

time. But this was a subject brought up by the distinguished majority leader, and I felt it was appropriate to answer. I have done the best I can in responding.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I have been advised by my colleague from North Dakota that he would like to follow me, so I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from North Dakota follow me for a period of 20 minutes. And then it is my understanding that the Senator from Ohio is in the queue, the Senator from Ohio being Mr. DEWINE. So I ask unanimous consent that be the order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

FEMA

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, to follow up on one of the things we did accomplish in the Senate, passing last night the Department of Homeland Defense appropriations bill, I want to call to the attention of the Senate three amendments this Senator from Florida had attached to the bill which were passed. They regard FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This, of course, has been extremely important to the Nation, but particularly to my State of Florida, having gone through the experience of four hurricanes last year within a 6-week period.

Originally, FEMA did a very good job. A lot of that was as a result of the lessons we had learned from a decade previously from the monster hurricane of 1992, Hurricane Andrew, when one level of Government was not talking to another level. Those lessons learned were applied. Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of those four hurricanes that hit Florida within that 6-week period, FEMA responded, and responded well, working with the State of Florida and the local governments, which in this case for those four hurricanes included most of the counties of Florida. Little did I know, going into August a year ago, I was going to end up visiting almost every emergency operations center in the State of Florida. But that is the fate that befell our State.

But then, in the long run, FEMA started dropping the ball. It was not because they did not have enough money. We appropriated \$13.5 billion—that is with a “B”—for hurricane relief. Of that \$13.5 billion, \$8.5 billion went to FEMA. It was not that it did not have enough money. But they started sending it to the wrong places. They sent over \$30 million to Miami-Dade County, when in fact the hurricane winds never blew in Miami-Dade County.

So one of the amendments has to do with them being required, under law,

to report back to the committee in the Senate and the committee in the House on all of the changes they have made in response to the recent inspector general’s report that named all of these deficiencies in FEMA. One of them was sending millions of dollars into a county where the hurricane winds did not blow.

Another example was they paid for over 300 funerals, but the number of deaths directly attributable or even indirectly attributable to the hurricane was about 125. Why are we paying for that?

Over and over—I cannot tell you how many county commissioners and mayors were calling us, pleading: Why won’t FEMA reimburse us for the debris removal? Over and over we had people saying: FEMA is not sending us any relief.

What is the purpose of FEMA? It is to help people when they are in a time of need and it is authorized under law.

Well, lo and behold, do you know what the most recent one is? It is exactly the reverse. Just a month ago, FEMA sent out \$27 million in payments to people; and now, as of 2 weeks ago, it is demanding the people send it back. They said they made a mistake, that they were not eligible for that—\$27 million?

Well, thank goodness the Governmental Affairs Committee of the Senate, at my request, had an investigation and a hearing. They allowed the senior Senator from Florida to be the leadoff witness. Of course, I chronicled a number of these instances.

So we attached to the legislation that passed last night—the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill—amendments that will require FEMA to report back to these committees on the changes that have been made in response to these deficiencies that were noticed by the Inspector General’s report.

But we also put on an amendment that will require FEMA to issue consistent and uniform guidelines for the local governments regarding their reimbursement for hurricane debris removal. This was what was so frustrating to our local governments because in one county FEMA would reimburse the local government for the debris removal and in another county it would not. You had this inconsistency. So in our oversight of the executive branch, it is our responsibility to make it. I am happy to say we passed this on this bill.

The third amendment was just a commonsense amendment. Do you know what happened? Last year, they were hiring inspectors to go into homes. The inspector general’s report pointed out that those inspectors did not have very much training. Therefore, they were just writing checks left and right, not knowing what they were doing. They would write, for example, a reimbursement for a demolished house and all the accoutrements and complete furnishings, but, in fact, that

house did not have any furnishings. If the inspector had asked, FEMA would have known. Well, that is going to be dealt with, with the amendment, with them coming back and reporting on the inspector general’s report.

