

want to take over the White House, so we want to give them a tax cut."

How do they do it? With a fraudulent budget. They go up and above, and my distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee on the Senate side, the Senator from New Mexico, knows better. I have worked with him. We are the two original members since 1974 of the budget process and the Budget Committee.

He comes in and he adds on almost \$800 billion to the debt. In addition to adding to the debt, he comes around and says now, "We are going to direct in reconciliation that the chairman of the Finance Committee, the Finance Committee itself, come out with a tax cut." This is an absolute adulteration and fraud of the budget process. We intended—and it is right in the reconciliation provisions—that if you get to the end of the road—and you are always slightly over—you can increase some revenues here, there, or yonder, or you can cut some spending here, there, or yonder. You reconcile spending and revenue so you do what you say and say what you do to balance items in the budget.

Instead, now the Republicans are going to use reconciliation to cut the revenues. Here we are spending \$100 billion more this fiscal year 1999 than we are taking in. Under current policy, it would be \$90 billion more, but you can see already with this particular monkey shine in the face of reality, there is no chance of a tax cut and having a real budget. We have already come in with caps.

Last year we exceeded the caps by \$12 billion. We exceed the caps \$21 billion this year. Then we come and pass an \$18 billion increase for military pay. That is \$50 billion we ought to be looking for in either increased revenues or spending cuts. Rather, the wonderful Budget Committee, on a partisan basis—the Republican budget is a fraud—comes forward and says, Here it is—and we are amending the reconciliation in this particular process—and sends it to the floor directing the Finance Committee—and the chairman of the Finance Committee, incidentally, the distinguished Senator from Delaware, said: If we do not have a tax cut, it would be highway robbery. We've got money sloshing around up here.

Unfortunately, they also repeal the pay-go rule. This means they will not need an off-set to pay for their tax cut. When we debate the budget this week, the Republicans are going to ram it through the Senate—10 hours, 10 hours, and 10 hours. They can get it through in three days and back up all the roll calls. And they already have it greased on the Republican side to send it through. Instead of a Budget Committee exercising its responsibility to promote fiscal responsibility, this budget here is a fraud and promotes irresponsibility.

To those who say, Mr. President, what are you going to do if you pass the Hollings bill that sets aside the

money in Social Security? It does not just sit there; it earns the highest amount allowed by law, just as it did for 33 years—from 1935 until 1968. The Social Security trust fund was sound. That is a requirement for all corporate endeavors, in that we make it a felony if you try to pay down the company debt with the pension fund.

The distinguished Presiding Officer, he heard me speak of Denny McLain the other afternoon. So I keep harping on it. Here we say in corporate America, if you engage in that kind of nefarious activity, it is a felony, and off you go to jail. But here you get the "Good Government Award." It is totally fraudulent what is going on. Neither side is giving. Both sides are out of reality and they are going merrily down the road as they are with the census, with no reconciliation. But be that as it may, there isn't any question that we can pay down the debt under current policy if we just stay the course.

That was my motion in the Budget Committee. You say, "All that big talk, HOLLINGS. What then would you do?" Look at the particular budget we have. Look at the economy we have. If you were the mayor of a city, if you were the Governor of a State, you would immediately say, "Well, let's stay the course. We don't want to let go of the firemen or the policemen. We don't want to start any new endeavors right now. Let's keep this economy growing."

All we have to do, as Mr. Greenspan finally testified, is do nothing, just hold the line, generally speaking, taking this year's budget for next year. By 2006, by that time, above Social Security surpluses, we would have regular surpluses, true surpluses. And that money could be used to pay down the debt.

I am not for the gamesmanship about public debt and the interest costs going down. That is a story out of the whole cloth. That is not going to happen. Right now, we owe \$730 billion to Social Security. By the year 2013, we will owe Social Security \$3 trillion—\$3 trillion.

We are supposed to have, under the Greenspan Commission report and law as it now stands, \$3 trillion in the bank. I know my distinguished friend from North Dakota is waiting to come here, but I want to make sure we understand the fiscal cancer this country has.

