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Senate

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The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Almighty God, Sovereign of this Nation, we praise You for Your providential care through the years of our blessed history as a people. Thank You that this Senate exemplifies that patriotism has not gone out of style. Our commitment to You is expressed in love and loyalty for our land. The sight of our flag still stirs our dedication, the national anthem fires our blood, and the Constitution keeps us rooted and grounded in truth. May we never forget the sacrifice of those who have fought and died for the American dream; may we never become so self-serving that we side-step the cost of courageous leadership.

Lord, empower the women and men of this Senate as they seek to keep their eyes on You and what ultimately is best for our Nation. Guide and direct the leadership of Senators DOLE and DASCHLE as they seek ways for both parties to work toward creative solutions to the crucial issues before them today.

Bless the President and First Lady of our land, the House of Representatives, the Justices, and all who seek Your guidance in the government of the cities and States across our country. God, bless America. We trust in You. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

Mr. THOMAS. Thank you, Mr. President.

SCHEDULE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, this morning, the time for the two leaders has been reserved and there will be a period for morning business until the hour of 10:30, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

At 10:30, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1158, the supplemental appropriations bill and the pending amendments thereto. Rollcall votes are, therefore, expected throughout the day today. Also, the Senate will stand in recess from 12:30 to 2:15 for the weekly policy luncheons to meet.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, not to extend beyond the hour of 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the Senator from Wyoming is recognized to speak for up to 30 minutes.

SPENDING AND REVENUES

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, let me say that the 30 minutes has been reserved for Members of the freshman class to take some time, and that will be divided among several of us.

We want to talk a little bit this morning about the future—the future for America, the future for Americans, and the future as it pertains to spending and spending limitations in this Government. More specifically, where will we be in the year 2000 if we continue to do as we have done over the past number of years? Where will we be at the beginning of the next millennium unless we make some changes in the direction that we are going?

The question before us, I think, as Americans and American taxpayers and American citizens, is, unless we make some changes, unless we set some priorities for ourselves now and do something about spending, will we have any options at the year 2000? Will we be able to set priorities for ourselves or, in fact, will our priorities be set by the bond market? Will our priorities be set simply by the financial condition of this country? So that is what we want to talk about.

There is nothing that can be more important to us than how we enter the new millennium with opportunities for people to be successful, with opportunities for people to earn a living for their families, and to have the American dream as we dreamed it in the past. And that is what we are talking about.

We are talking about spending and what has happened to spending over the last number of years and, frankly, the momentum to continue spending as it has been. And if that does continue, then by the year 2000, we will not have options. All of our money will be spent for Social Security, for interest on the debt, for defense.

One indication of where we have been is that the interest on the debt as part of our budget has soared from \$14 billion a year 25 years ago—in 1970, \$14 billion—to now \$234 billion; on interest alone, \$234 billion, which is more than the Government spent in 1970.

So this, it seems to me, is what we need to be prepared for. We need to take a look at where we are and where we are going. And we have a great opportunity to do that.

Unfortunately, the administration is resisting change and is seeking to extend the programs that we have had over the last 25 years, the last 30 years, seeking to extend and fund programs like the welfare program, which has been a failure. The poverty program

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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has been a failure. There are more people in poverty now than there were when we began.

So the choice is basically to continue what we have been doing and resist change or to take the opportunity to take a look at the things we are doing and really examine them.

It seems to me it is an exciting opportunity in this Congress. It is an exciting opportunity for the House and the Senate to examine programs and say, "Here's what we have been doing. How does it work? How does it impact the people that need it?" To take a look at it and say, "Are there better ways to deliver services?"

No one is talking about discontinuing services. Nobody is talking about hungry children. The people who are for change, I submit, have equally as much compassion for people in need as those who resist change. We have a great opportunity to see: Is there a better way for us to deliver services?

