

House of Representatives, and the Senator from Oregon was known in the House as being someone who dealt with substance. The same tradition that he established in the House, is being carried over to the Senate, as indicated by his remarks dealing with airline travel.

COMMERCIALISM OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am a great fan of public broadcasting. I listen almost every day to public radio. I am tremendously impressed with programs such as "Prairie Home Companion" and all the news stories in the morning that are extremely in depth. With public television, we all recognize the contributions made by the series on the Civil War, which is a classic and will continue to be in American television. The "MacNeil, Lehrer News Hour," which is now the "Lehrer News Hour," is the most in-depth news coverage that we have any place in America. There are many other programs on radio and on public television which I haven't mentioned that are quite good as well.

I am struck by the amount of commercials I endure and we all have to endure when we listen to public radio and watch public television. In my estimation, it is out of hand. These commercials are technically called "enhanced underwriting." You can call them whatever you want, but they are commercials.

An article appeared a short time ago in the Washington Post entitled "Now a Word About Our Sponsor." Critics say public radio's on-air credits come too close to being commercials, and, as indicated in that article, they are absolutely right. People are getting more disturbed every day with commercialism of public broadcasting.

I point this out because I am not the only one who has noticed the increasing sponsored announcements. According to this article, one survey shows a 700-percent increase in corporate funding over the past 5 or 6 years. It is just not listeners who are noticing the change. If I were the owner of a private broadcasting station, I would be up in arms. And some private station owners are tremendously disturbed about the increasing commercialism of this so-called public broadcasting.

Private stations aren't tax exempt like public broadcasting stations are. The private stations are now voicing their concerns about the existing uneven playing field. I don't want to sound as though I am beating up on public broadcasting because, as I have indicated in my opening statement, I really do like public broadcasting. I enjoy the programs on National Public Radio and public television. I believe public broadcasting should remain just that—public. That means we have to do a better job with public funding.

We can trace very clearly what has happened to public broadcasting. Newt Gingrich, and others with whom he as-

sociated, came out with the bad idea that they wanted to eliminate public broadcasting. This group found that they could not do that. So, in effect, they cut back the funding and they are strangling public broadcasting to death.

Mr. President, we need to do the necessary things to make public broadcasting more public in nature. I believe it is time for us to decide whether we want to have a public broadcasting system or whether we don't want to have one. Either we fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting so they can exist, or we end it. I prefer the former. Therefore, when the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education marks up its bill—and I am a member of that subcommittee—I plan to offer an amendment to increase the Corporation for Public Broadcasting appropriation to \$475 million. This is \$125 million more than their request. However, I also plan to include report language that would encourage public radio and television to scale back their so-called enhanced underwriting practices and to become, once again, a public broadcasting system that is publicly funded.

As long as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is leery of Congress cutting their funds or doing away with Federal funds altogether, they will begin to sound more and more like private broadcasting stations. The people who run those stations don't like it. You have people, as indicated in the Post article that I referred to earlier, who are continually talking about how difficult it is and how unfair it is. In this article, the author cites Bob Edwards from the NPR Morning Edition, which is a very fine program for news in the morning. He says:

Underwriting has kept us alive, but there's also a downside. It has cut into our air time. If you have to read a 30-second underwriting credit [a commercial], that's less news you can do.

So as I stated, we have to either make public broadcasting public or do away with it. If we continue the road we are going on, we are going to wind up having public broadcasting in name only, and it is going to be unfair that they are competing with the private stations, in which we have people who have invested a lot of money, trying to make money on an uneven playing field because of the protections public broadcasting have.

A DEMOCRATIC PLAN WITH WHICH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE CAN AGREE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we had some good news last week when the majority leader, Senator LOTT, indicated that if the President vetoed the \$800 billion Republican tax plan, that would be the end of it.

That is good news for the American public on the \$800 billion attempt to cut taxes in this country because, in fact, it really wasn't a tax cutting

measure. It was something that would give no immediate relief to the American taxpayer. There was relief in the outyears. In fact, what it would have done is prevent us from directing monies toward the debt, and the debt of \$5 trillion is something we need to address.

