

very difficult. And there are shifts taking place. We have changed the definition of "hospital" so that HCFA, the funding agency, can fund hospitals that have less than full services, even emergency rooms, to move those patients off to somewhere else.

We passed the Patients' Bill of Rights. I hope one of the things that will happen before we leave is some change in the balanced budget amendment on Medicare. That will probably be an additional \$15 billion over 10 years, to take away what we think were the overcuts that have been made by the agency that pays it out. So we will be moving forward on that.

Financial modernization: I think for the first time since the 1930s the whole financial picture has changed somewhat. That bill is prepared to come to the floor. We closed the deal last week. We have been trying for 10 years—and finally got that done—to change the regulations that were put in place during the Depression times to fit what is necessary now.

So we have accomplished a great deal in the budget: Social Security, education, defense, tax relief, health care, and now a banking bill—all things that are good for America—but yet without letting the Federal Government grow out of control.

It is legitimate to have different views, and we ought to have an exchange of views. There are different views everywhere. One of the basic differences here has to do, frankly, with the size and involvement of the Federal Government; it has to do with spending. The liberals, of course, want to have more taxes, more spending, put the Federal Government into more things, override the States because they think that is a better way to do it. It is a legitimate point of view. I do not agree with it.

We ought to try to limit those things that can best and must be done by the Federal Government. Do we raise money to do it? Of course. But after that we ought to let that be done closer to the people.

Those are the real issues. Sometimes they do not show up. We get to talking about details, but the basic philosophy is there and it is legitimate and we need to work at it.

I hope we can move forward. I think we have completed a good amount of work this year. We have some more to do. We have probably less than 2 weeks to do it. So I hope we move forward.

I now yield whatever time he might consume to the Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Senator from Wyoming.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Paul Barger, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today's session.

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

The distinguished Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I appreciate very much the Senator from Wyoming taking the time to show some of the differences and some of the accomplishments of this session of the Senate. While I was watching him do that, it occurred to me that something else constantly needs to be brought up before the American people because a lot of times people look at Democrats and Republicans and do not realize that we do stand for different things.

In the case of the Republican Party, I have had the honor, since I have been in the Senate, of serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I originally discovered when I was in the House of Representatives—and it was a shocker—why there is such a difference in the approach to national security between the Democrats and Republicans.

To put it very bluntly, the Republicans have always believed that the primary responsibility of Government was to give America a more secure country and to promote our national security. Yet time and time again, it is quite obvious that there is a difference between Democrats and Republicans.

To document this or to quantify it, there is a group called the Center for Security Policy. I think this is kind of interesting because people need to know what we are doing here. All too often people will read the mail of their Senators and assume that is everything that is going on here, when, in fact, there are some things that may not be accurately expressed in that mail. For example, if a constituent is concerned with how his particular Member is voting on tax issues, the National Tax Limitation Committee and National Taxpayers Union rank us so they can tell who is for more taxes and who is for less taxes. If a constituent is concerned about what is happening in terms of family values, they have a number of organizations that will tell how Members voted on issues such as abortion. If they are concerned about how much regulation is disturbing people who are trying to run small businesses, the NFIB, National Federation of Independent Business, actually does a rating.

As far as national security is concerned, the Center for Security Policy is an organization that takes all these votes we cast having to do with a strong national defense, having to do with test ban treaties, a national missile defense system, defense spending, and they rank us to see who the good guys and the bad guys are in their eyes; that is, who is promoting a stronger national defense and is more concerned about national security or who legitimately believes there is a threat.

The average Democrat is ranked, in accordance with the Center for Security Policy, at 12 percent; the average

Republican is 94 percent. That tells us something. It tells us there is a basic difference in the policy of the Democrat versus the Republican Party.

This is significant because we just completed debate on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and we heard a lot of dialog on both sides. To the last one on the Republican side who voted in opposition to this treaty, it was a recognition that there is a real threat out there. By unilaterally disarming, which is essentially what we would have done under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, we would have allowed those nations to go ahead and test their nuclear arsenal, even though there is no way of verifying whether or not they were testing, of course.

Good old America, we do what we say we are going to do. If we say we will not do it, then we don't do it. I remember several times Secretaries of Defense would actually testify: We know we are not going to do it, but there is no way of knowing whether the other side is doing it. I had no doubt in my mind that both China and Russia would continue to test their nuclear weapons, even if they had ultimately ratified. By the way, they kept using the argument that we are going to have to ratify this because if we don't do it, Russia won't do it. I remember that same argument in the START II treaty. Russia still hasn't done it. We need to look at these things. Unfortunately, it does become a partisan issue.

