

year before ever seeing the President's budget.

It makes no sense at all. It makes no sense. It seems to me we should spend that week—instead of debating a budget when we have never seen the President's recommendations—to provide for a stimulus package so that we are dealing with the immediate weakness in the economy and then come back to this longer term plan that the President proposes after we have seen the President's budget.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, will the Senator yield to me, finally?

Mr. CONRAD. Yes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Would the Senator take the few remaining minutes under my control and sum up the points that have been made here this morning as to the differences between what the Senate was confronted with in 1993 and what we are being confronted with today anent the budget resolution and the budget process? There are several items. Will the Senator sum them up?

Madam President, how much time do I have remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I would be happy to try to sum up by saying, first of all, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee told us last week he does not intend to mark up the budget in the Budget Committee. We urge him to reconsider. We urge him to have a public markup in which there is debate, discussion, and votes so that the Budget Committee meets its obligation and responsibility.

No. 2, when talking about 1993—because some have said, well, this is what happened in 1993; that we did not have the budget from the President before we wrote a budget resolution on the floor of the Senate—the differences are quite clear. In 1993, the Senate Budget Committee marked up fully a budget. No. 2, we had a good deal more detail from the President in 1993 in terms of functional totals, in terms of what each of the areas should get or what kind of cuts they could expect.

We do not have that this time. So now, in 2001, we do not have the Budget Committee doing a markup. At least that is what the chairman so far has said. We hope he will reconsider. We do not have the level of detail we had in 1993. So what is about to happen is really quite remarkable. We are going to have the Senate write a budget resolution without ever seeing the President's budget and without the Budget Committee ever doing its job to write a budget and to mark it up.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee. I assume that consumes all of the time on this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The Senator's time has expired.

Under the previous order, the Senator from Wyoming, Mr. THOMAS, or his designee is recognized for 1 hour.

SCHEDULE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12 noon. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the campaign finance reform bill, with Senator WELLSTONE to be recognized to offer an amendment. At 2 p.m. the Senate will begin consideration of S.J. Res. 4, a constitutional amendment regarding election contributions and expenditures. Debate will continue for up to 4 hours, with the vote scheduled at 6 p.m. Any votes ordered in relation to the amendments to the campaign finance reform bill will be stacked to follow the 6 p.m. vote this evening.

I thank the Chair.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we have been consumed over the last week, and will be for the remainder of this week, with campaign finance reform, an issue that has been about for some time and has been stressed by a number of Members of the Senate. I have indicated before that, certainly, it is an important issue. However, it is time we complete that issue, as there are many others that probably are of more importance to most people than that of campaign finance reform. Nevertheless, that is the commitment.

It has been an interesting debate. It will continue to be an interesting debate. I am hopeful we will come up with some kind of a proposition when it is over and not have wasted the entire 2 weeks discussing the various aspects of it.

This evening we will hear the introduction of the Hagel proposal, of which I am an original cosponsor. It is an important issue to be debated, one that deals with campaign finance reform more clearly than does the floor bill, which is the McCain-Feingold approach. One has to make a decision as to whether or not they want the Federal Government to be managing elections or whether, under the Constitution, elections should be comprised primarily of freedom of speech and an opportunity for people to participate. In terms of elections, it would be wrong if we found ourselves in a position of seeking to limit the opportunities for people to express themselves.

The Hagel bill, which he will discuss in great detail, deals with the most important aspect of campaign finance reform; that is, disclosure. Whenever dollars are given to a candidate for the purpose of election, they are disclosed, disclosed immediately so voters can then determine for themselves whether they think that is a legitimate expenditure or not.

The bill also provides for an increase in the level of hard money that goes to

candidates. That was set in law in the 1970s. It has not been changed since that time. Obviously, the amount of money represented in the 1970s through inflation is not nearly as expansive as it is today. It changes that. It also puts a limit on soft money.

I am hopeful that when the bill comes forward we will be able to discuss an alternative which I believe is a more reasonable alternative than the one that has been discussed. Then we can move on to some items of dire importance: Obviously, taxes—giving people an opportunity to keep more of their own money. When we find American taxpayers paying more today than they have ever paid in history as a percentage of gross national product, paying more now than they did in World War II, that doesn't seem appropriate. Where should the money go? It should go back to the people who have paid it in.

