

are going to steal more money from children to help children. I just do not follow that.

Now, what will it mean to our children 20, 30 years from now if we continue to tax and spend just at the level that we are taxing and spending at now? Forget about new programs that they are proposing, but what if we just stay on the path that we are on right now?

Well, Senator BOB KERREY, who had a great Commission on Entitlements, ended up recognizing that our children 30 years from now would be paying a tax rate of 89 percent. Eighty-nine percent. What that means is that for every dollar my boys make 20 years from now, they are going to have to pay 89 cents of it to Washington, DC; 89 cents out of every dollar they earn will go to Washington, DC, in Federal taxes.

And yet these same people who are supposedly defenders of children are saying they are going to pay for this kiddie care, this new program, by raising taxes more. I guess the past is prologue. Tax and spend, tax and spend, tax and spend, tax and spend. It is all they know. It is all they have ever known. It is all they will ever know.

They can wear children's ties, they can come on the floor and talk about how much they love kids, they can talk about how much they love my boys and your children and your grandchildren by starting these new programs, but the one thing they cannot do is, they cannot erase the fact that they have already bankrupted future generations, and they want to come back for more and more and more and more.

We are \$5.6 trillion in debt. That is an unmistakable fact. Nobody can shake their heads on that and say it is not so, because it is. We are \$5.6 trillion in debt. Democratic Senator BOB KERREY tells us our children are going to be paying 89 percent in taxes 20 years from now.

We either take care of the problem today or we selfishly leave our children with an America where it is impossible to pursue the same American dream that my parents and my grandparents left for me. My late grandfather worked through the Depression to keep his family afloat. He served in World War II, the Korean War, and gave his life so I could pursue the American dream. That is the least that I can do for my children.

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA IS DECLARED A MAJOR DISASTER AREA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, the State of South Dakota has endured floods, we have endured blizzards, we have endured high winds, ice storms and power outages, and right now we are enduring all of the above simultaneously. It is one of the most savage and bizarre ex-

amples of bad weather that our State has ever seen, and yesterday the President declared South Dakota a disaster area.

I think everybody at home would agree with that declaration. In fact, it makes official what we in South Dakota have known for a good long time, and that is that we are facing an enormous disaster.

Now our State is eligible for individual assistance; 44 of the 66 counties are eligible for public assistance, as well. Through all this, the people in our great State of South Dakota have shown themselves to be loyal, hardy, generous, and courageous. I think it speaks well to the pioneer stock from which we come, the spirit that they have shown, neighbor helping neighbor.

I have been in my State and had the opportunity to see firsthand the devastation that has been wreaked by these storms. The city of Watertown, 50,000 people evacuated. Many homes will not receive power. The power has been shut off and the utilities have been shut off. They may not receive water for 6 weeks time.

Little town of Leola, S.D., power went out on Sunday. They have been without heat and water for 2 days and they have had to rely upon each other. Each morning they wake up praying for heat while they face another day of cold.

We have seen repeated examples, countless examples throughout our State. The little town of Lemmon, which received 24 inches of snow, and with the snow and the winds, 60-mile-an-hour winds on Saturday, lost all their power and the only way they could get around was with 4-wheel drives.

We have seen the damage to the infrastructure in our State, the road system. Nineteen State Highways are underwater. U.S. highway 281 in the Redfield area is under 12 feet of water.

So we have some enormous challenges when it comes to repairing the damage that has been done to our infrastructure, our agricultural producers, who have already received and experienced unprecedented damages to their livestock herds. The question of spring planting is in serious doubt. Our ranchers who have gone through the blizzards of winter, now as calving season comes around have to deal with the spring weather and trying to get their calf crop to come through in spite of the conditions that surround them.

These are the types of things that have been happening in my State. In the last 2 weeks I have had the opportunity to view it firsthand, and I want to credit the administration, the President, for recognizing the needs, for declaring South Dakota, the Dakotas, a disaster area. I would hope that as we can make our way through all this, that as we look to each other, and we have seen countless examples of the Dakota experience, it has been no aberration.

I recall my father telling me as he grew up in the Depression-era days of

the 1930's what it was like to have to undergo extreme weather circumstances that strike at the very heart of our livelihood. So in this particular year we hope that we can get through it. We appreciate very much those from around our country who have recognized the need, have been there to help.

I have invited the Secretary of Transportation to come out to look at our roads and our bridges, our infrastructure, and to see the destruction firsthand. The severity of the problem cannot be contained, and we have asked the rest of the Nation to recognize the need that is in my State of South Dakota, in North Dakota, surrounding States, and to help us find the resources that we need to get through this.