In talking about our national defense, I come from the background of chairing the Readiness Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee. There is a huge issue taking place right now. I will make a couple of references to it because I have introduced a Senate concurrent resolution, with several Members who are cosponsoring it, which calls upon the President and the Secretary of Defense to reopen the Vieques training bombing range off the island of Puerto Rico.

This is what the range looks like. This is the island of Puerto Rico. It is about 22 miles from here to there. This part represents a live bombing range. It only constitutes 2.7 percent of the entire island.

This bombing range has been hot range active for 58 years. During the time period it has been active, there has only been one death on the ground as a result of the use of the range. That was last April 19. As a result, everyone in Puerto Rico who is running for office, whether it is for delegate or for the Governor of Puerto Rico, is using as his or her platform: We are going to do the most we can to shut down this range.

This is the range over here. It has been used for 58 years. There is live ordnance all over the range. There are protesters there right now, illegally trespassing, who are picking up and throwing around these live pieces of ordnance.

I have written twice to Janet Reno and told her she should go down there

and enforce the trespassing laws, if for no other reason than just to keep someone from getting killed. She has refused to do that. Unfortunately, it has been politicized.

We had a committee meeting where we had the Governor of Puerto Rico and others testify. They take the position that if you want to keep this training range active so we can properly train our American soldiers, which include Puerto Rican soldiers, somehow you don't like Puerto Ricans. I think it is very important to realize that that little training range offers three components of training that cannot be duplicated anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere.

First of all, it is high-altitude bombing. Why is that necessary? It is necessary because, as in the case of Kosovo, when we sent our pilots in there with cruise missiles, it was necessary that they be above the range of the surface-to-air missiles. They were very successful in Kosovo in doing that. There is no place else we can get that training because of airspace restrictions.

I went, the weekend before this last weekend, to the U.S.S. *Eisenhower*, which is scheduled to go to the gulf, where they very likely could see some kind of combat. The Navy pilots were actually from that aircraft carrier conducting their training exercises in two different places in the United States.

Here is the problem. I say this as a professional pilot of 40 years. To do that, they have to go through normal commercial airspace. In other words, they take off in an F-14 or F-18 from the U.S.S. *Eisenhower*. They go to drop their load of either real or not real ordnance. To do this, they have to fly through civilian airspace as if they were a general aviation pilot or a commercial pilot flying a commercial airline. In doing this, it is a totally different set of rules. Then when they come up to the range, where they can drop their ordnance, they have to all of a sudden be tactical. It is totally disruptive, and they can't do it at an altitude high enough to give them the actual training. What it will mean is, if these guys are deployed in the Persian Gulf on February 18, many of them will go over there and will be called upon to do things they have never done before.

At the same time, you have your marine expeditionary units, that would not have had this training—actually landing and going on amphibious operations on the shores of Vieques, where they have been doing it for 58 years without incident. We wouldn't have the Navy being able to fire their guns. In fact, one of the officers said that they would be sending sailors out there to fire when they have never fired live on the ground before.

It is a very serious problem. I bring this up not just to gain support for the resolution but to respond to something that is going on right now.

We had a committee hearing with Governor Rossello. He came in. I will read some of the local press there.

Gov. Rossello on Friday called Republican Senator James Inhofe a "backward and reactionary" member of the ultra right wing of the Republican Party, while several island legislators called him an "Ugly American" following comments the Oklahoma Senator made about Puerto Rico this week.

[Senator Inhofe] upholds the same tradition of other people who have made similar statements, which is an anti-Hispanic, anti-minority. . . .

It goes on. I think this is a further demonstration that they must not have a case, if they are going to have to resort to these kinds of insults.

I say, in my own defense, that it wasn't long ago—it was 1996—I, along with the Democrat over on the House side, was the recipient of the Award for Freedom and Democracy from the International Foundation for Election Systems. The statement that was made when I was being introduced was: Senator JAMES INHOFE has done more to promote freedom and democracy in Central America; he has done more to promote trade with Mexico and more to provide humanitarian assistance to the Caribbean than anybody else and is hereby awarded the Freedom and Democracy Award by the International Foundation of Election Systems.