When Lyndon Johnson last balanced the budget, we only had to pay \$16 billion in interest costs on the national debt—today, we pay \$357 billion each year—almost \$1 billion each day. And the interest costs go up, just like the price of energy and gas is going up now, as indicated in the morning paper. If those little interest costs go up, it will be over a billion dollars a day.

With the money we would save in interest costs on the national debt, I could give my Republican friends an \$80 billion tax cut. I could give my Democratic friends \$80 billion in in-

creased spending. I could give Social Security \$80 billion. I could give paying down the debt \$80 billion. That is only \$320 billion. We are going to spend that each year—next year and more. This country has fiscal cancer. That is the state of the Union. And in the best of times that we are all enjoying now, if we cannot get some kind of discipline in reality out of the process here in the Congress, I do not know how we are ever going to save it.

I thank the distinguished Chair and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator is recognized.

SPRING PLANTING LOANS FOR FAMILY FARMERS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the agenda for the Senate this week is to continue on the supplemental appropriations bill. Then at some point this week we will go to the budget bill. My hope is that we will finish work on the supplemental appropriations bill. I understand that we are heading towards a vote tomorrow on cloture on a Kosovo amendment to the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. So we are off on a range of other issues, that being a foreign policy issue. We already had votes on tobacco and tobacco products from the settlement, and so on.

But my hope is that one way or another we will get through the supplemental appropriations bill in order to provide the resources in that legislation for spring planting loans for family farmers. There are not very many weeks until our family farmers will be in the fields, and they need some operating loans to buy the seed and the fuel and to pay the expenses to do spring planting. And we have many farmers in North Dakota who are not, under current circumstances, going to be able to get loans from the Farm Service Agency unless we pass this supplemental bill.

So if we do not pass the supplemental appropriations bill this week, and we go home, then we are not in session the next 2 weeks, we are going to be leaving these farmers in pretty tough circumstances. Then this supplemental has to go through the House, the Senate, and go to the President for his signature. Frankly, the fate of a lot of family farmers rests on our ability to get this done.

Last week, a friend of mine announced that he was quitting farming, which I suppose is not such unusual news these days. A lot of farmers are quitting farming. This friend happens to be Elroy Lindaas, who is a State senator. Elroy is a wonderful fellow. He

farms near Mayville, ND. I have been to the barn dance on his farm a good many times. I guess the last time was about 5 months ago. The barn dances that Elroy has are held up in the hayloft of a very large white barn.

Elroy and his wife have gone to various garage sales in and around Mayville over the years, and they would pick up a davenport here or a couch or a chair. So up in the hayloft of his barn he has this large expanse lined with very comfortable old chairs.

He has built himself a little stage. He plays guitar and he has neighbors that play musical instruments, as well. At this barn dance that he holds every year, they get a little band together. They hang some crepe paper. They get a couple hundred people who come up and fill the hayloft at the Lindaas barn.

On this farmstead, they have planted 120 consecutive crops. For 120 years they have planted crops on the Lindaas farm. But this year, the 121st year they won't be planting a crop because he is selling his farm this June.

Here is a farm that has been in that family for 120 years, passed from granddad to dad and son. Why does that farm at this point cease operation? Why does the family decide it cannot make it any longer? Here is a family farmer trying to do business, with prices for wheat and other grains at Depression-era prices. In constant dollars, the price they get for a bushel of wheat today is no different than it was during the Great Depression.

What does all this mean and what do we do about it all? The chart with this map shows what is happening in our country as we talk about the choices and priorities we will make in the supplemental appropriations bill and then the budget bill. This map shows those counties, which are marked in red, where we have had an outmigration of people. You will see the outmigration from the middle part of America, up and down the farm belt and especially in North Dakota. Up and down the entire farm belt in the Great Plains, we have an entire region of America that is being depopulated. People are leaving, not coming. Look at all of these counties, each of these in red are rural counties in which the population is leaving. These are the counties that have lost fifteen percent or more of their population in a fifteen-year period.

My home county, Hettinger County, ND, is probably a good example. Hettinger County, ND, is right here in Southwestern North Dakota. It, too, is marked in red. When I left Hettinger County there were 5,000 citizens living there. Now there are 3,000 citizens. The next county is Slope County. Both my home county and the next county are the size of Rhode Island, individually. Slope County has 900 people. A year ago or so they had seven babies born in the entire county.

