

death sentences and re-try the defendants in accordance with internationally recognized human rights standards. To our shock, the executions were carried out 48 hours later.

This kind of behavior, this kind of brutality is unconscionable. It calls out for a tough international response. Later this week, I will be joining a bipartisan group of Senators in introducing sanctions legislation against Nigeria. While details are still be worked out, the bill is intended to ratchet up the pressure against General Abacha. His murderous regime must be stopped and isolated. The continued butchery of his country can only destabilize the region, harm international interests in the continent, and force suffering upon the 110 million people of Nigeria.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS MUST WORK TOGETHER

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, this morning I was asked by a reporter from a radio station why the President and Congress cannot work out this budget impasse, why the Government has to shut down.

That is a good question, and it deserves an answer. Of course, the answer is we will work it out, but it is going to take a little time, and here is why.

Yesterday, my offices received about 600 telephone calls from constituents, and they were running about 10 to 1 in favor of the Congress staying the course to achieve a balanced budget in 7 years.

The letters and the phone calls, all had a common theme: Do not give in. Do this for our grandchildren. We need a balanced budget. We have to get the fiscal house in order. Do not cave in to the President.

Those were the general sentiments of the people who were calling my office yesterday, and today, just before I came to the floor, I noted the same general theme and the same relationship of numbers in these calls.

So many of us, particularly those of us who were elected in the last election and heard the message from the people that they want to stop business as usual in Washington, DC, and get the Federal budget balanced, are committed to achieving a balanced budget in 7 years. I do not understand why the President will not concede that point.

I think part of the reason why it is taking time is that the President is looking good in the polls and op-ed pieces, and so on. He is finally standing firm for something, and so he is getting a lot of press. So there is not a great deal of pressure on the President to concede anything at this point, and that is why we have the impasse. We feel the pressure from our constituents to stay the course and have a balanced budget and, on the other hand, the President is not willing to agree to a balanced budget.

The first thing the President said when he vetoed the bill which would allow the Government to keep on operating was that he did it because we had Medicare cuts in the legislation.

That is not true. The Medicare legislation which we included with the bill to keep the Government running, because we knew the President would veto it if it was part of our reconciliation bill, called the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, that bill provides for precisely the same percentage of premium payment for part B Medicare as you have today and you have had for the last 5 years. The President would like, he says, to reduce that to 25 percent of premium instead of 31 percent. But that is the difference between the two of us as to the percent. We are not increasing the percent of premium. It is at 31.5 percent today. It will be 31.5 percent under our bill, and so that is not true.

I submit, by the way, that in the end the President will have to agree with us that it is fair to ask the seniors who are paying voluntarily for part B Medicare benefits to pay 31 percent of it after our children and our grandchildren are paying the other 68 or 69 percent. I submit that it is an unfair burden to ask them to pay any more of the part B Medicare.

So the bottom line here is the balanced budget. The President has said he agrees with the balanced budget, but he just does not agree with the numbers we would use to calculate it. And yet the numbers are precisely the numbers he asked us to use in his State of the Union speech, the Congressional Budget Office numbers. He said those were more accurate.

We said, OK, we will use them. Now that we have used them, he said, no, he wants to use a different set of numbers. And some people have said it is the rosy scenario numbers which would enable us to get a balanced budget without making some of the tough decisions which we have tried to make.

Let me conclude by noting why it is so important for us to have a balanced budget. If we can achieve this balanced budget by the year 2002, we will have reduced interest rates by about 2 percent in this country, and that means that a family of four with a \$75,000 home mortgage, for example, a \$15,000 car loan, an \$11,000 student loan, could save about \$2,000 a year in interest costs. My grandson Jonathan was just born this year, and he immediately took a burden of \$187,000 just to pay the interest on the national debt during his lifetime. That is unfair.

What this debate is all about is stopping the spending in Washington, DC, that creates this kind of liability for our children and grandchildren. It is time to stop handing the blank credit card to the big spenders in this city.

And so what this impasse between the President and the Congress is all about is getting to a balanced budget in the year 2002, reducing interest rates so that our citizens can enjoy the sav-

ings that are achieved as a result and stopping this additional spending which requires our children and grandchildren to continue to pay for our debts.

Mr. President, I find it ironic that at the very time we are trying to get to this balanced budget in the year 2002, the President is talking about committing an additional \$2 billion to the quagmire in Bosnia without congressional authorization of any kind in direct violation of the principle that the Congress and the President should both consult before we commit United States troops to this kind of an operation.

And so I find it ironic that that is the action the President is taking at the same time that he shut the Government down by vetoing the legislation and refusing to agree with us to balance the budget in 7 years.

It is time to get serious about balancing the Federal budget.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

BUDGET PRIORITIES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President I have great respect for my friend from Arizona. It is interesting, and this is a good example of the differences in the way we approach things. He is talking about spending, and he is absolutely right. We need to cut spending. Everybody agrees with that. There is no disagreement about goals. We ought to have a balanced budget. Nobody disagrees with that. I happen to think we ought to spend money in education and other investments. The Senator from Arizona and I have had a debate on this floor about star wars. He thinks we ought to build star wars. We will have that debate again later, I guess, but everybody seems to have their own set of priorities. It is interesting to me; this whole disagreement is being recast as a question of whether some want to balance the budget. That is not the question. Everybody wants to balance the budget. The question is what plan to do you use to get there.

I say this to my colleagues, that the journey we are on at the moment, that is, the journey that leads to the shutdown of the Federal Government, is not a spur-of-the-moment trip.

It has been planned for and packed. Back in April, April 3, Speaker GINGRICH vowed to "create a titanic legislative standoff with [the President] by adding vetoed bills to must-pass legislation increasing the national debt ceiling."

September: "I don't care what the price is," Speaker GINGRICH says. "I don't care if we have no executive offices and no bonds for 30 days—not this time," he says. Speaker GINGRICH has said he would force the Government to miss interest and principal payments for the first time ever to force Democrat Clinton's administration to agree to his 7-year deficit reduction.

The point is, this is not an accident; this is a destination that has been long planned. There are some around here who now gloat about it, that they have caused a shutdown. They may well cause a debt default. It is my judgment there is no good reason for anybody to gloat. There is no credit in this set of circumstances. We need to solve these problems together.

I want to tell you what the problem is in the differences in priorities. The 7-year plan—and I have no problem with 7 years—the 7-year plan to balance the budget is a plan that is fundamentally unfair. Let me describe it this way: You take the poorest 20 percent of the people and you say to them, “We are going to burden you with 80 percent of all the spending cuts.” To the poorest 20 percent of the American people, we are going to say, “We are going to burden you with 80 percent of the spending cuts.”

Then you turn to the wealthiest 20 percent of the American people and say, “Guess what, get ready to smile. We are going to give you 80 percent of the tax cuts.” The poorest 20 percent is burdened with most of the spending cuts, and the top 20 percent is rewarded with tax cuts.

Now, I do not know what school you attend to take a course in fairness that comes out that way, but it is a school that ought not be accredited. That is what this debate is about.

The other side says, “Well, we’re for the middle class.” I did not know what they meant until I saw one of our colleagues on the House side, a Congressman from Pennsylvania, and he said his salary of \$133,000, plus a \$50,000 pension that he also gets, “doesn’t make me rich.” He said, “That doesn’t make me middle class. In my opinion, I’m lower middle class.”

This Republican Congressman said, “When I see someone who is making from \$300,000 to \$750,000 a year, now, that’s middle class.” I guess now I understand what they mean when they say they are here to help the middle class—somebody making \$600,000, \$700,000 a year. Well, you know, there are a lot of folks that are not middle class making \$600,000 or \$700,000 a year in this country.

Ronald Reagan, when he proposed a budget plan, he said, “We’re going to have a safety net for the most vulnerable Americans, and there will be seven things in the safety net. We’re not going to cut them—Head Start, Medicare, Social Security, veterans, SSI, school lunches and summer jobs for youth.”

Guess what? Six of these are under the budget knife. Six of what Ronald Reagan said was in the safety net over a dozen years ago are now under the budget knife of this crowd.