What we really ought to do is measure what we have been doing against the principles that we all agree on, and that is that welfare programs and Social Security programs ought to be designed to help get people off welfare, to help people get back into the marketplace, to get back into an opportunity for self-esteem and self-sustenance, to reduce the dependency that has developed in this country and give people the opportunity to have jobs and be in the workplace; to provide incentives not only for people to work and to take care of themselves and their families, but incentives for business to invest to provide those jobs.

Now is a great opportunity for us to change some of the measurements of success, the measurement of welfare, not how many people you cover. The measurement of welfare is how many people you help to get off of welfare. And that is what we are talking about here.

It is unfortunate, I think, that the White House has apparently determined their approach to the next election by fear tactics of saying each time we take a look at changing some program, that somehow everyone is going to be thrown out in the cold. That is not true. That is not true. We are looking for better ways to deliver services.

I think it would be a shame, Mr. President, to pass up the opportunity that we have now. Americans voted for change in 1994, not for reckless change, but for fundamental change. They voted for fiscal responsibility.

Let me show you this chart, just as an example of what we are doing. Everyone has to have a chart here. We do not want to be without a chart. In any event, this shows spending and revenues over time from 1974 to 1980 to the year 2000. Look at the difference. All of this will be taken up in three categories and there will not be an opportunity for educational grants, there will not be an opportunity for training for work because there will not be money for that.

Now we can make the changes. Now we can make changes to do it and that is what it is all about, Mr. President. That is why we are on the floor this morning.

I want to share this time with a number of Senators who have worked very hard in this area.

The Senator from Arizona worked in the House and has been the author of a number of bills to make some fundamental changes to move us in what I believe to be the right direction.

I yield to the Senator from Arizona for 6 minutes.

CONSEQUENCES OF LACK OF FISCAL DISCIPLINE

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for yielding. I think my colleague from Wyoming makes an excellent point that I would like to speak to, and that is the issue of the balanced budget, of getting rid of our Federal budget deficit and balancing the budget has more than an economic dimension to it. It is really a matter of the future of our children and grandchildren, it is a matter of right and wrong and what we ought to be doing as a society.

Bill Bennett, who is the former Secretary of Education, testified before the Senate Budget Committee recently, and he said this:

We have created a nanny state that takes too much from us in order to do too much for us. This has created inefficiency, sapped individual responsibility and intruded on personal liberty.

Mr. President, that, as much as the economic consequences of our lack of fiscal discipline, is what this debate about balancing the Federal budget is all about. The bigger the Government gets, the more taxes it needs. The more revenue it takes, the less American families are able to provide for themselves, and that brings dependency on the Government. And the cycle continues: More spending, more taxes, a weaker economy, and ultimately more dependency on the Government.

The net result of that is a change in the personality of America, literally. Our welfare state has created a dependency by the people who have not found a way to get off welfare because of the kinds of incentives that have been built into the program over the years.

One of the things that the Republicans in the House and the Senate are trying to do is to change the welfare state to end this cycle of dependency. It is more than an economic matter. We are literally trying to give people a hand up rather than a handout to end the dependency, to enable them to provide for themselves.

The great debate in the House of Representatives in the next couple of days is whether we can modestly reduce some taxes at the same time that we are balancing the Federal budget. Of course, the answer is yes. If we have the discipline, we can both get to a balanced budget in 7 years and make some modest changes in the Tax Code. Here is the reason why we need to do it.

The chart behind us shows in the bars the level of Federal spending, and it

shows a green line running in about 19, 19.5 percent of the gross national product which represents revenues from 1970 through the year 2030.

We have had several tax rate increases during that period of time. Has it produced more revenue? No. The economy adjusts. When tax rates go up, people adjust their behavior accordingly. Likewise, when we have reduced taxes, has it reduced revenues to the Federal Treasury? No. As a percent of the gross national product, as you can see on that green line, revenues remain constant. Now that is in a growing economy.