What is happening with the depopulation of rural areas, with people moving

out, not moving in? Elroy Lindaas, after 120 years of planting crops and making a family farm work, is saying, "I can't do it anymore."

What is happening? A lot of things. The Presiding Officer will not be surprised when I mention the current farm bill, which in my judgment, is a disaster. In fact, it is interesting that in 1995 when we discussed the Budget Act on the floor of the Senate, that budget bill provided the framework for changing the farm bill. The budget that year framed the requirements under which a new farm bill had to be developed. It was developed into what was called the Freedom to Farm bill.

Freedom to Farm had two parts to it. One part made a lot of sense. It gave farmers the freedom to plant what they chose to plant, not what the Federal Government allowed them to plant.

Second, it cut the tie between farm prices and government payments. The bill's sponsors said because farm prices were so good and so robust and healthy at that time, we would give a transition payment on top of the current strong market prices, and then farmers would be on their own. That payment would decrease over a number of years after which farmers would be on their own. That was essentially the theory of the program. It was called transitioning-the-farmers-out-of-a-farm program.

The problem is, farm prices didn't stay healthy and family farmers discovered very quickly that as commodity prices for wheat, feed grains and others began to collapse, there wasn't much of a price support for them. There wasn't a government program that said, "You are important. So, when commodity prices collapse, somehow we will build a bridge over that pricing valley to see if we can help you get across."

We have our farm people looking 2 years, 5 years, 7 years ahead. They hear the economists say prices aren't going to improve much. They say if that is the case and if the Federal Government is not going to help and doesn't care whether there are family farmers left, they will leave. That is what is creating the depopulation of a rural area.

It is also true that the ability to raise grain here and ship it to Asia has diminished, as the Asian financial crisis took away our export markets. It is true that this administration has not been nearly as aggressive as it should have been on the Export Enhancement Program. It is also true that, frankly, the Congress did not provide what the administration asked for on EEP. The administration, Congress, and the markets shaped the circumstances that now conspire in ways that say to farmers there is not much hope for you out here.

As we watch the depopulation of a major part of our country, let me make another observation. Those farmers that stay in business will harvest a crop this fall and receive a price that is pretty anemic. When the farmers get in

the truck and haul the grain to the elevator, they will be told the food they produce doesn't really have much value. The farmers will scratch their heads and say, "I don't understand that."

This world adds a New York City in population every single month. Every single month another New York City in population appears on the face of this globe. At least a half billion people and probably far more than that go to bed every single night with an ache in their belly because they don't have anything to eat. Yet, we are telling our farmers that what they produce has no value. There is something fundamentally wrong with that.

Working on a bipartisan basis as a Congress, we have to find a way in this budget mechanism to say to family farmers that their presence in this country matters to America. It strengthens our country to have our food production produced by a network of broad-based economic owners, by our family farmers. It strengthens our country to have the family farm system existing in America.

We must decide and decide quickly that the current farm bill doesn't work. It must be changed. People say, "Do you want to go back to the old support prices?" I don't know. I am willing to discuss that. If you have a better idea, let me know. But, do you really want to go to any community in this area and say our nation's policy is more of the same? Do we want to keep seeing outmigration, and collapsed farm prices? Do we want to keep transitioning farmers out of farming?

Whatever ideas exist in this Chamber, I am willing to discuss. I have an idea for the first step. Let's take the caps off the price support loan rates and at least give farmers what the big print said it was going to give them in the farm bill, and what the fine print took away. Let's take the caps off the loan rates, and get the loan rates up to where they ought to be. That is the first step.

We have all the farm organizations around town who purport to support family farmers. I assume that is who is financing them. Yet, every single one has a different message about what ought to be done. Some do not support taking the cap off the loan rates. They don't have ideas, but they oppose those who do have ideas.

At some point, if we are going to save family farming for this country, we have to get together and find some kind of approach that will reconnect a decent income to those who produce.

