

will not delay in scheduling the additional hearings we need to hold to consider the fine men and women whom the President has nominated to fill these important positions.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COATS).

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. BOND. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now resume consideration of the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2168) making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I think the distinguished Senator from Arkansas is ready to proceed with an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

AMENDMENT NO. 3062

(Purpose: To terminate the Space Station and provide additional funding for veterans and low-income housing)

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. BUMPERS], for himself, Mr. BRYAN, Mr.

WELLSTONE, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. FEINGOLD and Mr. DURBIN, proposes an amendment numbered 3062.

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike line 21 on page 76 through line 4 on page 77 and insert the following:

“For termination of the International Space Station project, \$850,000,000. In addition to the other provisions of this Act, \$1,000,000,000 shall be available for the Veterans Health Administration Medical Care account and \$450,000,000 shall be available for the Housing Certificate Fund account within the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s budget.”

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, this will be the eighth year that I have stood here and debated whether or not America should go forward with a space station. I didn’t like the idea of the Space Station *Freedom*, but it was probably a bargain compared to what the International Space Station is turning out to be.

First, I would like to pose a question to my colleagues: Why is it that we continue to fund a program called the International Space Station, when every cellular biologist, every medical researcher, and every physicist in America who isn’t involved in the program itself is vehemently opposed to it? These are some of the most brilliant people in America. Before we start off spending \$100 billion, we ought to ask ourselves, Why are they opposed? Well, for very good reasons, and I will come back to those in just a minute.

It is a mystery that here in Congress we talk seriously about a program which in the last 3 years has become almost laughable. If it weren’t so serious and the amount of money so enormous, it would be almost a comedy—a comedy of errors.

The cost began to spiral in 1996—maybe before that, but that was the first time we really knew it. The Russians have had space stations up for almost 30 years. The Mir is the seventh space station that the Russians have had up since 1971. And what do they have to show for it? Absolutely nothing.

In a little while, I will come back and quote some of the top Nobel Prize winners, some of the top physicists in America, cellular biologists—you name it. I will come back and quote several of them and what they have had to say about the space station as a research vehicle.

Now, you should bear in mind throughout this debate that when you talk about research on the space station, there is only one reason—one reason—you have to believe that the kind of research we are going to do, which NASA says will cure ingrown toenails, warts, cancer, sties—it will cure everything—you have to believe that research of whatever kind—mostly medical, and some of it molecular biol-

ogy—but you have to believe that something happens in a microgravity situation that you can’t emulate on earth, and not only is something going to happen in a microgravity situation, but it is going to be good. Again, I will come back to what the top scientists in this country have to say about it. But right now I will quote Professor Bloembergen, who is a top physicist at Harvard University. When he was President of the American Physical Society, which consists of 40,000 physicists, and, he summed it up when he said, “microgravity is of micro importance.”

JOHN GLENN came to the Senate with me. We developed a warm friendship the first day we met and we have remained friends. I consider him one of my dearest friends, except when I bring this amendment up. But Senator GLENN is not going to deny that about all you get out of this is whatever you can get from microgravity research that can be emulated on earth; but there is no need to emulate it on earth. You are going to hear all this business about gallium arsenide crystals, which is “bunk.” Even if you could build crystals on the space station, nobody on earth could afford to use them.

Well, Mr. President, why are all these people opposed? Why are the top people on whom we rely for all of our medical research, cellular research—the top scientists in America—why are they outraged by spending \$100 billion on one orbiting space station with a crew of, at first three people, and subsequently six or seven people? Why are they outraged? Well, one reason might be that they come up here pleading for money for honest-to-God research every year, and we give them a few shekels and off they go to do the best they can with it.

Think about the National Institutes of Health getting about \$13 billion a year, and they do research on everything—honest research. They send out money to every university in the country that has a medical school to do research. Well, if we ever get this thing in space, just the annual operating cost will be enough to fund 6,000 researchers at NIH and universities across America for a year. We are going to have six people on the space station doing what the National Research Council estimates to be 24 hours of research each day, at a cost at which we could hire 6,000 researchers on earth.

Do you want to hear another one? Once we get it deployed, we are going to leave it in space for 10 years. You multiply the man-hours by 10 years that we are going to get in research, and if you don’t just divide the annual operating costs, which, as I said a moment ago, would produce 6,000 researchers on earth, but divide it into the entire \$100 billion cost, which is a legitimate thing to do because, after all, we are spending \$100 billion to put the space station up and do research—whether you are going to build crystals or cure ingrown toenails, it is all research. But when you do that, the cost