But do you know what else happened? FEMA allowed inspectors to go in, examine a house, and make a determination. But, lo and behold, they then came back, and those inspectors bought those houses at bargain basement prices, when the homeowner was desperate for cash, at below fair market value. The inspector was profiting as a result of the inspector having been hired, representing the U.S. Government, FEMA, to go in there and help the people, and then coming around and taking advantage of the people in their depleted condition.

So we added an amendment, last night, that is going to prohibit those inspectors from entering into contracts with people when they inspect their property. It is common sense.

There is one thing more I want to inform our colleagues in the Senate. When I arrived at the emergency operations center in the State of Florida Sunday afternoon, just before the hurricane hit—at the time when it was about 3 hours out from landfall, it was a category 4—we thought the poor people of Pensacola were going to be absolutely devastated again from the effects they had 10 months ago with Hurricane Ivan, when it hit with such ferociousness. Well, in those intervening hours, by landfall, it had come down from a category 4 to a category 2. By the way, the differential between 145 miles an hour and 125 miles an hour does not sound like much—that is 20 miles an hour—but the differential is exponential in its destructive force. When I arrived at the emergency operations center—and we were so apprehensive—immediately, several people in the State of Florida EOC came up to me and said: Senator, we want to thank you for standing up and opposing legislation that has been filed in the Senate.

It is legislation that was referred to our Senate Commerce Committee, legislation that would require the National Weather Service to take their Web site off the Internet, under the legislation filed, if there is a competing weather service offered by a commercial entity.

In this particular legislation, it is a commercial entity in the State of the Senator who offered the legislation called AccuWeather. What those people in the Florida EOC wanted me to know was that AccuWeather, on Saturday before the hurricane hit on Sunday, had been predicting it was going in to New Orleans or Mississippi, whereas the National Weather Service, through the National Hurricane Center, had that track coming straight to an area between Pensacola and Ft. Walton Beach, exactly the track where the hurricane hit.

If we had not had the National Weather Service accuracy available to

the public of Florida—and they were getting their information from this other entity—the people of the gulf coast of Florida would have let down their guard and then, all of a sudden, they would have gotten hit. There was a lot less destruction this time and, thank the good Lord, no loss of life because people heeded the warnings: Get out. The day before the hurricane, there was a massive evacuation, very orderly. We did not lose one life.

Here again is another reason why we can be thankful we do have such experts. And never, under the guise of privatization, should we say a governmental service that often is the difference between life and death in my State of Florida should be knocked off the Internet. To the contrary, I can tell you last year, the National Weather Service Web site got 9 billion—that is with a “b”—hits in that 6-week period. It is a governmental service I am proud of, and I am proud of all the people at the National Hurricane Center in Miami. I have called Max Mayfield, the director, to tell him how proud I am of all those people. They were right on. We never want to focus on that centerline of the track because Mother Nature has a mind of her own. We want to focus on that cone of possible landfall. But in this case, the National Hurricane Center was right on track. My congratulations to them.

I thank my colleagues for the passage of these amendments regarding FEMA last night on the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

(The remarks of Mr. DORGAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1412 are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

TV MARTÍ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I point out an amendment I will offer to the Foreign Operations appropriations bill. Let me show a picture of something called Fat Albert. Fat Albert is an aerostat balloon. It is on a tether far up in the sky. The purpose of Fat Albert is to broadcast television signals into the country of Cuba to tell the citizens of Cuba that life under Castro, life in communism in Cuba, is a pretty awful life and you ought to aspire toward a democracy and here are all the good things democracy has to offer.

The fact is, the Cubans already know all that. That is why they get on rafts and risk their lives trying to leave. In any event, if they don't know that, they can tune into a Miami radio station 90 miles away. If they choose not to tune in to a Miami radio station, they can tune in to Radio Martí. That does work. It sends signals to the country of Cuba and people listen to it. But TV Martí does not work.

TV Martí doesn't get into the Cuban marketplace. The Cuban people can't

see it, because the Castro regime jams the signals. We have now spent \$189 million on TV Martí. We send television signals the Cuban people can't see. We spend \$189 million. Apparently, someone feels better because we have wasted this money.

I had an amendment earlier this year to shut this down. Strangely enough, this Senate turned it down. I will give them the chance again on the Foreign Operations bill. I am going to take the money out of that bill, and we will vote on it again.

Why do the Cubans not see these signals? Because Castro jams them. The President is asking for \$21 million more to send television signals to Cuba. They used to use Fat Albert. Fat Albert got loose at one point, meandered over into the Everglades. They had to find some grapple hooks to rescue him. But that wasn't enough.

Incidentally, for most of the time they have broadcast these signals, they broadcast them from 3:30 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. All were jammed. They decided to change that on May 20, 2002, and then they began to broadcast in prime time. An administration official from the State Department said this: We don't have any official evidence that the audience has increased due to the broadcast schedule change.

Chris Coursen, former chairman of the President's board of advisors on broadcasting to Cuba, says until 6 years ago, TV Martí used to do exit interviews with Cubans coming to the United States on rafts and so on to determine whether Cubans, in fact, watched TV Martí. It was clear from those interviews no one was seeing TV Martí in Cuba because Castro was jamming it. We get people coming off a raft. We say: Have you watched Television Martí? No, we can't see it. It gets jammed. What do we do? We keep spending money anyway. And they stopped doing exit interviews with Cubans coming here, because they didn't want to document the fact that nobody could watch TV Martí.

It is now not enough to do it by an aerostat balloon. We now have a specially equipped airplane flying once a week, a C-130, Commando Solo, which is a very special airplane designed for communications strategies in warfare. We have taken an Air National Guard Commando Solo, put it up 4 hours a week, and it still cannot overcome the jammers in Cuba. We went from spending money we don't have on things we don't need to send television signals to people who can't receive them, and then we went to airplanes.

Now the President wants to buy an airplane just for this purpose, buy a new one. The President wants to spend \$21 million more sending a television signal no one can see. It is unbelievable. I want to see somebody vote to continue this funding and then go home and thumb their suspenders and crow about how they oppose Government waste. I want to see one person do that. If ever there was a dem-

onstrated waste in Government, this is it. Everybody in this Chamber knows it. We will see whether finally this Senate will decide to shut down money that is spent that unwisely.

MASSIVE WASTE OF TAXPAYER MONEY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am going to offer one other amendment on the Foreign Operations appropriations bill. I will offer it on every appropriations bill I get the chance to offer it on. It is legislating on appropriations, but it is important to do.

We have held hearing after hearing on the subject of Halliburton and other contractors in Iraq. There is massive waste of the taxpayers' money. The most recent hearing talked about a whistleblower who worked for Halliburton in a food service enterprise in a supervisory capacity in Iraq. He said: We were serving food to American troops that had expired and outdated stamps on it by as much as a year. We were told to feed it to the troops. There was food in convoys that came under fire, and the food was contaminated with bullets and shrapnel. We were told to take out the bullets and shrapnel, and feed the food to the troops anyway.

He also said—with respect to when he worked for Halliburton we were told if we spoke to a government auditor who came to our base, we would be fired or sent to an area to work where there is an active fire zone. And this in fact happened to him.

This isn't just this hearing. It is not just feeding outdated food to the troops. It is about people who have testified, whistleblowers who have testified at previous hearings and said: We drove \$85,000 new trucks, and we left them on the side of the road. If they had a flat tire or a plugged fuel pump, they got torched. We would just leave them behind. It was a cost plus contract, so there was no need to fix these little problems. Just buy new trucks, and make a nice little profit on the new purchase.

The stories of waste and fraud and abuse are unbelievable, and nobody cares.

Anybody hear of any oversight hearings by the oversight committees of jurisdiction in the U.S. Senate? None, zero. That is why we are holding the hearings I am chairing in the Policy Committee, because no one here cares.

I just sent a letter to Secretary Rumsfeld to say please at least look into this question of whether we are sending men and women in America's uniform to Iraq to fight and serving food that is outdated by as much as a year. Unbelievable.

Bunny Greenhouse testified at the hearing. She is the highest ranking civilian official in the Corps of Engineers, and is responsible for approving large contracts. She always got excellent scores on her performance evaluations. But they didn't like her much when she began to interfere with the