If the national debt were lowered, it would be a tax cut for everyone, rich and poor. We pay hundreds of millions of dollars every year in interest on that debt. If we lower that, it will be good for everyone. We are not going to continue to live in this great economy where everything is looking good, forever. Hard times may lie ahead, and I think we will rue the day we didn't use these good times to pay down that debt.

This massive tax package that was passed on a very partisan basis, and then withheld from the American public during the August break so there could be a public relations effort to have the American people accept this tax cut, never materialized. The American people would not accept it because it was not acceptable on its face. They realized there was no meaningful tax relief in this package. It was more of a public relations ploy. The fact is that there should have been more attention focused on paying down the debt and protecting Social Security and Medicare. We must pay down the debt. That would be a tax cut for everyone.

We must protect Social Security. The majority touted the Social Security lockbox in conjunction with the tax cut. But the Republican lockbox fails to extend the solvency in the Social Security trust fund by a single day, and it includes, in this so-called lockbox, a trapdoor, a loophole, that would allow Republicans to label anything Social Security reform and to raid the Social Security trust fund. Finally, the Republican lockbox does nothing to protect Medicare.

So by proposing targeted tax cuts toward working families, the minority believes our Democratic plan is able to prioritize paying down the debt and protecting Social Security and Medicare while still providing almost \$300 billion in targeted tax cuts.

What would those cuts do? They would increase the standard deduction for all individuals and married couples. They would provide marriage penalty relief for those taxpayers who pay more as married couples than they would if they were to file their taxes as two single individuals. They would provide for a long-term-care tax credit to make it easier to care for elderly family members. They would provide for a 100-percent deduction for health insurance costs of the self-employed and include tax incentives to build and modernize more than 6,000 schools. That is important.

Clark County, Las Vegas, NV, has the eighth-largest school district in America, with over 200,000 schoolchildren. We are having to build over a dozen new schools every year. In one year

—and we hold the record—we dedicated 18 new schools in Clark County. We have to build one new elementary school every month to keep up with the growth in Clark County. We need some help to do that. The Democratic tax plan would give us some of that needed help.

Also, one of the things we have talked about, which is so important, is a tax credit for research and development for high-tech companies. That is part of the Democratic tax plan—something we hope the majority leader and others will take a look at and be willing to compromise on. Democrats have been out in front on the issue for a long time. We pushed hard for a permanent R & D tax credit. The majority talked about how they were in favor of a permanent credit as well, until it came time to actually do it. In the end, the minority, myself included, were pushing for a ten year R & D tax credit. The majority ended up only committing to a five year tax credit in their package. Due in large part to initiatives like the R & D tax credit, the high-tech industry exists and has flourished. Without knowing whether or not that tax credit will be around next year or the year after or the year after that, hinders these companies' long term planning.

ATHLETICS IN NEVADA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in Nevada we are very proud of a number of things. We have a beautiful State. We are the most mountainous State in the Union, except for Alaska, with over 300 separate mountain ranges, with 32 mountains over 11,000 feet high. Las Vegas, of course, is the entertainment capital of the world.

We are very proud of our universities for a number of reasons. We have a great engineering program at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Mackay School of Mines is there, and we are proud of that as well. We have a great school for biological sciences, which has a national reputation. At UNLV, we have the finest hotel administration program in the entire country. The universities in Nevada are very proud of the football teams that we had in the forties and fifties. Since the schools have been divided, UNR has been a power in division II football, and they have played for the national championship. They are now a division I team. UNLV has won national championships in basketball. The UNLV football team has had some bad years, losing dozens of games. Last year they didn't win a single game, but this year they were able to beat North Texas State in their first away game.

A week ago last Thursday and then this past Saturday, they played Baylor. Even though Baylor was favored by a couple of touchdowns, one of the most miraculous wins in the history of football at the professional or college level occurred when Baylor was ahead by four points with less than 10 seconds left. They had the ball inside the 10-

yard line of UNLV. Rather than take their four-point victory, they wanted to run the score up a little bit and go for a touchdown. In the end zone there was a fumble picked up by a UNLV defensive back who ran 101 yards for the touchdown and beat Baylor with no time left on the clock. This was tremendous.

