

1996." Republicans have an eye on an election, too, but it was the 1994 election. We are trying to do what the taxpayers, the American voters, sent us here to do, while the Democrats are looking to 1996 and trying to put up some kind of a hope of regaining this Chamber.

Pretty soon, this quicksand reaches up to your chin. "Any more brilliant ideas?" you ask the consultant. "How about shouting louder this time that the Republicans are hurting children and the poor. That has always worked before for me." You roll your eyes, but you are getting more desperate, and so you start yelling for all that you are worth that the Republicans in Congress are hurting children and hurting the poor.

Of course, it is getting harder to shout because the quicksand is brushing up to the corners of your mouth. Still, nobody is paying attention.

"All right, the old tricks are not working anymore, so it is time for desperate measures," says the consultant.

"I guess I am going to have to throw you this vine, but you have to keep shouting while I get it over to you."

He tosses you the vine, and with your last breath, you scream, "I want a balanced budget—just not this one."

With a final "glug," you sink out of sight.

The political consultant would shake his head and say, "Gee," as he heads off searching for his next victim, "even I could have told you people were not gullible enough to swallow that line."

"We want a balanced budget, just not this one. We want a balanced budget, but we want to spend more money in order to balance the budget. We want to meet a compromise with our Republican friends, but it has to be our way; we want to spend more."

They are talking about coming to our senses. Ask the taxpayer if another \$500 billion in spending is coming to your senses. Mr. President, the opposition is sinking in the quicksand of public opinion. Not even their high-paid consultants and political spin doctors can put a good spin on a bad message.

Instead of facing the financial and moral crises that are challenging this Nation, they want to ignore it and point fingers. If you are not right, you demagog it to death.

If you do not have a plan of your own, you blast the opposition's. If you are not ready to do the people's business, stall them. If your own leadership is afraid to lead, you can resort to name calling and personal attacks.

Well, Mr. President, the more I hear from my colleagues across the aisle, the more difficult it is to understand how they can actually believe their own desperate words.

They claim this is a dark poison over this Capitol. Poison? It is far from it. What I hear in this Chamber and in the other body is the voice of the people.

After years of darkness, the election finally ushered in some light and some tough and that truth is what we are

hearing today. If my colleagues are seeing the truth, and it look like poison to them, they need to take a hard look at just who they are representing because they are not representing the people who are calling my office.

They have lost the power, and it is scaring them silly, and as they grasp for the last vine, look what it's done to them.

Mr. President, yesterday we passed what I believe will become the defining piece of legislation of the 104th Congress.

For the first time in a quarter century, we have balanced the budget, and we are doing it for our children and our future.

We are cutting taxes for working class families.

Of course the Democrats say, "Not this balanced budget. We want a balanced budget." The President, in a 5-minute speech the other day said it 16 times, "We want a balanced budget, but give us more money to do it."

We are giving welfare recipients the opportunity to lift themselves out of a life of dependency and into society. We are preserving and strengthening the Medicare system for this generation and the next. We are doing all of this because we believe we must.

As Abraham Lincoln warned, our character has indeed been tested by the power with which this Congress has been entrusted—entrusted to us by people like Duane Bonnenman who just sent me this fax here this morning, and let me read it quickly.

He said in the fax, "You are in difficult days. Be strong. Be courageous. Never give up. The prevention of the worst economic disaster in world history lies in your hands. Ignore the media. Ignore the polls. Do what you need to do to get it done. But please, don't give up."

Mr. President, I think the Democrats must be getting the same type of phone calls we are. I just want to say I am not here to give up.

Again, I say I know why I am here in the Senate. It is because the people of Minnesota sent me here to help balance the budget and cut taxes. I am not going to do anything short of that. I am not willing to compromise if it means taking more money from average families so that some bureaucrat in Washington can spend it.

I am willing to make sure that we have a fair and equitable budget, one that meets the needs and responsibilities of this Nation, but not one that robs our children's future.

I yield the floor.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed in morning business for 6 minutes.

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

CHANGING THE COURSE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I have been listening all day, as most of us

have. I suppose one could say that most everything has been said. Perhaps it has not been said by everyone, so it will go on. And it should.

We are talking, of course, about a difficult decision. I think the Senator who is presiding now said we are trustees here for the American people. That is really what we are—trustees.

We are faced with one of the most difficult decisions that has ever been made here, and that is taking a fundamentally different course with the Federal Government than we have had for the past 30 years.

We talk a lot about the cuts. Our friends talk a lot about the cuts. Let me share a couple of things with you. Social Security spending will increase each and every year from \$336 billion in 1995 to \$482 billion in 7 years, a 44-percent increase.

Mandatory Medicare spending will increase in each and every year from \$178 to \$289 billion, a 62-percent increase in 7 years.

Medicaid spending will increase each and every year from \$89 to \$122 billion, a 37-percent increase.

Mr. President, what we are seeking to do is to preserve these kinds of programs that we all believe in—health care programs for the elderly, health care programs for the poor. In order to preserve them, you have to have some kind of control on expenditures. Medicare expenditures have gone up three times as fast as inflation, twice as fast as health care in general.

So we can do some things about that and I am pleased, frankly, to hear our friends on the other side say that they are interested in cooperating in seeking a balanced budget. Frankly, there was not much evidence of that interest in balancing the budget prior to today. Most of the folks we listen to who decry the balanced budget and now embrace it have been here for 20 years. We have not balanced a budget one time in 30 years. Hopefully there now is some commitment to it.

I understand and I think as we listen to these things we should all understand that there are different philosophical political points of view about how you approach it.

