by the last hour or so of action on the floor of the Senate. But here is the Times description yesterday:

A dispute over Federal judgeships and the threat of a Democratic filibuster had halted floor action on a Republican-sponsored education bill, leaving Mr. LOTT casting about for something to fill the time until the tangle could be sorted out. The NATO resolution was available.

That was as of this morning. Since that time, of course, the education bill has been brought to the floor of the Senate, and, as I understand, with no debate, two cloture motions were filed, which is rather unusual before debate even begins. The proposition of cloture is that we are deciding to cut off debate? And as a result, because our side did not agree to limit amendments, the bill is pulled, and now we go to NATO expansion?

Let me just offer a couple of comments about our priorities. Those who are in charge have the opportunity to decide what is on the floor of the Senate. The power of scheduling goes to those who control the Senate. I understand that, and I do not quarrel with that. I do think, however, that education was the right subject, and I regret very much that we are not now on the Coverdell bill, which is the bill we expected to be debated this afternoon and the bill that many of us wanted to offer amendments to in order to have a debate about the central elements of education policy that we want to address.

Almost everyone in this country is concerned about some central issues in their lives. When they sit around the dinner table, they talk about things like: Do we have an opportunity for a decent job with good benefits? Does our

job pay well? Do we have job security? Do our kids have the opportunity to go to good schools? Do our grandparents have the opportunity to get decent health care? Are our children able to access decent health care? Are our neighborhoods safe? Those are the range of questions that affect people's everyday lives. At least the center part of those concerns, among which is education, is what we ought to, in my judgment, be debating on the floor of the Senate. And I had expected that would be the case this afternoon.

One of the amendments that we intended to offer, that apparently some do not want us to offer, is an amendment addressing the issue of the modernizing of the infrastructure in our schools and whether we can try through Federal policy to provide some help and some incentive for local governments to deal with the infrastructure problems in their schools.

Mr. COVERDELL. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DORGAN. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. COVERDELL. I say to the Senator, just for clarification—I know you are concerned; I understand it—but I do want to make it clear that at this point the difference relates to an order and an orderly procedure.

The majority leader has offered to the minority leader the suggestion that the other side offer its package to stand against the one that has come through the Finance Committee. There are already another four proposals in the Finance Committee offered, three of which are from colleagues on your side of the aisle: Senator MOYNIHAN of New York, Senator BREAUX of Louisiana, and Senator GRAHAM of Florida.

So there were still other issues on the other side. So the suggestion was, well, you put your package together, which could include the proposal you just mentioned, or any others, and we will let the two stand against each other. That was not accepted.

The second suggestion was that we arrive at a certain number of amendments on each side and that they be germane. As I understand it, that has not been accepted so far. But the proposal you just mentioned, there was not an attempt to keep that from being in debate. There is an attempt to keep the debate on education matters and not others. It is a tax bill; everybody understands that. It invites a lot of attention. But there is an attempt to keep it on the focus of education. I just wanted to make that comment.

Several Senators have mentioned the proposal from the Senator from Illinois. I don't think there has been an attempt to block that from being in the debate. It did not succeed in the Finance Committee; another school construction program from your side, Senator GRAHAM's, has.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. I was happy to yield because the Senator from Georgia is a thoughtful Member of this body and offers an interesting proposal. It is one

that I do not support, but certainly I respect his views on this issue. I had hoped we would be discussing the central portion of the Coverdell bill and amendments to it.

But I say to the Senator from Georgia that the majority leader has run for the Senate in only one State, and other Members of the Senate who are elected to this body from their States have a right to offer amendments on legislation brought to the floor of the Senate.

My understanding is that the reason we are now on NATO expansion is because, when the Coverdell bill was brought to the floor of the Senate, the majority leader wanted people on this side of the aisle to agree not to offer a certain number of amendments, to package them only the way the majority leader wants them packaged, and to offer them for a vote, up or down. If that is the way he wants to run the Senate, I say fine, but we have the right to offer amendments and intend to offer amendments, not just on the issue of school modernization, or the size of classrooms or the addition of 100,000 new teachers to limit class size, but also on a range of other issues that we think are important in the area of education.

It is a fact that today we were told that, unless we agree to dramatically reduce our proposals on education, we were not going to be debating education on the floor of the Senate. The clear message is: we either do it the way the majority leader wants to do this bill or we do not do it at all.