People are going to be very happy with their new football coach, John Robinson, who had a great career before coming to UNLV from the University of Southern California and, of course, coaching the Los Angeles Rams.

We offer our congratulations to John Robinson and UNLV for two victories, which is two more than they had during all of last year.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDRE AGASSI

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the main reason I wanted to talk about athletics in Nevada is not because of the team victories that we have had over the years in Nevada but because of a great young man who was born and raised in Nevada who has been part of the Nevada athletic scene for some 25 years, even though he is only 29 years old.

Andre Agassi and his family have been great for the State of Nevada. Andre, when he was a little boy still in elementary school, it was said by Poncho Gonzales, who was a tennis great, "He will be better than I someday." This is when he was a little, tiny boy. Poncho Gonzales was right.

Andre Agassi has already proven himself to be even greater than the great Poncho Gonzales. This was certainly the case as proven yesterday when he won the U.S. Open Tennis Championship.

I want to, on the Senate floor, congratulate Andre Agassi on this remarkable comeback yesterday in the U.S. Open and, of course, his comeback victory in the French Open.

Andre, as I have indicated, is a native of Las Vegas and dominated this summer with 35 victories in 39 matches. That is almost unheard of.

Andre Agassi is the No. 1 ranked tennis player in the United States. Not too long ago, because of an injury and other problems, Andre Agassi was ranked 141. He is now ranked the best tennis player in the world, as he should be.

I was watching the tennis matches over the weekend. John McEnroe, one of the great tennis players of all time, commenting about Andre Agassi, said his ability to return service is the best there has ever been in the entire history of tennis. His reputation and his abilities are still being proven. He is getting better with every match he plays.

But yesterday he closed out one of the greatest summers in tennis history. He came up with some of the most impressive shots ever seen in tennis in a dominating fifth set to capture his second U.S. Open.

Andre has made his place in tennis history. When he won the French Open, he joined Roy Emerson, Rod Laver, Don Budge, and Fred Perry as the only men to win all four major tournaments in their career.

Andre not only won the French and the U.S. Opens this year, he was also in the finals at Wimbledon, making him the first man since Ivan Lendl in 1986 to have gone to three grand slam finals in the same year.

No man had fought back to win the U.S. Open from a 2-1 deficit in sets since John Newcombe did it 26 years ago. But that is exactly what Agassi did in a 3-hour and 23-minute match yesterday.

The match was only the fifth all-American men's final at the U.S. Open in 32 years. The matchup of these two men who are almost 30-years-old, was the oldest since 39-year-old Ken Rosewall lost to 22-year-old Jimmy Connors in 1974. Even though these two men had not reached the age of 30, they played great tennis. They will be talked about as being old men at tennis, I repeat, even though they were not even 30 years old yet. They set a great example for tennis generally and for American tennis in particular.

I have to agree with Andre when after the match he said, "I'll tell you what. How can you ask for anything more than two Americans in the final of the U.S. Open playing a great five-set match?"

Andre turned pro when he was 16 years old. We can all remember—I shouldn't say "we can all" because that was 13 or 14 years ago—a lot of us can remember when he turned pro. In those 13 or 14 years, he has changed. He won Wimbledon in 1992, the U.S. Open in 1994, and was the No. 1 player in the world by 1995.

But by 1997, Andre had, as I have indicated, come across some tough times. But he has fought back remarkably well. He finished sixth in the world last year. Earlier this year, he was ranked No. 1. He is now No. 1 again.

In a period of 4 months, he won the French Open—coming back from two sets down in the final—reached the Wimbledon final, and won the U.S. Open, a truly phenomenal comeback.

Andre deserves to be congratulated not only for his tremendous tennis, but for all the great work he does for at-risk youth in Las Vegas. He truly has put his money where his mouth is.

The Agassi Foundation has helped poor kids in Nevada. That is an understatement. He personally raises millions of dollars. He is going to have an event this month. He has gotten some of his friends to come from Las Vegas. He will raise \$3 million at that event, all of which will go into his foundation to help the youth of Las Vegas.

His exhibition against Todd Martin yesterday was exciting. Todd Martin is a great champion in his own right. His towering stature of 6-foot-6 was as towering on the tennis court. These two men were interviewed after the tennis