

rules, from men like Richard Russell and John Stennis. Over the years, the student ROBERT BYRD has become the teacher ROBERT BYRD, but also remains the student ROBERT BYRD—a remarkable combination.

He has devoted his time and energy to formal education, earning a law degree while serving as a Member of Congress. Imagine that, all the duties of a Congressman and also getting a law degree, the only time in history that anyone has both begun and completed law school while serving in the Congress.

But just as important, the Senator from West Virginia also studies for his own enjoyment because he loves to learn, he loves to study and he loves to go through self-improvement, and he does it every day. ROBERT BYRD's devotion to learning is reflected in his work. When Senator BYRD offers an amendment, manages a bill, or speaks on an issue, he knows what he is talking about, and all of us recognize that on both sides of the aisle.

As chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator BYRD's advice and counsel led to the system of discretionary spending caps we have been using for the last 6 years. These spending caps and the reductions in Federal discretionary spending they have enforced have made the most significant contribution to deficit reduction of any policy we have adopted in the last decade.

If we in the Congress took the same kind of step on entitlement programs that we have done under Senator BYRD's leadership on discretionary programs, the fiscal outlook for our country and the future of our children and grandchildren would dramatically improve.

Too often today, when important matters are being considered, the media and some politicians look to opinion polls first for guidance. The Senator from West Virginia is not one of those individuals. The Senator from West Virginia is much more likely to follow the advice of Winston Churchill who said: "Study history, study history. In history lies all the secrets of statecraft."

Mr. President, Senator BYRD's knowledge of history and the relevance of history to the issues we face today—it is not just knowledge of history, it is the parallel between what we should learn from history and the kind of challenges we face today—and his deep appreciation of the connection all Senators should feel to those who have gone before us are the hallmarks of his service and, indeed, I think the unique contribution he has made to this institution.

When Senator BYRD speaks on issues like the line-item veto, for instance—and I agree with him that in the future the Senate will regret turning over this power to the executive branch. It has been done. We will see how it works, but I am one of those in the ROBERT BYRD school on the line-item veto. I do not think it will be used to bring down

the deficit. I think it will be used by the President for whatever power he would like to display on whatever his priorities are at the moment, depending on the President.

But when he speaks on issues like the line-item veto, ROBERT BYRD speaks with the knowledge born of long hours of study of the development of constitutional Government and of separated and shared powers in the history of England and ancient Rome as well as our own country.

Historian ROBERT BYRD knows how long it took for the legislative branch to attain the power of the purse. He knows what it means to have the power of the purse. He knows what it means for the President to have the power of the purse, because that has been done more frequently in history than having the legislative body with that power. He also is keenly aware of what it means to lose the power of the purse.

ROBERT BYRD understands and articulates better than any Member of this body the crucial role that an independent legislature plays in a democracy. You do not have a democracy without a legislative branch. The Senator from West Virginia knows that we cannot have democracy without an independent legislative branch.

Mr. President, I could speak about the leadership and virtues of ROBERT BYRD for a long time. But let me wrap up my remarks by quoting the senior Senator from West Virginia in his history of the Senate, a magnificent quote in my view, summing up his view, and I hope increasingly all of our views, of the role of this great body.

After two hundred years, [the Senate] is still the anchor of the Republic, the morning and evening star in the American constitutional constellation. It has had its giants and its little men, its Websters and its Bilbos, its Calhouns and its McCarthys. It has been the stage of high drama, of comedy and of tragedy, and its players have been the great and the near-great, those who think they are great, and those who will never be great. It has weathered the storms of adversity, withstood the barbs of cynics and the attacks of critics, and provided stability and strength to the nation during periods of civil strife and uncertainty, panics and depressions. In war and peace, it has been the sure refuge and protector of the rights of the states and of a political minority. And, today, the Senate still stands—the great forum of constitutional American liberty!

Mr. President, the U.S. Senate still stands as a great forum of constitutional liberty, in large part because of the vision of our Founding Fathers and the genius and durability of our constitutional system of Government. The men and women who serve in the Senate have a solemn obligation to understand this history and to protect the combination of powers that make the Senate unique under the Constitution.

Senator BYRD further reminds us of this solemn obligation in his addresses on the history of Roman constitutionalism when he said:

For over two hundred years, from the beginning of the republic to this very hour, [the American constitutional system] has

survived in unbroken continuity. We received it from our fathers. Let us surely pass it on to our sons and daughters

Mr. President, it is my hope and prayer that our successors will study the words, study the life and emulate the deeds of ROBERT BYRD, U.S. Senator from West Virginia, as he has studied the words and emulated the deeds of our forefathers. If they do, the Senate of the United States will stand as a beacon of liberty, and the lamp of America's freedom will shine for the next 200 years. That will be the ultimate tribute to the service in the U.S. Senate of a remarkable individual—ROBERT C. BYRD of West Virginia. I thank the Chair.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GREGG). THE SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, let me first say it is an honor to simply have heard the tribute by the Senator from Georgia directed at the Senator from West Virginia. It is an honor to simply serve with these two men. I was delighted to hear the tribute. I thank the Senator. We will all miss him very, very much in this body.

TAX CUTS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, we are nearing the end of the 104th Congress, a time when many will review the accomplishments and the failures of the last 2 years.

Though the dramatic budget disputes have dominated much of the brief history of the 104th Congress, there have in fact been a number of bipartisan successes that have not been as publicly noted. These bipartisan efforts have included congressional compliance, unfunded mandates legislation, lobby and gift reform, modest, but helpful, health insurance reform, and the promising beginnings of campaign finance reform.

But, Mr. President, perhaps the biggest achievement of this Congress has been something that was not done. This Congress did not enact any of the massive, fiscally irresponsible tax-cut proposals that Members of both parties have proposed.

Mr. President, a recent headline in the Washington Post read, "Dole's Tax Cut Centerpiece Has Yet To Strike a Chord With Voters." It is a telling story about the inability of the Dole campaign to gain significant political benefit from his proposal to cut taxes by nearly half a trillion dollars.

To a certain extent, I think the same kind of story could be written, in fairness, about President Clinton's tax-cut proposals. The bulk of the success that the President has enjoyed—I believe will continue to enjoy—clearly comes not from his tax-cut plans, but from his handling of the economy and his record on deficit reduction.

So, Mr. President, I think neither candidate has benefited in any significant way from proposing tax cuts. The reason is straightforward. Voters understand we simply cannot afford to

cut taxes if we are to balance the Federal budget within the next 6 years. Mr. President, do Americans want lower taxes? Of course they do. But given the choice between cutting taxes and balancing the budget, the American voter wants to balance the budget.

Make no mistake, Mr. President, that is the choice we have before us. We have to do one or the other. You cannot do both. Anyone who claims you can do both is either blowing smoke or simply does not understand the huge problem we have in this country with our deficit and the debt which underlies it.

Mr. President, we saw how politically unsustainable a budget package becomes when it attempts to provide a major tax cut while it also claims to be eliminating the deficit. The political developments of this past year are testimony to this fact.

Indeed, any budget package that eliminates the deficit will be difficult enough to sustain over the next few years that it would take to fully implement its provisions even without the added burden of funding a significant tax cut.

The failure of the tax-cut plans offered by either party to gain political momentum is, of course, not due to a lack of effort. Millions of dollars are being spent on carefully crafted television commercials advocating these tax-cut proposals. These plans are not new nor are the efforts to promote them.

The President's plan that we have heard about recently is similar, in many ways, to the one he proposed in December of 1994. The Dole plan clearly has its roots in the massive tax cut proposed as a part of the now famous Contract With America. In fact, many in this body will recall that the Speaker of the other body pronounced that the tax-cut proposal, of all the proposals in the Contract With America, was the "crown jewel" of the Contract With America, in his words.

Mr. President, the Speaker's characterization was notable. Of all the provisions in that political document, it was the tax cut that he, the leader of that charge, gave the privileged position. Yet, despite the considerable political inertia that is conferred by being singled out as the crown jewel of the Contract With America, the tax cut has not been enacted.

Mr. President, does anyone doubt that, if there had been strong broad-based support for that tax cut, it would have been enacted by now? Clearly it would have been. If the American people truly preferred tax cuts to deficit reduction, we would have seen an inevitable bipartisan rush to enact them. But that has not been the case.

In the Washington Post story on the failure of the Dole tax-cut plan to attract voter support, a gentleman named Ralph Miller, of Greencastle, IN, a self-described independent, is quoted as saying this:

When I hear all that talk about how they're going to cut taxes and balance the budget, it turns me against the both of them.

He added:

I don't believe anybody can do that * * * I have respect for Bob Dole, but this seems ridiculous to me.

Mr. President, despite the lost opportunity to make even more progress to reduce the deficit during the 104th Congress, the deficit-reduction package passed in 1993 continues to lower the annual budget deficits below where they otherwise would have been.

As many have noted, in the last 4 years we have seen deficits come down from nearly \$300 billion to an estimated \$117 billion. That progress, of course, has come only with great difficulty. Finishing the job will be even tougher, but it is something that absolutely must be done.

Mr. President, proposals to provide large tax cuts jeopardize that effort by pirating the savings generated by spending cuts away from deficit reduction in order to fund tax cuts.

They also undercut deficit reduction by providing an alluring alternative to the often painful and unpopular work of balancing the budget.

It is much easier it is to talk of cutting taxes than it is to focus on where to cut spending.

The American people have not been swayed by the talk of cutting taxes by the Presidential candidates.

In fact, if President Clinton wins, as I hope and expect he will, it will in large part be because of his success in reducing the deficit, not because of his tax cut proposals.

Mr. President, in 1994, the first time many voters became aware of the Contract With America, including its crown jewel, was after the election.

But that fact was conveniently ignored when the new congressional leadership sought to advance their agenda.

The contract's provisions were held up as an electoral mandate, though I doubt 1 voter in 10 was in any way familiar with the real specifics of the Contract With America.

There will be no comparable, after-the-fact, document this year, Mr. President.

The differences between the two candidates are well known.

And despite the efforts of some in both parties, and the political and media specialists in both campaigns, the outcome of this election will rest in large part on whether voters choose reducing the deficit or cutting taxes as the higher economic priority of this Nation.

Mr. President, despite the loudly trumpeted promises made at the beginning of this Congress, and despite the significant political pressure brought to bear by well-funded special interests, we have succeeded in avoiding significant damage to the deficit, and to the goal of a balanced budget, that a huge tax cut would have meant.

If, in the 105th Congress, as I very much hope, we are finally able to enact a bipartisan budget plan that will balance the Federal books, it will be in large part because we did not enact a

fiscally irresponsible tax cut in the 104th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. D'AMATO pertaining to the introduction of S. 2136 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

COOPERATIVE RESEARCH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE AND USDA'S EXPERIMENT STATION AT MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to report to Congress and the American people on a unique success story. A story about a public-private partnership. A story involving a cooperative effort of two Federal agencies. A story requiring teamwork between a State government and the Federal Government. A story about our land grant university for Mississippi, and catfish farmers in Mississippi's Delta.

First, let me say, I am proud to report to my colleagues that the Mississippi Delta produces 80 percent of the farm-raised catfish enjoyed in America. This farm-raised catfish industry represents approximately 70 percent of the commercial value of America's entire aquaculture industry. Clearly, farm-raised catfish is big business in America. And clearly, it is big business for Mississippi.

But, it was not always successful. The catfish industry in Mississippi struggled for 25 years. There were many tales of financial woe. However, with hard work and the willingness to accept large fiscal risk, Mississippians developed aquaculture into a dynamic and viable economic enterprise. The pioneers in this industry spent a lot of their own money to build a giant infrastructure which includes production, processing, transportation, marketing, distribution, and feed mill capacity. We are talking about a \$2 billion agricultural investment.

Mr. President, according to data provided to my office by the State of Mississippi, the Mississippi catfish industry employs more than 25,000. And this industry sells approximately \$0.5 billion each year of catfish at the pond bank.

Throughout the growth of this new fledgling agricultural enterprise over the past 25 years, the No. 1 priority for the catfish farmers has always been to find new production techniques. If you build a pond and fill it with catfish, the question is not where the fish are. No—the real question and challenge is how to harvest the fish of a certain size.

Similar to any other intensely managed livestock operation, the farm-raised catfish industry experienced enormous production challenges such