

massive tax increases. We can move this whole debate in a different direction. And I have been here through 22 years of trying to deal with the deficit—through Gramm-Rudman, through the Gang of 17, and through the budget negotiations at Andrews Air Force Base. Congress has tried time and time again to balance the budget, but we never quite carry through with it.

We need this constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. The American people support it overwhelmingly. This is our opportunity. And we must, must find a way to come together to pass it. I know it is going to be a bipartisan vote; one of our key proponents of the balanced budget amendment has been the distinguished Senator from Illinois, Senator SIMON.

The balanced budget amendment has already passed the House. It is up to the Senate. If we vote now, it goes to the States. The people will have a chance to decide. The only thing standing between the people's opportunity to vote on this and its passage is how the Senate will vote.

I urge my colleagues, let us begin to bring this to a conclusion. Let us quit talking about red herrings. Let us face up to the real issue and vote for a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the minority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. My friend, the distinguished Senator from Mississippi, made reference to some comments I made last year. Let me respond briefly because I know there are others waiting.

I made them in earnest last year, and I stand by them this year. Nothing the Senator from Mississippi said with regard to my comments last year are any less true this year. What I said then applies now, and that is my whole point. If we are going to have a balanced Federal budget, good intentions are not enough. It is not enough to just say we are going to do it. We must be serious about it, and that is the question.

When I made those comments last year, we were serious, and we proved we were serious with a \$500 billion deficit reduction plan that laid out with specificity exactly what we were going to do.

Where is the plan this year? How are we going to do it this year? On just a hope, somehow the expectation that it is all going to magically come together?

That is what we are saying. That is why this right to know amendment is so important.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair might intervene for a moment to say to the distinguished Democratic leader, his time has expired under the previous order, and the time is now under the control of the acting majority leader. If he chooses to yield time to the minority leader to complete his remarks, up until 10 o'clock, he may do so.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I know our two leaders will be speaking at 10 a.m. for 15 minutes each. Unless there is a problem with his other colleagues, I will be glad to yield the remaining 4 minutes to the leader to conclude his remarks.

Mr. DASCHLE. I appreciate very much the willingness of the whip to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader may proceed, then.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me finish very briefly.

Mr. President, I agree with exactly what the distinguished Senator from Mississippi said about what the issue is, with the exception of one word. He said the issue is very simply do we support a balanced Federal budget, a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

I think that is a legitimate question, and the answer should be yes. But it should not be are we willing to support any constitutional amendment to balance the Federal budget, any constitutional amendment. The answer is no. This is going to be with us for all perpetuity, all posterity, and if it is going to be with us that long and if it is that important and will have that far-reaching a consequence, we had better do it right because we will not get a second chance.

With that, again, I thank the Senator for yielding, and I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I may respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Again, I refer to the distinguished Democratic leader's comments last year because they were so persuasive then, and I believe they are now. I will just quote these two paragraphs and yield the time for others.

Some of my colleagues feel, as does President Clinton—

This is Senator DASCHLE speaking.

that we can make these tough budget choices without amending the Constitution. I wish they were right, but history indicates they are not.

By adding a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we as a nation are embracing the principle that government should not spend beyond its means. This is a principle worthy of inclusion in the document that sets forth the limits of governmental power and protects the rights of individual citizens.

Those are the words of Senator DASCHLE, the distinguished Democratic leader. They were only 1 year ago. They were right then, and they are right now. We must pass this balanced budget amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. HEFLIN. I ask the minority leader if he will yield me about 6 minutes of time to speak on the Iwo Jima anniversary.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will be happy to yield to the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, may I inquire whether this would be from the 15 minutes the leader has?

Mr. DASCHLE. That would be my expectation, that I will yield 6 minutes I have available on the cloture vote to the Senator from Alabama to speak on an issue of his choosing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alabama.

THE DEADLY BATTLE ON IWO JIMA

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I rise today to remind Americans of one of the costliest battles of World War II, and the sacrifices made by the men of the United States Marine Corps. This Sunday will be the 50th anniversary of the Marine Corps landing on Iwo Jima, a place where, as Admiral Nimitz said "Uncommon valor was a common virtue."

After 36 days of fighting and at a cost of 6,821 Americans killed and 19,217 wounded, the island was captured. The cost to the Japanese defenders was over 22,000 lives. Only about 1,000 Japanese survived the battle.

The Japanese had long prepared for the February 19, 1945, invasion. After the battle was over, it was revealed that the enemy had constructed 642 blockhouses, pillboxes, and other gun positions. The marines landing on Iwo Jima were certainly stepping into the very jaws of the enemy—and I might say, the very jaws of hell.

At 9 o'clock in the morning, the massive assault wave of the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions hit the beach at Iwo Jima. A Japanese observer watching the drama unfold from a cave on the slopes of Mount Suribachi reported: "At 9 in the morning, several hundred landing crafts with amphibious tanks in the lead rushed ashore like an enormous tidal wave." Within minutes, 6,000 marines were ashore, and initial casualties were lighter than expected.

Then the pounding started as the Japanese commander unleashed hundreds of heavy artillery pieces, giant mortars, rockets, and antitank weapons that had been carefully arranged around the landing beaches now clogged with troops and materials. The ensuing bombardment was as deadly and terrifying as the marines had ever experienced. Casualties mounted appallingly on what would become the costliest single day in the U.S. Marine Corps history. By the day's end, nearly 2,500 Marines were killed or wounded.

Typical of the marine heroism and sacrifice of that first day on Iwo Jima, and not unlike what I had witnessed while serving in the Marine Corps with the 9th Regiment in the Pacific, were the actions of legendary Marine Gunner Sergeant John Basilone. "Manila John," as he was fondly called by his fellow marines, had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in recognition of his outstanding heroism at Guadalcanal. On Iwo Jima, Basilone

single-handedly destroyed a Japanese blockhouse while braving the deadly assault of enemy heavy caliber fire. For his exploits he was posthumously awarded the Navy cross.

The battle for Iwo Jima raged for 36 long days, and on many days the advances of the American forces could be measured in yards. Though I was not there because I was recovering from a wound I received during the battle of Guam, my outfit, the 3rd Division, served as the floating reserve for this battle.

Entering the fray on February 21, when the fighting was at its worst, the soldiers of the 3rd Marine Division were tasked with clearing the central plateau of the island. This area held many prepared enemy defensive positions, but very little cover for the advancing Marines. By the time the plateau was taken, the regimental casualties exceeded 50 percent. Some companies suffered casualty rates in excess of 200 percent, including my old company, A Company, of the 9th Regiment.

Considering the magnitude of these casualties, one may wonder what drove these men to carry on. From my own experience, I would say these men drew their strength from the support of their fellow marines, an esprit de corps that is unique in military history, and the knowledge that taking this island was important to the war effort. Most important, however, they fought because they knew they had to fight. They had to take that hill, that they had to take that island. The Commander in Chief had said it, and these men knew it in their hearts, victory was the only way home.

On March 26, 1945, finally, the Japanese were defeated and the island was ours.

On Sunday, the 50th anniversary of the landing on Iwo Jima, approximately 5,000 survivors of the battle will gather at the Iwo Jima Memorial here in Washington to remember and to pay reverence to those who gave their lives.

Mount Suribachi, and the flag raising on that mount, stands as a symbol of the courage of the U.S. Marine Corps. Mount Suribachi was 556 feet high. It bristled with over 200 guns, and 21 blockhouses. It had to be taken, because it was delivering devastating fire on the beaches and to the marines that were below. The marines assigned were willing to risk their lives for the sake of their comrades and their country. So, through personal courage and esprit de corps, on February 23 the Japanese defending Mount Suribachi were overcome and the Stars and Stripes were raised.

And as the flag was raised on that mount, it gave additional strength to the marines below to move forward, on to victory. We salute the survivors of Iwo Jima and wish them well as they commemorate that very important battle of World War II.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The Democratic leader.