So despite the fact that the economy is growing larger, revenues to the Treasury are keeping up when you reduce taxes, and that is one of the reasons that we want to reduce the taxes, both on capital gains so that people can sell assets that they have been holding but do not want to pay 28 percent tax on the profit they make on that—profit which is largely generated by inflation, by the way, so it is not real profit at all—and why we are interested in the \$500 tax credit for children. That helps to restore the balance in who does the spending.

One of our colleagues was here yesterday talking about cuts in education, and I made the point that we are not talking about cuts in spending on education. What we are talking about is who does the spending. Who do you think can do a better job of making decisions on how to spend money on our children, a Federal bureaucrat in Washington or the family of that child? We say leave the money with the family that earned it. They will make smarter decisions about what to spend on that child.

So, Mr. President, my point is this: There is more to this than just the pure economics of it, than the dollars and cents of it. That is critical. It is very important. But there is more to it than that. It is fundamentally what our society is all about. We are trying to reduce the power, the authority, the intrusiveness of the Federal Government into our lives.

We are trying to restore power to the States and local governments and to the families. One way we do that is by giving the Federal Government less money to spend and by limiting the growth in that spending to the revenues that we take in.

The other way we do it is by not just limiting how much money the Federal Government takes in, but by actually reducing it through selected tax cuts. I think it is very important, as the House of Representatives will do in the next 3 days, as they will pass these reductions in taxes, it is very important for the U.S. Senate to follow suit, to follow what the House of Representatives does. We do not necessarily have to cut exactly the same taxes and the same amount. But it is important that we begin to put this Government on a diet, and the way to do that is begin to ratchet down the amount of money

that the Government takes from the workers of our Nation, from the families of our Nation, and leave that money with them to make the decisions on how best to spend it.

Mr. President, Members of the freshman Republican class are going to be conducting these conversations every week throughout this entire year, I suspect even beyond that, to try to make the point that we just heard from the voters out there, we heard what was on their minds. We listened, and I am still hearing the same thing: They want us to reduce the power and the size and the expense of the Federal Government. And we freshmen Republicans are committed to that.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, the Senator from Minnesota brings that message from the recent election as well.

I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Minnesota.

THE DEFICIT LOCKBOX

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to dispell a misconception that has become popular in Washington—the idea that tax cuts cannot go hand in hand with deficit reduction.

There are some who suggest that the massive deficit we have today is due to the tax-cutting policies of the 1980's.

What they ignore is the fact that during the 1980's, the number of jobs increased, the amount of taxable income increased, and as a result, tax revenues increased—all due to the Reagan tax cuts.

What did not happen were the spending cuts promised by Congress but never delivered.

In fact, spending during the 1980's increased significantly more than the increase in revenue, leading directly to the deficit we face today.

This year we are on the verge of making the same mistake, but in the opposite direction.

This time, Congress may pass spending cuts without providing the tax relief we promised the American people.

One of the worst ideas I have heard during the budget debate, and frankly, it came from a member of my own party, was the idea of a deficit lockbox to stall enactment of the \$500 per-child tax credit.

Under the lockbox proposal, the tax cuts promised by Congress would be repealed if Congress fails to meet specific deficit targets.

In other words, if Congress were to act as irresponsibly in the future as it has in the past, Congress would not suffer the consequences, Washington would not suffer the consequences.

The taxpayer would.

Even now, our colleagues in the House have come up with a compromise to tie tax cuts to deficit reduction. If the deficit targets are not met, the tax cuts are not delivered. But is it not just like Congress to think that way?

If we were not in a collegial body, I would say the idea was just plain stu-

pid. Instead, let me just label it misguided.

Mr. President, we cannot compromise the taxpayers of this country or the future of their children.

Instead of a deficit lockbox involving tax cuts, what we should have is the automatic spending reduction mechanism Senator COATS and I have proposed in our Families First bill.

Under our legislation, if Congress fails to keep the growth of spending capped at 2 percent each year, an automatic, across-the-board sequester, excluding Social Security, would take effect.

In other words, every spending program would be held to a growth rate of 2 percent.

