

This Ojibwe School should have been provided with a new school years and years ago. It was once on a priority list and somehow it got dropped off that list. There is a current priority list for construction, but the BIA cannot tell us how the priority list was arrived at, who is on it, or how it was constructed. This is a mess. One way or another this has to be addressed, because we cannot put 400 children in unsafe circumstances in this Ojibwe School. The BIA and our Congress has a responsibility.

I almost feel that we must think about having 400 children look at the people who walk in the door of the BIA or through the front doors of Congress every morning until we look in the eyes of those children and say, "We owe you a decent school to attend."

I must move on to another topic, but we will talk more about this later. I say this with the greatest respect to the people who are managing this bill. I say to the BIA, you must begin addressing these issues that deal with Indian children.

CRIME

Mr. DORGAN. In the next 3 or 4 minutes I will introduce a piece of legislation. It is late in the session, but I intend to push on this legislation in the next session of Congress, as well. It deals with crime.

One-third of all violent crimes in this country are committed by people who are under supervision. Under supervision means people on probation, parole, or pretrial release. One-third of all violent crimes are committed by people we know because they are already in our system. They are in jail and let out. In most cases, they are let out early. It does not take Dick Tracy to figure out who will commit the next crime. In most cases it is someone who has committed a previous crime.

Now, in the Federal system, which we control, we allow automatic good time for Federal prisoners. It is not supposed to be automatic because this Congress passed a piece of legislation, that I authored, that revoked automatic good time and said Federal prisoners will get good time only if the present system decides to bestow it upon them for exemplary behavior. The prison system interprets that differently and automatically gives every prisoner automatic good time off for good behavior. That is not what the Congress meant.

Now, I have a different idea. I think in the Federal system and also in the State and local system in the criminal justice system, we ought to have a system that says to people who commit violent crimes: "If you commit a violent crime you are going to go to prison and you will spend your entire term or sentence in jail." No good time off for good behavior. No rewards for doing well in prison. If you commit a violent act you will go to jail and stay in jail until the end of your sentence.

We do not run the State and local criminal justice system, but we do run the Federal system. Let me give an example of one Federal prisoner named Martin Link. In 1982, Martin Link grabbed a 15-year-old girl in an alley in St. Louis, MO, sodomized her and tried to rape her. In 1983, he forced another young girl into his car, took her to East St. Louis and raped her. He was sentenced to 20 years in Federal prison, and was released in 6 years because of a combination of good time credits and parole. Soon afterward, he got a year's probation for soliciting sex from an undercover agent. The next year, in 1990, he stole a car, but he was still on the streets in 1991 when he murdered an 11-year-old girl named Elissa Self-Braun while she was walking to her schoolbus from her home.

This fellow is awaiting death in the Federal prison system. But he, like so many others convicted of violent crimes, was walking our streets early because we still have in the Federal system good time off for good behavior for those who commit violent crimes—for all Federal prisoners. For those who commit violent acts, it seems to me we ought to say in this country: "Understand this, if you are a criminal and prepared to commit a violent act, there will be no reward for you once you get to prison." When you get to prison, whatever the judge says your sentence is, your sentence will be—no good time off for good behavior for those who commit violent crimes.

Do you know that there are more than 4,000 people who have been murdered in this country—murdered by people who should not have been on the streets to murder anybody? They should have been in jail, in prison, but they were let out early. Now, the prison system authorities say, "Well, we need incentives to make people behave in prison, and we need opportunities to tell people that if you behave behind bars, we will give you good time off for good behavior."

My interest is in establishing order on American streets. We don't do that by letting violent criminals out of prison before the end of their sentence. If they have trouble managing violent offenders in prison, think of what happens when those violent offenders get back on our streets.

Let me end where I started. One-third of all violent crimes committed in this country are committed by people who are on probation, parole, or pretrial release. We know who they are, we know what they do, and we know what they are going to do. We ought to decide to get smart on these issues. In the Federal system we can decide that they will spend the entire time in prison, without good time off for good behavior. I am introducing my legislation which would do that. I invite my colleagues to cosponsor it. Recognizing we won't be able to advance it this year, I hope next year we will be able to have a vote on this piece of legislation.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The hour of 11:30 a.m. having arrived, there will now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each, with Senator THOMAS controlling the time between now and 12 noon.

APPOINTMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the Secretary of the Senate, pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the appointment of Sheilah Mann, of Maryland, to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress for the 104th Congress, vice Richard N. Smith.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

AMERICANS HAVE TO MAKE CHOICES

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, as you know, for some time now, we have attempted to have the freshmen of the Senate come on to the floor, from time to time, to talk about issues we think are important. We call this "Freshman Focus." We appreciate this time to do that. I will be joined by at least one of my associates, very soon. Many of the others have departed for home.

Mr. President, we wanted to talk a little today about choices—choices that we have in a Government like ours, the one that President Lincoln said was a Government "of the people, by the people, and for the people," which we all, of course, want to maintain. In order to do that, then each of us, as citizens, as the people who will run this Government, need to make choices, need to make decisions, and need, of course, to be as informed as we can be with respect to those choices.

In order to be informed voters, and in order to participate in those decisions that will guide the country, not only in the short term but in the long term, I think we have to decide what those fundamental choices are and then, of course, decide for ourselves how we approach them. And there are fundamental choices, choices that have impact over time, choices that affect this country and the way it is organized, in its purpose, and its goals—not just the short-term issues that sort of are instant gratification for each of us. Of course there are those, and we always like that. But the fact is that there are basic issues that really will affect the way we operate over the years, not only for those of us who are now voting, but for our kids and our grandchildren. Those are the ones that, it is my belief, we should really focus on and seek to bring out in our own minds, at least how important they are.

I am concerned, because it seems to me that we are increasingly moving away from basing our views on those fundamental decisions and we get engrossed in all the short-term kinds of things that we talk about. This administration, frankly, has done more to seek to blur issues than any administration that I have ever seen. It is fairly easy to do that. It is fairly easy to say, "Yes, I am for that, too." I think the best example that I have seen over the last number of years—and particularly in this session—is where we have spent a great deal of time talking about balancing the budget and a balanced budget amendment to ensure that that in fact happens. I don't think there has been a soul that has risen and said: "I am not for balancing the budget." They have said, "I am for balancing the budget, but. . ." So we establish that initially, at least in rhetoric, and don't do that. We haven't balanced the budget in 25 years.

So it is very easy to blur the issues, very easy to make it difficult to ascertain where people are on these issues. And issues is what elections are about. Those are the choices that you and I have to make as November comes. I think it is more and more difficult to really identify where people are, where parties are, where candidates are, for a number of reasons. It is almost an irony that—just imagine, 50 years ago, 100 years ago, how little information we all had about what went on in our Nation's Capital or around the world. Now, because of technology, we know instantly. If we fire a rocket at Iraq, we know about it right away, and we actually see it. Despite that technological opportunity to know more, it seems as if it is more difficult for us to clarify the choices that we have. One of the reasons, of course, is the media. We get much of our information—most of our information and, indeed, almost all of your information—through public media. I don't think it is any secret that the media most often tries to pick out those things that are controversial and emotional, and those things that create debate rather than the ones that clarify the issues. I understand that. That's the way it is. But it makes it difficult.

More and more of our decisions and our choices and our information come from advertising, political advertising, which is generally designed to skew issues in one way or another. It is not the exclusive province of either party, but it is something that is done, almost entirely, in almost all the ads we see. So that does not help to clarify issues.

We see right here in this Chamber all kinds of amendments. Yesterday was a great example of amendments designed simply for some kind of political statement, which really had nothing to do with the bill we talked about. Frankly, it had very little to do with the prospect of it passing. But it was something thrown out there to create an image. It makes it difficult to decide

on choices. We even find, Mr. President—like yesterday—a delay tactic going on here. Instead of moving forward, because we have a couple more weeks to finish a lot of work, we spent 25 hours on one bill, with 100 amendments. Why? I think simply to delay. I think simply to increase the potential—frankly, the possibility of a shutdown of the Government and Congress would be blamed for that. So, when you're dealing with things like that, it is very difficult to really come down on the bona fide choices and directions that will guide this country into the future.

There are differences. There are choices. There are legitimate choices and, frankly, they are fairly clear. It is a legitimate choice, but there are those who want more Government, who think there ought to be more taxes, who think that money collected in taxes and spent by the Government is better spent. I don't happen to agree with that, but I agree that it is a legitimate choice.

Indeed, if we can make it a little more clear between those kinds of things, then people could choose. The other choice, of course, is less Government, moving Government closer to people through the State and local governments, and actually having tax relief so people spend more of their own money rather than collecting it and spending it out through the Federal Government. Those are choices. Those are quite different, and that is what elections are about—to decide which of those directions we want to take.

Imagine, for a minute, that you have a ballot. You go into the polling booth and the ballot has on it a number of issues. You check those issues that you agree with. What is your choice on the issue of a balanced budget amendment? Do you want that? You go down a series of questions of that kind, and then, rather than selecting a candidate, because of what you have selected with the issues, the candidate is automatic. The ones who represent what you most nearly represent is your choice. That would be an interesting exercise, wouldn't it?

I suppose you could talk about the size of Government—smaller, larger? Federal Government—smaller, larger?

Cost? Do you think the cost is too much? Do you think the Federal Government costs too much as it increases, or should it be less? It is possible to be less.

Tax relief? If we pay nearly 40 percent of our income on average in taxes, should we have tax relief, or have the system continue like it is? Yes or no?

Welfare reform? We have talked about that for the last 2 years. The President had it in his campaign in 1992. Finally, after the third time, it was passed and signed. Now, of course, the same people who said they were for welfare reform are now saying, "Well, as soon as we get back in Congress, we will change it. We will take out some of that stuff. We really do not want

this welfare reform." So welfare reform ought to be one of the questions for voters.

Do you want welfare reform? Regulatory relief? We talked a lot about that. We tried to do that this year. Lots of people are not for regulatory relief. Many of us on this side of the aisle are. They are legitimate issues, and legitimate choices.

So, Mr. President, I simply want to say that I hope as we move on in this election that each of us has a responsibility to vote, each of us who has the responsibility in this kind of Government to participate in the decision as to where we go in the future, take a look at the issues and choose, because there will be fairly clear choices, but it may be hard to determine that.

I guess that is the essence of what I am talking about this morning—that we need to have choices. I believe that we have two pretty different philosophies—one for more Government, more taxes, more regulations; one to reduce the size of Government, have tax relief, reduce the regulations so that we have more jobs and more economic growth. Those are the clear choices.

Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by the Senator from Minnesota, who also wants to comment on some of the choices that are available to us as part of today's Freshman Focus.

I yield to my friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank, very much, my colleague from Wyoming.

OUR AMERICAN AGENDA

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, my freshman colleagues and I have come to the floor this morning to share our thoughts about the future. It is a vision for tomorrow not bound in political partisanship, because ours is not a Republican agenda, but an American agenda: A message every citizen can embrace, whether they are just starting out on the job, a new parent, an executive working their way up the ladder, a long time employee in a union shop, a student, a senior citizen. Anybody who is searching for something better, and the freedom to achieve it, is welcome.

And our message for the future can be spelled out in just six words: Lower taxes, less Government, more jobs.

The vision those six words embodies contrasts sharply with the reality that has been imposed on the American people by their own Government.

Instead of making real achievements on behalf of America's families, the last Congress, the 103d, was most noted for enacting the largest tax increase in American history. The \$265 billion in new taxes it demanded from the middle class could not have been further from what the taxpayers wanted or deserved.

This Congress heard their calls and we have pointed Washington in a new direction by seeking dramatically lower taxes for working Americans.