

budget should be. Each Senator has his own views. That is a very important debate. I personally fall on the side of the Senator from Maryland and the Senator from Massachusetts, in saying this budget proposed by the Republican majority is unfair. It creates too much of a burden on middle-income people, on low-income people, and shifts the benefit to the most wealthy. It is just basically unfair. But, Mr. President, I stand here to address another issue.

While we are here debating what the provisions of the Federal budget should be, many—tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of innocent Americans—are suffering because the Government is shut down and because innocent Americans, whether they are working for the Federal Government or not, are bearing the brunt of this shutdown. It is wrong. It is absolutely wrong. We should put people back to work.

The burden of this debate should not fall on innocent Americans, and it is now falling on innocent Americans because the House majority and the Speaker of the House are in a willful band over there and are not letting American Federal employees go back to work.

It is a very interesting debate we have heard from the Senator from Mississippi, the Senator from Massachusetts, and the Senator from Maryland. It is very interesting. Let us have this debate. Let us work on the budget. Let us work on the provisions. But, in the meantime, let us put Americans back to work, and let us take the burden off of innocent Americans.

Today, once again, most of the employees of the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the VA hospitals, the State Department, and many other parts of our Government will stay home and the rest will work without pay.

Small businesses will go without Government contracts as their rent and utility bills are coming due.

People on Indian reservations will have to go without heating assistance money as a blizzard now sweeps across the Great Plains during the coldest weeks of the year.

Gas stations in rural areas that depend on their customers in the Forest Service will lose more of their business.

Families will lose their housing deposits. Why? Because the VA cannot process home loans.

I am here to say that it is an outrage. I spent last Monday walking down Route I-94 through Miles City, close to where you, Mr. President, reside. That is the State you represent. I heard from people who do not know how they will pay their heating bills, and others who had counted on a day snowmobiling in Yellowstone National Park. I have heard the same outrage from people in our State who are unable to go snowmobiling in Yellowstone National Park. Excuse my language, but they are mad as hell, and they are right to be mad as hell.

Listen to a letter I got last week from a fellow who works in the park.

I work here in Yellowstone National park in the fleet Maintenance Division as a mechanic. The job I currently hold has been the best one I've ever held. I've held this permanent position since the 25th of September, 1989. As you very well know, the National Park Service is currently in the middle of the budget crisis. This stalemate has got to stop now, due to the fact that the main concessionaire, TW Recreational Services, has been considering shutting the season down because they cannot maintain the number of employees to wait out this "Mexican Stand-off" and may have to abandon the rest of the season.

Not only that, the gateway communities of the Park are currently losing capital and are trying to survive the lost income all because you people decided to "flex" your muscle and keep the National Park Service shut down.

Now hear an e-mail I received just this morning from a woman who works in Hamilton:

As a non-tenured, furloughed staff scientist at the Rocky Mountain Labs, NIH, Hamilton Montana, I am feeling this quite acutely, both financially and professionally.

Or listen to the folks at the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce:

Gardiner is the north entrance to Yellowstone Park. The economy is almost entirely dependent on visitors to Yellowstone. With Yellowstone closed the last three weeks, the cost to our small community of 1,500 is not less than \$1.5 million in private sector gross receipts.

Mr. President, you heard that right. Since last December, Gardiner has lost \$1,000 for every single resident—innocent people, while we here debate. It is wrong.

Mr. President, it is an outrage. Whatever one's views on the budget, it is wrong and has to stop. It is wrong that innocent people suffer, whether they are furloughed Federal employees or other Americans who feel the brunt of it, while we in the Congress debate the budget.

I want to commend our majority leader for doing what is right and getting the Senate to do its part by passing a bill to keep the Government open. That was a tough decision. He has been roundly criticized for it. But it was the right thing to do.

Now it is up to Speaker GINGRICH and the House. Up to now, they have flat-out refused to do what is right. They have flat-out refused to take the burden off of innocent Americans. They are the holdouts. Yesterday, they voted to keep hurting the small businesses outside Yellowstone, keep the people on the Fort Peck Reservation and our other reservations waiting for their heating assistance, keep people at home or working without pay.

Why did they do it? Well, they have ideas that they want the President to accept on the budget. Maybe they believe they get some leverage over the President with this, or think they have some political advantage when all of this is ended. That might be so. I have ideas that I would like the President to accept on the budget, too. But I am not going to punish innocent people just because I want my views adopted.

The fact is, you should not do things that you know are wrong. It is that simple. It is the very first moral lesson we learn as children. You should not do things you know are wrong.