That way, Congress would have to pay the price for its own failings. Congress would have to explain to the taxpayers why they couldn't make the tough choices to slow the rate of growth of spending in order to balance the budget.

It is clear, Mr. President, that deficit reduction must be a top priority of this Congress.

But it is also clear that tax relief is equally urgent. And while there are some in this Chamber who say the two cannot go hand in hand—I say the two must go hand in hand. We cannot allow the opponents of middle-class tax relief to pit one against the other.

Mr. President, I am reminded of the animal trainer who walks into the lion cage.

There is a lion to the left of him and a tiger to the right. Both are ready to devour him if he makes a wrong move.

Do you believe for one instant that the lion-tamer will be foolish enough to focus his attention on either animal, while completely ignoring the other?

Like the lion-tamer, Congress is facing a pair of equally dangerous beasts.

In one corner looms the Federal deficit, in the other sits the oppressive tax burden American families are being asked to bear.

We cannot ignore one at the expense of the other. They both need to be dealt with before they overpower us and eat this Nation alive.

The mandate of the November election is clear, and the people are demanding change.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. FRIST addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). The Senator from Tennessee.

NEED FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today to continue the discussions of my distinguished Senators and fellow Republican freshmen from Minnesota, Arizona, and Wyoming.

Our discussion this morning is on the balancing of our Nation's budget. And, again, coming off the campaign trail, coming to this distinguished body, I believe that there is no more pressing issue than balancing the budget before this Congress. Along with my 10 other fellow Republican freshmen Senators

and over 70 freshmen Republican Members of the House, I was elected with a simple mandate: to restore fiscal sanity to the Federal Government.

If this Congress today does not take steps to change the profligate spending habits of the Federal Government, the Members of this Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike, will be to blame for leaving an enormous mountain of debt to be paid by our children, the next generation, and future generations of Americans.

Mr. President, we simply cannot continue the current trend of Federal spending. Already the Federal debt is fast approaching \$5 trillion. A family of four currently pays \$440 per month in taxes just to pay the interest on our national debt. For the long term, the statistics are astounding. By the year 2000, just 5 years away, the Federal debt will exceed \$6.7 trillion. This trend creates a debt of \$25,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. That is a debt burden of \$100,000 for every family in this country, a debt burden created by this body over the past several decades.

Speaker GINGRICH noted recently that a child born today will pay \$187,000 in interest on the Federal debt during his or her lifetime, if current spending continues unchecked.

Mr. President, as shown in this chart behind me, all Federal revenues will be consumed by entitlement spending in less than 15 years. This is 1970, 1990, the year 2000, the year 2010, 15 years from now. The greenline here are total revenues brought in. Expenditures are the column, the red being entitlement spending, the yellow net interest and the blue discretionary spending, like defense, education, and infrastructure. By 2010, all revenues will be spent for entitlement spending, as well as net interest with no money left over for things like defense, education, support of our infrastructure unless we do something about it today.

Every group interested in deficit reduction today, from the Concord Coalition to the Kerrey-Danforth entitlement commission has recognized that the long-term health of the Federal budget depends on the ability of this Congress to restrain growth of Federal programs. In fact, the board of trustees of the Medicare trust fund will come out today with an annual report. It says that the Medicare Program is predicted to be bankrupt in 7 years. At the beginning of fiscal year 1997, the Medicare trust fund will begin to run a cash-flow deficit. Medicare is just one of the many Federal programs that must be restructured, be improved, restructured by allowing more choice for seniors in order to achieve long-term viability.

But, Mr. President, there are powerful interests that have already begun to resist even initial efforts to curb Federal spending. Defenders of the status quo would have us believe that there is no waste in Federal programs, that all of our Federal programs are

run efficiently, that there is no room to trim back this mammoth Federal bureaucracy. Yet, a Florida task force recently uncovered more than \$100 million in Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse, according to the Health Care Financing Administration.