As we do that, I am certainly hopeful that as we go through the process of balancing the budget, and frankly, Mr. Speaker, if we were able to balance our budget, we would have about \$245 billion more in interest payments that we make that we could dedicate to this important cause. So we recognize the need for fiscal responsibility in this country but also the need to help those who cannot help themselves.

We are very grateful that our Nation has banded together and has recognized the extreme circumstances and weather conditions we are having in South Dakota, and I want to credit my people, the folks in my home State who have weathered this storm, continuing to show the incredible spirit, the incredible fortitude for which we are known and for which we continue to survive.

Mr. Speaker, the great State of South Dakota has endured floods, we've endured blizzards, we've endured high winds, ice storms, and power outages. But right now we're enduring all of the above simultaneously. It's one of the most savage and bizarre example of bad weather seen in South Dakota in the last 500 years.

Yesterday, the President declared the State of a major disaster. Everyone at home agrees wholeheartedly with that assessment and I would like to thank the President at this time for recognizing the scope and severity of our problem. South Dakota is now eligible for individual assistance. The President has also made 44 of 66 counties immediately eligible for public assistance, all of which is greatly needed.

I'd like to take the next few minutes to explain why. I'd also like to take this opportunity to show the Nation the kind of people I'm here to represent.

Throughout this disaster the people of South Dakota have shown themselves to be loyal, hardy, generous, and courageous. They've shown the mettle of the pioneers stock we spring from. They've shown that it takes more than blinding snow, rising water, snapped power poles, and freezing temperature to keep neighbors from helping neighbors. So for the next few minutes, I'd like to show you all the devastation Mother Nature is creating in my State, and the courage South Dakotans are using to face her.

Places I've been and people I have seen—Mr. Speaker, on the recent 2-week break I

had an opportunity to witness firsthand the efforts South Dakotans were making in anticipation of the flood. Thanks to the spirit and fortitude of our State's leaders, important efforts to prevent serious damage were initiated weeks in advance of the terrible recent events. The Governor has done an excellent job of coordinating State, Federal, and local efforts to control flooding. Unfortunately, some of these efforts failed.

James River Valley—including dikes built in the Aberdeen area; Huron; Mitchell; Yankton. In Mitchell, I visited with Shawn and Darcie Winters who run Siouxland Camp. And their father Don McLean. High winds had blown the roof off of a dormitory there. In Pierre, I met with city officials and with the Southeast Pierre Homeowners Association. Approximately 200 homes have experienced flooding conditions. The city has worked with the Army Corps of Engineers to build a dyke to help divert an overflow of water out of this neighborhood. Watertown—spoke with Mayor Brenda Barger today where at one point 5,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes and take up temporary residence with friends, in hotels, and in even in a public exposition building.

PEOPLE PERSEVERING

Leola—The power went out Sunday at 1:00 a.m. They lost water Sunday night at 8:30 p.m. They've been without heat and water for 2 days. They wear stocking caps, mittens, and winter jackets to bed as they try to fall asleep under the bulk of six or seven blankets. The temperature fell to 15 below last night. Every morning they wake up, praying for heat while they face another day of cold.

During the day, people gather at the local fire hall where a generator provides the communities only heat. They're pumping water from the fire truck to take care of basic needs. The local cafe is staying open during this disaster so people can eat. The cafe has a propane grill and it's the only place in town where you can get a warm meal and a hot cup of coffee.

Watertown—5,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes in the midst of a raging blizzard. It will be days or even weeks before people are able to get into their homes, look at the damage, dry things out, make repairs, and move back in. In the meantime, they're living with friends, relatives, in hotels, and in shelters set up in the local county ag building. Lemmon—In Lemmon, SD, they got 24 inches of snow and had 60-mile-an-hour winds on Saturday. That's also the day they lost their power. Volunteers used snowmobiles, pay loaders, and four wheel drive vehicles to move the snow and move people trapped in freezing homes.

The mayor told me they came to the home of an 89-year-old woman. They asked her if she could ride a snowmobile. She said sure she could ride a snowmobile, though it would be the first time she'd ever done it. People were taken to the nursing home and the local fire hall were a generator created heat. Others were taken to private homes with wood-burning stoves. Neighbors took in neighbors to make sure everyone had shelter from the storm.

TRANSPORTATION QUICK FACTS

Yesterday, I invited USDOT Secretary Rodney Slater to survey damage to the State's transportation infrastructure. He has yet to get a response from Slater, but is hopeful that the Secretary will take him up on the invitation.

Highways—As of this morning, 19 sections of State and U.S. highways were deemed impassable and closed to traffic. Several other roads have water flowing over their surface. One stretch of U.S. 281 just south of Redfield near Tulare was under 12 feet of water.