We will also be discussing the economy, an issue that needs to be talked about immediately. We will be talking about the opportunity of tax relief to assist in strengthening the economy. I am sure we will be talking more clearly about the idea of putting some money back into the economy more immediately, some \$60 billion that is in surplus of this year's needs for the budget and could be placed back into the economy in some method or other.

Those are topics that need to be debated.

We say education is an issue that means more to people than any other individual subject. We ought to be talking about that. We ought to be talking about the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We ought to be debating whether or not Federal dollars for education ought to be designated in terms of where they go by the Federal Government, or should they be sent to local and State governments to decide for themselves where their needs are.

I am from Wyoming. Certainly, the needs in Chugwater, WY, are different from those in Pittsburgh, PA. We ought to have the opportunity and the flexibility to send those dollars there.

Certainly, we need to be discussing preserving Social Security as we have in the past, making sure those dollars are there. We need to be talking about paying down the debt, which we have an opportunity to do now. We ought to be discussing doing something with health care to provide more availability for people all over the country.

There are many topics we ought to be debating, and hopefully we will be able to move to those. One of them, of course, is energy and the environment. We now find ourselves in a position of facing great difficulty with energy, made more visible and accentuated by the problems existing in California.

The California problems are not necessarily typical of energy concerns throughout the country. Indeed, many of them have been brought on by some unusual efforts in terms of electric re-regulation in which California chose to

put limits on the cost of retail electricity but not wholesale. We can imagine that that is not a workable situation, and it has caused many problems, not only in California but throughout the West as well.

We will be talking about energy, and we should be. Often when we discuss energy, we also have to talk about the environment, although the environment is an issue that we need to be concerned with all of the time, in my judgment. One of the reasons energy and the environment are of particular importance to me and to others in the West is the fact that the Federal Government is a principal owner of lands in the western United States.

I brought this visual display to show what Federal land ownership is in each State. Most people are surprised by the percentage. In my State of Wyoming, nearly half of the land belongs to the Federal Government. Some States, of course, are even higher than that. In Alaska, almost 68 percent of the land is owned by the Federal Government. In Nevada, almost 85 percent is owned by the Federal Government.

So the kinds of regulations that are put into place, the kinds of issues that arise in terms of the environment and the usage of public lands, become very important to us. That, of course, is not the only aspect of the environment, but it is one that is very important and, frankly, quite difficult.

The point I want to make is, as we go about a number of the problems that we have before us, and a number of the opportunities to solve them, unfortunately, we find ourselves with environmental groups and many Members of the Senate making the case, let's either protect the environment or ruin it by using it. I suggest to you that those are not the only two alternatives. You can access the lands; you can use the lands as multiple-use lands, yet continue to protect the environment.

In Wyoming we think we have done that pretty well. We have had mining, oil production, hunting, fishing, and we have had access to the lands for more than 100 years now. We are pretty proud of the environment we have there. So this idea that is often out here that you have to choose between the opportunity to have multiple use and the opportunity to protect the environment is wrong.

Certainly, protecting the resources is a high priority for most everyone. I happen to be chairman of the parks subcommittee. Certainly, regarding our national parks, the basic, No. 1 issue is to protect the resource and, 2, to let the owners, the American people, enjoy those resources. That is really the purpose of having a park.

We find ourselves, from time to time, in conflict with that, in that protecting the resources, to some people, means we should not let anybody have access to enjoy those resources. One of the issues is to allow access. We have seen a great deal about that lately.

One of the things that prompts me to visit about it this morning is, Members

of this Senate have been, in the last few days, getting up and saying this administration is anti-environment because they have changed some of the regulations that were put in place in the last administration. Well, I think it was a legitimate, reasonable thing for a new administration to do, to look at those literally hundreds of regulations that were put in the day before the administration left, to see if indeed they are reasonable and consistent with the efforts of the new administration. I think that is not unusual at all.

We also now have the issue of energy. Of course, much of the energy comes from land. Whether it be coal, oil, natural gas, hydro or water, it comes from various uses of the land. I think we find ourselves now with a real issue as to what is the best way to preserve the environment and to be able to meet the needs of domestic energy production. That is kind of where we are.

The complaints about this administration are not valid. I think they are totally political, and we ought to really examine them in terms of where they are. One of the reasons we are having problems, of course, is that we have let ourselves, over the last year, go along without an energy policy, without a decision on a national level on what we want to do with respect to energy—what kinds of energy we want to promote. But more importantly, do we want to let ourselves get into the position of becoming totally dependent on foreign imports—in this case, OPEC? That is basically what we have allowed ourselves to do.

The prediction is that we will have 60-percent dependency on foreign oil within the next couple of years. We are now 55- or 56-percent dependent. When OPEC decides, as they recently did, to reduce production, we find ourselves going to the gas pump with higher prices or, even worse, finding ourselves without the kind of energy we need to continue to have the economy that we have now and want to have in the future.

So I think one of the things that is happening that is very helpful is that this administration, with the leadership of the President, has assigned Vice President DICK CHENEY to a work group to define where we need to be in terms of energy and in terms of the economy in the future. They are due to have a report in about 6 weeks or a month from now which will put us in the position of having a national policy on energy for the first time in many years. Hopefully, that will give us some direction as to how we can resolve that.

There are lots of alternatives, of course, in energy policy. We need to talk about the diversity of energy—not all natural gas. We also have coal, our largest resource. In the budget, we have some opportunities to research some more in coal, to make it a cleaner fuel so it is a fuel for stationary electric production. We can use something in hydro, one of the renewables that in the last administration there

were efforts made to reduce, to tear down some of the dams that are there that provide those kinds of resources. So there are a lot of things that can be done.

We are talking more about the opportunity for nuclear power, which is one of the cleanest opportunities for electric generation, of course. First of all, we need to find a place to store nuclear waste. We have been fighting over that for a number of years. We need to finally make a determination. Despite the fact that we have spent billions of dollars already at the Yucca Mountain storage site in Nevada, we haven't resolved that completely. There is an opportunity for renewables—sun and wind. We can do more with that. We need research to make those things more economical and more well placed.

Also, of course, one of the things we need to do is look at ourselves in terms of conservation and areas where we can do a better job of using energy so that we can reduce demand, as demand continues to go up—in the case of California, very sharply—and production does not go up. You know you have a wreck coming when that sort of thing happens.

So we are looking forward to that kind of an opportunity.

Beyond that, of course, I suggest that all of us are in the position of wanting to protect the environment. Obviously, we want to protect our lands. We are very pleased with the lands. We have talked for a number of months now in Wyoming about what we want our State to look like in 15, 20 years. We called it Vision 20/20, which is an opportunity to get an idea where we want to go.

One of the things we want to have, of course, is open space. That has been a very vital part of the West and of Wyoming. We also want to have fish and wildlife—again, a vital part of what we want to do. In order to do that, we have to protect the environment. We are prepared to do that, and, at the same time, we want to be able to produce many of the things that need to be done to provide power and energy for this country.

We have recently heard—I am sorry to hear this—accusations that this administration is turning around some of the useful things that have been done over the last 8 years. I am here to tell you that not all those things have been based on facts. Not all of them have been based on research. This idea that the administration is a “charm offensive” turned into a “harm offensive” is a ridiculous statement to make. It doesn't have any basis in fact at all.

Talking about CO₂, for example, CO₂ was included in regulations put out just as this administration went out. CO₂ is not included and identified as a pollutant. Do we want to work at doing something? Of course, we do. CO₂ also has a lot to do with the ability to generate electricity. In the Agriculture

Committee we are looking for trade-offs, where you can use timber, grasslands to absorb CO₂, and some of the things we can do there. But to suggest that is a terrific environmental problem is simply not supported by facts.

The same thing is basically true of arsenic. The new Administrator of the EPA delayed the recommendations that were put in on arsenic. Why? Because there wasn't sufficient study, there weren't sufficient scientific bases. Furthermore, under the original plan, there were another 2 years to establish that level. She has assured that there will be a level. But this one was not scientifically put into place in terms of water projects for communities throughout the country.

This idea that it is setting back 8 years of progress is ridiculous. We ought to be working together to find a way for our communities to have a good water supply and at the same time be affordable. I think we can do that.

Another one of our friends said George Bush has declared war on the environment. That is a ridiculous idea. No one is declaring war on the environment. The environment is something all of us want to protect. The question is how do we do that and at the same time let people enjoy the resources.

We have had an interesting debate about the roadless areas in the Federal lands of the West. The Forest Service put out a regulation on roadless areas. I happened to attend some of the meetings. They called for local meetings. Not even the local Forest Service people knew what they were talking about.

We have national forest plans. New plans are developed every 10 years. The Forest Service goes through a very complex system of setting up a forest plan designed to deal with forests differently because they are, indeed, different. This was an idea that came from the Department of Agriculture deciding that all forests should be dealt with in the same way.

