

or another have joined together to make a real success.

In 1993, along with every one of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, I opposed President Clinton's first budget in the firm belief that it would result in harm to our economy. Now, in a very real sense, we were wrong. For a group of reasons, the budget deficit did, indeed, decline and economic opportunity did, indeed, increase.

In 1995, as a part of a majority, we proposed a dramatic change in direction, a real balanced budget for the first time, genuine tax relief for the first time and major reforms in entitlement programs designed not only to help the taxpayers' pocket, but to save the future of Medicaid and Medicare.

That resolution never became law because of the President's veto, but it did have one tremendously positive impact. For the first time, the President and a majority of his party dedicated themselves actually to balancing the budget. During the entire year during which that 1995 budget was debated, interest rates declined, it became easier and easier for the people of the United States to purchase homes, purchase automobiles, start new businesses, provide job opportunities. Only when the promise began to fail did interest rates, once again, increase.

The promise was renewed early this year, and a few short weeks ago met fruition in an agreement between the Republican leadership of both Houses and the President of the United States.

Since even the commitment to a balanced budget paid dramatic dividends in increased economic opportunity, lower unemployment and lower interest rates, the accomplishment of a balanced budget, I am convinced, Mr. President, will bring even more rewards to the American people in lower interest rates and greater opportunity, and for the first time in decades meeting our responsibility not to spend money today while sending the bills to our children and to our grandchildren.

I am convinced, in spite of my own disagreement with some of the policies in this proposal, that it will have nothing but good results with respect to the economy of the United States. Yet, Mr. President, I am convinced there are still very real troubles ahead, very real rough spots in the road.

I note that while only eight Members of the Democratic Party voted against the budget resolution, the vast majority of them voted for amendment after amendment during the course of the last 3 days that would have increased taxes and increased spending, by my own total for the amendments, by \$88 billion in higher taxes and almost that amount in greater spending—direct violations of the agreement that they and the President have made with the Republican leadership.

As a consequence, I am convinced that it is important for all of us on both sides of the aisle to remember that we made a commitment to the American people in this agreement,

one that was almost instantly approved by the vast majority of our citizens, and keep not just those parts of the agreement with which we agree, but those with which we disagree.

I am the chairman, Mr. President, of a subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. The agreement includes a number of Presidential priorities that can only be funded through my subcommittee. Several of those priorities are ones with which I disagree. I think the money could be spent elsewhere better. But I do feel committed to keep those unpleasant parts of the agreement in order to reach the overall more important goals that are a part of a historic budget resolution.

So, in one sense, Mr. President, the vote a few hours ago was the culmination of a process and of a debate which has lasted for many, many years. In another sense, it is only the beginning. And unless it is taken seriously by those who support it, we still face the prospect of failing.

I am an optimist. I think that this is a new beginning, more than an ending to a long period of arid political exchanges. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues in order to make it happen.

(The remarks of Mr. GORTON pertaining to the submission of Senate Concurrent Resolution 29 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

Mr. THURMOND addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). The Senator from South Carolina.

(The remarks of Mr. THURMOND pertaining to the introduction of S. 813 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

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

RECORD SENATE SERVICE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I commend the President pro tempore, the distinguished Senator from South Carolina, [Mr. THURMOND]. As we will note when we come back, the distinguished Senator from South Carolina will mark a very important day on Sunday. That day will represent the first day he will have exceeded the time that anyone has had the good fortune to serve in the Senate. He will go down in history as having served longer than any other Senator, Democratic or Republican or, for that matter, any other party that has existed in our Nation's 220-year past. I congratu-

late and commend him. I look forward to having more of an opportunity when we return to call attention to his remarkable record and the success he has enjoyed. It has been my good fortune to work with him. While we differ on many issues, I certainly admire the extraordinary service he has provided this country. I congratulate him and his family on this remarkable achievement this weekend.