Well, that is not the way the Senate works. Fortunately, the Senate rules allow us, when someone brings a bill to the floor of the Senate to say, you have an idea, and we have some ideas as well. And here are our ideas. Let us vote on them. There might be two, four, six or eight ideas, but we want to have the opportunity for Members of the Senate to offer them, to debate them, and to have a vote on them. That is the way the Senate works.

It is interesting to me that, for several months now, every piece of legislation that has come to the Senate floor that would be amendable somehow comes has been manacled in some way so that no one else can offer amendments because we are afraid of having a debate on other amendments. In this case it was not so much a case of tying it up as it was deciding, if these people are going to offer amendments, then we are going to pull the bill off the floor. My point is very simple: I think education is the subject we ought to discuss. I believe the Senator from Georgia feels the same. I do not believe that, with scarce federal resources, we ought to embrace the recommendations of the Senator from Georgia. I believe that with scarce resources, you start at the critical level of need and work up.

Let me describe just for a moment that critical level of need. This afternoon, as I speak, down at the elemen-

tary school in Cannon Ball, ND, there are Indian children being educated in old, dilapidated classrooms. One of these rooms is a choir room next to an area where the smell and the gases from the backlogged sewer system are so strong that the kids need to be removed from class. You would keep your children in that room for 1 hour before pulling them out. Children go to that school.

Or if not the Cannon Ball school, how about the Ojibwa school on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, where kids go to school in trailers and have to walk outside in the bitter cold to get to class. All those kids have names. All those kids have hopes. They want a future. They want to get educated. They have dreams. But they do not have the opportunity to go to the kind of schools that we went to. This country has an obligation to decide those kids matter. So, in terms of my notion about education, let us start at the critical end of the scale of need and say to those kids, your lives matter. We are going to do something to try to help you.

So when we debate education, I demand an opportunity—and, in fact, the rules of this Senate guarantee me the opportunity—to offer an amendment when a bill is brought up. And I can offer an amendment that says to that child, sitting in a classroom with sewer gases seeping in, that we can do something for you.

This is not a problem that requires rocket science to solve. This is a problem we can solve if we just have the will.

We can talk about more Indian schools. On, the Standing Rock Reservation, where the Cannon Ball school is located, 48 teenage kids over the last 9 months have attempted suicides—47 kids. Six of them have been successful. I was on the phone yesterday with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta trying to get suicide prevention teams sent to the Reservation.

Yesterday, when we wrote the supplemental appropriations bill, I also included some resources there to help address this tragic problem. We need to get to that reservation, to those children and say to them: your life matters to us, you make a difference, and suicide is the wrong answer. Suicide is never the right answer.

My point is that we have such desperate needs that exist in this country. I just mention that one because I have been working on it in recent days. We have such critical problems affecting these young lives, especially with respect to education, because school is where these young kids spend most of their days.

And on the Standing Rock Reservation, guess what? We have PCB, a known carcinogen, leaking out of light fixtures. They have had to evacuate kids from their school for over a month now and move them around to half a dozen other locations. Six classes are meeting in the gymnasium.

So, yes, let us talk about education right now, right here in the Senate. Let us bring the bill of the Senator from Georgia to the floor right now and let us not be afraid of any amendment. Maybe the idea of the Senator from Georgia is the best idea, and perhaps at the end of the day he has sufficient votes to advance it. That is the way the system works. I take my hat off to him if he does.

But maybe there are others of us who have some very good ideas as well that address the bull's-eye, the central education needs, of this country, that address the needs of schools and kids that are not functioning very well, and that says to those who are hopeless and helpless, there is hope and help. Those of us in the Senate who worry about the education system and have some ideas to help want to be able to advance those ideas. That is all we are asking.

It is just not acceptable to me to not be able to offer education amendments to a bill we have on education. And, incidentally, the Senator from Georgia did say, and he is correct, that this is more than an education bill. It is also a revenue bill.

I am not going to offer revenue amendments to the Senator's bill, but I am tempted. As he indicated in his statement, this is very tempting because you get so few revenue bills through here that when a revenue bill comes up, you ought to offer a revenue amendment in order to get it done.

I will give you an example. Nearly 70 percent of all the foreign corporations doing business in America pay zero in Federal income taxes—not 1 percent, not 5 percent, but zero in Federal income taxes. And the names of these corporations are ones you will recognize.