SDDOT expects to give notice of intent to apply for Emergency Relief [ER] funds this week. Inspections by FHWA, SDDOT officials will get an assessment of damages to roads and bridges. Those surveys will be turned in to FHWA to determine the level of assistance. ER funds can be used for Federal aid highways and bridges. FEMA funds can be used for local roads and bridges that receive no Federal funds.

In Redfield, flooding has restricted access from many directions. A portion of U.S. 281 south of the town is under 12 feet of water.

The winter blizzards escalated fiscal year 1997 highway maintenance costs to \$25.7 million. The State budgeted \$5.2 million. FEMA thus far has provided \$3 million to the State. The proposed temporary increase to the State gas tax would have generated between \$15 and \$16 million.

Rail, Air and Transit—DM&E and several areas of the State-owned line have been washed out by flooding. In Sioux City, State-owned line used by BNSF, 900 feet of track was buried by 20 feet of soil that slid off of a bluff. In 1993, \$1.6 million was provided for rail assistance as a result of flooding. Figures for this year are not yet available. Several small airports may need assistance as a result of flooding and excessively cold temperatures.

AGRICULTURE

Ranchers are braced to take some heavy livestock losses, especially among newborn calves. This latest blizzard hit right at calving time.

Longtime rancher, Bud Jones from Caputa, SD, said he has lost an undetermined number of new calves when winds—estimated at 50 to 70 mph from Wyoming across western South Dakota—chilled calves already soaked by rain that turned to heavy wet snow.

On top of that, more than 20 yearlings died trapped in a deep snow drift along South Dakota Highway 44. That's just what shows sticking out of the snow. It could be a week or more before the drift melts and reveals what lies buried underneath.

Bitter winds have compelled some cattle to quit good shelter and drift into water holes to stand in deep slush and suffer hypothermia.

It is too early to estimate the effects this will have on spring planting, but it is safe to say our spring crops are in jeopardy—it is too wet to plant anything.

ELECTRICITY

This disaster is a giant disaster made up of many smaller catastrophes.

The storm started with rain on April 4. Late on the 5th that rain started to freeze. Then the wind started gusting to over 60 miles per hour. Mother Nature whipped the frozen lines until they swayed and snapped and poles broke in half and toppled.

To make matters worse, a blizzard blew in after the rain. It wasn't safe to stay home because there was no heat. It wasn't safe to go out because of zero visibility on every road and highway. Then the flood waters started to rise.

Given all these problems it's impossible to say when power may be restored again.

Dedication and perseverance are the only tools that work under the circumstances. The

downed lines are mired in snow, mud, and water. Only four wheel drive vehicles can navigate the mud.

Some people may be waiting in the cold until this weekend before temperatures are restored. Thousand of people are waiting by their grandparents old kerosene lamps for the return of heat and light. Approximately 1,500 people lost power in the community of Wakpala; 25 South Dakotans lost electricity in the city of Cam-Wal; and 700 people were without power in the town of Long Lake.

These are just South Dakota rural electric customers. All across the State, South Dakotans are making do, waiting for the power to be restored.

CLOSING

Although flood waters continue to saturate our State with misery, our citizens are holding together. The Dakota spirit is no aberration. Though frigid and soaked to the bone it is unmistakably clear during these trying times. Every day neighbor helping neighbor endure hardship—neither knowing which needs help the most.

I think of the stories I've been told about the Dirty Thirties—about the devastation the drought unleashed upon the Midwest. People who had lost all hope found that it was faith that would get them through. Many South Dakotans find themselves in similar situations today. They are finding their faith provides the only solid foundation to be found.

I have witnessed the destruction first hand. I have observed children and grandparents working side-by-side attempting to restrain the forces of nature. They are doing everything they can, but those efforts haven't always been enough. The severity of the problem cannot be contained. That is why South Dakota and our neighbors must come to the rest of the Nation—to ask them to do for us, that which we cannot do for ourselves. It is our job here in Washington to look at our resources and find a way to meet those most urgent needs.

The Federal Government has limited resources. I am convinced we can find the means to address our most urgent spending priorities.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO BALANCE ITS BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I drove over to Cousin Artie and Rebecca's house to pick up my daughter Anne, who had walked to their house after ballet. Anne's first cousin and best friend is Arabella Hadwin. And Arabella came out; she was wearing an Indian costume. Kind of leather. Actually, fake leather with frills on it. It had Pocahontas's picture on it.

So I said to 6-year-old Arabella, "Arabella, do you know today is Pocahontas's wedding day?"

□ 1815

She looked at me, and I could tell in that little 6-year-old mind she was