

and how it made it very clear to them: You do not live beyond your means. You just do not do that.

The interest payments on the national debt are the third largest part of the budget. And the interest payments do not buy a single school lunch, and they do not buy a single road and they do not make a single payment on a Medicare bill.

The national debt rises \$355,000 every minute. In 1 second, \$6,000—just now. That is how fast this is growing.

All of this talk about budget cuts, a budget cut in Washington means something very different than a budget cut in Idaho. In the Nation's Capital, when a Government program asks for a 5 percent budget increase, and it is only granted a 3 percent budget increase, we do not call that a cut. That is an increase. But that is not how Washington, DC, deals with it. We are simply slowing the growth. The budget package that I am backing will bring us a balanced budget over the next 7 years by holding the growth of Government spending to around 3 percent a year.

What about Social Security and Medicare? Well, we do not touch the Social Security pension trust fund, and we should not because it is not the problem. Medicare, on the other hand, must be fixed. The trustees say that it will be bankrupt in 7 years if the escalating growth is not stopped.

When you think about that, if you are now 55 years old after spending a lifetime paying Medicare taxes, there is no assurance that there will be enough money to pay doctor bills when you become eligible. That is unacceptable, and that is why we are going to deal with that in this budget.

The next tough issue is taxes. I oppose tax increases, but what about tax cuts? I will support tax cuts that meet these tests. First, they must not slow the effort to balance the budget. And second, they must encourage investment, help families with children, help small business, encourage savings that will pay for college, care for the elderly and the purchase of first homes.

I will just conclude by saying that after all of this discussion, I think we need to realize that what we are talking about is the money of the American citizen. Again, not the Government's money. It is time that we start leaving more of the American citizen's money with the citizen and not the Government.

This 104th Congress, I think, will go down in history as that session of Congress that finally stopped the financial decline which would lead to the ruin of this country and will return it to a financial stability that we will look back to with a great deal of pride some day.

Yes, we have some real tough votes that are facing us. But what Idahoans tell me is that we absolutely must balance the Nation's budget and we must do it by making it an evenhanded approach so that we can look and see

that our neighbors also are taking part in the sacrifice. As long as all of us are sharing in this, this is absolutely the right thing to do for this Nation.

Mr. President, I want to commend Senator PETE DOMENICI and all the members of the Budget Committee that has brought us this budget resolution which is going to put us on that course so that we will have financial stability, so that the greatest nation in the world can look with pride to know that its future will be bright, that we will avoid that financial collapse we have been headed toward and, again, that all Members of this 104th Congress will know that some day we will be judged as that Congress that did the right thing by action and not rhetoric.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. NUNN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

GETTING THE BUDGET UNDER CONTROL

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I would just like to say to my friend from Idaho, I appreciate his remarks on the reasons for getting the budget under control and the historic nature of this undertaking. I, too, although I certainly do not agree with everything in the budget resolution and I have supported a number of amendments and will support others tomorrow, I, too, want to add my thanks and congratulations to Senator DOMENICI, the chairman of the Budget Committee, and others on the Budget Committee, Senator EXON and all who worked so long and hard, disagreeing often, but coming out with this budget resolution that at least is a beginning point in the debate for the road we must travel.

It is my hope that I will be able to support this resolution in the final analysis. It will depend on what amendments are adopted or not adopted tomorrow. But I certainly hope that I will be able to support it. It is my hope that when it goes to conference, the conference will look carefully at what the Senate did today in turning down the very large tax cuts that were proposed by the Senator from Texas. All of us would like tax cuts, all of us would like to return that money to the American people because it is their money, but I think the public overwhelmingly that I represent wants us to get the budget under control and does not want us to take steps that will make that more and more difficult.

We all know that there is going to be group after group coming here this summer that are going to be complaining about budget cuts, many of them with justification because they are going to be impacted. We all know that after that process starts, it is more likely there is going to be fall-back in this regard. We all know that we need a reserve fund because we are going to have difficulties in implementation based on any historical examination.