THE CLOTURE VOTE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, at 10:30, in less than 25 minutes, there will be a vote on the majority leader's cloture motion. I want to take a couple of minutes to comment on that prior to the time we vote.

I regret we have to take a vote at this time. I believe, frankly, as I said the other day, it is unnecessary. I am concerned that it sends the wrong message to the American people about how seriously we consider the process of amending the U.S. Constitution.

The implicit suggestion behind the motion is that shutting off debate on this very serious and complicated issue is necessary because Democratic Senators are filibustering the balanced budget amendment and obstructing the debate, when the truth is just the opposite. There is no filibuster here. There have been very few quorum calls over the last several days. The Senate floor has been busy, virtually every minute. Senators have been on the floor. They have been here offering amendments, debating the issues. They have been busy doing exactly what we are all elected to do, to consider carefully some of the most far-reaching issues that they and the American people face.

Democratic Senators have not employed dilatory tactics. To the contrary, we have offered legitimate and very serious amendments that ought to be given serious consideration by all Senators—several amendments that, in my view, as I said just a moment ago, would have made this particular balanced budget amendment much stronger. Unfortunately, the obstruction has come from the other side. Every Democratic amendment has been tabled—virtually along party lines. Anyone who has been on or watched this debate over the last several days knows very well that the substance of these amendments has been seemingly of little concern. They have been tabled, not because of their content, but simply because they were offered.

This issue is far too serious to simply step aside and avoid the stampede. Amending the Constitution is just about the most serious step the Congress and States can take. It should not be taken lightly. And it should reflect the most thoughtful and inclusive debate that we have to offer. It should reflect the best ideas we have to offer. A vote to cut off this debate artificially is a vote to obstruct that thoughtful and inclusive process. It is premature, it is unnecessary, and, under these circumstances, I view it as a disservice to the American people.

It is also a direct threat to the rights of all Democratic Senators, each of whom have a right to offer amendments. As I said, there have been virtually no quorum calls; virtually every amendment has been relevant. In recent days nearly every Democratic Senator has agreed to a time limit on the debate on his or her amendment. And these have been important amendments.

We debated, as we again talked this morning, about the right to know, and spelling out to the American people how we are going to accomplish a balanced Federal budget—what kind of blueprint we are going to use, what kind of tools we will acquire and utilize to accomplish a balanced budget in just 7 years.

We talked about Social Security and the need to protect it, to take it off the table to ensure that we are not going to mask the size of the debt with the size of the Social Security trust fund.

We talked about enforcement. Simply saying we are going to balance the budget with no legal mechanism in place to ensure that we are going to enforce what we say we are going to do makes anyone wonder just how serious we are about doing it in the first place.

We talked about the need to separate operating capital from investments in the future—how we do that in business, how we do that in State governments, how we need to compare apples and apples when we compare the Federal Government to the State government and how a capital budget would allow us to do that.

We talked about circumstances relating to natural disasters. The Senator from California raised a very difficult issue. How do we address serious problems relating to the disasters that occur in every part of the country all too frequently once we have a balanced Federal budget?

It is very disconcerting that virtually every amendment was defeated on a near party-line vote. Regardless of the vote, there are many more very important, relevant amendments that deserve our careful consideration. Not all amendments that are pending will be offered. I know that mention was made yesterday about how many amendments are still pending. Some of those amendments were offered just to protect Democratic Senators in case there is a cloture vote and it passes. We know what happens when cloture votes are filed. Amendments are also filed simply to ensure that every Senator has a right to protect himself or herself. That is really what has gone on in the last couple of days. Senators want to know that they have the opportunity to be involved in this debate and to commit to a process by which these issues can be raised. That is what filing amendments is all about in situations as we have this morning.

We may be able to come to some agreement. In fact, I would almost ensure, to our colleagues on the other side, that we will come to some agreement with regard to a finite list of amendments and some way with which to work through them as we have done in several of our bills already this year.

The point is no one is trying to delay a final vote. We know that the final vote will come in the not too distant future. But it is absolutely critical, especially on an issue of this importance, that all Members have a right to be heard.