Look at the brand names on your appliances at home and ask yourself, might these be the names of companies from abroad that are doing business in the United States? And what do they pay in Federal taxes? Do they pay what our businesses pay? Do they pay what our constituents pay? No; I am sorry. Most of them pay zero. We should fix that. I have been trying to. I would love to offer that amendment again. We had a vote on it once in the Senate, and I lost. I would love to offer that amendment again because there is no excuse in this country to have a Tax Code that says, if you want to do \$5 billion worth of business in the United States from abroad, then you can go do that. You can earn lots of money, and by the way, you can pay zero in Federal income taxes. Nobody in this country gets to do that.

So, I am sorely tempted to say, yes, this is a revenue bill. I would love to offer an amendment. What we are asking for is the ability to offer amendments directly related to the subject—there are a couple of others, but not many—directly related to education. There is no reason—none—why anyone in the majority or minority can come

to the floor of the Senate and say, "By the way, we are going to change the way the Senate works. We will allow our proposal to get a vote, and you package up all of the ideas you have into one amendment with one vote, and that is the way we will dispatch your interest." This is not something we will accept. It is not something we should accept. It is not something you would accept in a million years if you were standing here.

So, we now are debating NATO. I suppose at some point, after lengthy and wonderful statements by the majority and minority leaders on this issue, I will come to the Senate floor also and speak about NATO. All of us have views about NATO expansion. But I regret we are here, because we should be on the Coverdell bill, and we should be debating amendments that focus on the education agenda in this country.

Our amendments are very simple. We believe we can improve education by investing in 100,000 new teachers and reducing class size. We believe we can invest in school infrastructure by helping State and local governments on the interest costs of modernizing our schools. Too many schools in this country are 50, 70, and 80 years old and crumbling and in need of repair.

We believe we can address those issues and a half a dozen other issues that represent the right initiatives for this country. But we can't do that if we are told, "You add up those amendments, stick them in one package, and we will give you one vote on the package. If you can't carry the entire package, you lose everything, and that is the way we will run the Senate." That is not the way we will allow the Senate to be run on measures brought to the floor that can be amendable. We will continue to insist on the right to offer amendments, and I will be here again and again to do that.

Let me say again to the Senator from Nebraska, who I believe will manage this bill, I regret I have taken the time to speak on this issue on your time, but I think it is necessary to describe where we are and how we got here. I also apologize to the Senator from Delaware for the same purpose.

Mr. BIDEN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DORGAN. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. BIDEN. The Senator does not owe the Senator from Delaware any apology at all. I think the case he makes is the correct case.

I am particularly concerned that the most important foreign policy debate we have had maybe in the 25 years that I have been here is being used as a filler. That bothers me. It bothers me in the sense it lends an air of credibility to the unfair criticism that we have not adequately and fully and seriously taken into consideration the pros and cons relating to expansion. It just reinforces, in my view, that false argument.

I happen to support the position of Senator COVERDELL on the procedural

aspects of the issue. There is no question the Senator from North Dakota, in my view, is correct.

I have been here 25 years. We have just begun, in the last couple of years, deciding new and innovative ways to avoid the opportunity for people to be able to get a vote on issues on this floor. For the first 23 years I was here, I don't ever recall us being in a circumstance where the minority was presented with the proposition that you put up your package, we will put up our package, we each get one vote, and that is it. That is not the way the rules were intended to work, in my view. I am not suggesting that the majority leader is violating the letter of the Senate rules, but I think the spirit is being violated.

I have a secondary problem that is almost as bothersome to me. I have, along with the Republican manager of this bill and the chairman of the full committee, Senator HELMS, and others, devoted hundreds and hundreds of hours to this issue of NATO expansion, taken the issue very seriously, and now it is kind of like, well, yesterday we had extra hours so, boom, let's go ahead and throw in NATO. By the way, we don't know what else to do. Today we hit a logjam, the Democrats wouldn't swallow the, in my view, heavy-handed tactics employed here on the education bill; so, what do we get? There must be something out there—grab NATO.

So it will reinforce the notion that somehow we are not taking this incredibly important foreign policy consideration seriously. This should be set aside to have one solid, continuous debate, whether it takes 2 hours or 2 weeks—and it is closer to 2 weeks, and appropriate, than 2 hours—in order for the public to be educated about what we are doing. I believe no foreign policy can be sustained or should be sustained without the informed consent of the American people. This is a gigantic issue which, understandably, and historically, they are not interested in, in the day-to-day sense, in that they are more concerned about the classroom the Senator described in his own State or whether or not their company is downsizing and they will lose their job or whether or not they will be able to get their child to college.