So it is my hope that when the conference takes place, that the message, by a strong vote from the U.S. Senate, to concentrate on deficit reduction and wait until we have really accomplished that before declaring a dividend I hope sinks in.

IN MEMORY OF LES ASPIN

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I am deeply saddened by the death of my close friend and colleague, Les Aspin. Many of us in this body have known Les for many, many, many years and worked very closely with him.

Les Aspin devoted his life to public service. In his younger years, he served in the Senate on the staff of our former colleague, Senator William Proxmire. He also served as staff assistant to Walter Heller, the former Chairman of President Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers and on the staff of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

Les Aspin was elected to the House of Representatives in 1970, and he immediately sought and was granted membership on the House Armed Services Committee on which he later served as chairman from 1985 through 1992.

I had the great honor and privilege of working with Les since I came to the Senate in 1973. From 1987 through 1992, we served respectively as chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. During that time, when our chairmanships overlapped, we developed a close personal and professional relationship, and we forged six National Defense Authorization Acts during that period.

Mr. President, these years were marked by national defense challenges of great difficulty and complexity. In 1987, the cold war had begun to thaw, but barely so. There were many divisions in Congress on national defense issues, ranging from the size of the defense budget to the procurement of particular weapons systems to the appropriate course of national strategy. At a time when many sought substantial reductions in national defense commitments and programs, Les Aspin provided a voice for a strong national security and a sensible American foreign policy.

As the former Soviet Union collapsed, many sought to rapidly dismantle our military establishment. Les Aspin recognized the continuing dangers facing the United States and successfully led the House of Representatives in support of a measured defense buildup, which was designed to maintain our military capacity in an era of defense reductions. Les was a particularly forceful advocate for defense conversion and retraining programs designed to assist military personnel, civilian workers, and the defense industry in adjusting to a new era with new challenges.

Les was also both an originator and strong supporter in the House, and as Secretary of Defense, of the program

that is known as the Nunn-Lugar program that works for nuclear and chemical dismantlement in the former Soviet Union that has been so effective in helping denuclearize three former nuclear states and also helped in dismantling both chemical and nuclear weapons. We have a long way to go in that regard, but Les Aspin was on board when that ship was launched, which is probably our most important national security challenge—that is, nonproliferation in the breakup of the Soviet empire.

During this entire period, I developed tremendous respect for the breadth of Les Aspin's knowledge and his devotion to the cause of national defense. Les was a brilliant analyst, but he was more than a scholar; he was an outstanding legislator and a master at putting together coalitions in the House of Representatives during a very tough period of time for national security.

I will always treasure the memories of working with Les on the House-Senate conferences on the National Defense Authorization Act that were enacted during the period in which we chaired our respective committees. The challenge of crafting a conference agreement was always daunting in the contentious atmosphere of the cold war and post-cold-war eras. Each year, hundreds of language and funding differences divided the two Houses—and we were continually faced with the threat of a veto over controversial issues such as the ABM Treaty, abortion, and prerogatives of the executive branch.

Les and I talked on the telephone and met very frequently, not just during conference but also in the months before we passed either the House or Senate bill. These meetings were quiet and unpublicized, but they enabled us to shape bills in both the House and the Senate which could be reconciled in conference and also signed into law by a Republican President.

Much as I appreciated and admired Les Aspin's policy and legislative skills, what I enjoyed most about Les was his sense of humor. Frequently, when a conference point reached its most critical point, we could count on a story from Les to break the tension and produce a bipartisan compromise. Nobody loved a joke more than Les Aspin, and I can still see that big grin on his face laughing heartily in the middle of a conference right at a crucial moment, which gave us the kind of balance, the kind of sense of priorities to understand that it was our job to reconcile our differences and to come to conclusions in the interest of national security. He never lost sight of the serious policy issues that confronted us, but he never got personal in his fervent support for one position or another.