Opponents of spending reform argue that we must spend more and not less, out of compassion. Mr. President, where is the compassion for the children of the next generation? The debate about Federal spending is more than a debate about cold budget numbers. It is a debate about restoring the American dream for future generations, making that American dream a reality for all Americans.

Mr. President, I wonder what the opponents of Federal spending reform will tell their grandchildren when they are paying lifetime income tax rates of 84 percent to pay off the debt we created, when they cannot afford college tuition or a mortgage on their first home. Will it past muster to say we just could not find a way to reduce the growth?

To reduce the growth, we are not talking about cutting spending in the sense that an American family today thinks of cutting spending. People in Washington engage in what I call Congress-speak. In Congress-speak, cutting spending means letting a program grow at 4 instead of 5 percent. If you told an American family today that they could spend 4 percent more next year than this year, they would think they are doing pretty well. Not here. Not in Congress. The liberals in Congress shamelessly oppose such reforms, leaving the public to believe that Government services will be drastically reduced. In reality, all of the hue and cry is not about compassion for the poor or children, but instead about a desperate attempt to maintain the Federal bureaucracy.

Mr. President, by the outcry in Washington over even modest savings proposals, you would think the Federal Government is about to pack up and go home. Far from it. The Federal Government will spend approximately \$9 trillion over the next 5 years. To get a balanced budget by the year 2002, we must save \$385 billion in mandatory spending. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has called the task of balancing the Federal budget a modest restructuring. While the job of balancing the Federal budget will be difficult, by no means will it result in drastic reductions in Government services or benefits. I believe Americans are ready to tighten their belts, so long as our plan is fair and balanced.

Yes, it disturbs me that the President has not joined Republicans in the task of achieving a balanced Federal budget. As shown in this chart which depicts Federal budget deficits, the Clinton plan is in red versus the Republican budget here, which comes down to be balanced in the year 2002. We see that the Clinton budget throws up its hands and says that the budget cannot

be balanced, keeping \$200 billion deficits over the next 5 years. The Republican plan, in contrast, balances the budget in the year 2002.

The President's advisers are trying to put an effective spin on the fact that they have thrown up their hands on any attempt to balance this budget, and they say that the stable deficits over the next 5 years will remain at \$200 billion with a deficit declining to 2.1 percent of the gross domestic product by the next century. But even those modest claims have been refuted.

The Congressional Budget Office took a look at the President's budget and found that the President had understated the deficit by approximately \$209 billion over 5 years. The CBO also found the deficit as a percentage of gross domestic product, the administration's favorite measure will actually increase from 2.5 to 3.1 percent. The President has completely abdicated his duty to lead on fiscal issues.

Finally, Mr. President, let me say a word about economic growth. Not only do we have a moral obligation to reduce the Federal deficit, but from an economic perspective, we simply must reduce the amount of Government borrowing in order to free up capital for productive investment in the private sector.

No Government program can substitute for economic growth led by entrepreneurs, small businessowners, and other risk takers.

Our economy will make room for everyone, but we must unleash America's capital for investment and put a stop to massive Government borrowing.

In closing, we should remember what this debate is all about. It is about the moral imperative to pay off a debt we created. It is about the responsibility we have to the children of future generations. It is about increasing economic growth and access to capital. And it is about the strength of our system to survive.

If we cannot stand up to those who would oppose real reform, then our very democracy is threatened.

I thank the Chair, and I would like to yield to my distinguished colleague from Ohio.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, let me first congratulate my colleague from Tennessee for his description of the problem that we face.

I think it is appropriate and significant that this week, the 11 new Members of this body are coming to the floor to talk about really the most important problem facing our country; that is, our inability to deal with our budget deficit.

This week, Mr. President, there is going to be a lot of discussion about the close of the first 100 days of this Congress. There will be talk about the Contract With America.

I think that, by and large, the American people are pleased with what they have seen. We have begun to make progress; we have a way to go. We have passed in this body the line-item veto.