This isn't the fault of family farmers. This is not their doing. They didn't cause the markets to collapse. They didn't cause the financial crisis in Asia. They didn't cause the unfair trade from Canada that allows a massive quantity of spring wheat and durum wheat to flood into our marketplace. They didn't cause that, and they ought not be victims.

They didn't cause the foreign policy problems that require us to have sanctions against other countries, or the foolish notion that we ought to have any sanctions at all on food and medicine. Farmers didn't cause that.

That is another step we ought to take. I don't say this suggesting that it will solve the farm problem, because it won't. We ought to decide all sanctions on food and medicine anywhere in the world ought to be ended. I may offer that to the budget resolution this week. Does anyone think Saddam Hussein or Fidel Castro missed a meal because we can't ship food to Cuba or Iraq? Not hardly. All that sanctions hurt are our farmers here in this country and poor people and hungry people abroad.

My point is we must pass this supplemental bill in order to allow some of these family farmers to get into the field this spring. Without it, many of them won't get into the field. Then we must fix this farm program because this farm program doesn't work. We must work on a range of other issues, including trade to deal with the unfair trade problems our farmers face. There are a whole series of other steps that we can and should take.

I want to mention this issue of priorities. I come from one of the most rural States in America, and our family farmers are in desperate trouble. Even as we debate these issues, we are told there is limited money available and we just can't do all of these things. If that is your priority, then farmers don't matter much.

I mentioned that in 1995 the genesis of the current farm bill originated here on the Senate floor in the Budget Act that was brought for a vote to the Senate. And so better farm policy could start this week here in the budget resolution that is brought to the Senate later this week.

Let's talk about what the priorities are. The majority party will bring a domestic budget mark to the floor this week that decreases domestic spending by slightly over \$20 billion. The proposed mark of the Budget Committee will have a \$9.1 billion increase for defense over that which was assumed in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. So, in defense, their budget will provide \$290 billion, a \$9 billion increase. But, in other domestic discretionary spending, their budget would take \$20 billion in cuts.

Now, last year in the fall, we passed some emergency aid for farmers. In that omnibus appropriations bill Congress provided aid for a range of things, including agriculture. \$1 billion was added for the national missile defense program. \$1 billion. It was money that wasn't asked for by the Defense Department. This money wasn't needed by the Defense Department. The Defense Department said it was spending money as rapidly as it could to find the technology and the solutions to hitting a bullet with a bullet, which is what the national missile defense program is.

The Defense Department said it really didn't have the capability of using any more money. The Congress said it didn't matter to them and demanded that they have \$1 billion more. So \$1 billion more emerged. I tried to get a few thousand dollars, a few hundred thousand dollars, or a few million dollars to deal with the emergencies in Indian housing and Indian health care. I couldn't do it. But \$1 billion, which the Department of Defense didn't want, didn't ask for, and didn't need emerged mysteriously. In fact, it turns out that they could not even spend it.

Of the \$1 billion, the Department of Defense could only find \$150 million in uses in fiscal year 1999. Do you know what that was for? A third of it, amounting to \$56 million was used for contract transition and rebaselining. Does anybody know what that is? Does that sound as if you are building a weapon? Contract transition and rebaselining. They are going to allocate another \$50 million in the next fiscal year because they could not use it in the last fiscal year. They want to use \$400 million on things other than national missile defense because they could not find a use for it in national missile defense.

This priority comes from a Congress that says that we don't have enough money and we can't help these farm folks. It doesn't matter that these farmers aren't doing very well. They say we can't help them much because we don't have the money.

My point is that this is about making choices. We have a responsibility to make thoughtful choices, good choices, choices that will strengthen our country. I find it more than a bit disappointing to discover that there is plenty of money for someone else's priorities, but not enough money to deal with what I think is a priority for this country such as the long-term economic health of family farming.

I want to also mention one contributing factor to the farm troubles in this country of ours. I mentioned trade just a moment ago. I want to go back to it because our prices have collapsed for a range of reasons. These are the prices that our farmers receive for grain when they haul it to the elevator. One of the reasons is that we have a trade policy in this country that is a terrible trade policy. We say to the rest of the world that we are for free trade, open trade, come and trade with us. Yet, we refuse to stand up and have any backbone at all to stand for our producers when we are the victims of unfair trade.

