

part of Indiana, a very key economic development tool, the life of that particular area.

In checking, Mr. President, on this particular amendment, I understand that the Budget Committee—which has the right to do so—would make a point of order against my amendment and that it would require 60 votes, a supermajority, in order for me to pass the amendment. Of course, I know I cannot do that.

There are things in this life that you realize cannot be done. You accept that and move on. Well, I accept this for the moment. I accept this for the moment. We are going to revisit this question time and time again because it is an abomination for a major highway to have a major bridge constructed to a point—two piers sticking out of the Ohio River—and not a dime to complete it.

My State is not a wealthy State, but the money is available by the State to pay for its part, and it has paid more than its part in the designation of the highway to the bridge and the four-lane facility, and the bridge will be a four-lane facility and has been recognized as one of the outstanding designs for not only design but safety that we have had in this country.

Mr. President, I regret the attitude of the Budget Committee. At least I thought I might have a fighting chance to be able to secure the funds for this bridge. However, if the Members on the other side stick together, then I have no chance.

I just wanted the record to reflect this morning that my constituents and those in Indiana are being denied infrastructure, that \$58 million of our tax dollars have been spent, and they say, "No, we will not build the rest of it." It seems to me that it is no longer a demonstration project, with \$58 million having been spent, the piers being built in the river, and the span now is all that is lacking.

This new majority here in the Congress has said to my people, "We are not going to finish it. It is up to you." They even reduced the funds to my State by some \$45 million for this fiscal year compared to last fiscal year, and they say, "Just take it out of your funds and build it."

Well, that is not easy to swallow. I do not intend to see my people denied something that is real, something that is necessary, and something I do not think you could hold fault with, take umbrage with, because of its need, and we are in the position which we are in.

Mr. President, I will file my amendment. I will not call it up. I want it to be on record. It will be there. I will offer it this afternoon, at least file it at the desk and let my colleagues know of my interest and how much damage they are doing to the commerce from south to north that goes through Tennessee, Kentucky, on into Indiana, that hooks up with interstate highways.

It will cause major economic devastation to our area. Many companies that have built there, that have come

there, have been depending on this mode of transportation because trucks are important to the new development of new businesses that have come into that area.

Mr. President, again, I regret that the majority has said to my people and those in southern Indiana that we are just going to let the piers stick out of the river like two sore spots and not complete the bridge.

Mr. President, I imagine my 5 minutes are up. I know the Chair is patient, and I appreciate that, but I did want the record to reflect that I am very disappointed in the way that the constituents in Indiana and Kentucky have been treated in this particular budget for this particular item.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). The Senator from North Dakota.

RECONCILIATION

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will begin deliberating something called the budget reconciliation bill, which for most Americans is a term that does not mean very much. The reconciliation bill means reconciling spending on Federal programs to the terms of the budget agreement that was agreed to earlier this year by the Congress.

The reconciliation bill is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation that has been considered in this Chamber in several decades. Yet we were provided with the reconciliation bill late yesterday afternoon.

For purposes of illustrating what the Senate is going to be considering, this bill is contained in these two volumes, about 2,000 pages of legislation. It is 1,949 pages, to be exact, and was delivered late yesterday to our desks.

Because there was a World Series game last night and I was preoccupied, unfortunately, until the 11th inning of that game—until quarter to 1 in the morning—I did try to muddle my way through these 2,000 pages but without great success. This is not a very good way to legislate.

However, I want to make two points about this bill. First, even though there will be a lot of criticism back and forth, and much of it justifiable, we should recognize that there are some provisions in this bill on which both political parties agree. There are things in this reconciliation bill that make a lot of sense, and I commend the majority party for a number of things that they intend to do. For instance, we do need to cut spending.

There are a number of areas of spending cuts offered by the majority party for which I say to them, "Good job; I support you." There are areas here where there is agreement. The American people in most cases hear only about where we disagree—for good reason, because there is no need to stand up and debate for hours about an issue where there's already agreement. In

those areas where we agree, I think we should recognize there has been some good work done, bringing some of this to the floor of the Senate. I commend the people who worked to do that.