You should not make families on the Fort Peck Reservation go without heating in the coldest part of winter.

You should not threaten the jobs of auto mechanics and scientific researchers.

You should not threaten to make small businesses close their doors because they have no money to pay the rent.

You should not hurt innocent, hard-working people.

So I have come down here to the floor, Mr. President, just to say to the Speaker and to the folks in the House, do what you know is right. Pass the resolution. Put folks back to work. Take the burden off of them so that we in both Houses of Congress, along with the President, can do the Nation's work and pass the 7-year balanced budget resolution.

Let us debate the provisions of it, but let us not in the meantime put the burden on innocent Americans. Mr. Speaker, and all of the Republicans in the House, I urge you to do what you know is right. Pass the resolution and put the people back to work.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. SARBANES addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, just a couple of days ago Ellen Goodman wrote a very interesting column entitled "Bootstraps for Middle-Aged Children," and she addressed the problem that would confront the elderly and their children if the budget is cut according to the Republican budget proposal. She made the point that middle-aged children may get a small tax cut of less than \$1 a day and a nursing home bill of \$35,000 a year for their parents if some of these Medicaid cuts go through.

Actually, the fact is that Medicaid now pays for 60 percent of nursing home care. The elderly are required to use up their own assets until they get down to a level where they qualify for Medicaid. These are middle-income people who are, in effect, by their health situation, forced to use up their assets in order to meet their medical needs, and then Medicaid covers for them. If Medicaid ceases to do that, the burden is going to come back upon their children.

I think if people ask themselves carefully, "Which would you rather do, forego a small tax benefit or keep the protection against the extraordinary costs of nursing home care?" they would want to be protected against the nursing home costs.

I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Sun, Jan. 3, 1996]

BOOTSTRAPS FOR MIDDLE-AGED CHILDREN

(By Ellen Goodman)

BOSTON.—This one is for Priscilla Parten, the Derry, N.H., woman who had the temerity to ask Lamar Alexander who would care for the elderly if the budget is cut according to the GOP pattern.

The answer from the presidential candidate, one of the men hawking their wares across New Hampshire was that "We're going to have to accept more personal responsibility in our own families for reading to our children and caring for our parents, and that's going to be inconvenient and difficult."

Happy New Year, Priscilla and open up your calendar. Scribble down two rather large words under 1996: Personal Responsibility. They're going to be the watchwords of the 1996 campaign.

Personal Responsibility is the catchall moral phrase uttered by politicians in favor of removing the guaranteed safety net and parceling the money out in incredibly shrinking block grants to the states. It's the all-purpose ethical disclaimer for those who equate the task of caring for the elderly sick with "reading to children," for those who blithely describe eldercare as "inconvenient" or "difficult" but character-building.

To know what they have in mind, get past the P.R. campaign and go to the fine print of the GOP's Medicaid Transformation Act of 1995. That's the Orwellian title for the bill that would "transform" Medicaid by eliminating its guarantee.

From the day Medicaid is block-granted, adult children earning more than the national median income—that's \$31,000 a year per household—may be held responsible for the bill if their parents are in a nursing home. If they don't pay up, these newly defined Deadbeat Kids may find a lien put on their incomes, their houses, their savings.

A secret of the current system is that Medicaid, the health program established for the poor and their children, now pays for 60 percent of nursing-home care. That's because nursing care eats up the assets of elders at a rate of about \$35,000 a year until they are indigent.

Not surprisingly, the folks calling for Personal Responsibility draw on examples of personal irresponsibility to justify a change that is beginning to make middle-class eyes widen. They point to elderly millionaires who deliberately transfer their assets to the kids in order to go on the dole in nursing homes. They describe deadbeat kids who callously drop their parents at the government door and go off to the Bahamas.

THE ONES WHO WILL SUFFER

But if and when states begin sending bills to the kids, those folks aren't the ones who'll suffer. Thousands of middle-aged "children" of the 3 million elders in nursing homes may have to pay for their parents out of their children's education fund and their own retirement savings. Adult children, perhaps elders themselves, may have to choose between nursing sick parents at home or emptying the bank.

How neglectful are we, anyway? Despite the bad P.R. we are getting, families do not by and large look to nursing homes for their parents until they are overwhelmed. Elders do not, by and large, go there until they are too ill to be cared for at home. Only one-fifth of the disabled elderly are in nursing homes.

Daughters and daughters-in-law provide most of the care of elders and they will shoulder the increased Personal Responsibility at the cost of their jobs, their pensions, their own old age. The daughter of a disabled 88-year-old may, after all, be 66 herself. It is

their characters that will be built on deteriorating lives. One politician's social issue is another woman's life.