We failed by one vote to pass a balanced budget amendment, but I am hopeful, as I know many of my colleagues are and as the majority leader is, that we will get that one additional vote and that we will be able to come back on this floor and pass that balanced budget amendment.

We passed the unfunded mandate bill which, for the first time, will really hold Congress accountable for unfunded mandates that are passed down to the local communities with no money, but just telling the communities what to do.

With unfunded mandates, line-item veto, making Congress live by the same laws that everyone else has to live under, I think we have made progress. We have a way to go.

Quite frankly, Mr. President, I believe the tough votes are ahead of the Senate, not behind the Senate. I believe that this Congress really should be looked at in two different sections. The first part of the Congress deals with the items we have just talked about. Then we will move in—and frankly we have already begun to do this with different committees—the Budget Committee particularly—to the hardest and most difficult task that we have; that is, to do something that we have not done for a quarter of a century. That is to get ahold of Federal spending and bring it under control.

I think the American people should understand that this week, while the focus is on the first 100 days, we now must turn to where we go from here. Mr. President, it is not going to be easy.

Over the next few months, the U.S. Senate and this Congress is going to face some very, very tough choices. This Congress must do what prior Congresses have not done. We have to write a realistic budget for the U.S. Government. All Americans must be prepared for what lies ahead. Mr. President, this will not be pretty. It will not be easy.

Indeed, the votes we have cast so far in this body are very easy compared to what lies ahead. We have to begin, Mr. President, by being absolutely candid and honest with the American people about the tough choices that lie ahead.

We can no longer postpone the day of reckoning. The day of reckoning, Mr. President, is here. The current direction of U.S. budget policy is simply not sustainable.

Congress has already amassed a \$4.7 trillion national debt that our children and grandchildren will have to pay. That is what the American people in the past election voted to change. The people of this country demand change because they know what is going to happen if we do not change.

Mr. President, we are already paying over \$235 billion a year just in interest on the national debt. By the year 2003, just 8 years from now, spending on entitlements and interest alone will exceed 70 percent of the entire Federal budget.

If we take out defense, we leave just 15 percent of the budget for all the discretionary spending on our domestic needs. That is 15 percent of the whole budget—15 percent, Mr. President, for education; job training; for the Women, Infants, and Children Program; just 15 percent of all these domestic needs. That is, if we just stay on our present course.

It does not get any better after the year 2003. In fact, it gets worse. By the year 2012, just 17 years from today, there will be nothing left in the budget for these social needs—zero. No money for our children, no money for our future—everything consumed. Every last red cent of the Federal budget will go to entitlements and interest payments.

Mr. President, Congress' fiscal insanity has had a terrible human cost. The year 2012, the year the money is scheduled to run out if we do not change our ways, is 1 year after my wife, Fran, and I expect our grandson, Albert, to graduate from high school, and 1 year after our daughter, Anna, should enter college.

Mr. President, if we do not succeed in writing a sensible budget, a budget that leads toward balance instead of further and further into bankruptcy, I shudder to think of the America we are going to leave these children.

Another way of looking at it, when my parents graduated from high school in the early 1940's, the debt attributable to each child graduating from high school that year was \$360. By the time my wife, Fran, and I graduated, in the mid-1960's, that figure was up to \$1,600 for each child. When our older children, Patrick, Jill, and Becky, graduated in the mid-to-late 1980's, that figure was up to \$9,000. If we continue, Mr. President, to go the way we have been going, by the time our grandson, Albert, graduates from high school in the year 2012, that figure will be up to almost \$25,000. That is \$25,000 in debt, and no money at all to pay for urgent national needs.

Mr. President, this is much more than simply a budget question. It is much more than a question of accounting and bookkeeping. I believe, Mr. President, it is a fundamental moral question about the kind of people we are, the kind of Americans we are.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I contend that we do not have the right to leave our children a bankrupt America. They deserve a lot better. That is why we are here on the floor today.