I do note, however, that some of the proposals in this bill are very troublesome and those are the ones that will engender a substantial amount of debate.

One of my colleagues took to the floor yesterday, and I am sure it took a fair amount of courage to do so. Senator SPECTER spoke at length about this reconciliation bill, and one thing he said struck me. He said, and I am paraphrasing, "I have concern that the tax cuts are unfair or at least give the perception of unfairness." Senator SPECTER said, "I express this concern because much of the pain of the spending cuts goes to the elderly, the young, the infirm, while allowing tax cuts for corporate America and those in higher brackets."

It is not often that someone in the Chamber speaks in such an unvarnished way. I am sure it was not easy for Senator SPECTER to do, because I do not think that is the prevailing message on that side of the aisle. Yet that is what is in these 2,000 pages.

It seems to me that, while containing some good recommendations and some commendable work, this bill is also a vehicle making profound changes in Medicare and Medicaid. It is also going to make it harder for middle-income parents to send their kids to college. It represents a set of priorities that I think Senator SPECTER properly says will impose most of the burden on lower income folks and will bestow most of the benefits on those who are very privileged in our country.

There is reason for us to be having a disagreement if we each believe in a different approach. I happen to agree that we should cut spending, but I do think there are some areas of spending that are more important than others. I personally do not support the star wars program. I do not think we have to build 20 more B-2 bombers at \$30 billion. I could go through a whole list of items I think we should cut. But I do think it is valuable to keep the Head Start Program running and fully funded. I do not think it is wise to kick 55,000 kids off Head Start. I think it is valuable to keep kids in Head Start. That is a priority of mine. This is going to be a debate over the next 3 or 4 days about priorities.

Again, I have said this several times in the last couple of weeks, but people should not lament the fact that we are debating and aggressively disagreeing in this Chamber. The way you reach compromise is to take different positions that you might believe in very strongly, debate them aggressively, and from that debate comes compromise. My hope is that there will be a compromise on this reconciliation bill after these 2,000 pages are most likely passed by the Congress without

my vote and then vetoed by the President of the United States. Following that veto, there must follow, by necessity, some kind of compromise. This system is predicated on compromise.

I think this is a sign of strength. We come to the floor. We discuss 2,000 pages. It is not a sign of strength that we get 2,000 pages in the late afternoon and are told, "By the way, we will start in the morning." That is not the right way to do it.

But we will have, I think, in the next few days, a pretty aggressive debate about priorities, and I hope at the end, after this bill is vetoed, we will come back to another set of priorities that better represents this country's interests.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the distinguished Senator yield?

Mr. DORGAN. I will be happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. BYRD. It is a sign of strength just to be able to lift this monstrosity. Does anybody in this Senate know what is in this bill; 1,949 pages? We will be flying deaf, dumb, and blind, because we do not know what we are voting on here. I suppose there are a few members of the Budget Committee who will know something about it, but the rest of us, though, do not. It is a monstrosity. It is an abomination. And we have all of 20 hours—20 hours for debate, for amendments, motions, et cetera. It is ridiculous.

I thank the Senator for yielding.

Mr. DORGAN. I could not agree more with the Senator. Again, I think this will be vetoed and perhaps after that, we will have a more orderly process that results in better priorities.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

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

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

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, as soon as Senator DASCHLE or Senator EXON are on the floor, I will call up the reconciliation package, but I will await their arrival and go ahead and make my remarks.

THE RECONCILIATION BILL

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, 31 years ago this Friday, Ronald Reagan delivered a nationally televised speech that began his career in politics. The speech was called "A Time for Choosing."

Ronald Reagan made clear that the choice facing America was not one between right or left—rather it was one between up or down.

More than three decades later, this Congress now faces that same choice.

We can either go down the path of the status quo—a path that will lead

America into a downward spiral of bigger government, higher deficits, more taxes, and a financially bankrupt Medicare system.

Or we can move America up to a brighter future, a future where our children and grandchildren are free from staggering deficits. A future where power flows from our States to Washington, and not the other way around. A future with a strong and secure Medicare Program.

