

people's devotion to each other, devotion to God, and really a showing of spirit of coming together.

The Ohio National Guard has done a fantastic job. The Watercraft Division of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources literally came in and saved life after life—rescued people from the top of homes. The Ohio Department of Transportation is doing a phenomenal job, the Red Cross. I could go on and on. An absolutely tremendous amount of work is being done in the communities to really make a difference in the communities.

My wife, Fran, had the opportunity to work in Ohio several days last week. She worked with the Salvation Army. She worked with the Red Cross and is working with one group of Southern Baptists who are all geared up whenever there is a disaster. They come from all over the State of Ohio and from other States into an area and cook and prepare food for people. They really made a difference. She was very inspired by what she saw them doing. And as she has told me about it, I have certainly been inspired as well.

So these are just a few examples of what we are seeing in the State of Ohio. We are seeing people who are out there making a difference, people who are working with their neighbors, and people are just hanging in there.

I happened to talk to one man in New Boston. His home was flooded in a very quick flash flood. He literally had to knock a hole in the ceiling. As the water was rising inside his house, he had to knock a hole in the ceiling and put his four little children up into the attic. He and his wife then crawled up into the attic. He knocked a hole in the roof, and they were rescued from the top of their house. Yet, when I came across this man, the mayor of New Boston told me that he had been one of the chief volunteers over the last few days. This man who had lost virtually everything in his home, who went through that unbelievable experience, was out leading the cleanup, volunteering for other people. So that is the type of thing we see.

Let me also compliment the FEMA personnel who are on the scene. These are good folks who are out doing their job every day and who are really making a difference.

So the report from Ohio, Mr. President, is that there is a tremendous amount of damage. We think it is \$150 million, maybe \$200 million. We really will not know until the entire flood has receded and we see what damage has been done. But the good news is people are fighting back. Human spirit is strong and people are helping each other. Again, I think that is the good news that I have to report for the last 3 days I spent in the State of Ohio.

Mr. President, I will at this point yield the floor and yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is the Presiding Officer's understanding that the Senator from Nebraska, as designee for the Senator from Wyoming, is allowed to speak for up to 30 minutes.

Mr. HAGEL. I thank the Chair.

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP ON THE BUDGET

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I ran for the Senate because I wanted to help strengthen America's future. I, like my colleagues here, want to help solve problems. America is reaching out for leadership to put our fiscal house in order.

When we debate the budget, we are debating America's future, the future we leave for our children and our grandchildren—the opportunities they will have, the burdens in debt they will inherit, the America they will know.

Balancing the budget must be our top priority, not because we have some abstract fascination with accounting but because the future of every man, woman, and child hangs in the balance. The future of our very liberty is at stake.

That is why I strongly supported the proposed balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, an amendment that would have forced Congress to make the hard choices and set priorities, priorities that we have for too long avoided. Despite the support of all my Republican and 11 of my Democratic colleagues, the Senate last week defeated the balanced budget amendment. We lost by one vote.

President Kennedy told us three decades ago that real leaders "are not here to curse the darkness but to light a candle." Without the balanced budget amendment, we are still looking for a candle to guide us to a balanced budget. Now more than ever we need leadership for America's future.

However, when I read the President's budget, I do not like the future I see. This budget offers a future that continues to pile up more and more and more debt. The President's proposal keeps running deficits for as far as the eye can see. Next year, the President's budget actually increases the deficit by more than \$25 billion. That is not acceptable.

Three weeks ago, I, along with 23 of my colleagues, sent a letter to the majority leader. As we told the leader, "A path to a balanced budget should be just that—a path on which the deficit decreases every year in as near equal amounts as possible until the year 2002," the year of a balanced budget.

The President has chosen another path. At the end of his path, there is still a pool of red ink. The Congressional Budget Office says the budget that the President has submitted is still \$70 billion in the red in the year 2002. That is \$70 billion, Mr. President, in the red in the year 2002. That is a far cry from responsible, balanced fiscal policy. That is a far cry from the balanced budget the President promised us. And it gets worse.

The President's budget offers a future where we put off tough choices until "tomorrow." We all know that in the world of the Federal budget "to-

morrow" never comes. Our \$5.3 trillion debt is proof enough of that fact. We have to act today if we are to balance the budget and save programs like Social Security and Medicare for years to come.

