

limit spending as the way to implement the constitutional balanced budget amendment. Of course, as a mere statutory program, Congress can override it. We can always unpass what we just passed. But at least I think it sets forth a blueprint, a guideline for achieving the objective.

Finally, Mr. President, I think almost all of us agree that if we pass this balanced budget amendment and send it to the States for ratification, we have to begin achieving that balanced budget today. We have to go back to last year's budget and see if there is anything in the appropriations we passed last year that we can pull back—money that we can save. We need to look at this year's budget as the first of the budgets that gets us on the glidepath to a balanced budget, and set the outside limit of perhaps 7 years. But we probably ought to try to do it in a shorter period, if we can, so that when the balanced budget amendment has finally been ratified by all of the States, it will not be an impossible task for us; so that we will have already started the process and each year intervening will have brought that budget deficit down another ratchet.

If we do that, in the last couple of years when we actually have to do it as a constitutional requirement, it will be an achievable objective, and in the last year or two, we will be able to make the savings and limit spending in such a way that we can achieve that balanced budget at the time it is called for in the constitutional amendment.

So these are some of the things we are going to have to think about as the balanced budget debate begins to unfold. I think it is important to at least begin to think about them in the context of the debate we are having on unfunded mandates, because as the Governors and State legislators that have to deal with the balanced budget amendment tell us, they know we have to mean business and get on with the balanced budget amendment.

At this point, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Georgia for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

NATIONAL SERVICE

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the national service program which has been the subject of a good bit of discussion in recent media accounts and which President Clinton addressed this last week.

From the outset, I want to make it clear that I join President Clinton in

expressing my continued strong support of the concept of national service. The passage of the national service bill in the last Congress was an event that I, along with a number of my colleagues, looked forward to for many years. Since President Clinton signed the legislation into law on September 21, 1993, thousands of Americans have served our country in projects which range from teaching school in inner-city neighborhoods to preventing destruction of lands along our Nation's rivers.

The case for this initiative depends on understanding that it is uniquely a program that offers a triple investment in the future productive capacity of our people and our communities—first of all, in the service performed; the service experience, No. 2; and the postservice benefit for our young people, No. 3. I know that the word "investment" has been much abused in debate on the Senate floor in recent years, and for some it is just a code word for Government spending. We must not, however, become so cynical that we cannot see a real investment with a real payoff when it is staring us in the face.

The idea for this investment came from recognition that many Americans have, for the first time, perhaps, in our history, forgotten the relationship between rights and responsibilities. We often see reports in the news media about various groups proclaiming that this Government service or that Government service is a right. We are so often reminded of the rights all Americans should enjoy that we often lose sight of the other side of the same coin, and that is the responsibilities that we must share in order to make these rights possible. Just as we have rights to freedom, to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, those sacred rights carry with them equally sacred responsibilities. The National Service Program was created to provide young Americans with opportunities to fulfill that obligation to give something back to their country and to their communities.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who dedicated his life to the cause of civil rights and whose birthday we celebrated this past Monday, understood that only through assuming responsibilities that accompany our rights can we help ourselves. He said in the last Sunday morning sermon before his assassination:

Human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. So we must help time and realize that the time is always ripe to do right.

National Service provides young people a means to meet the challenge to do right while expanding their own horizons and building opportunity for their futures.

Critics have tried to attack the National Service Program in a number of

different ways. During the debate on the authorizing legislation, we heard cries of how many more Pell grants we could fund with the money, or how many more job training programs we could fund with the money. Though these criticisms are valid as far as they go, they almost inevitably lose sight of the fact that National Service does not exist for the purpose of simply providing student aid or even job training. National Service exists primarily to provide service. And if the program is not providing service, then it does not deserve to exist. A good analogy is our Nation's Armed Forces. We do not maintain Armed Forces in order to provide valuable skills and develop good character in young men and women. Rather, Armed Forces personnel develop skills and character in the military as they carry out their primary mission of providing our Nation's security.

The same is true of national service. Would critics have the Senate disregard the benefits to society of national service participants providing employment counseling and tutoring to homeless people in Atlanta? Should we ignore the benefits of the first-time immunization of 33,000 children in Fort Worth, TX, in one month which was carried out by those serving in the national service program?

I could go on and on with the kind of service being provided. That is the true test of national service. Are we really serving people and helping communities? Considering the benefits national service provides at the community level, it is difficult to see why there are so many objections to this program. Indeed, given the debates we have heard on unfunded mandates and we continue to hear that on legislation in this body, I would think that our colleagues would agree that national service represents the type of program that we ought to support.

National service is not a Federal mandate for any specific type of service, nor does it require that communities participate at all. National service gives communities and service organizations and young people the chance, voluntarily, to identify and perform the kind of service which best meets their local needs with the Federal Government providing the funding. So it is almost the opposite of a Government mandate.

At the same time, it provides meaningful work for young people addressing real problems without Federal micromanagement. This real work for real value will ensure a strong payback for the taxpayers' dollar. In the process, national service instills in young people the strong traditional values of hard work and responsibility. They learn those values because they are serving. It is not a program to teach those values. It is a program where the values are learned because of service rendered.

As for the claim that national service is—quoting one of the critics—“coerced volunteerism,” I would suggest that critics ask any of the more than 200,000 people who requested applications for last year’s AmeriCorps Program or the 20,000 that were selected and are now serving, whether they were coerced. National service is not coercion any more than was the Montgomery GI bill which provides educational benefits for hundreds of thousands of young Americans who serve and have served in our Nation’s All-Volunteer Force.