I am not critical of the American people. The only time we have an opportunity to get their attention—and when we do, they pay attention, they understand, they fully grasp what we are about—is if we say, "And now we are about to debate a major foreign policy issue. Basically, tune in, and we will have a coherent debate." This place is capable of coherent and intelligent debate. This, in a sense, demeans the process and demeans the issue.

The Senator owes me no apology. Now that we are on NATO, I hope we don't get off NATO; I hope we continue. Let's pick a course here. If we are going to debate this issue, debate it fully and resolve it and put everything

else aside until we do it. I really hope the majority leader will refrain from using NATO as sort of a filler here, because it is so much more important, and we all know that the way in which the process treats an issue reflects, at least in the mind of the press and the public at large, what value we place on the issue, how important we think it is.

I don't mean to be personally critical of the leader. I think he grabbed whatever was available procedurally to be able to be brought up and this was here. I am really sorry that we have gotten to this point.

Again, let me conclude my comments relative to this by saying to the Senator from North Dakota, he owes me no apology. He is protecting not only his rights but he is protecting the rights of the Senator from Delaware, majority and minority Members. I have been here long enough to realize that there is no such thing as a permanent majority. I have been in the majority, I was then in the minority, I was back in the majority, and I am now in the minority, and I look forward to being in the majority again. This kind of precedence sets a tone that puts the majority—whichever party that may be—into the position of ratcheting up the way in which they attempt to have their way on the floor. I think it is not prudent.

Mr. DORGAN. The Senator from Delaware is correct. I did not address the question of NATO expansion and the way this bill got to the Senate. I didn't read the rest of the New York Times article that I found so interesting: "It is always difficult to predict the schedule in the Senate which can turn on the dime or on the whim of the majority leader and it is not uncommon for the opening debate on major bills to be slow. But even longtime Senators express bewilderment how the NATO resolution appeared to have shoehorned into the Senate schedule," and, in fact, shoehorned in yesterday and again today.

I agree with the Senator from Delaware. NATO expansion, however one might feel about the issue, is a legislative main course. It is a significant foreign policy issue that one would hope—having read the history of the Senate written by Senator BYRD—that the chapter of Senate history on our debate today on NATO expansion would be described as a thoughtful debate. I hope that our debate will be viewed as one in which most of the Senators were here and listened to wonderful presentations about the impact of NATO expansion, the pros and the cons, the impact on this country's foreign policy and its relationships with Europe and Russia, and on a whole range of other issues that are very, very important. In many instances, the effect of these kinds of policies won't be understood or fully known for a decade or perhaps for a quarter of a century or more.

When the Senator from Delaware—and I know the Senator from Nebraska

also feels this way—describes the importance of this NATO expansion debate, it is hard to describe its importance in terms that are too strong. It is enormously important. I hope it will not be just legislative filler here. There must be a significant debate. I will come at some point and engage in that discussion and share some of my feelings about it.

The point I was making earlier is that I hoped very much that, as we were told last week, we were going to be on the subject of education. I know the Senator from Delaware and I disagree on the underlying bill of the Senator from Georgia, but I expect we will not disagree on a range of other amendments that will be offered. These amendments represent the only opportunity for those of us who have ideas about how to address some of the central problems in education to bring those to the floor.

If you are not in a position where you are the one who determines how this Senate schedules its business, the only opportunity you have if you have an idea—and everyone here has ideas, and some of them are wonderful and some not so wonderful—depends upon a set of Senate rules that say the last Senator has the opportunity to seek the floor and offer an amendment. Every other Senator can vote against it if they think it is not a very good amendment, but you have the right to take these ideas and turn them into proposals and ask your colleagues to weigh in on them after a debate.

That is why I worry a little bit. We have gotten to the point where, over several months, anything that is amendable somehow becomes a nuisance. Gee, if somebody is going to be down here and actually wants to offer ideas, what kind of nut is that? What a nuisance that is for the legislative process. I say, that is not a nuisance, that is the way the system works. Is it efficient? No, not very efficient. Is it effective? Name one other chamber or one other country that equals this. There aren't any and never have been.

My complaint today was that we are not on the subject that we expected to be on, that I want us to be on, that represents the central issues concerning our country. Is NATO important? Sure. I hope it is scheduled at some point when there is a significant block of time, with the best thinkers in this Chamber standing up and telling us what they know and what they have seen and what they understand about the foreign policy relationships and the impact of those relationships. That is what I hope we will do.