Mr. President, I believe the choice is clear.

For this historic Republican Congress, the vote on the reconciliation bills will be a defining moment. It will be the moment when the American public will see that we are not business as usual. We are not the status quo. Rather, this Congress is one that keeps its promises to the American people.

There will be plenty of debate in the coming days, and I know the American people will be listening closely. Judging from what has been coming out of the White House lately, I know they will hear a lot of rhetoric, and a lot of scare tactics.

But I believe that in the end, they will see through this smokescreen, and they will see the truth.

And the truth is that the Republican budget contained in this bill is a realistic, thoughtful budget blueprint for America. The truth is that it will ratchet down the deficit by roughly \$30 billion a year during the next 7 years. The truth is that it will balance the budget in the year 2002. And the truth is that it is the only real honest budget plan before the American people.

The truth also is that a balanced budget means a brighter future for our children and grandchildren. Our national debt is now so huge that a child born in 1995 will pay more than \$187,000 in taxes over his or her lifetime just to pay their share of the debt. We owe our children a far better future.

A balanced budget will create lower interest rates, which means that more Americans will be able to own a house, buy a car, or go to college, or to borrow money. Lower interest rates also mean business will have more money to invest and hire workers.

The truth also is that the American people are more able to decide how to spend their hard earned money than are Government bureaucrats.

And with the \$245 billion tax cut contained in this bill, millions of American families will have more money to spend. Our \$500-per-child tax credit will mean that over the coming years, families will have thousands and thousands more dollars to spend on college tuition or braces for their kids.

We will include in the RECORD during the debate how such money will be coming to each State, such as my own State of Kansas. There are a lot of families with children. They are not rich. But a \$500 tax credit—if you have two or three children, that is \$1,500. They can spend it better on their families than any bureaucrat I know of in Washington, DC, or any Member of

Congress, for that matter, on either side of the aisle.

By rewarding those who save and invest, our capital gains tax cut will also create jobs and opportunity.

There is an undeniable truth that the President has tried to ignore for months and months. And that is the fact that three of the President's own Cabinet members tell us that if no action is taken, Medicare will be completely broke by the year 2002.

This bill makes the tough decisions necessary to preserve, protect, and strengthen Medicare. And we have been aided a great deal in this effort by the Presiding Officer, the Senator from New Hampshire, Senator GREGG.

We do it by slowing its rate of growth, and by giving seniors more options in selecting their health care.

And despite the phony talk you may hear of "cutting Medicare," the Republican plan will increase Medicare spending from \$4,800 per beneficiary in 1995 to \$6,700 per beneficiary in 2002.

Let me repeat: The Republican plan will increase Medicare spending from \$4,800 per beneficiary in 1995 to \$6,700 per beneficiary in 2002.

I know that during the next few days, some of my friends on the other side of the aisle will be painting horrible pictures. They will tell us that passage of this bill means we are turning our backs on children, on seniors, and on the disabled. They will repeat it again and again. But no matter how many times they repeat it, it does not make it true.

Mr. President, I wish all Americans could read the column by budget expert James Glassman that was printed in the October 17 edition of the Washington Post. Mr. Glassman's column—and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD following my remarks—makes clear the falsehoods contained in some of the emotional rhetoric we have been hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. (See exhibit 1.)

Mr. DOLE. Mr. Glassman writes that under the Republican plan, Federal spending will rise between 1995 and 2002 by \$358 billion—or 24 percent. It is going to rise 24 percent over the next 7 years. Is that devastation? Is that cutting programs? No. Only in Washington would a \$358 billion increase be called a cut.

The media bought onto the President's spin for the most part; they keep talking about it. Turn on NBC, and Katie Couric is talking about "big cuts, big cuts." She does not know anything about the budget. All she is picking up on is the liberal spin which the Democrats have been dishing out there with no facts, no effort to save Medicare, to balance the budget, or tax cuts; a lot of talk, but that is about all.

Mr. Glassman makes very clear that President Clinton was absolutely off the mark when he said—and I quote—"I will not let balancing the budget