

education and spend it as they choose? That is what it is all about. That is what this debate is about. That is what a balanced budget is about—to be financially and fiscally responsible, and also to reduce the interest rates so that the economy will grow.

That is what tax relief is about—middle class tax relief, which the President promised when he ran. He has never delivered. That is what \$500 per child is about, so it goes to families. That is what regulatory relief is about. It is not a matter of regulation and specifics. It is a matter of being able to grow an economy where there are jobs and prosperity. That is what our agenda is about, Mr. President.

The final argument, of course, will be that basic argument of do you follow the suggestion that says it is the Government's task to regulate these, and let us get more government, more regulation and more involved? Or do we release this dynamic private sector to create jobs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

#### WHERE AMERICA IS GOING

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and my friend from Wyoming for his leadership on this freshman focus, a time where freshman Members of the Senate have an opportunity to get up and talk about issues of importance to the country from a perspective of those of us who are relatively new in this body. I think he is right on target to talk about the issue of the economy and where this country is going.

We have a President who is running around the country talking about how this is the healthiest economy that we have seen and we are doing great and everything is fine. It actually reminds me of another President in an election year 4 years ago, who was going around the country trying to convince the American public that the economy was fine and everything is great and this is a healthy economy and we are moving forward. The American public, frankly, did not buy it.

The reaction was very simple: What country is he living in? What country is he leading? Does he not have any understanding of what is actually going on in the economy, what we are dealing with here, that in fact the statistics show that, out of recessionary years, this economy is the slowest growing economy since the 1950's? This is not a robust economy.

The Senator from Wyoming was right on target as to why this is not a growing economy. It is the same reason that the previous President had problems saying it was a growing economy, and that is because this President and the previous President raised taxes on the American public. They took more money out of their pocket and sent it here to Washington. It had a real effect

on their take-home pay and had a real effect on their ability to be able to provide for themselves and their families. That has a ripple effect through the economy, from consumer confidence and their willingness to consume to the real issue of just paying bills.

I think we may be seeing a repeat here. I know many of us who are in this Chamber now were here as Senators or Representatives during the 1993 Budget Act, when President Clinton went out and said we have to raise taxes and we said this is going to have an effect. It is the same type of tax increase that was put forward in 1990. Many Republicans—I was in the House at the time—many Republicans fought it and said President Bush at that time was making a mistake; it would hurt the economy and drag the whole economy down and this country down. A lot of us believed it would bring the President down. It did.

Then 1993 comes around and President Clinton did not learn from the mistakes of President Bush and pushed forward through another tax increase—and, I might add, more entitlement programs, more regulation, more on people's backs. Many of us said, "Learn your lesson from 1990. That is not going to help the economy. That is not, in the long run, going to balance this budget." He said, "No, we have to do it." They did it.

As a result, coming out of this recession in the early 1990's, we have had one of the slowest recoveries in history. Job growth, yes. We have had jobs. But I think if you talk to most of the people, the kind of jobs being created are not the kind of jobs that will support a family. You hear Members on both sides of the aisle talking about that. The reason is oppressive regulation, oppressive taxation.

Almost 25 percent of the income of the average family in America goes just to pay taxes to Washington, DC. That is a peace-time high. By the way, I like to compare that to what it was back in 1950 when the average American family—same family, average-income family—did not pay almost 25 percent of their taxes to the Federal Government; they paid 2 percent of their income to the Federal Government in taxes. Now it is almost 25 percent.

Do we wonder why people feel squeezed, why they do not feel they have the opportunities to provide for a family anymore, why both husband and wife have to work? If you are a single parent, what do you do? You work two jobs and you struggle to provide for your children.

What we do here is what they did 3 years ago: Put even more taxes on the American public. We believe that is not the answer. We have stood up this year and said the answer is not to take the American public for more, not to regulate the American public more, but to put Government on a diet so we can allow the folks back home to take a little bit more out of their paycheck for their own use, not Government use.

So we proposed this irresponsible thing. People got on the floor and said this was such an irresponsible thing to let people keep more of their own money to help provide for their families. As the song goes, "That's my story and I'm sticking to it." My story is that American families should keep more of their money.

We are going to continue to push for a tax cut for American families. We will continue to push for a tax cut to create growth and opportunity in capital gains and helping small business people, because creating jobs is the real answer here. Creating good quality jobs is the real answer here. Growth is the answer—not further taxation, but liberating people. Money should go out and be invested in capital resources so we can create more high-quality jobs in this country. We will continue to push for that.

We will continue to push for regulatory reform so Government does not stifle the creativity of Americans by regimenting them into some model that we believe in Washington, DC, is the best for everyone. We are going to go out and do the things that are necessary to make this country prosperous and moving forward.

I just hope that the President will come to the realization that tightening the belt here in Washington ever so slightly—and frankly, that is all we are talking about in this balanced budget—tightening the belt here in Washington so we can give just a little bit more to working families is not cruel. It may be cruel to some bureaucrats in town, but it is not cruel to American families. It is not cruel to Americans who want good-paying jobs, outside in the private sector, not just here in Washington.

I am hopeful we can somehow come to an agreement that this is not the healthiest economy, that the spin doctors of the campaign of 1996 for the President are not going to win the day to try to convince the American public what they know is not true, that this economy is booming and healthy and the best it has ever been. We should get down to trying to address the real economic insecurity that American workers have, the real problems of raising families in this country, and do something about it on a bipartisan basis in this Congress.

I am hopeful we can do that. We should be able to do that. I am looking forward to the opportunity to make that happen. I yield the floor.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania. I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended by 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this has been a very enlightening morning listening to both Democrats and Republicans refuting this myth that seems to

be floating around the country that we are enjoying this great economic time when, in fact, the indicators show just the opposite.

I happened to be presiding when the distinguished Senator from New Mexico, Senator BINGAMAN, observed that people who are doing the work in America are getting less and more rapidly plummeting down to the point where we were in 1967 in terms of real income or purchasing power for the American people. Also we can observe that it is worse than might be indicated by family income because we increasingly have multifamily members working in America. When I was quite young, it was somewhat unheard of. It was not a way of life in America. Nonetheless, the real purchasing power is going down.

I do not like to point fingers as to why this is happening, but I think, Mr. President, when you look at the policies that were adopted by the current President of the United States, Bill Clinton, it is four-tiered. It is increased spending, increased taxes, increased borrowing, and increased regulations. I do not very often quote a very distinguished talk radio show host but I remember the other day he said, "If you really want to be competitive with the Japanese, export our regulations to Japan and we will be competitive." I think there is a lot of truth to that.

Some people may have forgotten that back in the first year of the Clinton administration, in 1993, there was a tax increase that was characterized by Democrats and Republicans alike, and I specifically recall the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee characterizing that tax increase as the largest single tax increase in the history of public finance in America or anyplace in the world. That was a very large tax increase.

I recall, also, when the chief adviser to the President, prior to being sworn in for her duties, made the observation that there is no relationship between the level of taxation in a country and the economic activity, and further went on to say what we need in this country in addition to the taxes we currently have is a value-added tax to be comparable to that in other industrialized nations that would immediately increase revenues \$400 billion.

I suggest this is where this administration has gone wrong, because the problem we are having in America is not that we are taxed too little, but we are taxed too much.

I, the other day, on the 9th of January, witnessed the birth of a charming little man by the name of James Edward Rapert, in Fayetteville, AR. At that time I looked at this very small baby, where I was actually there in the room during the delivery of that small child in Arkansas, and I realized that innocent child, who had not done anything wrong on his own, inherits a share of the national debt of \$18,000 that that one individual will have to pay off during his lifetime. That indi-

vidual did not do anything to cause this.

Also, I noticed if we do not change this trend that has been continued by the current administration, that that small child, James Edward Rapert, will have to pay 82 percent of his lifetime income just to support the debt. That is how we have gotten to the point where we are now, where we have to do something about it.

There was a man who came to this country by the name of Alexis de Tocqueville many years ago. He actually came here to study our prison system, and when he got here he was so impressed by the freedom in this country and by the wealth of this Nation that he wrote a book. The final paragraph of that book said: Once the people of this country find they can vote themselves money out of the public trust, the system will fail. And that is exactly where we are today, right on the brink of having a system that will fail. The economy is not good today.

One more thing I want to say before yielding the floor, back to this tax thing, is the President has opposed a budget balancing amendment to the Constitution. He actually campaigned on a budget balancing amendment to the Constitution. Also, he vetoed the Balanced Budget Act. When he vetoed that Balanced Budget Act he was saying that we do not want to live in the confines where we will be able to eliminate the deficit in 7 years.

That particular act also included some tax relief. There was a lot of criticism I heard from conservative Republicans all across the country: We do not care about tax relief until we balance the budget. What they do not realize is all we were trying to do is correct a mistake that was made in this country back in 1993 when we passed the largest single tax increase in the history of public finance in America or anyplace else in the world. If anyone was not for that tax increase, then they should be for tax relief.

I think it is incumbent upon us, and certainly those in the freshman class, who are new here to the U.S. Senate, to have an absolute commitment to giving tax relief, to giving families more of the expendable income that they work so hard for. That is our commitment. It is not just for those of us who are around today but the new generations that are coming up, the James Edward Raperts. Incidentally, that happened to be my grandson.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent morning business be extended for a total of 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRIBUTE TO MINNIE PEARL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition and in memory of one of America's most beloved country

personalities, Minnie Pearl, who died Monday night at the age of 83. Minnie Pearl was born Sarah Ophelia Colley, in Centerville, TN, the daughter of a prosperous sawmill owner and lumber dealer. As a student at Nashville's Ward-Belmont Finishing School in the middle of the Great Depression, not many would have thought Sarah Colley had the background to believably portray Minnie Pearl, that man-hunting spinster from Grinder's Switch, TN. But her down home country comedy act, old-fashioned dresses, and a wide-brimmed hat with a price tag still dangling, found a place in the hearts of millions of Americans.

Today, the State of Tennessee and the entire country mourn the loss of a truly outstanding and inspirational American.

After completing her drama education at Ward-Belmont, where I should add that she was a student with my mother, Sarah Colley traveled throughout the rural South for 6 years, putting together amateur theatricals for churches and civic groups. During that time she met various country folk who formed the foundation for the character of Minnie Pearl, as well as Minnie's friends and neighbors from fictional Grinder's Switch. The name Minnie Pearl was actually a combination of Sara Colley's favorite country names.

When she returned to Tennessee in 1940, the story-telling character of Minnie Pearl had fully developed, and WSM radio in Nashville asked her to audition for the Grand Ole Opry. A week after her audition, Minnie Pearl made her debut on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry and was an immediate hit. Before her second performance the next weekend, Miss Minnie had been asked to become a regular member of the Grand Ole Opry cast.

In the 50 years since she burst onto the stage, Minnie Pearl traveled with country music legend Roy Acuff, entertained troops in World War II, and was featured on NBC-TV's "This Is Your Life." She recorded numerous albums, continued her frequent appearances at the Grand Ole Opry, and appeared as a regular on the nationally syndicated television program, "Hee Haw." In 1975 she became the first person elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame for comedy work, and she has been honored by the Academy of Country Music with its Pioneer Award.

Unlike her country counterpart, Sarah Colley caught her man, Henry Cannon, and was married to him for more than 40 years, until her death this week. As active members of the Brentwood United Methodist Church just outside of Nashville, Sarah and Henry Cannon have been actively involved in charitable and community affairs all over this country. Sarah Cannon worked tirelessly for many causes, including the Children's Hospital, the American Cancer Society, and so many others. For her hard work for the Cancer Society, and in recognition of her