Let me give you an example. The Canadians continue to flood our country with their durum wheat and their spring wheat, undercutting our farmers' prices. Our nation can't seem to do a thing about it. For years now, it has gone on. I acknowledge that our Trade Ambassador and this President have taken some action, which is more than previous Presidents have done. Previous Presidents would not give the

time of day to this issue. But this President's action and the action of the Trade Ambassador is far short of what it should be, and they know it.

I found it interesting when I was in Europe a few months ago and I picked up the paper. I read that we are going into a trade war with Europe over bananas. I am sitting there in Europe thinking, gee, that is strange. Let's see, where do we produce bananas in the United States? I guess maybe we produce a few bananas in Hawaii. But by and large, we don't produce bananas in the United States. So why do we have a Trade Ambassador prepared to go into a trade war over bananas, something we don't produce? I guess it is because U.S. corporations produce bananas in Latin America and they are trying to sell them to Europe. Europe won't let the bananas in, so we get all exercised and we are going to have a trade war over bananas.

I want to ask the Trade Ambassador this: If you are willing to go into a trade war over bananas, which we don't produce, would you be willing to take some reasonable action against countries that inundate our markets and cut our prices on something we do produce, such as spring wheat, durum, and barley? Why is it that we are willing to go to bat here and ratchet up a big trade dispute with Europe over bananas when we don't produce any real bananas. Yet, we seem unable, or unwilling, to take action against the Canadians, who clearly are violating our trade laws and who are causing massive dislocation in the center part of our country by undercutting our grain markets and hurting our family farmers?

Oh, I have thought from time to time about getting a truckload of bananas and dumping it on the front steps of the USTR's office to say at least here you can see some bananas when you walk out. You won't see any in the fields and you won't see any banana trees anywhere you look in the continental United States. You have this big trade dispute going on over bananas, which you won't be able to find in most corners of this country. That would at least give our trade office a chance to see bananas. But I decided I could not afford to do that, and it would probably be a stupid stunt anyway.

Somebody needs to say: You are not thinking straight. If you want to stand up for the economic interests of this country, then stand up for things we produce. Then someone will say to me: Mr. Senator, you know there are some agricultural groups that support action against Europe on the banana issue? Yes, I am sure there are. We have dozens of farm organizations in this country who say they speak for farmers, and they wouldn't know a pair of cowering from an oil rag. I mean, they wouldn't know a pickup truck from a razorback hog. In fact, they don't know much about farming. They are about agribusiness. They lobby under the

name of farmers, but they really represent the agrifactories of this country.

I say to them: You are off supporting this dispute about bananas, and you are probably all upset that I am undercutting you. No, all I am interested in doing is getting the limited resources of the U.S. Trade Ambassador's office to start fighting for the economic interests of what we produce in this country. Things like wheat and steel? Sure, we have people concerned about steel. I will join them. How about focusing on wheat coming in from Canada at secret prices, sent to us by a state trading enterprise that would be illegal in this country? We send auditors up to Canada and they say, "We want information about what price you are selling for." They say, "We are sorry, we don't intend to give you any information at all." That is violative of our trade laws, and we ought to have a Trade Ambassador who will do something about that and a President who will join her to say it is time to stop that kind of unfair trade.

Well, Mr. President, my time is about over. I know that, as we begin the budget process this week and as we complete, hopefully, action on the supplemental this week, we will have a discussion about choices. I have talked a great deal about agriculture and the farm program.

Let me conclude by saying that one of the most significant choices we will make, in addition to those I have described, will be the issue of the broad choices of what we are able to do with the future surplus. One of the major choices will be to determine whether there will be reserves left from that surplus to invest in Social Security and to protect Medicare. I am especially concerned with the issue of Medicare, which is the major issue that represents the difference between the two budget resolutions that will be brought to the floor of the Senate.

That, I think, will be an aggressive and healthy debate and an appropriate one.

There are those who stood on this floor some 35 or so years ago and said that the Medicare Program would make sense for this country for senior citizens who had no health care. They found that insurance companies were not lining up to ask if they can insure older folks. They didn't run around looking for older folks to insure, because old folks aren't the kind of people you make money from. You insure young, healthy people, and make money from those folks.

Sixty percent of the senior citizens of this country had no health insurance, and we passed Medicare over the objections of many. Now, 99 percent of the senior citizens in this country have health care. They don't go to bed at night worried about whether their health circumstance will change in a way that will cause them very substantial trouble because they won't have the money to deal with their health

care needs. Medicare relieves them of that kind of anxiety.

We must, it seems to me, commit ourselves, in the context of choices that we make in the budget this year and in future years, to the long-term financial future and solvency of both Social Security and Medicare. I think in the next 2 or 3 days we will have a robust, healthy, and aggressive debate on this. Perhaps the debate will include some who never liked Medicare in the first place, and who wouldn't vote for it now, if they had a chance. I have heard a couple of people suggest as much in recent years. But, there are those on that side and perhaps many of us on the other who believe very strongly that this is a program that has been very, very healthy for tens of millions of American people and who believe that we ought to continue to provide solvency for it in the long term.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE SITUATION IN KOSOVO

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the situation in Kosovo. We have been watching this situation unfold for days, actually months—actually, you could say thousands of years. But it is coming to a head in the very near future, perhaps in hours. As I speak today, Richard Holbrooke is talking to Slobodan Milosevic and trying to encourage him to come to the peace table. I hope he is successful, and I know every American hopes that he is successful. But what I think we must talk about today is what happens if he is not.

What happens if Mr. Milosevic says, "No, I am not going to allow foreign troops in my country," and if he says he is going to move forward with whatever he intends to do in the governance of that country? I think we have to step back and look at the situation and the dilemma which we face, because there is no question, this is not an easy decision. What comes next?

Basically, the President has committed the United States to a policy in NATO to which he really does not have the authority to commit. The consequences are that we have to make a decision that would appear to walk away from the commitment he made without coming to Congress, and that is not a good situation. I do not like having to make such a choice, because I want our word to be good. When the United States speaks, I want our word to be good. Whether it is to our ally or to our enemy, they need to know what we say we will do.

But the problem here is, the President has gone out with a commitment before he talked to Congress about it, and now we have really changed the whole nature of NATO without congressional approval. We are saying that we are going to bomb a sovereign country because of their mistreatment of people within their country, the province of Kosovo, and we are going to take this action, basically declaring war on a country that should not be an enemy of the United States and in fact was a partner at the peace table in the Dayton accords on Bosnia.

So now we are taking sides. We are turning NATO, which was a defense alliance—is a defense alliance—into an aggressive, perhaps, declarer-of-war on a country that is not in NATO. Mr. President, I just do not think we can take a step like that without the Congress and the American people understanding what we are doing and, furthermore, approving of it.

There is no question that Mr. Milosevic is not our kind of person. We have seen atrocities that he has committed in Kosovo. But, in fact, there have been other atrocities committed by the parties with whom we are purporting to be taking sides. The Albanians have committed atrocities as well, the Kosovar Albanians. So we are now picking sides in a civil war where I think the U.S. security interest is not clear.

I think it is incumbent on the President to come to Congress, before he takes any military action in Kosovo, to lay out the case and to get congressional approval. What would he tell Congress? First of all, before we put one American in harm's way, I want to know: What is the intention here? What is the commitment? What happens in the eventuality that Mr. Milosevic does not respond to bombing, that he declares he is going to go forward without responding to an intervention in his country? What do we do then? Do we send ground troops in to force him to come to the peace table? And if we did, could we consider that is really a peace? What if NATO decides to strike and an American plane is shot down? What if there is an American POW? What then? What is our commitment then?

My concern here is that the administration has not looked at the third, fourth, and fifth steps in a plan. They have only addressed step 1, which is, we are going to bomb because they will not come to the peace table and accept the agreement that we have hammered out. I just say, before we go bombing sovereign nations, we ought to have a plan. We ought to know what steps 3, 4, and 5 are, because I believe Congress has a right to know what this commitment is. How many people from the United States of America are going to be put in harm's way? What is it going to cost and where is the money going to come from? Is it going to come from other defense accounts, so other places in the world where we have troops are