There is enough guilt in every family to trip the responsibility wire, to push the button that says families should take care of their own. As a political slogan, P.R. passes what Dan Yankelovich calls the "they have a point" test.

But there is an awful lot of Personal Responsibility going around already. As educational loans are cut we are told to be responsible for our own children. As company pensions are fading, we are told to be responsible for our own retirement. At the same time we are to be responsible for disabled parents and even grandparents.

Dear Priscilla, when the politicians up there start talking about Personal Responsibility, they mean our responsibility, not theirs. The GOP Congress isn't just trying to balance the budget. They want to end the idea of government as an agent of mutual responsibility.

This is what you get in return for a safety net: a pair of bootstraps, a middle-class tax cut of less than a dollar a day and, oh yes, a nursing-home bill of \$35,000 a year.

FEDERAL REGULATION OF WETLANDS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, for years, I have tried to reform the way our Federal Government protects wetlands. The current system is bureaucratic and cumbersome; it is full of delay, waste, and uncertainty. I believe that wetlands should be protected. I believe that the Federal Government should continue to have an important role. But clearly, whatever is done to address the outstanding questions surrounding the Federal regulation of wetlands, the system must be streamlined. This is not radical or extreme. It is not even partisan. If one is not an employee of the Environmental Protection Agency or if one is not a K-Street concrete environmentalist, streamlining makes sense. Streamlining is a bipartisan issue. Depending on which day one decides to listen to the President, he believes in streamlining.

Senators may remember the National Performance Review to re-invent Government making Government work better and cost less. We have been told that the administration wants to make the Government user friendly, that it wants to streamline and reduce duplication and waste.

Our goal is to make the entire Federal Government both less expensive and more efficient, and to change the culture of our national bureaucracy away from complacency and entitlement toward initiative and empowerment. We intend to redesign, to reinvent, to reinvigorate the entire national government.

This is President Clinton on March 3, 1993. He also said:

It is time the Federal Government follow the example set by the most innovative State and local leaders and by the many huge private sector companies that have had to go through the same sort of searching re-examination over the last decade, companies that have downsized and streamlined and become more customer-friendly and, as a result, have had much, much more success.

Apparently, Vice President GORE also believes in streamlining and rein-

venting Government. On that same day, Vice President GORE said:

It's time we cut the red tape and trimmed the bureaucracy, and it's time we took out of our vocabulary the words, 'Well, we've always done it that way.'

The Vice President also requested action from citizens and policymakers.

Help us get rid of the waste and inefficiency. Help us get rid of unnecessary bureaucracy. Let us know when you spot a problem and tell us when you've got an idea.

I have spotted a problem and I have an idea. Outside of Washington, this is common sense. The problem is that we have multiple agencies doing the same thing with regard to wetlands. My idea was to eliminate just a fraction of the existing redundancy in wetlands regulation. The Clinton administration already has employees at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who have had the lead in making permitting decisions on wetlands for 20 years. The Clinton administration also has employees at the Environmental Protection Agency which oversee the same permitting decisions. My idea is that one team of professionals should be enough. If it is not enough, then we have more management problems than a National Performance Review could remedy.

I included a provision in the VA-HUD appropriations bill which removes EPA's duplicative authority to veto corps-issued permits. According to the corps, there is no other Federal regulatory program that gives two Federal agencies decisional authority over the same Federal permit of action. The corps has been the lead agency in wetlands protection for almost 20 years and it simply cannot be demonstrated that we need to hire one set of bureaucrats to second-guess what the first set of bureaucrats is hired to do in the first place. We are here today to balance a budget. To balance a budget, tough choices must be made. Eliminating redundant activities is an easy choice. It is common sense. Leave it to the environmental lobbyists to argue that we need two or more different Federal agencies conducting the same task—looking over each other's shoulder—adding expense, confusion, delay and frustration for our Nation's citizens.

There have been many changes recommended to improve the administration of this important program. This change is the easiest one. In that sense, I thought the provision should be non-controversial. In fact, no Senator offered an amendment on the floor to address this provision. It was not challenged in the House. Hearings have been held in both the House and the Senate. The House-passed reauthorization of the Clean Water Act removes this duplicative authority. The bipartisan bill introduced in the Senate to reform the wetlands regulatory program removes this authority.

Knowing of the Clinton's administration's efforts to streamline Government, I was surprised to learn in the President's veto message that this provision is one of the reasons for the