It is our challenge over the coming weeks to create another picture of America, another picture of America in the year 2012, an America with a balanced budget, an America that is gradually paying off its debt and coming back to fiscal sanity, an America in which Albert, Anna, and other children of their generation are liberated from the crushing burden of debt and have, finally, the freedom to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. That is what, Mr. President, the coming debate is all about.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Under the previous order, the Senator from South Dakota or his designee is recognized to speak for up to 30 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DORGAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 663 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

PUBLIC POLICY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I heard a discussion this morning about fiscal policy, about the future, about Federal deficits, about accountability, about jobs, about opportunity. All of those issues interest me and I think interest every Member of this Senate.

Our country is, I think, unique in that we have a democratic system in which we create some pretty aggressive battles between the parties and between the individuals in political parties, contesting ideas. Even as we contest those ideas, differences in approaches, and different ideas, we essentially have the same goals.

The Senator from Ohio, who is now the Presiding Officer, comes from a big State. I am from a small State. He is a Republican. I am a Democrat. I would guess, if we sat and discussed goals, he and I would have very few differences in the goals we have for our country. We want a country that expands and grows and provides opportunity. We want children to be well educated. We want our streets to be free of crime. We want our air to be air we breathe without getting sick. We want health care that is available to us at a decent price. The fact is, we would very quickly discover—as we do all across this country when we talk politics—that our goals are the same. But, our methods of achieving those goals take very different paths.

Since the first of this year, we have been undergoing some very interesting times. We have, I think, because the American people registered a significant protest in the last election. Since then, we have passed more legislation on more significant issues than Congress has passed during any similar time period in the past.

Now, how was that protest registered? What was the score in November 1994? The American people said by their vote: 20 percent of us who are eligible to vote, voted for the Republicans; 19 percent of us who are eligible to vote, voted for the Democrats; and 61 percent of us who are eligible to vote decided it does not matter. They said, "I am not going to vote."

So that is the score: 20 percent to 19 percent—but 61 percent said, "Count

me out, I am not going to participate in that process."

As a result of the 20-to-19 victory, there is a great clamor about what in politics is called a mandate for the Republicans. Probably only in politics could you get a mandate from a 20-to-19 victory.

You see, they had printed something called a Contract With America. In fact, on the House side, Speaker GINGRICH—now Speaker GINGRICH, but then Congressman NEWT GINGRICH—lined all the Republicans up in front of the Capitol, had the television cameras there, and had them all sign this little contract called the Contract With America which proposed some very substantial changes.

Some of that Contract With America made eminent good sense. In fact, some of it embraced the very things we tried to pass in the previous session of Congress here in the U.S. Senate, that the Republicans filibustered and opposed. They prevented us from getting it passed.

That is fine. Times change and so do opinions, and so the contract embraced some of the very things that we supported and tried to get done.

Since that election and since this contract the Senate has passed some of those things that make good sense. I supported them, as did most of my colleagues on both sides of the political aisle.

Unfunded mandates: Let us decide to stop telling everybody else what they have to do while saying to them you pay for it. Mandates are easy. Unfunded mandates are even easier. But it is irresponsible, and we passed legislation that says let us be more responsible when we talk about mandates. Let us find out what it is going to cost somebody and maybe let us decide, if we are going to stick them with a mandate, we have a responsibility to pay the bill. We passed an unfunded mandates bill that made good sense.

Congressional accountability: In effect saying if you pass a bill in Congress you have a responsibility to live under that same law you passed. It made good sense. I supported that this year and I supported it in the previous Congress as well.

Regulatory 45-day veto? That made good sense. I supported that. It is saying let us stop these unintended consequences. When we pass a law that we think is going to be a good law and somebody puts out a half-goofy regulation, let us have the opportunity to veto the regulation if it does not work, if that is not what we meant. I voted for that as did almost all of my colleagues. It made good sense.

Line-item veto: That was more controversial, but I voted for it because Governors have it—almost all Governors have a line-item veto. I have thought for 10 years that a President ought to have a line-item veto.

That is a menu of things we have done that make good sense.