Instead, like the Montgomery GI bill, national service is an opportunity, an opportunity that young people all over America have said they want. Nothing is more evident of that than the overwhelming number of applications. I think we will see even more of the applications in the years to come, assuming this program continues.

As for the benefits of service, and to me this must be the way we judge the program more than any other judgment, although there are, really, as I said, three parts to the program, service is the No. 1 part. In my State alone the excellent works that have been performed by these young people is very impressive. In Georgia, national service participants are working in Atlanta area schools as teaching assistants, tutors, and mentors. They are aiding police in developing a community-oriented police program in Albany, GA. They are helping create an emergency 911 network in Douglas and Coffee County. They are identifying local environmental programs in Decatur, GA, and developing plans to engage youth in solving them. They are tutoring hundreds and thousands of young people every day in elementary school. They are also in some of the rural areas that I visited. They do not have any foreign language teachers in the schools there and they have found that with the immigration that is growing in our State and other States, these young people who are in school that cannot speak English need help. In many cases, in a couple of the rural communities, that help is coming from national service participants who have a second language and who are able to be the only ones in the community that can really communicate with the newly arrived legal immigrants in our school.

All of these efforts are duplicated in national service programs nationwide. From aiding the American Red Cross and providing food and clothing for California flood victims to building homes for needy families in the poorest sections of Miami, with Habitat for Humanity.

In conclusion, Mr. President, national service provides a triple payback in valuable service to the community. Higher skills and lower debts for our young people for attending colleges or getting advanced education after high school and a much stronger sense that we are all in the American enterprise

together, bound by mutual respect and mutual obligation.

In the Peace Corps Program in my State the participants begin each day with a chant announcing their readiness to serve, to earn, and to learn. That, Mr. President, is the most eloquent summary of the concept of national service that I think we can offer: To serve, to earn, and to learn.

I urge all Senators to listen to our young people, to visit these programs, to make sure that the criticism of the programs—which is welcome—make sure it is constructive, to make sure we look at whether we are really getting service in the communities where they are serving, rather than simply oppose this program as another governmental program.

I urge all Senators to particularly talk to our young people, listen to them, and see what they say about what they are doing in serving and earning and learning and continuing to give them a chance in this regard. There is room for improvement in the program. There is room for constructive criticism. There is room, perhaps, to even critique the program in a way that would affect the budget. In my view, blind opposition to this exciting concept is simply not the way to go at this point in time.

I think the main measure must be whether we are getting service from these young people and whether they are helping the communities, helping young people, helping those in need. It is my hope that if this program works and I believe it is working, that it will be viewed in the future as not simply an addition to the way we deliver services to those in need in our country and in our communities but rather in lieu of some of the existing programs.

I can think of no better way to deliver social services in this Nation to those in need. We are going to continue to have people in need. We are going to continue to have community demands that cannot be met with nominal funding. I can think of no better way than unleashing the energy, enthusiasm, and idealism of tens of thousands of America’s young people in addressing these critical problems. To me this is the way we ought to begin thinking about shaping our social services.

At this point in time this program is in addition to the existing programs. We should look at it more and more as a substitute to some of the programs and a supplement to others.

I thank the Chair. I know the Senator from New Hampshire would like to speak. I yield the floor.

Mr. SMITH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

END DELAY ON UNFUNDED MANDATES LEGISLATION

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, the bill that has been before the Senate for 8 days now basi-

cally has been delayed and stalled, is very important business for the people of the United States of America and certainly many communities around the country who suffer from the unfunded mandates that they have to comply with.

I want to discuss that legislation today for a few minutes and also to say that I sincerely hope that in the very near future, hopefully some time early next week, that we will be able to pass that legislation and get it on through the House and the Senate and get it to the President. Hopefully he will sign it. This is a major piece of legislation that the majority, overwhelming majority of the American people support.

I do not understand why we are delaying it. Apparently there seems to be, based on those we talk with, a great number of people on the other side of the aisle who say they support the bill yet when it came down to signing the petition for cloture, we did not get much help at all. Indeed, we only had one vote. I find a strange inconsistency here that those who say they support the legislation cannot bring themselves to bring the legislation to a vote. I think sometimes we get criticized here for not being able to accomplish anything and the American people look at this and say, why is it that a Senator, perhaps my own Senator, would say, “I am for this bill but I do not want us to vote on it.”

When we get criticized out there in the public, we really should not wonder why that happens. There is nothing wrong with debate. All Senators have every right to debate this legislation as long as they wish. Certainly, I stand here today before one of the most historic desks in the U.S. Senate. This desk belonged to Daniel Webster, one of the few original desks in the Senate.

Daniel Webster, of course, at one time represented New Hampshire in the House, was born in New Hampshire, and represented Massachusetts in the U.S. Senate, one of the greatest orators of the pre-Civil War time. He certainly stood on the floor of the U.S. Senate before this desk and debated many of the great issues of the day and, I am sure, frustrated a lot of people on the other side. That is the way it should be. That is what the Senate is. There is nothing wrong with that. I do not criticize that in any way.

I will say that this is an issue, the unfunded mandate issue, that is so overwhelmingly supported by the people in this country—I hesitate to say this, but I think it is true—that the American people, I think, are going to exact a price from those who delay it. I think they do it under grave risks.

This legislation places, very interestingly, increased and added responsibilities on those who want to create the new mandate. It would also increase the cost of an existing one. In other words, they must get an estimate of the cost of the new requirement to both State and local government and the private sector and provide the