MARY NIEDRINGHAUS: BRANDON VALLEY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, it is my privilege today to honor Mary Niedringhaus of Brandon Valley, SD. Mary has been selected as Teacher of the Year in the Brandon Valley School District in recognition of two decades of outstanding teaching, guidance, and care that she has given the children of the community. I can think of few individuals more deserving of this prestigious award.

A fifth grade teacher at Brandon Elementary, Mary's gift is her ability to recognize and meet the needs of each of her students. She conveys an excitement for learning that her students find infectious. Whether bright or struggling, students excel in Mary's class because she genuinely believes in each of them and draws out their best efforts. After hearing Mary's lesson on importance of ladybugs to people, one little girl was so excited that later in the day she rushed to Mary and presented her with a ladybug. As she explained breathlessly, she had just rescued it from being flushed down the toilet in the girls' bathroom.

Mary holds herself and her students to the highest standards. Parents in Brandon seek to place their children in her classroom because they know that she will give them the finest education possible. Once, when planning a unit on South Dakota history for her students, Mary discovered that no good textbooks existed on the subject for grade school students. Undaunted, she developed her own curriculum based on materials she gathered on her own. Mary's curriculum is now the model used by all teachers in the Brandon Valley school district.

No remarks about Mary would be complete without mention of the deep empathy she has for others. Brandon Elementary School Principal Marv Sharkey noted that Mary, "has the knack of making parents feel like their child is the best kid in the world." Mary genuinely loves her students; I believe that this is the true source of her success as a teacher.

Finally, it seems that Mary has done as a good of job raising her children as she has teaching her students. Her daughter, Nancy Erickson, is a longtime, invaluable senior member of my staff. Mary should be deeply proud of her.

Mr. President, I commend Mary Niedringhaus for her exceptional work. Along with other district winners, she

will now be considered at the State level for the South Dakota Teacher of the Year award. I wish her the best of luck as this process continues.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I was not able to come to the floor as the Senator from North Dakota was expressing himself with regard to the disaster, and I know that the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Minnesota, [Mr. GRAMS], has worked long and hard to work with all of us as we have made the effort to address the extraordinary concerns, the extraordinary difficulties, and the extraordinary pain that people in Minnesota and the Dakotas have faced now for the better part of 6 months. First, the harsh winter months, cold and snow and ice in many cases precluded farmers from feeding their livestock, and in many cases caused the death of hundreds of thousands of livestock, only to be followed by floods and other spring disasters that have left many thousands of people homeless in all three States.

After visits which the President, the Vice President, the Speaker, the House majority leader and others, there was a national commitment to address this problem and to find ways in which to help these people as quickly as we possibly could. There were editorials written about the great bipartisan effort that was made in order to do all we could to address the matter in an expeditious and comprehensive manner.

I am very saddened by what has happened in the last 48 hours. I am troubled by the fact that there are those who still wish to use the effort to provide this assistance to people who need it so badly as the vehicle for an agenda that has nothing to do with the disaster, as a vehicle to address other needs, other concerns that may or may not be legitimate but have absolutely no reason for being associated with this bill, have absolutely no reason for being attached to this legislation.

I am troubled that anybody would use the kind of cynical approach to hinder our efforts to find ways with which to address this problem as quickly and as seriously as we possibly could. We have no business leaving the Senate and leaving the House under these circumstances.

I give great credit to the majority leader as he comes to the floor, because I do believe he made every effort to try to address this problem as successfully as he could. I know he has attempted to find ways in which to extract those problematic provisions from the bill. I know of his efforts yesterday. I am very disappointed that even with his efforts we failed. I also applaud the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Senator STEVENS has done great work in attempting to find ways with which to address this problem.

So I must say, Mr. President, on a bipartisan basis I believe our body has

done a great deal in attempting to avert the extraordinary calamitous circumstances that we are facing right now. It is going to be very difficult to go home, as I will, to speak to the people of Watertown, SD, not only on Memorial Day but at their high school commencement this year and explain what happened, explain why this Congress has left town without completing its work on this very important matter.

