

their policy differences, we dedicated ourselves to translating the budget outline we had developed into a full blown legislative plan, and that is what we have presented to our colleagues today.

We are not here to suggest that this is the only way to balance the budget. We're here to illustrate that a balanced budget plan can be drafted from the middle of the political spectrum and driven by policy. Regardless of the outcome of the balanced budget debate, I think it is important that we demonstrate to the administration, the congressional leadership, and the American people what a bipartisan budget compromise would encompass.

One of the biggest differences between this bipartisan plan and either the Republican or Democrat plans is that both of their last offers reached balance on paper by relying on deep cuts in discretionary spending—cuts that would require future Congresses to make far tougher choices than any recent Congress has been willing to make. You only have to look at this year's appropriations process to realize that future cuts of the magnitude proposed by the current plans are both unwise as a matter of policy and unattainable politically.

There's no question that if we make these cuts on the defense side of the ledger, we can't possibly maintain our ability, as the world's sole remaining superpower, to protect our own shores, much less help defend freedom, and maintain peace throughout the world.

Yet, if these reductions can't be made in defense—far and away the biggest item in discretionary spending—where can we make responsible reductions of this magnitude in discretionary spending? In transportation infrastructure? In research and development? In education? In job training? In medical research funding? Do we cut mine safety inspectors, or air traffic controllers or those who ensure the safety of our food and maintain the quality of our air and water?

Fortunately, the members of our group have not only chosen a more realistic and achievable discretionary path over the next 7 years, but we have done so to protect these types of important investments, investments which are critical to raising future productivity, growth, and incomes. We are dedicated to the belief that we should not sacrifice these investments at the expense of taking on politically popular entitlement programs.

And protect discretionary spending we must, since entitlements and interest on the national debt are rapidly edging out discretionary programs in the battle for scarce federal dollars. Entitlements and interest on the national debt are projected to account for 70 percent of our budget by the year 2002, up from 30 percent in 1963. Most disturbing of all, it is projected that entitlements and interest on the debt will consume the entire Federal revenue base by the year 2012.

With such staggering expansions of entitlements on the horizon, significant entitlement reform has to be at the heart of any serious balanced budget effort. This budget makes meaningful—but fair—reductions in entitlements like Medicare, Medicaid and welfare while also seeking to protect our most vulnerable citizens. And it requires Medicare beneficiaries who can afford to pay more to make a larger—and more reasonable—contribution to the Medicare Program.

For many of us, the most important part of this plan is its downward modification of the consumer price index, which controls cost-of-living adjustments for entitlement programs and tax bracket indexing.

A report of the Senate Finance Committee indicates that the present value of the CPI overstates the actual rate of inflation by somewhere between 0.7 and 2.0 percent. By making a CPI adjustment, we are better able to control the future costs of entitlement programs, including Social Security, which has up until now been left off the table by both Republicans and Democrats alike.

From a policy perspective, a CPI modification is absolutely the right thing to do since it restrains future entitlement costs, thus helping to protect the discretionary side of the budget from unwise reductions in the future. But it is understandable, given the approaching political season, that the modification has become a political hot potato for both sides, subject to an attack from Republicans as a backdoor tax increase and from Democrats as a Social Security cut.

As I look back on the events of the last 6 months and ahead to the Presidential campaign, I sense that political considerations are again costing us an important and historic opportunity to begin to address our long-term budget problems.

And if we are ever to make serious headway on these matters, I am more convinced than ever that the American people don't need to see important issues of public policy demagogued anymore. They don't need to see interest groups fired-up to wage war against responsible change. The American people need to hear and understand the truth about the sources and seriousness of our long-term budget problems.

Patrick Henry once said, "for my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth—to know the worst and provide for it."

Only by separating the truth from the rhetoric can we balance our Federal budget the right way. And the anguish will be a lot less if the sacrificed is shared—and if we summon the courage to act now. For if we fail to act—and if we continue down the path of cowards—we will guarantee for our children, not the bright future we inherited, but the dark responsibilities we refused to accept.

I thank my colleagues for the time to speak and the chance to be a part of

the Centrist Coalition. I hope that this will be the start, not the end, of our efforts to bring bipartisan and common-sense solutions to the legislative issues of our day.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BINGAMAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for up to 5 minutes.

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

(The remarks of Mr. BINGAMAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1702 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BROWN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

THE CHAFEE-BREAUX BUDGET PROPOSAL

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to make very brief comments, and I will make them extremely brief because I know my friend from Connecticut has been here waiting, with regard to the Chafee-Breaux budget proposal.

Mr. President, as I see it, the simple facts are these. This country urgently, desperately needs legislative action to ensure the soundness of the Medicare funds, to ensure the soundness of a variety of other trust funds. I do not think anyone objects to that. I should say more precisely I do not know that anyone disputes that fact, that we need strong and urgent action to put those on track.

Second, I do not think anyone doubts that we have an enormous problem with the deficit. We are not just the world's biggest debtor, but we see a problem that seems very difficult for Congress to solve.

Third, I think it is quite clear to everyone involved that we need a bipartisan budget. The simple fact is this Congress acted in what I thought was a responsible way, in I think a moderate way, in trying to address the budget problems. We passed a budget last year. We passed a reconciliation act that had enormous progress for the country in moving these funds into solvency, and it was vetoed by the President. We have been unable to reach an agreement with the President.

Whichever side you take in that controversy, the reality is nothing got done in terms of long-term reconciliation. It is my belief that nothing is going to get done unless we have a bipartisan approach. So I rise to speak for that budget, not because I like it better than what this Congress did. I do not. I think what this Congress did in reconciliation is much better and much more responsible. As a matter of fact, I

do not think it went near far enough. But the only way we are going to have progress in that area, the only way we are going to begin to address these problems with this Congress and this President is to go with a bipartisan budget. It is my belief that will put the President in a position where he has to go along with the Congress if we have a budget that has strong bipartisan support.

The Chafee-Breaux budget's value is it is real. The numbers are real, and the savings are real. Second, it has a very significant long-term effect in dealing with the trust funds, perhaps even better than other alternatives we have looked at. And third, Mr. President, it is the only game in town. It is the only bipartisan effort that we have on the table. It is the only way we are going to make progress.

Is it less than what I would like to see? Absolutely. I do not think it goes near far enough in dealing with our problems. It is clear, significant progress. And without it, without moving that bipartisan budget, I suspect we will find that we have put off dealing with one of our most serious problems.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.

Mr. DODD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

THE PRESENT SITUATION IN HAITI

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, last Friday, the majority leader, Senator DOLE, took to the floor and made a rather critical speech of our present policy in Haiti. He introduced at that time a report which was prepared by a Republican staff delegation that had gone down to Haiti during the Easter recess. I think the report probably could have been written a week or two in advance of the trip and the trip might not have even been necessary since there was not any real effort to examine the issues in Haiti and what has happened there over the past 18 months or so.

This morning I wish to take a few minutes to apprise my colleagues of how I see the present situation in Haiti. Where we have come over the past number of months in making real progress there. The good news is, of course, that Haiti is not in the headlines on a daily basis but there has been significant progress.

I think it is important that my colleagues and others who have heard Senator DOLE's remarks have an opportunity to hear another point of view, and that is what I would like to do this morning.

I am no stranger to Haiti. I have visited the country many times over the years. When I was a Peace Corps volunteer 30 years ago, I lived very close to the Haitian border in the Dominican Republic. I visited Haiti often in those days and still have many close friends in the country of Haiti.

Most recently, I visited Haiti this past January to make my own first-

hand assessment of the political situation. Based upon that visit, and the many others that I have made over the years, one thing is crystal clear. President Clinton's decision in September 1994 to support democracy in Haiti was the right thing to do. Whatever else one might say about United States policy, Haiti is a far, far better place today than it was 19 months ago.

Remember what those days were like. The reign of terror was the order of the day. Murder, rape, and kidnaping were daily occurrences in Haiti, all in an effort to intimidate the Haitian people. Those days are gone now. And, despite the fact that Haiti is a long way, a long way from becoming a Jeffersonian democracy, we are not going to rewrite almost 200 years of Haitian history in less than 2 years—I believe that today the Haitian people are one step closer to fulfilling their aspirations of living in freedom and dignity without fear of their Government.

An important phase of our Haiti policy came to a close just a month or so ago. U.S. forces are no longer participants in the United Nations mandated mission. In fact, last week the final contingent of United States forces left Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

When President Clinton dispatched United States forces to Haiti in the fall of 1994, he set a deadline of February 29, 1996, as the date when United States military participation in the mandated mission of the United Nations would terminate. He has stood by that situation and it has been fulfilled.

The goals of the United States policy have been clear from the outset, that is, to restore the democratically elected President of Haiti to office, to provide a secure and stable environment within which Democratic elections could be conducted, to protect international personnel and installations, and to facilitate the creation of a Haitian national police force.

Despite what some might have you believe, we have made tremendous strides toward fulfilling those goals. The duly elected president was restored to office. Municipal, congressional and presidential elections were successfully conducted. A civilian national police force has been established. The army no longer exists. The dreaded Haitian military has been dissolved.

During my January visit to Port-au-Prince, Mr. President, it became very apparent to me that there was a shared consensus across the broadest segment of Haitian society for a continued United Nations presence after February 29. President Aristide, then President-elect Preval, members of the Haitian Congress, the business community, the United States Embassy, U.N. officials, virtually everyone with whom I met, expressed the strong view that a follow-on presence by the United Nations was vital to solidifying the very real gains that have been made in Haiti over the last many months. Fortunately, the United Nations Security Council concurred with the prevailing

wisdom in Haiti and extended the U.N. mission for an additional 4 months until June 1 of this year. The Canadian Government, not the United States Government, has assumed the leadership role in the extended, albeit smaller, United Nations mission. I for one have expressed my appreciation to Canadian authorities for their willingness to do so.

No one is saying that the job is complete in Haiti. Far from it. Much remains to be done on the economic front, on the judicial front, on the human rights front, and on the migration front.

Public security, for example, continues to be a major challenge to the current Haitian administration, as it was to its predecessor. In that regard, some critics of Haiti have singled out the performance of the newly formed Haitian national police as an example of how United States policy has failed. That was included in the majority leader's remarks last Friday.

Mr. President, I could not disagree more. It does a great injustice to the real progress that has been made in this area in less than a year's time. Let us remember that until last June a civilian police force did not exist in Haiti. It had to be built from scratch while dissolving the army, the dreaded military.

In less than 8 months, a force of 5,000 freshly recruited and trained Haitians has been deployed throughout the country. Yes, they are green. They have made mistakes. But it is really quite a remarkable feat, when you think of it. Can you imagine establishing something like a 5,000-person force from the ground up, going through all the training, in a major city in this country overnight?

Haiti is not the only place we have endeavored to support the creation of a new professional civilian force to replace corrupt and brutal militarily justice. In Panama and in El Salvador, we joined with their government leaders to do something similar. In those cases, we had bipartisan support. Unfortunately, bipartisanship seems to be absent in the case of Haiti.

Some of the same problems in Haiti did, in fact, existed in these countries as well, Panama and El Salvador, and continue, I point out, to confront us to today.

Continued international assistance and support at this juncture is terribly important for this little country. These are critical to ensuring the strengthening and permanency of still fragile democratic institutions in Haiti. I believe the United States must remain engaged in Haiti.

U.S. humanitarian and democracy-building programs will continue to be important to future progress in a wide array of areas: the national police, the judicial and legislative branches, economic reforms, human rights and migration. If we do not remain engaged, I predict the previous problems that confronted both the Bush and Clinton administrations with respect to Haiti will