

now saying that the Appropriations Committee has voluntarily said, even before the conference committee that we are going to live by these standards.

I will not quibble with the Senator from Oklahoma because he and I see this quite differently. But authorizing a project does not mean it has money. That is why we have authorizing committees and appropriating committees. I can authorize the Sun, the Moon, the stars, and the Milky Way, but I will not deliver any of those to anybody until I get to an appropriations bill.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. When I am finished, I will. All of the authorization in the world notwithstanding, unless you appropriate the money from the Treasury for the project, it is just a good idea that might happen.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. I said I will. Allow me to finish my sentence. What I am suggesting is, other committees may take this up as well on an interim basis. But the bills that are going to move on the floor of the Senate are the appropriations bills. Now that the budget resolution is passed, our major obligation is to achieve something we haven't done for years. We want to try to pass the appropriations bills on time. That means that the time of the Senators from Oklahoma and South Carolina and all of us will be consumed with appropriations bills, and the rules we will play by on earmarks for those bills which will be front and center, our major business, will be the same rule that you voted for, the vote that the Senator from Oklahoma cast on this floor for earmark reform. So I say to the Senator from Oklahoma, he can be prepared as these bills come to the floor to see the very approach he has suggested be followed voluntarily. In the meantime we have the assurance of the House that this matter is going to conference committee.

Suggesting that we have abandoned our commitment to reform or calling it a flimsy excuse overstates the Senator's position.

I object.

Mr. COBURN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senators will please address other Senators through the Chair and refer to other Senators in the third person, not in the first person.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I object to the unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois objects.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will re-

sume consideration of S. 372, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 372) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Rockefeller/Bond amendment No. 843, in the nature of a substitute.

Collins amendment No. 847 (to amendment No. 843), to reaffirm the constitutional and statutory protections accorded sealed domestic mail.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, the Republican manager, Senator BOND, and I and our staffs have been working together to clear some amendments, and we have in fact cleared already 10 amendments. I now ask unanimous consent that it be in order for the Senate to consider en bloc the following amendments, that they be agreed to en bloc, and that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc. These were agreed to by both sides and have been cleared by all parties. The numbers of the amendments are 845, 846, 856, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, and 872.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the several requests?

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, it is very important that we move forward with this bill. We have given time for our colleagues to debate and raise other questions. We would ask that we be able to proceed in a reasonable timeframe to take up amendments which have been introduced by the chairman and the vice chairman together and reflect bipartisan agreement. As vice chairman, I am firmly committed to passage of intelligence reauthorization. I would say further it remains my intention to reduce the partisanship and politicization of intelligence matters.

Events on the Senate floor yesterday, including direct personal attacks on me, indicate this remains a tall order. This bill makes getting a bill harder, and it is already hard enough. Given the kitchen sink provided in the administration's Statement of Administration Policy indicating a possible veto, the chairman and I are trying in good faith, as the chairman indicated, to work through 9, 10, or a dozen amendments to correct the major objections that the administration has.

The administration must know that as we try to weigh their key priorities, they must respect our priorities and our fundamental oversight responsibility which I and the Members of this body should take seriously, as any Senator will.

As for yesterday's events, Senator MCCONNELL manages the floor for the

minority. He did not want to end the debate prematurely and the opportunity to offer amendments by the minority, especially with 18 Members absent from the Senate due to bad weather. I supported him because it is the responsibility of our two leaders to manage the floor debate and to protect the rights of minorities and absent Senators. While the attacks on me were inappropriate and offensive, I will continue to work for passage of this intelligence reform measure, which is one of the most important bills we can pass in this session. The measure is too important to be derailed by personal and political attacks.

My friends on the other side of the aisle want more oversight of intelligence. I agree. We got into problems prior to 9/11 because we didn't have good oversight. We have found that there are holes that need to be plugged in oversight. We need to move forward. But forcing an end to the debate with 18 Members absent was not the way to do so. I am hoping that we can show progress by adopting amendments and moving this bill forward to exercise our oversight to provide the intelligence community the direction they need. Our desire is to move forward in the regular order, work our way through amendments, work out a time agreement, dispose of amendments, and hopefully conclude with a bill that most, if not the overwhelming majority, of Members can support so we can get to conference and continue the process.

I will continue to work with the chairman under the difficult circumstances that he and I both face. I am not for delay or any effort, real or imagined, to kill this bill, but I have honest concerns, as others, that there should be an opportunity to address through the regular order in a reasonable timeframe. If there are unreasonable delays, then we will pursue other options which are necessary sometimes to move a bill.

Because of the difficult division present in recent years over these issues, we have been unable to get an authorization bill passed. I find that unacceptable, and I am committed to finding a bill, but it can't be just any bill. It must be the product of give and take and mutual respect and compromise between both parties and both bodies and one the administration can sign.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Will the vice chairman yield?

Mr. BOND. Yes.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, the Senator from Oklahoma has indicated to me that he will not object to the managers' amendment going forward, if he would be allowed to finish what he was talking about, which I assume would happen within the next 5 or 8 minutes. If that is the case, then we will have made progress.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I didn't mean to cut the Senator off. For the movement of this bill, we had hoped to