We need to act today if we are to save programs that protect education and the environment. We need to act today if we want to maintain a strong national defense that will preserve our children's freedom as it has preserved ours. We need to act today if we care about tomorrow.

The President's budget does not act today. The truth is it does not act at all; it is a fraud, and the people need to know it is a fraud. Mr. President, 98.5 percent of the deficit reduction in the President's budget comes in the last 2 years of his 7-year plan—98.5 percent. Those are not my figures. Those numbers come from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Does anybody here remember the President's first State of the Union Address when he promised to rely on CBO's figures? Well, the CBO has spoken. It says the President's numbers just do not add up.

The President's plan is very clear. He plans to put off the tough and painful choices until he is out of office and somebody else will have to make them. That is not leadership. That is business as usual. That is disaster.

But even that is not all. The President's budget offers a future where taxes go up and families must work harder to have less. The President may put off real deficit reduction until later, but he does not procrastinate when it comes to raising taxes, for example. Despite the President's claim that he will cut taxes, the Joint Committee on Taxation reports that the budget the President has submitted will result in a net increase in taxes of \$23 billion over the next 10 years. There is no tax cut. This budget includes at least 39 specific tax increases, and they are permanent. By contrast, those tax cuts that the President proposes expire by the year 2002. The bottom line is simple: The President's tax cuts are temporary and conditional, but his new tax increases are permanent. That is fraudulent. That is wrong.

Last week, 13 of my colleagues joined me in a second letter to the majority leader. We made it very clear to the leader that we will not vote for any budget plan that increases taxes. Any solution to our budget problems that relies on tax increases is really no solution at all; it is just more debt.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan testified recently before the Senate Banking Committee that "Ultimately, you cannot solve long-term deficits from the receipt side." He added, "It's got to be from the expenditure side." That means cut spending.

That is why we are here. I came to Washington, as did many of my colleagues, to cut spending, cut taxes and cut Government. We came to take power and authority away from the Federal Government and return it to

the States and to the people. We did not come to destroy. We came to renew, to renew the American dream for future generations of Americans, to renew the freedom that made this Nation great and kept it strong.

The President's budget does none of this. It increases spending. It increases taxes. It increases the power of the Federal Government.

This body must be about the work of the future, not the past. It is immoral for us to mortgage our children's and grandchildren's future. The truth is the future begins now. It is in our hands. It is time for us to lead. We must balance the budget with a real balanced budget.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair. I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senator from Vermont and I were going to speak. I know he has a time limitation, so I yield to him.

NGAWANG CHOEPHEL

Mr. JEFFORDS. I thank my colleague. I will be very brief. I understand Senate Resolution 19, concerning the imprisonment of Tibetan ethnomusicologist Ngawang Choephel may be coming to the floor later in the day, and I want to speak in favor of it. It will be most useful if we pass this legislation, and I will be most pleased to vote for the passage of this legislation.

This case has a special resonance in Vermont because Mr. Choephel was a Fulbright scholar at Middlebury College from 1993 to 1995, and has hundreds of friends throughout the State. He is well known as a talented and compassionate individual, who cares deeply about the culture of the Tibetan people.

Indeed, it was while he was researching and recording traditional folk song and dance in Tibet in the fall of 1995 that he was arrested by the Chinese authorities and held incommunicado. It was over a year before the Chinese Government acknowledged in letters to me and other Members of Congress that he was in custody.

The charges filed against him by the Chinese Government—that he was in Tibet to spy for the Dalai Lama, shocked and outraged those of us who know Ngawang well. His subsequent conviction at a secret trial and an incredible 18-year sentence are an injustice and have been widely and justifiably condemned by society in general.

I hope this resolution will help to convince Beijing to reconsider its actions in this case, and to release Ngawang immediately and unconditionally. The Chinese Government needs to understand that its handling of this and other human rights cases, and its continued repression of the minority rights in Tibet, are serious setbacks to the Chinese-American relationship and make it difficult to pursue cooperation in other areas.

I yield to my good colleague and friend from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague from Vermont. I thank him for his strong support on the issue of Ngawang Choephel. He and I have heard from so many Vermonters who met Ngawang Choephel at his time in Middlebury and feel as we do.

I also thank Senator MOYNIHAN for his support of this former Middlebury College student and this Fulbright scholar, and also for his support of other prisoners of conscience in Tibet. Senator MOYNIHAN has been a stalwart supporter of Tibet and its people for as long as I can remember. The fact he has sponsored this resolution gives added weight to it.

Like so many in Vermont, I was outraged when I heard of Mr. Choephel's 18-year prison sentence in December. This followed a secret trial and followed a year of incommunicado detention. The Chinese Government has not released a shred of evidence that Mr. Choephel committed any crime. In fact, I understand the entire 16 hours of videotape that he sent out of Tibet prior to his arrest contained only footage of traditional Tibetan music and dance. That is what he studied at Middlebury College and that is the reason he returned to Tibet.

The frustrating aspect of this is that China has done so much to destroy a lot of the tradition of Tibet, the history, the writings, the music, the dance. Mr. Choephel was simply preserving for future generations what is so important in this ancient, ancient culture. When the Chinese authorities finally acknowledged that Mr. Choephel had been arrested, and they did not do that until a year after he disappeared despite numerous inquiries on his behalf, the State Department called for his immediate release. Even after he was convicted, the Chinese Government refused to release any information to support the charge against him.

Many of us suspect that his arrest and sentence were intended to intimidate the Dalai Lama's supporters in the United States. The Dalai Lama's supporters have voiced their support for Mr. Choephel, but I am not aware of any relationship between Mr. Choephel and the Dalai Lama. If the Chinese authorities' purpose was to scare off these supporters, they are going to be disappointed. It is only going to embolden those like myself who support Tibet and its people.

I have written several letters to Chinese and United States officials, as has Senator JEFFORDS and Representative SANDERS and others. I was in Beijing in November, and I asked President Jiang Zemin personally about the case of Ngawang Choephel, and I raised the case of Ngawang Choephel with the other Chinese authorities with whom I met. Just last week I sent letters to President Jiang Zemin and Vice President GORE. The Vice President is due to travel to China in the near future.

Those letters were signed by the Democratic leader, Senator DASCHLE, and by Senators FEINSTEIN, GLENN, KEMPTHORNE, and DORGAN, all of whom were on the November delegation to China.

Of course there have been all kinds of articles and editorials on Mr. Choephel's behalf in this country.

I said to the Chinese that here, at a time when we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Fulbright Scholarship Program, a Fulbright scholar from Vermont is arrested unjustly. It shows a lack of any sense of history on the part of the Chinese in this because, of course, the first Fulbright scholarships 50 years ago were used in China. Now, on the 50th anniversary of the Fulbright scholarship, the Chinese arrest a person who was simply recording an ancient culture.

So, our resolution calls for the release of Ngawang Choephel. It urges United States officials to raise his case in their meetings with China's officials, to support a resolution on human rights in Tibet and China at the U. N. Commission on Human Rights, to urge the Chinese Government to allow international human rights groups to monitor human rights in Tibet, and to support an exchange program for Tibetan students. It says, instead of bringing the curtain down on Tibet, open the doors to Tibet, open them to this wonderful, wonderful culture.

The resolution makes clear to the Chinese Government that the United States Senate considers improvements and respect for human rights in China and Tibet a priority. There would be no better way for the Chinese Government to demonstrate sincerity on human rights than to release Mr. Choephel.

This resolution and the support for Mr. Choephel that we all share are not intended to embarrass or unfairly single out China. We want relations between our two great countries to improve. But our purpose is to call attention to a terrible mistake that has been made in the hope that China's Government will review the case and set Mr. Choephel free. I intend to keep writing and speaking about Ngawang Choephel until that day comes. So I thank Senator MOYNIHAN for his leadership as well as the other dozens of Members of Congress, the hundreds of Vermonters, and Americans around the country who have signed letters in support of Ngawang Choephel.

The Chinese should look at the names on these resolutions. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue, not conservative or liberal issue. It goes across the political spectrum in this body. What it says is that we are as interested in human rights as anybody else. It also says, when you have an ancient culture like the Tibetans', an ancient religion, ancient music, ancient writings and speakings, they cannot be stamped out by anybody and they should not be stamped out by anybody. The Chinese should respect the culture of the Tibetans.