Mr. President, there are no words to describe how badly some of us feel, how frustrated, exasperated, and angered we are at these circumstances. We can only hope that upon our return, these political games and these ploys that have nothing to do with this legislation can be averted and we can deal with them far more effectively and address it in a comprehensive way. At that time, we will still, as late as it will be, give people hope that we understand their pain, that we understand their circumstance, and that we will respond as we best know how to do. It is only that hope that allows me with a very heavy heart to leave this town with our work incomplete.

Mr. President, I hope all of us will redouble our efforts as soon as we return. Let us get the job done. Let us do it right. Let us do it understanding completely how difficult a circumstance people in our States and States around the country must now face.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I do have some unanimous-consent requests to make and an Executive Calendar list. First I want to say to the distinguished Democratic leader I understand his feelings and appreciate his comments. We did work to try to get through all the legislative hurdles in moving the supplemental and resolving the problems attached to it. We ran into some procedural limitations there at the end that made it impossible for us to complete it, but we need to get it done. We are going to get it done. We are going to make sure the people of the States that have had disasters are going to get the aid they need.

I have already sent a letter urging everything be done to make sure the funds continue to flow through FEMA and any other agency that has a role in providing disaster assistance, whether it is in South Dakota, North Dakota, Kentucky, or Minnesota.

When we come back, it is going to be one of the two first orders of priority. One, we have to do the budget conference report, which I think will be done very quickly, and then we can really focus on getting the supplemental completed and resolving some of the issues that are critical issues attached to it so that we can come up with a solution everybody can live with on the census question and address the roads problem and also find a way to deal with avoiding Government shutdowns in the future.

I think we can do all of those once we make up our minds to focus on it and

get our minds committed to working on that effort.

EXPLANATION OF SELECTED VOTES TO THE SENATE BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, now that the budget resolution has been adopted, I wanted to take a few moments to discuss several of the more important votes that took place.

The first of these was the Hatch-Kennedy amendment. This amendment was characterized as an effort to raise cigarette excise taxes in order to provide health care for low- and moderate-income children. I take exception to that description. There was nothing in the Hatch-Kennedy amendment to ensure that the new taxes would be imposed upon cigarettes or that the additional revenues would be spent on children's health. The net effect of this amendment would have been to raise taxes by \$30 billion and spending by \$20 billion, period. I have several reasons for opposing an amendment of this sort.

First, I am not opposed to taxing cigarettes in order to either reduce taxes elsewhere or fund important programs, and this vote should not be interpreted as such. The net effect of this amendment, however, would be to reduce the net tax cut contained within this resolution—tax cuts targeted at families, education, and pro-growth policies—by \$30 billion. The tax cut contained in this resolution is already less than 1 percent of the total Federal tax burden over the next 5 years, barely adequate to provided badly needed tax relief to families and small businesses. I believe that level is already too low, and I certainly do not support making it smaller.

Furthermore, nothing prevents Senator HATCH, as a member of the Finance Committee, from offering his proposal as part of the reconciliation process. An amendment offered in the Finance Committee to increase tobacco taxes in order to provide additional Medicaid funding for children's health insurance would be in order. I might support it. The amendment considered by the Senate Wednesday, however, does nothing to further the prospects of such an effort.

On the other hand, this amendment does expand the reconciliation instructions of the Labor Committee, where Senator KENNEDY is the ranking member. This amendment would provide the Finance Committee an additional \$2 billion and the Committee on Labor a whopping \$18 billion. Notwithstanding the debate over taxes or children's health, there is no disagreement that both these issues belong in the Finance Committee—not Labor. The construction of this amendment appears motivated more by the jurisdictional concerns of Senator KENNEDY than a concern for children's health.

Finally, Mr. President, this amendment ignores the \$16 billion already