

and did not finish the final product until late this afternoon, it is unrealistic to assume everyone could have read this, gone over it carefully, and signed off on it.

I regret we were unable to get that done, but I believe before the final gavel comes down on this session, whenever that is, the Congress of the United States will have a chance to express its approval of this effort.

I wish I could stand here and say that this is done. It is not, because we need those signatures on this conference report. But I can say that those who have been involved in trying to craft it believe we have put together a good agreement.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

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

Mr. REID. This is more of a comment than a question. The Senator from Connecticut has been on the floor this week for two very important reasons. One was to announce election reform, which is landmark legislation. No matter how one looks at it, it is landmark legislation. Also, the Senator from Connecticut has worked on this terrorism insurance bill for more than a year.

The reason I mention this is that there are no legislative winners or losers. It is something that was done on a bipartisan basis, each not getting everything they wanted but coming up with a product that is good for the American people.

The Senator is a veteran legislator. We all know that. But I really want to spread on the RECORD of this Senate how important it is to have someone such as the Senator from Connecticut who can work with people on the other side of the aisle to come up with a product for which no one can claim credit. This is not a Democrat or Republican victory with regard to election reform and terrorism insurance—when that is approved, and I am confident it will be. It will not be a victory for the Democrats or the Republicans. It will be a victory for the American people.

The way we were able to do so was with patience, perseverance, and the expertise of the Senator from Connecticut. On behalf of the entire Senate, the people of Nevada, who badly need both pieces of legislation, and the rest of the country, I applaud the work of the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Nevada for those very gracious comments. I thank him for his efforts, as well as the very fine staff people, on both the terrorism insurance issue, which is an important question in his State, and the election reform bill.

I think we have finally come to realize—maybe it takes some of us longer than others—that any product that is going to have much merit requires that it be one reached on a bipartisan basis. The very fact that this institution is divided about as equally as it can be demands that.

I have served in this Chamber in the minority by a significant number of seats, and I have served in the majority by a significant number of seats. I have served in this Chamber, obviously, as we all do today, when we have been evenly divided. Under any set of circumstances short of an overwhelming number, measures need to be worked out with each other. We have to sit down and resolve differences across party lines.

The Senator from Nevada is a master at it. He was generous in his comments about the Senator from Connecticut. All of us admire the patience, the diligence, and the tenacity of Senator REID. There is no one who fights harder and spends more time every day to try to make things happen. There is no more frustrating job.

I found that out working on these last two issues, and that was frustrating enough. I am tired. I have been up several nights into the wee hours of the morning. I have talked about that 1-year-old daughter of mine. I have been accused of trying to avoid some of the paternal responsibilities that come with a new child by legislating too late at night. That is hardly the case. I cannot wait to get home to her.

I have admiration for Senator REID, who does it every day, but for those who do this on occasion, it is very hard. To do it every single day we are here takes a special talent and ability and commitment to this country. No one embraces those qualities better than the senior Senator from Nevada.

I thank the Senator for the kind words about the Senator from Connecticut. But they can be said with greater emphasis about the Senator from Nevada. I am sorry we cannot urge the adoption of a conference report on terrorism insurance. We will do that shortly sometime within the next few weeks. I am confident that before the Congress ends, enough Members, as they have already indicated in this Chamber, will be willing to sign a conference report, and hopefully the other Chamber will do the same.

Again, my compliments to the leadership of the other body and the leadership here for insisting we work to try to get this done. It is never an easy job. You have to try to work things out. I thank the President of the United States, as well, and his very kind staff. They worked very hard to keep us at this. When a number of us became discouraged on whether it was worthwhile spending anymore time, people at the White House, legislative staff kept saying: let's stick with it and see if we cannot come up with some answers. I admire that tenacity and that commitment.

I look forward to the final passage of this bill. It will happen, without any doubt. It is just a matter of time. I thank those involved in the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

SENATE BUSINESS

Mr. DAYTON. I join my colleague from Nevada in complimenting the Senator from Connecticut on the passage of the election reform law. I had the distinct pleasure and privilege to sit in the chair to preside when this matter was debated and discussed many months ago. As the Senator from Connecticut has observed, no one could have known then how long the ordeal remained before they could bring the conference report back this week. What the Senator from Connecticut, the Senator from Kentucky, and the Senator from Missouri accomplished on behalf of the Senate and, more importantly, on behalf of the citizens of America, is extraordinary. Given all that has not been brought to fruition in the final days, the accomplishment the Senator brought to the Senate is an extraordinary tribute to his endurance and his legislative skills.

He was very gracious yesterday to commend all of the people who worked so hard on this legislation—his colleagues and the staff across the aisle. He was too modest to compliment himself. I join with the Senator from Nevada in saying that Senator DODD has performed an extraordinary service to his Nation. We will—in Minnesota and Hawaii and Connecticut and across the country—conduct better elections, more reliable elections, elections where citizens can vote and know the votes will be counted and counted accurately.

His daughter Grace and his grandchildren and my children and grandchildren will be the beneficiaries of those hours of hard work. I thank the Senator. I congratulate him for that extraordinary accomplishment. It is one of the true highlights of our session.

Also, to follow up, I was presiding when the Senator referred to a couple of pieces of legislation that were not enacted in this session. We will be finishing our work and perhaps coming back in November after the election, with an agenda then that has not yet been determined and with prospects that are unknown. I express my great disappointment in some of the matters that were not accomplished.

When I was elected 2 years ago—so this is my first session of Congress—perhaps I came with loftier expectations and perhaps less seasoned assumptions of what could be accomplished, especially given the opportunities that presented themselves less than 2 years ago when we arrived and were looking at these months of time, the trillions of dollars of resources available to do the things that needed to be done.

One of the promises I made to the people of Minnesota during my campaign, which I took very seriously, was the passage of prescription drug legislation to provide for coverage through Medicare or some other means, but my own view was, through the Medicare Program for senior citizens throughout

Minnesota, I am sure Hawaii and elsewhere, have been ravaged by these rising prices, by their inability to control the costs, by the need, as I have discovered in my age, to require more prescription medication. The benefits of those medications are lifegiving, life-saving, life-enhancing for millions of Americans.

However, for our elderly population, they are literally the difference between life and death. They are literally the difference, time after time, between being able to enjoy their lives, rather than being consigned to pain and suffering, and infirmity that no one should be subjected to, certainly not in your last months or years of your life. We had all these good intentions. If we totaled the assurances Members made from both sides of the aisle when they sought election or reelection that year, we would have had a unanimous agreement that this legislation was overdue, was badly needed, and we might have had some differences of views as to how it was going to be enacted.

But when I came here in January of 2001 I felt as certain as I felt about anything that we would pass that legislation and we would have that moment that Senator DODD enjoyed yesterday, to bring back to the Senate a conference report, something that was agreed upon by the House, by the White House, and by the Senate, and we could pass it and go back and proudly tell our fellow citizens we had done the job they sent us to do.

I am terribly distraught and disappointed and disillusioned. I feel apologetic to the citizens of Minnesota, to the senior citizens who placed their trust in me and sent me here. I remember one elderly woman in Duluth, MN, in the northeastern part of our State, about half my size and twice my age, who spoke to me in December of the year 2000 just before I came here. She looked at me after I visited her with her and her friends. She said, If you do not keep your promises, I will take you out behind the woodshed for an old-fashioned thrashing.

I don't dare go back to Duluth, MN, after our failure to pass this legislation. I think in some ways this whole process that we failed to master, if not ourselves, individually, the failure of this entire endeavor, needs an old-fashioned thrashing. It is shameful we have not enacted that legislation on behalf of seniors in Minnesota and everywhere.

It is only one instance, unfortunately, where this failure to enact the people's business occurred in this body. I have presided over this Senate more hours in the last 2 years than anyone, save my colleague, Senator CARPER, of Delaware, and it has been in most respects a very enjoyable, fascinating, and certainly educational experience as a new Member of the Senate to see firsthand what occurs here and how these matters are handled. The masters of the Senate, through years of experi-

ence, know how this process works; also, unfortunately, masters of the process who know how to prevent it from working and how to obstruct and delay it.

I have watched since the beginning of this year, time after time the efforts of the majority leader, my good friend from the neighboring State of South Dakota, who has the responsibility as leader of our majority caucus to try to schedule and move legislation forward. I have seen time after time that he has not been given the agreement necessary. In the Senate, it takes, as you know, unanimous consent. It takes all 100 of us to agree individually just to bring up a matter of legislation. Without that unanimous consent, we have to go through a procedure that then requires the majority leader to file cloture. Then it takes 2 more days before we can vote on proceeding, just going ahead to take up a piece of legislation.

Time after time we have had to go through that process. The majority leader has had to follow it. I believe, if we tallied up all those days that we have been obstructed and delayed from just considering legislation in this body, it would be 50 or 60 during the last year alone. That is 10 to 12 weeks of time. That is 2½ to 3 months of time that we have not been able to conduct the people's business, where we couldn't consider legislation, where we couldn't bring up amendments and vote them up or down.

Here we are now just at a point of recess or adjournment or whatever it is going to be, and we have not passed prescription drug coverage for seniors, we have not extended unemployment benefits but once. I believe we have tried two or three other times to do so. We have not been able to get to so many things the people of Minnesota depended on me to provide and I think the people of America were looking for from all of us.

So as we are in these closing moments, and as Senator DODD from Connecticut has brought attention to some of the unfinished business before us, I wanted to highlight some of that myself and to say, the Good Lord willing, I will be back here, whether it is in November or December or January of next year or the new session of Congress. I wish we would have been able to leave here with much more accomplished. Those who are out there wondering, who do not want excuses or explanations, who want real results, which they should have, who want programs that will benefit them, who want help when they need it, who want improvements in their lives—if they really want to understand why we are leaving some of these matters undone, I invite their calls. I would be happy to discuss those matters with them.

They should look, as I say, and count the number of days we have had to wait to let the clock tick so we could follow the rules of the Senate just to move on to another matter. Then I would recommend they ask themselves

why it is and who it was behind this delay and this obstruction, and hold those individuals to account when they visit the voting booth in the next occasion.

With that, I wish the President a good evening, and I yield the floor.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED AND PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations: Robert Battista to be a member of the NLRB; Wilma Liebman to be a member of the NLRB; Peter Schaumber to be a member of the NLRB; Joel Kahn to be a member of the National Council on Disability; Patricia Pound to be a member of the National Council on Disability; Linda Wetters to be a member of the National Council on Disability; David Gelernter to be a member of the National Council of the Arts; Allen Greene, Judith Rapanos, Maria Guillemard, Nancy Dwight, Peter Hero, Sharon Walkup, and Thomas Lorentzen to be members of the National Museum Services Board; Juan Olivarez to be a member of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board; James Stephens to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission; Peggy Goldwater-Clay to be a member of the Board of Trustees for the Barry Goldwater Scholarship Excellence in Education Foundation; and Carol Gambill to be a member of the National Institute for Literacy, and that the nominations be placed on the Executive Calendar.

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

NOMINATION DISCHARGED AND REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged of the nomination of John Higgins to be the Inspector General for the Department of Education and that it be referred to the Governmental Affairs Committee for the statutory time limitation.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed