

the appointment as the Director of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. His induction came a critical time in the Agency's history. His strong leadership restored stability to an agency which needed greater independence and a change of direction. Assembling a team of highly qualified professionals, Director Nedrow overhauled the Service, reorganizing it to diminish its bureaucracy, and to provide greater accountability and responsiveness to its consumers. He provided his people with a new vision, the necessary resources and support, and the inspiration to achieve positive change. Under his leadership, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service gained national recognition for its innovation in the field of homicide investigation. Its approach to the investigation of previously unresolved or cold case homicides, some as old as 28 years, was lauded in October 1996 by the International Chiefs of Police [IACP] during its prestigious Webber Seavey Award for Quality in Law Enforcement Ceremony for innovation and excellence in law enforcement programs. The NCIS cold case methodology has since been adopted by numerous law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. Director Nedrow also recognized the problems and anxieties endured by families of deceased service men and women whose deaths occurred under other than natural circumstances. He revitalized and championed a Family Liaison Program to assure responsiveness to the needs of, and issues raised by, surviving family members during the death investigation process. His legacy of additional achievements with and for the Service include a well-respected Critical Incident Debriefing Team, a proven Alternative Dispute Resolution system, and a cutting edge Computer Crimes Investigation Group.

"The final test of a leader," renowned journalist Walter Lippman wrote in 1945, "is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and will to carry on." The testimony to Roy Nedrow is that the Naval Criminal Investigative Service is indeed a better agency today and that he leaves it in most capable and inspired hands.

Mr. President, in closing I wish to commend Roy Nedrow for outstanding leadership and service and thank him for his dedication to the Nation as a guardian of our peace. I wish him, and his wife, Claudia, Godspeed in his retirement.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

(Mr. HAGEL assumed the Chair.)

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 19

Mr. COVERDELL. Madam President, I send a joint resolution to the desk on behalf of myself and Senators FEINSTEIN and HELMS, a joint resolution relative to Presidential certification of Mexico regarding drugs, and ask that the joint resolution be read for the first time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

To disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997.

Mr. COVERDELL. Madam President, I now ask for its second reading and object to my request on behalf of Democratic Members on the other side of the aisle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

(The remarks of Mr. COVERDELL and Mrs. FEINSTEIN pertaining to the introduction of Senate Joint Resolution 19, Senate Joint Resolution 20, and Senate Joint Resolution 21 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. COATS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AL-LARD). The Senator from Indiana.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, over the last 15 years, the balanced budget amendment has been debated over and over again in this Chamber. Members of one or both Chambers of Congress actually have voted on this proposal six times. The arguments, by this point, are familiar. We have heard them over the last several weeks and the last several years in these debates. So there is the disturbing process by which the vested interests of this institution are protected against the clear will of our democracy.

We are not, of course, debating about passage of a balanced budget amendment. We are debating whether or not to send that decision to the States and to the people of America. Often that gets confused. People think that the entire decision, the entire vote, rests with the 100 Members of this Senate body, when in fact the only thing that rests with us is whether or not we will make the decision to give the people of America, to give democracy, an opportunity to decide whether or not we ought to have a balanced budget directing our fiscal affairs here in Washington.

We are debating whether to prefer our interests above their wisdom, and it appears we will once again by the narrowest of margins decide to sustain this corrupt and corrupting Federal power of unlimited debt.

Once again our debate on this matter has been conducted to maximize public cynicism—not intentionally but that is certainly the result—with twisted arms, violated promises, pressure tactics, and broken commitments. We have seen it all surround this issue time and time again. And, once again, as we are debating this, people are switching their position, people pledging to their constituents during the campaign: "I will be there when the balanced budget call is taken; when the roll is called, I will be on the plus side." And, of course, now we hear the excuses as to why since the election is over that is no longer the case. Even those who have voted for the balanced budget amendment in the past now find convenient reasons not to do so in the present.

So I guess we cannot really blame the American people for being cynical, for being apathetic about what takes place here in this body, in the Congress, in Washington. All of this in a desperate attempt to prevent the American citizen from having a voice and having a vote, all to prop up, if just for a few more years, the ability of Congress to cripple the success and the prosperity of the future.

There are many divisive issues debated in this Chamber, but this issue is unique in one way. The defeat of a balanced budget amendment represents the raw exercise of political power against the desires of over 80 percent of the American public. In my experience in politics, no proposal with support so strong and so consistent has ever been frustrated for so long by the Congress.

Make no mistake. A balanced budget amendment will eventually be sent to the States for ratification. I think that is guaranteed by the breadth of public commitment which will not go away and will only grow in strength. We can delay this process, as apparently we will do once again, but not deny it. Every year of delay increases our danger and ought to add to our shame and guilt.

Rather than rehearse the detailed arguments of this debate, let me take, if I could, a long review of what I think we have learned. First, the history of the last few decades and the nature of the political process itself argues that the Congress is incapable of self-restraint. We have a system in place, a system that allows us to vote public benefits to the very people who keep us in office. We have a system that allows us to place the burden of those benefits on the future while we gain political support from the present. We have found an efficient way to betray future generations in favor of the present. And it is easy and relatively painless because our generation can vote while future generations cannot and our silence and their anger is distant. We do not feel or hear their anger at the next election because they do not have a vote at the next election. So we please those who benefit us now at the expense of those in the future.

The only thing we sacrifice in this process—Mr. President, I would say it is a great sacrifice—is our integrity and our historical reputation. In a distortion of the Constitution, we promote the general welfare for ourselves at the expense of our posterity. As it stands, there is no weight on the other side of this balance. There is no reliable check on this process of intergenerational theft. It is politically prudent, even popular, and this political calculation will not change, will never permanently change without some kind of systematic institutional counterweight, without some measure to give posterity a voice in our affairs. Nothing, in my view, will permanently change until the accumulation of popular debt is a violation of our oath to the Constitution. Perverse incentives of the current system will not be altered until the system itself is altered, until our political interests are balanced by the weighty words of a constitutional amendment.

The second lesson I believe we have learned in the last few decades is that despite all the talk we hear in Congress, despite all the posturing, despite all the rhetoric, we are simply ignoring the coming entitlement crisis. We are not facing up to the hard question. We have chosen cheerful oblivion over public responsibility. The train wreck is a precise, measurable distance away. Trustees predict that the Medicare part A will be bankrupt by the year 2002. Trustees of Social Security believe that the system will begin to run a deficit in 2013 and could collapse by 2029.

Former Commerce Secretary Pete Peterson recently wrote that if entitlements are not reformed, the cost of Social Security and Medicare by the year 2040 will take between 35 and 55 percent of every worker's paycheck. It is a crisis propelled by demographics and propelled by Federal irresponsibility. Every year we avoid real reform we make real reform more painful.

Oh, and the attitude here is, well, 2002, 2013, 2029, I will probably be out of office by then, or hopefully something will change by then, or let us not think beyond 1998. That is the next election, isn't it. Let us see what we can do to slip by one more election. But it is always one more election, one more election, one more election.

When I came here in 1980, we were charged with the responsibility of dealing with deficit spending. We were charged with the responsibility of getting a handle on the entitlements and being straightforward and real with the American people, but each time it slipped one more election, one more election, one more election. Now we are looking at 1998.

There does not appear to be any movement out of this administration to address entitlements in a serious structural way—some tinkering at the edges suggesting but not proffered, some concerns about the political implications of making the hard choices,

making the difficult decisions, but nothing concrete before us as a body. And so we will pass again for 2 more years.

Opponents of the balanced budget amendment talk a great deal about Social Security, but they do not talk about solving its most fundamental problems. Instead, their efforts are designed to move it off budget, creating the illusion that this action will somehow save the system.

This is a distraction, as I think everyone in this Chamber knows. It is not a solution. It is a distraction from the fact that our current budget rules are deceptive. We are borrowing from the Social Security trust fund and replacing real money with T-bills. There is not some giant pot of money out here waiting for Social Security recipients. It is a pay-as-you-go system. Some have called it the ultimate pyramid system. We are borrowing from it and putting pieces of paper into it to pay it back someday. That payback has to come from the general revenue. Those T-bills are a promise to pay benefits in the future, yet this borrowing is not reflected in our deficit calculations each year.

As a matter of budgeting integrity, we should stop the shell game. We need an accurate accounting of the yearly deficit and the Federal debt. In fiscal 1996, we reported a budget deficit of \$107 billion, but we failed to report an additional \$66 billion borrowed from and owed to Social Security. Where does that money come from? It comes from the American taxpayer. It comes from taxes imposed against their paychecks. It is money that is going to have to be paid back.

To say we can solve this problem by conveniently taking it off budget is a shell game. It is a deception of the American people. What it really amounts to is keeping two sets of books. These kinds of budget tricks make the job of balancing the budget easier in the short term—and of course it is the short term here that everyone is concerned about, the next election—but they compound the problems of future generations.