Les Aspin served as Secretary of Defense during a particularly difficult time. I enjoyed working very closely with him and his staff during his ten-

ure as Secretary of Defense. Lacking a cold war enemy and a national consensus on defense issues, Les was faced with the extraordinary challenges of managing a defense build-down while retaining essential military capabilities. The complex and new international circumstances surrounding events in places such as the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Haiti added to the complexity of his task. Throughout this period, he continued to work diligently toward building a new foundation for our defense needs in the 21st century. And as Secretary of Defense, he laid a foundation for the defense drawdown that hopefully will avoid the mistakes of the past. At least he did his part.

During his years of service as a Member of the House Armed Services Committee and as Secretary of Defense, Les continually fought for a strong, well-equipped, and affordable national security. He was always on the cutting edge of national defense policy during both the cold war and during the post-cold-war build-down. His creative approaches to national strategy, acquisition policies, and defense budget matters have made a lasting and indelible contribution to this Nation's security.

After his service as Secretary of Defense, he continued to serve our Nation as chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, as chairman to the Commission on Intelligence, and as a member of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces. It was in this capacity that I last talked to him on the telephone at length about some of the aspirations he had for changing our intelligence community. Les never lost his ardor or his commitment to public service.

Mr. President, the Nation has lost a devoted public servant who contributed much and who had so much more to contribute to our national security.

I have lost a valued friend and a real colleague, a friendship that I will cherish forever, and a man that I will miss very much.

I thank the Chair.

TRIBUTE TO LES ASPIN

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I would like to associate myself with the comments of our distinguished colleague from Georgia. Before he departs the floor, I thought we might put in one additional chapter in reminiscing about our dearly beloved friend, Les Aspin. It was a period when the two Armed Services Committees met, and I was privileged at that time for some 6 years to serve as ranking member, together with Senator NUNN as chairman, and Les Aspin as chairman of the House. I remember when we would act as the "big four." If the Senator from Georgia will remember that—

Mr. NUNN. Along with Congressman Bill Dickinson.

Mr. WARNER. Yes, Congressman Bill Dickinson. There would be absolute

deadlock in the conferences. The big four would sort of get off together, and the other members, I think they were slightly envious in some respects, but in other respects, they were glad they did not have to make the decisions the big four had to crank out.

Mr. NUNN. I think many times it was like we were the "little four" rather than the big four.

Mr. WARNER. That is correct. But my friend from Georgia is a man of great patience. Chairman Aspin would always be late, almost invariably late, and he would come in with a great swath of papers under his arm, down the hall with two or three staff people, and he would literally flop in the chair. He would consume the entire chair, and the papers would be scattered all over the floor. And, finally, the Senator from Georgia, who at that time was chairman of the Armed Services Committee, would regain his composure and we would start to resolve the problems. But it was a marvelous chapter in the relationship between the Senate and House Armed Services Committee, and Les Aspin was instrumental in seeing that we arrived at the proper decision which, almost without exception, was in the best security interest of this country. In those days, we had almost no politics that entered into the decision—occasionally, a ship here or a tank there, but other than that, it was straightforward, tough decisions on behalf of the country.

I join my friend from Georgia in saying how much we will miss our friend. I was with him just 2 weeks ago. I am privileged to serve on the Intelligence Commission, and Les Aspin was the chairman. We went down to one of the Central Intelligence facilities to spend a day. And I wish to add, Mr. President, that Zoe Baird is a member of that commission, and she called me just yesterday and expressed her great admiration. I would like to include that in my comments for Chairman Aspin of the commission. That commission will carry on and do its work, but he laid the foundation. I join my distinguished colleague in paying this brief tribute to our fallen friend.

Mr. NUNN. I thank my friend from Virginia. I remember those days very well, and I will always cherish the memories. I have to say that while Les Aspin would consume that chair, my friend from Virginia was usually consuming the sofa.

Mr. WARNER. That is quite true.

Mr. NUNN. For health reasons, though.

Mr. WARNER. In those days I had a bum leg. I think we should end this brief set of comments on behalf of the late Congressman Aspin with a smile on our face, because that is the way he would want it. I am glad that my distinguished colleague from Georgia mentioned the Bottom-Up Review. That was a document that was created and is still used as a benchmark for many of our discussions here. He had that foresight and courage.