No, this is not about whether there should be a balanced budget. Of course there should. It is about the priorities. It is about describing \$600,000-a-year people as middle income and saying, “By the way, we’re helping the middle-

income folks.” What about the people that work all day, every day, for 8, 10 hours, work hard, come home, take care of their family, making \$20,000, \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000 a year, and then discover that much of what they rely on is gone, going to make it harder for them to send their kids to college, going to kick some of their kids off the Head Start Program—55,000 of those kids. Every one has a name. They are told, no Head Start Program; 600,000 summer youth do not get a job because we cannot afford it. But we are off building star wars and B-2 bombers.

No, these priorities are wrong. We ought to balance this budget and we ought to do it soon, but we ought to get the priorities squared away. Let us not talk about middle-income families as \$600,000 a year and give them a big, fat tax break and say, “By the way, we’re here to help the middle-income folks.”

What a bunch of nonsense. There is no school in America that teaches us this is the definition of “middle income.”

There is nothing wrong with someone making \$600,000. God bless them. I wish everybody could do that. But there is something wrong to tell vulnerable people, kids, families who are struggling, that we cannot afford you, but we can build B-2 bombers and star wars because that is where our priorities are. Those are bad priorities, and we ought to change.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). The Senator’s time has expired.

Mr. DORGAN. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BOXER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

CONGRESS IS STILL GETTING PAID

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I want to certainly applaud the Senator from North Dakota for his words because they are right on target. This is day two of a partial shutdown of the Government of the United States of America. And, yes, we know it is not impacting too many Americans yet, but it is hurting some veterans, Social Security recipients, those who use our national parks, museums, and monuments, those who need to travel and need to get their passports for business who have already paid for their airline tickets and cannot get their passports.

There are environmental laws that are on the books that are not being enforced because they are not deemed “essential emergencies.” That is dangerous. And I might say, there are hundreds of thousands of American workers staying home who chose to work for the Federal Government because they believe that is a proud place to work, and they do not know if they will get their pay. I think they are asking a very legitimate question, and that is:

What about the pay of Members of Congress? What about that?

Well, unless the House acts as the Senate did and passes the no-budget, no-pay bill that I authored with Congressman DICK DURBIN, Members of Congress will get their pay—oh, yes, do not worry—while they send to the President debt extensions and continuing resolutions loaded down with political blackmail. They are getting their pay. They are getting their pay.

NEWT GINGRICH said in April, we are going to “create a titanic legislative standoff with President Clinton by adding vetoed bills to must-pass legislation increasing the national debt ceiling.” And that is what he has done. But he has protected his own flock of supporters over there. And I hope people are ringing his phone off the hook, telling him to pass the no budget, no pay. It was supported here by Senator DOLE and Senator DASCHLE, and it passed here twice. Today, the House has a chance to join us because it is in the DC appropriations bill. It is in the conference, and it turns out that Senator JEFFORDS and Senator KOHL are going to push it. Congressman DURBIN is on that conference. All the Members of Congress have to do is vote to send the President a short-term continuing appropriations bill clean, not loaded down with the budget fights because those budget fights are coming.

Why have we not had them yet? Because this Republican Congress has not done its work. They have not finished the appropriations bills. They have not finished the reconciliation bill. When they do, it will be vetoed by this President because of its cruel cuts in Medicare, its cruel cuts in Medicaid, its repeal of national standards for nursing homes, its deep cuts in environmental protection, its deep cuts in education.

This President and the Democrats in this body want to have a balanced budget, but we want to do it the right way, not the wrong way. We are not going to steal from Medicare and Medicaid and education and give a tax cut to those earning millions of dollars a year.

Under their plan, if you earn \$350,000 a year you are going to get back \$5,500 a year. Oh, but Members of Congress are getting paid while this standoff happens, while a million workers are wondering if they can pay their rent. And I can tell you, if not this, what is our job? If not to come together and keep the Government running, what is our job? This is not a ball game.

This is the greatest Nation in the world. When I was a stockbroker, I watched the financial markets, and they shivered when the President got sick or there was any threat of instability.

I am going to show you a quote. The Washington Post wrote on November 15: “Newt’s Nightmare for America. Budget gridlock could send stock prices down as much as 20 percent and lead to higher interest rates and a weaker dollar.”