

My sense is that they do not want to come forward with proposals because they are not sincere, to be quite honest. I do not believe they are sincere. If they were sincere they would come forward with these proposals. But the fact that they have not raises serious doubts as to their sincerity in their efforts. I hope I am wrong but, as of right now, I think the facts show I am right. I think the American people should start asking themselves what type of administration, what philosophy of Government allows the executive branch to agree to a 7-year timeframe for reaching a balanced budget but refuses to come forward and define how they are going to get to that balanced budget? What is the philosophy of an administration that does that?

I do not believe it is a philosophy that is sincerely committed to a balanced budget. I believe it is a philosophy that is more involved in the politics of the issue than the substance of the issue. That is the problem. We cannot afford, as a nation, any longer to be involved in the politics. We need to be involved with the substance of the balanced budget. In order to get involved in the substance, we need to have this administration come forward and state specifically how it intends to get to a balanced budget in 7 years. We have done it. The reason we have done it is because we understand that, if this is not accomplished, and not accomplished at this time, at this moment in history where the opportunity is so ripe, that we may not have a chance at any later date to do it again. And, if we do not do it now, if we do not put in place now the decisions that are necessary to change the spending patterns of this Government in the outyears so we reduce its rate of growth—we are not talking about cutting the Federal Government, we are talking about reducing its rate of growth. In fact, in the Medicare area we are talking about adding \$349 billion of new spending to Medicare and allowing it to grow at a rate that actually exceeds what the President projected in one of his budgets that he sent up.

But, if we do not make the changes necessary to reduce the rate of growth in the Federal Government and make those changes now by changing the programs which drive spending, specifically the entitlement programs, then we are going to end up, as a nation, passing on to our children a country that is bankrupt. That is an extremely cynical act to have occur at the time when all the parties have formally stated that they are opposed to having that occur. That is the irony of this. All the parties have now formally stated they are willing to reach a balanced budget. Yet one of the parties has been unwilling to state how it is going to get there. Thus, you have to question their sincerity.

The fact is, if we do not do this now, if we do not make these changes now which accomplish a balanced budget—and we do not have to follow the plan

laid out by the Republicans. We would be happy to see a plan from the other side of the aisle, specifically from the administration, or a joint plan worked out. But we need to have the facts from the administration first and the proposals from the administration first. If we do not follow such a plan and put such a plan in place now, we are not going to be able to accomplish it.

Mr. President, I ask for an additional minute.

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

Mr. GREGG. We are not going to be able to accomplish what is that overriding, absolutely essential goal which is that we get this budget in balance so our children have a nation which is solvent.

So, as we move down this road, recognizing there is a tremendously large amount going on in this world today which distracts the attention of Americans, recognizing our first concern and interest must be for our soldiers who are going into Bosnia, I do hope we will not lose focus on the fact that the future of our children is being decided today on the issue of whether we get to a balanced budget. We are not going to be able to get from here to there unless this administration starts putting forward some honest proposals.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

COOPERATION

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we have been treated in the Senate with a discussion by Senator THOMAS, Senator INHOFE, Senator COVERDELL, Senator ABRAHAM, Senator HUTCHISON, Senator GREGG, and I assume there will be more, who come to the Senate, among other things to question the sincerity of those on the Democratic side, and especially the President, about whether or not we are interested in a balanced budget. In fact, one of the speakers this morning said that he felt that the President was hiding in Europe, I believe that was the term he used, "hiding out" in Europe.

It is not the kind of thoughtful discussion that would advance a spirit of cooperation, to do the right thing for this country, to see a parade of people coming to the floor of the Senate, questioning the sincerity of people on the other side. It is certainly not thoughtful. But, rather, it is thoughtless for anyone to come here and suggest that what the President is doing at this point in Europe—dealing with the issue of peacekeepers in Ireland, and so on—is that the President is hiding out. I did not intend to come to the floor to speak on this issue today.

THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have been asked to be one of the negotiators in the budget negotiations. So I and Senator EXON, representing the Democratic side in the budget negotiations,

are spending a lot of time and will spend a great deal of time on this issue. I do not need, nor do I think the President nor anyone else needs, to have their sincerity questioned about whether or not they want a balanced budget. I believe it is in this country's interest to have a balanced budget. I believe that is a goal that represents a legitimate and important goal for this country. It is one goal. There are others.

Do we care and should we do something about making sure we have the best schools in the world? Yes. That is another goal. Do we care that we have clean air and clean water and a decent environment in the country? Yes. That is a third goal. Do we care whether low-income senior citizens have access to health care? Do we care whether children have access to good nutrition? Do we care whether poor children have access to health care? Those are other goals. It is not a case where there is only one goal in this country. We have a number of goals we must meet.

It is true the Republicans put together a plan. It is also true that plan is dead, gone. The President will veto it. There are 34 people who will sustain the veto. And that plan does not exist at that point. Then what is true is Democrats and Republicans sit down at the table and decide together, how do we balance the budget in 7 years? That is going to take a substantial amount of effort and good will. And it is not just how do you balance the budget in 7 years, but it is how do you do that in a responsible way for the long-term interests of this country?

Those who paraded in here this morning had a plan that would balance the budget in 7 years by, among other things, providing—let me give you a couple of little examples—that we repeal most of the alternative minimum tax for corporations so 2,000 corporations will get \$7 million each in tax breaks because of the reduction in the alternative minimum tax. I do not know whether everyone who voted for that knew that was in there. But those who voted for it and believe that should happen do no service to this country. That is not good public policy.

I wonder whether those who voted for this plan they are so proud of understand that what they did was increase the tax incentive for people to close down their plants in America and move their jobs overseas. That is in the plan. It says, by the way, if you do that, we will give you a bigger tax benefit. Just move the American jobs you have overseas and we will give you a benefit. I do not know whether anybody is proud of that or whether they want to come here and boast that was in their plan.

There are a series of very large policy areas that we must address—Medicare, Medicaid, education, environment, and others. On the issue of Medicare, the majority party plan, which is now going to be dead when the President vetoes it, calls for \$270 billion in budget

savings for Medicare. Many of us believe that is too much. There needs to be a compromise in that area. The same plan provided for \$245 billion in tax cuts.

I offered an amendment on the floor of the Senate that I believe every single Republican voted against. It was very simple. I said, if there is going to be tax cuts—I do not think there should be at this point. I think we ought to balance the budget first. Then we ought to decide after the budget is balanced how to change the tax system, and where to cut taxes. But if there will be tax cuts, I said, let us at least decide this. Let us decide that those tax cuts shall be limited to people whose incomes are below a quarter of a million dollars. Can we not at least agree that we will provide the tax cuts only to those whose incomes are below a quarter of a million dollars a year and use the savings from that, somewhere around \$50 billion in 7 years, to reduce the reductions in Medicare, reduce the hit on Medicare especially for low-income elderly?

I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

Mr. DORGAN. I posed the question in an amendment. Should we not, if we are going to do that, at least limit the tax cuts to those whose incomes are a quarter of a million dollars a year or less and use the savings from that limitation to reduce the hurt that is going to be caused to low-income senior citizens on Medicare? The answer was no. They said no. We insist that people above \$250,000 get a tax cut. Some will get an enormous tax cut from this legislation.

So those who come here and bust their suit buttons boasting about what they have done, what they have done was unacceptable to a lot of folks. Not that they have balanced the budget. That is not unacceptable. It is the way they have done it that is unacceptable. I want to balance the budget. I want to spend a lot of hours in the room with negotiators and try to balance the budget. I am not going to come out here and question their sincerity. I do not think they ought to come out here and suggest the President is hiding in Europe. It does no service to try to advance an opportunity to reach agreement on these issues.

We are talking, after all, about a 7-year spending plan for this country, a 7-year spending plan created in such a way that put this country's books in balance. That is a worthy goal—put the books in balance in a way that also recognizes the need for investment in certain areas, education; the need for protection in certain areas, health care for low-income elderly, and others. We can do that. I am convinced we can do that. But we cannot do it if we keep shouting across the aisle that we are the only ones that had a plan, that we are the only ones on the right track, and that all the rest of you folks do not

believe in it. We question your sincerity. You are hiding.