It does not work. It does not work that way. Do we want roads everywhere? Of course not, and there is no need to have them everywhere. But we do have to have some if people are going to have access. The environmentalists claim it is just the timber people. I heard from a lot of folks, including disabled veterans, who said: How are we going to enjoy these public lands if we don't have access to them?

I agree with them. Limit the roads? Of course. Roadless does not seem to work.

In Yellowstone Park, the people have an opportunity to see Yellowstone Park in the wintertime and they can see it with snow machines. The park did not manage them at all. They sat and watched it for years, and all of a sudden, they decided the parks cannot have this happen and wanted to discontinue allowing snow machines. We have suggested, rather than that, to take a look at those snow machines.

Get EPA to do their job and set some standards for emissions and noise and then the park can say: Look, if you want to come to the park, you have to have a machine that meets these standards. It can be done, and the manufacturers say they can do it. It is a good idea. People can have access.

Instead, this past administration said: We are tired of it; we are going to do away with it, without even making an effort. If there are too many there, manage them. They are talking now about west Yellowstone where too many of them pile up at the gate, and the park ranger is getting a sore throat, or something. We should not do that. There is a way to manage them.

Agencies seem to have a hard time figuring out how to manage it. When there is a problem, everybody else manages it and changes it. We can do that. Access is something that I think is important.

All I am suggesting and hoping is that this administration will seek some reasonable approaches to the things that need to be done.

The Clean Water Act—do we like clean water? Of course, everybody likes clean water. This EPA last year came up with the clean water action plan that had about 100 different proposals in it, some of which were not authorized under the law, and sought to put those into place. This administration is taking another look at them and, indeed, they should. We can find ways to have clean water and allow the lands to be used.

Those are the kinds of changes this administration is seeking to make that are being called "a war on the environment."

I do not think we can come to reasonable decisions in this body if Members take far-end positions such as if you are for the environment, you cannot be for using it. That is what we find ourselves faced with. That is not a workable answer. I am hopeful we can move toward finding solutions that are, indeed, useful and at the same time, of course, protect the environment.

Getting back to carbon monoxide, this was largely a product of the Kyoto agreement sometime back, signed by the United States as a treaty and brought to this body. We unanimously decided not to consider it. Now we find complaints because CO₂ changes have been made and it was not even considered as part of the Kyoto agreement. Do we want to have clean air? Of course.

These are some issues we need to look at in a balanced way, with good science and not just political decisions. We can consider ways to preserve those resources and at the same time utilize them.

These are the issues which we ought to be talking about. I am distressed, frankly, when I hear on this floor statements such as "going from charm to harm"; "going to destroy the environment"; "declared war on the envi-

ronment." That is not a fair presentation. It is not a logical presentation. I hope we can, indeed, look at some responsible answers rather than looking for a political issue for the next election.

Mr. President, I will shortly be joined by the Senator from Alaska. In the meantime, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I will address an issue that I ran into last weekend at home regarding some of the tragedies that have happened and continue to happen in high schools. We had a threat in one of our schools. Fortunately, it was dealt with before anything tragic happened as in Columbine and some of the other schools.

One of the judges indicated he thought it would be useful, and I tend to agree with him, if we could find a way to get one of the agencies—perhaps the FBI or Education, including someone in psychiatry and others—to try to come up with a plan that schools can put into effect to try to avoid the problem of terrorism, shootings and guns and, more importantly perhaps, describe a better system. It seems in many cases the young people who sought to carry out these deeds had indicated they were going to do that prior thereto. I believe his view was not all communities and not all schools are prepared to deal with those threats.

Perhaps it would be useful if, indeed, we had some assistance putting together a combination of educators, law enforcement, psychologists and a program that could be put into place in a school to try to avoid tragedies of violence; and also, when there was some evidence of it, in this case even a note written of people this student intended to deal with; and then if it does happen, what you do when those things occur. I imagine there are techniques which could be applied, more professional techniques than most schools are capable of on their own.

I suggest, perhaps some Federal agencies, there could be some kind of meeting of the involved people to come up with what they think are the most useful techniques for dealing with this kind of violence in communities and high schools and in detecting it and doing something about it, in dealing with it, if it does happen, and to provide that kind of leadership to communities and to the very school districts throughout the country that would be interested in that type of assistance.

I don't think it is particularly a legislative question, but to encourage the