There are people who genuinely believe that more Government is better, more spending is better, that you should, indeed, extract more money into the public pot so it can be spent that way. I happen not to agree with that.

I think that is not the majority view. But it is a view and I understand that.

It is also interesting to me, my friend from North Dakota and the Senator from Massachusetts get up at least several times daily and talk about how bad things are, therefore, we need to help, but are not willing to change the programs that have made things as bad as they are.

It seems to me there is a principle there. If you do not like the results of what has been happening, you ought not to continue to do the same thing.

You ought not to continue to do the same thing and expect that the results will be different, because likely they will not.

I think, too, it is interesting that we ought to examine for a moment what it is we are seeking to do in this country. We are trying to provide an economy in a private enterprise system, in a free market economy, in a democracy, so that you and I can have jobs and earn a living for our families. That is the basis of this country.

I get a little weary, frankly, of constant talk about greedy business men and women because I do not understand where those folks think jobs come from. Jobs come from people willing to put capital—either theirs or someone else's—and risk that capital and create businesses, generally small businesses, to create jobs. That is what makes this country work.

It is sort of interesting, we are spending a great deal of energy, properly, in helping countries throughout the world change their form of government to a democracy, change their form of economy to a free-market economy, a private-sector economy and we constantly make it more and more difficult for us to succeed doing the very same thing.

It is always popular to talk about the rich and how the rich are getting the breaks. I frankly do not know as much about the rich, I suspect, as the Senator from Massachusetts does or others, but I do know a little bit about small business. I do know that it takes some incentive for you to put your money in there at risk.

I do know that it is awful easy to be regulated to the extent that you say, why should I fool with it at all? Why should I create jobs, because I am over-regulated. You have to have some incentives to cause people to do that.

We ought to take just a little time and review, I suppose, what are our own values, what we think has made this country great, keeping in mind it is indeed the greatest country in the world.

I had a chance, with Senator GLENN, to go to Bosnia a while back and see other countries, a chance to go to the Balkans, a chance to go to Nicaragua several years ago, and I can tell you, as you know, this is the greatest country in the world. We have more freedom. We have more things than anyone else.

We ought to examine what it is that has caused us to be able to have those. It has to do with freedom, with less Government rather than more. It has to do with personal responsibility that each of us must take in a democracy. It has to do with compassion for the helpless and the needy, but to help them get back to help themselves. It has to do with incentives to invest so that we can create jobs.

So this ought to be our goal, to preserve those personal freedoms, to help strengthen the economy so that we can have jobs, to maintain those programs that do help the needy. You cannot keep them going if you do not control

the costs, with the possibility we are going to go broke in Medicare—we all know that. So we can cheat.

So I hope, Mr. President, each of us will challenge ourselves to perform during these next few months, indeed years, and take the tough role of leadership. It is fairly easy to poll. It is fairly easy to have little groups that you talk to, little focus groups, and sort of decide what is best for your political future. It is much tougher to decide what you think we need to do to be a leader. And it is uncomfortable, from time to time. And this is the time when we have the opportunity to stand up and express at least our heartfelt beliefs as to where to go.

Mr. President, I am just excited by the opportunity to do that. I think yesterday's vote was a fundamental change and the most important vote that any of us will make for a very long time.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until 4 p.m. today.

Thereupon, at 2 p.m., the Senate recessed until 4 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. GORTON].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 123

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I believe the distinguished Democratic leader is going to be here momentarily because we do have some business pending.

Mr. President, I might just describe what we are going to do here momentarily while we wait on the Democratic leader to be here. We will ask for consent here momentarily to proceed to the consideration of House Joint Resolution 123, making continuing appropriations in order. This is the one that passed earlier this afternoon in the House of Representatives having to do with Social Security, veterans, and Medicare offices. And we will ask that we proceed to the consideration of that.

I understand the minority leader will be here for some comment or some action. We will proceed to that as soon as he arrives. But while we wait on him, does the Senator from Virginia wish to speak?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I just wish to ask for a brief period in which to address the Senate following the distinguished Senator from Alaska, if that might be agreeable.

Mr. LOTT. If we could get an agreement when the minority leader arrives, we would then go ahead and take up this business. That would be fine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I am happy to follow the senior Senator from Alaska, if he so desires. I wish to speak briefly. I have had the opportunity through the day, together with the distinguished acting majority leader, and others, to join the Speaker of the House in reference to the continuing resolution situation.

I specifically addressed at that time my deepest concern, which is shared by many, about the fate of those Government employees, those both defense and nondefense, who at this time have continuing uncertainty as to their status.

I am pleased to say, Mr. President, that the Speaker and those present gave me reassurances that the earlier representations by the Speaker and the distinguished majority leader of the Senate to members of the Virginia congressional delegation—indeed, others—that Government employees, defense and nondefense, will at some point in time be cared for in a separate manner, separate manner from the question of, and the very important question of, the balanced budget amendment, to which I swear my allegiance to the 7-year program. But it has to be done in a separate context.

With that assurance, I hope I can convey, not only to the colleagues here in the Congress who have an interest but also to those employees listening and learning this, that at some point in time this solution will be resolved, and hopefully very satisfactorily.

FURTHER CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of House Joint Resolution 123, making in order continuing appropriations, that the joint resolution be read a third time, passed, and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator's request be modified to include passage of the continuing appropriations with an amendment to include the rest of the Government agencies that are not included in this joint resolution.

Mr. LOTT. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I believe that would be what would be considered, I guess, a clean continuing spending resolution to put all of the Federal employees back to work and to work out the resolution of the question of the balanced budget of 7 years. Is that correct?

Mr. DASCHLE. That is correct. It is my understanding that is what this resolution does as well.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, then I would object to that request.