That was due to a couple of things I have done. One time, not too many years ago, when a devastating hurricane wiped out the lower Caribbean, I led a group of 10 airplanes through two hurricanes to take down humanitarian goods, doctors, two nurses, and food for the victims on those islands. In the case of promoting trade with Mexico, in 1981 I promoted the first trade where we actually flew to San Luis Potosi, Mexico, and made, not a cultural exchange but an industrial exchange, where we computerized things they can do down there and things we were doing in my home city of Tulsa, OK. And they now have established trade with that country, and relationships and contracts are still alive today.

I had occasion to be involved in Central America during the problems that were taking place down in Nicaragua and some of the other Central American countries. So I say that in my own defense. I appeal to people to start looking at the real problems that exist in Puerto Rico right now, in terms of that range. I wish there was someplace else we could train other than this island of Vieques. When they say it is an inconvenience and it is noisy and it is just 10 miles—this is the range. This is where the population is. It is 9.7 miles between here and here.

I want to show you, by contrast, if you hold up the other chart, the two red areas are the live ranges that are where? In Oklahoma, Fort Sill, which is an artillery training range, a hot range. When I fly over the area, the controller tells me whether their range is hot or not. So there it is, these two ranges. Here is the population of Lawton, OK. So you can see the hot range goes within 1 mile of a population of 100,000 people, as opposed to Vieques, where the range is 9.7 miles from 9,000 people.

Hold up the other chart, if you will. To give a comparison between the two, at Vieques, they use 9-inch guns. We use 6.1-inch in Fort Sill. The days of training average 164 live days a year in Vieques, and at Fort Sill we average 320 days per year. The range at Fort Sill is open and is hot and used twice as many days per year as it is in Vieques.

Thirdly, the distance from the population is 9.7 miles in Vieques, and it is only 1 mile at Fort Sill. The population, instead of 9,000, is 100,000 people. They talk about the danger that imposes. There have been three fatalities. One fatality in Vieques was an F-18 that went down and both pilots were killed. They have had 1 ground fatality there, and we have had 26 (34 including air fatalities) at Fort Sill over a period of time.

So when people accuse us of having two standards, one for those ranges in the United States and one for the range that happens to be in a territory, I think those people have to stop and realize: aren't they asking for something that is more than what we find to be perfectly acceptable in Kansas or in Oklahoma? So I hope people will keep in mind that several of our officers have made the statement that if we send and deploy, on February 18, as is currently scheduled, those sailors and airmen and marines, they will have to go by way of the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. The chances are better than 2-to-1 that they will see combat in the Persian Gulf because that is what history shows us right now. We would be sending them there without the benefit of any training at all.

There is another resolution that was introduced by Senator WARNER, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, last week. He was admonishing the President not to deploy the U.S.S. *Eisenhower* if they don't have that training range opened up so they can get the training. I am going to support that resolution as well as mine. The problem I see with it is that we have already deployed the U.S.S. *Roosevelt*. They are already returning. The U.S.S. *Kennedy* is out there right now, and only half of its personnel have had proper training. We would be asking them to make a second 6-month deployment. That would have a terribly negative effect on an already-eroding problem that we have with retention in the military.

So I have two points I wish to make. One is that we need to do all we can to protect our young people whom we are asking to go into combat by giving them the proper training, and also to point out that there is a difference between the Democratic and the Republican Party when it comes to our support of national defense.

I will repeat one more time the statistic I used from the center for security policy. The average Democrat rates 12 percent; the average Republican rates 94 percent. I don't think the American people would expect that the

defense of our country and national security should be a partisan issue, but it is.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

COOKED BOOKS

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise today to read an editorial from today's Columbus Dispatch. I want to read it in its entirety because I believe it strongly makes a point that needs to be made.

The editorial is entitled: "Cooked books—That big federal budget surplus? It isn't."

The editorial reads as follows:

The president and members of Congress should all be kept after school to write this on the blackboard 123 billion times:

There is no federal budget surplus.

The \$123 billion surplus that the president and Congress are crowing about last week really is a \$1 billion deficit, hidden by \$124 billion in excess Social Security tax revenue that shouldn't even be counted in the general budget because it is meant to be set aside in a trust fund to cover retirement-benefit payments later.

Put that Social Security money aside as intended and the truth about the federal surplus becomes evident:

The government spent \$1 billion more than it took in last year.

Certainly, a \$1 billion deficit is a vast improvement over years past, when the government was running in the red to the tune of \$200 billion or more annually and creating a national debt approaching \$6 trillion.