What kind of nonsense is that? That is not thoughtful. That is thoughtless political pandering. And I think that we will all be better off if we decide—yes, the goal is worthy. The plan that was advanced was not acceptable.

So let us have a rectangular table where we sit down and in good faith decide how we balance the budget and to do it in the right way. I want to do that. It is good for this country. The motives of the other side are, in my judgment, good motives. But some of the language makes no sense. Let us decide to work together in a spirit of cooperation, and fix what is wrong in this country and do it the right way.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I would like to thank the Senator from North Dakota for his comments. I believe they are right on. They are helpful, and I think they are positive.

It is my belief that the budget debate could be settled in 20 minutes, if both sides really sat down and did it. I think the Senator from North Dakota clearly gave the main kernel of a solution. The tax cuts that are in the bill—no one benefits from those tax cuts more than my own family does. My husband is an investment banker. The capital gains clearly benefits him. He would love to have those benefits. It would be a nice thing to have, and many Americans feel that way. However, to have those benefits by making deeper cuts in Medicare and Medicaid—in my own State the Medicaid Program pays half a million of the poorest Californians' premiums and copayments whose Medicare would be done away with. We do not need to do that in this bill. You do not need to have the depth of the cuts to balance the budget in 7 years.

The issue is not balancing the budget in 7 years. We have all agreed that is now going to be the case. The issue is do we need to have a major tax reduction benefiting largely upper-income people by taking those dollars, by making the cuts deeper in Medicare and Medicaid and social programs that are important to the well-being of this Nation? I think the answer to that, for anyone that looks at this from a moral perspective, clearly has to be no. So my own view is that this thing can be settled very quickly, and that the Senator from North Dakota clearly put forward a kernel of that solution.

BOSNIA

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk about Bosnia.

Three nights ago the President of the United States went before the American people to make the case for sending 20,000 American soldiers to help implement the peace agreement that was

recently drawn up and initialed in Dayton.

I listened, as did millions of other Americans, and I heard the President lay out his reasons for doing something no one really wants to do, not even he. The decision that he made was not an easy one. As we have come to know all too well over the past few years, there are no easy answers to end the bloody conflict in Bosnia that has consumed so many lives.

Over the past 72 hours all of us have weighed this question, and discussed the options before us with the administration, with our constituents, and deep within our own conscience. I submit to you that when push comes to shove this is going to be a vote of conscience, a vote of conscience here in the Senate, and a vote of conscience in the House of Representatives.

While the details of the implementation plan have not yet been finalized, and as the President noted, there are critical questions that still need to be answered about how this mission can be accomplished effectively and with the greatest attention to troop safety, it is now clear to me that the American people and the Congress must and should support the President.

To do otherwise, I believe, is to show a divided nation and send a signal throughout a world where 30 wars are now in progress that the American people forfeit our leadership role as the moral force for freedom and responsibility in the world.

Over the past 4 years, while America and our European allies have quibbled about responsibility, the war has continued unabated. Amid the often self-inflicted charges of hand-wringing and finger-pointing as to whose war is it, who should lead, whose backyard is affected, two inescapable facts come home to me. One is something that the British statesman Edmund Burke said two centuries ago. We should all listen to what he said.

I quote: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

And, second, in the words of George Santayana, "Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it."

Mr. President, it is time for good men and women to stand up, and America must lead.

To those who know history, this area of the world is no stranger to conflict. In 1878, 117 years ago, Benjamin Disraeli said in the House of Lords in Great Britain:

No language can describe adequately the condition of that large portion of the Balkan peninsula—Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and other provinces—political intrigues, constant rivalries, a total absence of all public spirit . . . hatred of all races, animosity of rival religions and absence of any controlling power . . . nothing short of an army of 50,000 of the best troops would produce anything like order in these parts.

Disraeli's observation is as astute today as it was in 1878, but over the past 4 years the war in Bosnia has taken an enormous toll: a quarter of a