I urge my colleagues to put aside this phony debate over Social Security. It is impossible to disentangle Social Security revenues and expenditures from the budget. Congress should address the national debt by passing the balanced budget amendment and then turn quickly to real solutions, real reform of Social Security.

It is unfortunate and it is undeniable that President Clinton's budget currently on the table understands none of these lessons, and actually deepens our problems. It is a symbol of the Federal Government's failure of will and nerve.

When I came to the Congress in 1981, our total Federal debt was just under \$1 trillion. In the plan the President submitted recently to this Congress, his budgets will contribute another \$1 trillion to the debt before those budgets are supposed to come into balance.

This is hardly an act of courage. In fact, the President's plan demands that nearly all the courage be shown by others, since it postpones real spending cuts until after he leaves office. Moreover, if the President's own optimistic estimates about future deficits do not prove accurate, he relies on triggers—automatic cuts in spending and increased taxes—to bring the budget into balance. All of this occurring, again, after he has left office, after he no longer will be held to account.

Harry Truman's famous injunction, "the buck stops here," apparently now reads: The buck stops at the desk of the next person to occupy this office.

Now we will apparently learn from CBO later this week that even the President's budget numbers are not accurate. They are not even close. We will, in fact, be about \$70 billion short of balance in 2002. This year's budgets alone will see a 20 percent increase in the deficit.

This budget is the embodiment of the point I am trying to make. Deferring responsibility is easy. Shifting hard choices to the future is easy. Deficit spending is easy. Everybody plays the game unless a constitutional amendment changes the ground rules, unless fiscal discipline is imposed from above, not from within. Unless the system is changed, exposing and ending all of our tricks and excuses, that is the only way we can be honest with the American people. That is the only way we can end the cynicism toward our efforts here in the Congress, which are falling, I am afraid, ever more on deaf ears.

There is a great deal at stake here. As others have argued at length, increasing debt has an economic cost in higher interest rates. For businesses, this means slowed or stalled expansion, and for families it means that buying that new house or sending that child to college becomes more difficult each year.

Another cost is measured in lost opportunities to meet justified public needs. By fiscal year 1998, interest payments on the national debt will approach \$250 billion—\$250 billion in interest payments. That figure is 21 times more money on interest than on the entire Federal expenditure for agriculture; 17 times more than the entire Federal expenditures for international affairs; 11 times more than on natural resources and the environment combined; and 4 times more than on education, training, and employment. We stand on this floor and argue, and we work in committee, just to try to scratch a little bit more money out for job training, for education, to deal with problems of the environment and our natural resources, to deal with international affairs and pressing problems in agriculture. We try to scratch a few million dollars here, a few hundred million dollars there. Yet \$250 billion simply goes to pay interest.

What could we do with that \$250 billion if we did not have to pay any interest? A big healthy return to the

American people would be the first start, a big tax cut to give them back some more of their hard-earned money. And there may be priorities, there may be roads that need to be repaired or built, there may be education expenditures that are appropriate, there may be natural resource and environmental concerns that ought to be addressed, there may be agricultural items that ought to be funded, and a whole raft of other appropriate spending efforts. Yet those are squeezed ever more, as more and more of our budget goes to pay interest.

Beyond this, there is a moral cost of continued debt, a price paid in the character of our Nation. I have quoted Thomas Jefferson in this debate before, but let me quote him once more. It is an injunction that this Congress has ignored time after time:

The question of whether one generation has the right to bind another by the deficit it imposes is a question of such consequence as to place it among the fundamental principles of government. We should consider ourselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts and be morally bound to pay for them by ourselves.

Those were words of a great American a long time ago. I wonder what he would say today, looking at over \$5.4 trillion of national debt and continuing budget deficits year after year after year after year. "We should consider ourselves unauthorized to saddle posterity with our debts and be morally bound to pay them ourselves," said Thomas Jefferson, one of the most fundamental principles of government.

In this debate we are accustomed to thinking in terms of dollars and cents. We should also be thinking in terms of right and wrong. It is simply wrong to accumulate power in the present by placing burdens on the future. And that is exactly what we are doing. We are accumulating power in the present, the power of spending, and the way we are doing it is placing burdens on the future. It is an important part of our moral tradition, to sacrifice for posterity. It is rank selfishness to demand that posterity sacrifice for us. And there is only one way to ensure that this strong and constant temptation is defeated, by making a balanced budget a fundamental institutional commitment of our Government.