But it is still a deficit.

And it is patently dishonest for the president and Congress to pretend that all that red ink is black.

Even the \$124 billion in excess Social Security revenues is really not a surplus for the retirement program.

Yes, Social Security took in more last year than it paid out, but that surplus is a drop in the bucket of the program's \$8 trillion unfunded liability.

That's the amount of money the program ultimately is obligated to pay out to current retirees and workers above and beyond what those participants have paid or will pay into the system.

The \$124 billion cushion that Social Security has right now puts a mere 1.6 percent dent in that massive obligation.

Congress and the president each pay lip service to the idea of balancing the federal budget and preserving the Social Security surpluses for Social Security, but a genuine commitment to these goals would begin with honest bookkeeping.

Until then, it is back to the blackboard:

There is no federal budget surplus.

There is no federal budget surplus.

There is no federal budget surplus.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Bob Perret, a fellow in my office, be accorded the privilege of the floor during the pendency of S. 1287.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam 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.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask consent to be recognized in morning business. I understand the majority leader and Democratic leader will soon appear on the floor. When they do, I will be happy to yield the floor to them to take care of business they will transact. In the meantime, I would like to speak in morning business about a very important issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

THE INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION OF CRIMINALS

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, the picture I have displayed on the floor of the Senate is of an 11-year-old child named Jeanna North. Jeanna North was tragically murdered by a man named Kyle Bell. Kyle Bell was a previously convicted child molester, a violent criminal living in the neighborhood. This young girl, out on roller blades one afternoon on a quiet Fargo street, was abducted and murdered.

Kyle Bell was convicted of that murder. On October 13, Kyle Bell was being transported to prison and he escaped in New Mexico from a bus that was transporting him and nearly 30 other prisoners across the country. Kyle Bell, this convicted child murderer, escaped from a company called Transcorps. Transcorps is a private company. There are a number of private companies that states contract with to haul killers and criminals around the country. When you haul toxic waste around America, you have to meet certain requirements. When you haul circus animals around this country, you have to meet certain minimum requirements. But if you are a business holding yourself out to transport prisoners all around this country from State to State, there are no minimum requirements and no standards. Get yourself a minivan, hire your brother-in-law and two cousins

and say you are in business and you want to haul a convicted child killer around the country.

The escape of this convicted child killer occurred in a circumstance where the bus transporting him, which carried over 30 people, pulled up to a service station to get gas. One of the guards apparently was fueling the vehicle, the other apparently might have been getting a hamburger at the Food Mart, and the third was asleep on the bus, and in the meanwhile this killer goes out through a hatch in the roof of the bus. Then the guards get back on the bus and for 9 hours that bus drove across the country, and they never knew this convicted killer had escaped.

He escaped in civilian clothes, incidentally—a convicted killer being transported across this country in civilian clothes. One would logically ask the question: If you are doing that, if you are transporting a convicted killer across State lines, why would you not have an orange prison uniform that says "I Am A Prisoner"? Because there are no regulations, no standards. You can haul prisoners, including violent prisoners, across this country coast to coast and you do not have any standards to meet. I think that is wrong. If you are a company, a private company contracting to haul violent prisoners across this country, it seems to me you ought to meet minimum regulations, minimum standards.

In order to enhance public safety, I am going to propose later this week a piece of legislation that will require the Justice Department to establish standards that private companies effecting that transport must meet. When there is an interstate transport of criminals across this country, especially high-risk criminals, certain minimum conditions must be met.

Minimum standards on background checks for employees—is that reasonable? You bet. Minimum standards for the type of training an employee would have, who is transporting a violent criminal across State lines; restrictions on the number of hours that employees are on duty during a 24-hour period; minimum standards on the number of guards that must be present for supervising violent criminals; standards requiring that high-risk violent prisoners wear brightly colored clothing, clearly identifying them as prisoners; minimum standards on the type of restraint that is used when transporting these prisoners; and a requirement that private prison transport companies notify law enforcement officials of scheduled stops in their jurisdiction when they are hauling a cargo of violent prisoners.

These are standards that ought to be implemented. The murder of this young girl in Fargo, ND, by Kyle Bell is a tragedy. But it is a tragedy that is compounded by the escape of this murderer who now, this afternoon, is on the loose. God forbid he should harm or kill someone else while he has escaped from custody. But this escape should