I don't run this place and probably never will. But I hope that the relationship that we have—and I think a lot of the majority leader; I think he is an awfully good majority leader, although I hope some day soon he will be the minority leader—will allow everyone to understand that we all have rights. We all have our issues that compel us to run for public office, and

one of those for a lot of us on this side of the aisle is education. I regret very much that the bill of the Senator from Georgia was pulled, and we hope it is back soon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

PROTOCOLS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON ACCESSION OF POLAND, HUNGARY, AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Senate resumed consideration of the treaty.

Mr. BIDEN. I see my colleague from Nebraska is here. We worked closely together on the Foreign Relations Committee.

I say to the Senator, I have an opening statement in the hope and expectation that we really will debate NATO now for some time. To make it clear to my colleagues who are listening, I have no strong preference whether we have education on the floor or NATO expansion on the floor; I just hope whatever we have, we stick with it, so there is coherence to the debate. That is my overall point.

I ask my friend from Nebraska, as the manager for the Democrats on the NATO expansion issue, I have what we might call the obligatory very long and detailed statement. My statement is probably the better part of a half hour to 45 minutes. I don't want to begin if my friend would rather speak now. I want to accommodate the Senator. When I begin, I would like to be able to begin and, in an attempt to be coherent, lay out in detail my position on NATO expansion.

Mr. HAGEL. I have never known my friend and colleague not to be coherent on any issue, but if that is his wish to proceed, please do. I do not have an opening statement, so I think that would fit into the schedule.

Mr. BIDEN. I will proceed.

I thank my colleague and I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I rise in support of the Resolution of Ratification of the Protocol for the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, which we oftentimes refer to as the Washington Treaty.

On March 3, the Foreign Relations Committee, in a show of overwhelming bipartisan support, agreed to the resolution expanding NATO by a vote of 16-2. The decision of whether or not to enlarge NATO for a fourth time in its history is a momentous one. Unlike the admission of Greece and Turkey in 1952, West Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982, NATO now, for the first time, is proposing to welcome former members of the now-defunct Soviet-led Warsaw Pact Organization.

Mr. President, the rationale for favorable action on the resolution of ratification, in my view, is very clear.

For political, economic, strategic, and cultural reasons, Europe remains an area of vital interest to the United States of America. We are a European power, and for our own safety's sake, in my view, we must remain a European power. Stability on that continent is fundamental to the well-being of our country and to our ability to move our assets and attention quickly to other parts of the world when necessary.

The primary purpose and benefit of NATO, since its inception in 1949, has been ensuring stability in democratic Europe by guaranteeing the territorial integrity of alliance members. I argue, Mr. President, that this focus continues. History shows us that when there is a vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe, countries are forced to pursue their own individual security arrangements. We saw that before and after World War I. Enlargement, Mr. President—and this is a central reason why I believe it is in our interest to enlarge NATO, to embrace the three countries in question—will preclude a repeat of the developments in post-World War I. Enlargement will extend the zone of stability and help eliminate the gray area in Central and Eastern Europe. In fact, the prospect of enlargement has already had a positive impact on stability by stimulating internal reforms in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic and encouraging them to resolve historic disputes with their neighbors.

Mr. President, prior to Poland being offered the opportunity to join NATO, there was a question of whether or not the military controlled the military or civilians controlled the military in Poland. They made a very difficult political decision of doing what was stipulated in the Perry requirements—that is, the requirements set forth by former Secretary of Defense Perry—for expansion of NATO, and what all other NATO nations have done, which is to guarantee that there is civilian control of the military. I respectfully suggest that that action would not have been taken but for moving into NATO.

The three applicants for NATO membership before us have resolved long and historic border disputes such as those between Poland and Germany, and Hungary and Romania. Romania, also hoping to become a member of the NATO, has for the first time in modern history reached an agreement for the equitable treatment of its Hungarian minority. I could cite you example upon example in Central and Eastern Europe where actions have been taken as a consequence of even the prospect of NATO membership. This prospect, of being anchored to the West, has caused many countries in that region to accord their behavior with international norms that we believe are minimum requirements for countries with whom we wish to be allied. So the process of NATO enlargement has already had, in my view, a very stabilizing impact on Europe.

Numerous witnesses before our committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, have made a compelling case for