After 25 years of budget deficits, the call to voluntary restraint is hollow. Too many promises have been made and broken. Congress has spent the full measure of public trust. Meaningful budget restraint, if we find it, will come from above, not from within. This fundamental principle of government should be, and hopefully someday will be, and I predict it will be, in America's fundamental law. That day cannot come too soon. We should be ashamed if that process does not begin tomorrow.

Tomorrow we will vote once again. Two years ago I sat in my seat, one row down, listening to the final debate on the balanced budget amendment, lis-

tening to the call of the roll. As every Senator sat at his or her desk, each stood to record his or her vote, and as we went through the roll we tallied the numbers and we stopped at 66. We came one vote short. One vote short, not of adopting a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, one vote short of exercising the right in a democracy of the people to determine that matter for themselves. It appears that we will stop one vote short again. I hope that is not the case. I pray that is not the case.

We desperately need to arrest the power of the purse that has so corrupted our ability to represent the will of the people. I hope tomorrow we will demonstrate the courage to finally say: Power to the people. Let them decide the fiscal course for this Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

SAY "NO" TO A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I would like to take some time to talk about the vote that is pending tomorrow and the subject of the balanced budget amendment. We are coming to the close of yet another marathon debate on this subject, and I hope that I can crystallize the perspective and detail some of the major concerns of those of us who oppose this amendment.

Mr. President, it is tempting, as the debate goes on, to accept right being on our side; the other side claims right and the moral imperative that says we should pass this balanced budget amendment, put it into the Constitution, open it up, have the courage to step forward.

The courage is to be in the minority and say, "No," though the most popular view is to amend the Constitution because the folks we represent, each of us in our States, really have not been made aware of what the penalty is if we lock ourselves into an amendment to the Constitution.

We will be saying to people that in the future, programs that you relied on to sustain your family, to take care of your health care, to take care of your child's education, to take care of your unemployment insurance, may not be available, and if this country starts to slide into a recession, we may go the whole route.

So, as we listen to the debate, it is very hard not to get to feeling rather sanctimonious about the side that we are on. I simply point out, as we talk about bipartisanship, and note that the Democrats are all of the votes in opposition, the 34 contemplated votes in opposition to the balanced budget amendment. Not the majority. The majority says, "We can't manage our own behavior; we have to be controlled by other strictures, we have to be told that we are not allowed to do these things," not that we were sent here, elected to

this honorific body, one of 100 out of 260 million people, who say we have the guts to stand up and make the decisions or pay the consequences.

We talk about courage. The courage is to say, "No; we will accept the voters' decision in the future when we run for election if we insist on maintaining the posture as it is." Good news brought us to this point, to where the budget deficit has been reduced by over 60 percent in the last 4 years, where job growth is up to 11 million new jobs, as major company after major company shrinks down, closes its doors, sends its jobs overseas. The good news is inflation is under control, that our percentage of deficit to GDP is the smallest among the advanced nations of the world and the envy of all the other countries.

So, Mr. President, I would like to discuss four points that go to the heart of the debate and hope that we will stay the course as it is and say no to a balanced budget amendment and say yes to the American people, that we have the backbone to stand up to this debate and we are obliged to carry on your wishes.

First, the evidence is mounting and the public tide is turning against this amendment. Economist after economist, newspaper after newspaper, academic after academic believes this amendment is bad for the Nation, and for good reasons.

Two, we will balance the budget without a balanced budget amendment.

Third, the balanced budget amendment could wreak havoc with the economy and the economic security of millions of Americans.

And four, it would be almost impossible to undo the damage of a balanced budget amendment once the harm is done.

On the first point, the mounting opposition to the balanced budget amendment is not confined to one group of Senators or Members of the House. It is also not limited, when we consider both bodies, to a particular party or segment of the political spectrum.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, former CBO Director Rudy Penner, former Solicitors General Robert Bork and Charles Freid, not to mention our former and esteemed colleague, Senator Mark Hatfield, have all weighed in against the balanced budget amendment. Even last year's Vice Presidential candidate, Jack Kemp, appearing on "Meet the Press" called the amendment "a recipe for future disaster in this country."

In the November 25, 1996, edition of Newsweek, conservative columnist George Will wrote:

The Constitution should not be amended, unless there is a compelling reason to do so.

He goes on to say:

Current conditions do not constitute a compelling reason.

In its November 15, 1996, lead editorial entitled "An Amendment is Poor Substitute for Backbone," USA Today said: