

Nevada, Mr. REID, and the Senator from California for the condolences and well wishes they have offered.

Yesterday, the parents in Jefferson County, CO, said goodbye to their children on their way to school as they have done on countless mornings, and as I have done, and as you have also done as a parent over the years. But for some, that goodbye must now be their final farewell. As a parent and grandparent and the husband of a person who taught school for over 10 years, I can't imagine the agony those families are feeling this morning. Today, my whole State is paralyzed with grief, as you might know.

Hundreds of families in Colorado endured a life-or-death lottery—knowing students at Columbine High School were dead, but not knowing if their youngsters were among those killed. It is tragic that on Earth Day the remains of those students will be returned to the Earth while their souls go to heaven.

The community of Littleton is a very nice town. I visit there often. Mr. President, Columbine High School is a fine school, with a fine staff, a good curriculum and nice youngsters. It has no history of racial violence or gang trouble or anything of that nature. It was not a school you would ever expect something like this to happen in. Certainly, there is a story in that and a tragedy. For those families, there will be no more hurried breakfasts, no more arguments over curfews when they send the youngsters to school, no more report cards, no more money for trips to the malls, and no more plans for after they leave high school.

What really frightens me is that, despite our best intentions to prevent this from happening, these horrors find a way to continue. In fact, Colorado has had a law on the books since 1994 that prevents any weapons from going into a public school. But they still do. With a gun, a bomb, a knife, a club, or whatever, young people are using violence as a way to resolve disagreements.

I don't know how we got there. Perhaps nobody does. I can remember the days when young people decided it was OK to have disagreements in the streets and they might have fist fights after school, or drag races, things of that nature. Those means were not right or acceptable, but those days are long gone. Now, too often they tend to kill their way to solutions. The disputes in those days were between two individuals, and they ended up shaking hands. Somebody lost and somebody won. In those days, we all lived through it. Now, all too often some of the parties to a conflict lose their lives. I don't know when we traded pugilism for pipe bombs. Frankly, I don't think they have found all the bombs at Littleton High School. They are still searching.

In fact, one went off at 2 o'clock this morning.

I don't know when these youngsters got accustomed to killing each other.

But I know we often blame television, we blame movies, we blame video games, and we blame a number of other things.

But those children in Jefferson County and their families ache every day. I just wanted to tell the people of Colorado that my colleagues, Senator WYDEN, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator REID, Senator LAUTENBERG, and a number of others have all offered their sympathies, and want people in Colorado to know that our hearts in the United States Senate are with all of the families through this terrible and tragic time.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 remarks of Mr. McCONNELL and Mr. LIEBERMAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 846 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, suggests the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Angela Ewell-Madison, Mr. Sean McCluskie, and Mr. Jordan Coyle of my staff be afforded privileges of the floor during the duration of my remarks.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. President.

BUDGET REFORM

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I prepared these remarks yesterday in anticipation that we would be debating the budget reform bill today. It is my understanding that subsequent to yesterday's offering of an amendment, which was referred to as the lockbox amendment, in lieu of the budget reform bill, that now the budget reform bill has been withdrawn.

But anticipating that that is a relatively temporary step, because we cannot avoid having to deal with the issues of budget reform if we are serious about our goal of preserving the momentum that is currently underway

towards a surplus in the Federal Government fiscal accounts, I offer some comments today which I hope will be useful as we prepare for that return to the budget reform discussion.

I am very pleased that we are focusing on this issue, because it is an indication of our commitment to retain the fiscal discipline that has gotten us to the point where we have the opportunity to talk about a Federal budget surplus and how it should be appropriately used.

I want to discuss two interrelated issues. One I will call the issue of the "vault": How will we protect the surplus that we have once it has been attained? But the even more significant predicate issue is, How do we achieve the surplus?

I am concerned by some of the actions that were taken in 1998 which indicate a lack of resolve to protect the surplus. It is no good to have the securest vault in the bank possible if we fritter away the money we would like to place in that vault. If we do not address the underlying issues of fiscal discipline, responsibility, the Social Security trust fund will be endangered no matter how strong our lockbox is to protect it.

This Congress is in a unique position to reaffirm the stated commitment to fiscal discipline and to cure the previous willingness of Congresses to undermine that discipline through budget trickery.

As recently as 1993, the Federal budget deficit was at a record high of \$290 billion. Last year, we learned that 5 years of effort, fiscal austerity, and a strong economy had transformed that staggering deficit into the first budget surplus in more than a generation. While we celebrated that success—it was a cause for celebration—it did not give Congress carte blanche authority to return to its spendthrift ways of the past. Especially daunting was the reality that 100 percent of the surplus was the result of surpluses in the Social Security trust fund.

We have a responsibility to our current generation, as well as to their children and grandchildren, to save that extra money until Social Security's long-term solvency is assured. Unfortunately, the 105th Congress stumbled in its commitment to that goal. Though it resisted a proposal to spend surplus funds on a catch-all omnibus list of tax cuts, and it similarly rejected suggestions that the surplus could be used for increased spending, it did not exercise similar good judgment during the end-of-the-year rush to adjourn. The same Congress that claimed to be saving the surplus for Social Security participated in raids on that same surplus through the back door.

In the waning hours of last year's budget negotiations, we passed a \$532 billion omnibus appropriations bill. Inserted in that \$532 billion spending bill was \$21.4 billion of so-called emergency spending. As we know, the fact that that \$21.4 billion was designated as an

emergency meant that it did not have to be offset by spending reductions elsewhere in the budget or by additional revenue. Rather, it was funded by reducing the surplus, that 100-percent Social Security-derived surplus.

Let me illustrate with these charts what has been happening.

In 1998, the stated Social Security surplus, that is the amount of revenue into the Social Security trust fund in excess of the checks that were written to the beneficiaries of Social Security, was \$99 billion. But before that \$99 billion could be realized, there was a predicate called for in it, and that was for \$27 billion in order to offset the deficit that the Federal Government was running in its non-Social Security accounts. And then we added to that \$27 billion an additional \$3 billion in the fiscal year 1998 expenditures through that emergency appropriation that did not have to be offset by reductions in spending or additional revenue but came directly out of the surplus fund. So instead of having a surplus of \$99 billion, we ended up with a surplus of \$69 billion.

What is the projection for fiscal year 1999? This year, the Social Security surplus has grown to \$127 billion, but, again, the first call is going to be to offset the deficit which will be projected for the non-Social Security portion of the budget, which is \$3 billion, the next \$13 billion, which is this year's component of last year's emergency spending bill, and in addition to that, we are now discussing the possibility of additional funding for the Kosovo emergency of \$6 billion. That is the most modest number which has been suggested thus far. Others are suggesting that number might be doubled or tripled in terms of its cost.

Instead of a Social Security surplus of \$127 billion, we are now at \$105 billion in Social Security surplus, with that number itself being subject to further dilution if there are additional emergency outlays allocated.

For fiscal year 2000, we are looking at a Social Security surplus of \$138 billion, minus \$5 billion to pay for deficits other than Social Security in the Federal budget, \$5 billion, which is the final installment on that 1998 emergency appropriation bill, and, again, the possibility of additional emergency spending for Kosovo or other purposes.

Mr. President, it is critical that we exercise constraint in terms of how we use the emergency spending power available to Congress, or we will substantially dilute the funds that are going to be locked up in this lockbox vault protected for Social Security beneficiaries. I think there are several steps we need to take.

The first is that Congress needs to commit itself to reexamining that \$21.4 billion we spent last year and determine what portions of that \$21.4 billion did not meet the standards for an emergency appropriation. With that commitment, we should restore those funds to the Social Security surplus

during this year's budget consideration. I am pleased that the Senate adopted an amendment to our budget resolution which committed us to that objective. That should be a commitment in which we should be joined by the House and the President.

Over the long haul, it is critical that we institute some additional spending procedures which will allow us to respond to true emergencies without, as we did in 1998, opening the door to misuse.

Senator SNOWE of Maine, Senator VOINOVICH of Ohio, and I have introduced legislation to permanently close these loopholes in our current budget procedure. These procedures would basically provide for a 60-vote supermajority of the Senate to be required in the event there was a challenge that items which were listed as emergencies in an emergency spending bill were not true emergencies and did not meet the statutory definition; also, a 60-vote supermajority for the passage of any bill which contained emergency spending so we could not have a repetition of what happened last year in that emergency spending was inserted into a large omnibus spending bill and, therefore, not effectively subject to removal.

Those are some of the procedural steps that should be taken in order to assure we do not have a continued repetition of a dilution of the Social Security surplus before it has a chance to get into the lockbox.

Now let me make a few points about the lockbox itself, the vault into which we intend to place these surpluses that, hopefully, we have protected with greater vigilance than we did in the fall of 1998.

I strongly support developing measures which will create a financially solvent Social Security system for current and future beneficiaries. This is not only a fiscal goal, but it is a moral responsibility, a moral responsibility to carry out the contract that exists between the American people and the American Government for their financial security in retirement. I am pleased the Senate is debating this issue, since the trustees of the Social Security system are predicting that in the year 2034 the current Social Security system will not be solvent. It is critical that we take steps now to protect long-term solvency.

However, the proposed lockbox, which was a part of the budget reform legislation, in my opinion, is not sufficient to accomplish this objective.

What are its deficiencies?

First, it allows the Social Security surplus, in addition to paying down the national debt, to be used for unspecified "Social Security reform."

Now, Social Security reform can mean different things, but not all of those things are related to achieving solvency in the Social Security system. Would Social Security reform include increasing the benefits which would make the program potentially even

more subject to insolvency at an earlier date? Would it mean reducing revenue into the system, including such proposals as returning to a pay-as-you-go system or diverting a portion of the current revenue out of the Social Security system into some individual retirement accounts? All of those ideas may or may not have merit, but they should not be accomplished at the expense of our commitment to solvency in the current Social Security system.

I propose to offer an amendment at such time as it is appropriate that would have the Social Security surplus used solely to pay off national debt, specifically that component of the debt which is held by the public. Only this action will ensure the Social Security surplus is used for its intended purpose of meeting our obligations to the American people and, in so doing, contribute to a stronger American economy, which is the fundamental basis upon which the Federal Government will be able to meet its future obligations to Social Security beneficiaries.

There will be a cascading series of positive effects on the economy if we commit the Social Security surplus to paying down the national debt. Paying down the debt will lower long-term interest rates. These lower rates will make it less expensive for Americans to borrow money, and this lower cost of borrowing will encourage business ventures to expand, to increase their productivity, to increase their hiring.

It will encourage increased investment in long-term fundamental areas such as education. The new economic activity and increased labor productivity will lead to increased economic growth. This growth will lead to the strengthened capacity of the National Government to meet its Social Security obligations.

These points were best expressed by the chairman of the Federal Reserve System, Mr. Alan Greenspan, when he said,

... in light of these inexorable demographic trends, I have always emphasized that we should be aiming budgetary surpluses and using the proceeds to retire outstanding Federal debt. This would put further downward pressure on long-term interest rates, which would enhance private capital investment, labor productivity, and economic growth.

If I were allowed, I would also have offered a second amendment that would not tie the Government's ability to borrow debt from the public to a 10-year budget projection. In the legislation that was before us, there was a proposal to use future estimates of our national debt as the benchmark for determining whether we had protected the Social Security surplus. I think there is merit in that approach, but I believe this legislation had carried that merit beyond its reasonable limits.

I would provide, through the amendment I had intended to offer, for a more reasonable and credible debt ceiling target. It also would have provided enhanced flexibility to accommodate

unanticipated events, both domestic and foreign. I would suggest that it is an impossible task for any person to estimate the budget and to estimate the national debt on a 10-year basis. I would offer as my basis for that statement a look-back just 5 years, not 10 years, which this legislation proposed.

In January of 1993, the Congressional Budget Office estimated what the national debt would be 5 years hence, in the fiscal year 1998, which ended September 30, 1998. Their projection was that the national debt on that date would be \$4.863 trillion. At the same time, in January of 1993, the administration made an estimate of what they thought the national debt would be 5 years hence. Their projection was \$4.576 trillion. The actual number was \$3.720 trillion. So the CBO was off by over a trillion dollars. The administration was off by \$856 billion. That was a 5-year projection.

What we are proposing in this legislation is to use 10-year projections and to give those the sanctity of almost biblical correctness, because they would become the basis upon which our future budgets would be predicated.

Mr. President, seeing my time is about to expire, I offer these amendments as an indication of the direction which I think we should be proceeding in as we strive together to achieve a very important goal, which is to protect the Social Security surplus for its intended purpose of meeting the obligations that we have for this and future generations of Americans. I believe the amendments I will offer will help both assure that the money is protected before it goes into the vault, and that the vault itself is a reasonable and secure place in which we can place those funds.

Protecting Social Security for our children and grandchildren is one of the highest goals of the Federal Government. We can make the lockbox stronger, and we can and should control emergency spending so there will be money to put in the lockbox for future generations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. BREAX addresses the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

VIOLENT CRIME

Mr. BREAX. Mr. President, I rise to make comments about the very unfortunate situation that occurred in Denver, CO, yesterday at Columbine High School. I know that our entire Nation mourns and grieves for the students and the teachers who lost their lives in the very tragic occurrence that happened just yesterday.

I, and I know all of my colleagues, hope for a day when the young people, our Nation's children, will never again have to fear for their safety anywhere in this country—but especially in their own schools that they attend each day. I certainly want to join with others who have extended their sympathies

and condolences to the families and friends of those children who lost their lives. We hope for the very best for their families as they deal with this very tragic situation. I express my desire that they know our prayers are with them and their families.

As I, along with millions of Americans, watched on television yesterday the carrying out of something that used to be only in theatrical performances and in the movies—the tragic situation—I was drawn to the men and women of the Denver Police, Colorado law enforcement officials, members of the SWAT team, and the emergency medical personnel who were all working so diligently to spare people from suffering grave damages that were being inflicted on the victims in that community. They were doing everything they could to minimize the loss of life and human suffering and misery that was being brought about by the tragic actions of two apparently very disturbed and deranged young students who carried out these dastardly deeds.

I was also reminded of all of the people in my home State of Louisiana who, at the same time, have been working every day, night, week, and month to try to do something about the abnormal crime rate that has affected my own State of Louisiana. I report to my colleagues and to the people of our State that there is, indeed, some good news. The good news is contained in a report I saw just yesterday while this tragic event was going on in Colorado. The good news was that violent crime in the city of New Orleans, for example, has fallen 21 percent just since the month of January. This is the 11th consecutive quarter in which total crime—and particularly violent crime—was down.

This is not something that just happened. It happened because of the joint efforts of Mayor Marc Morial and the city council, along with the police force and, in particular, the superintendent of police in New Orleans, Superintendent Richard Pennington, and all the men and women of the New Orleans police force who have been working very diligently in a joint and cooperative effort to try to reach the success that now is becoming more and more apparent.

Since Chief Pennington took over the New Orleans Police Department, violent crime has dropped 55 percent. Overall, crime has fallen 33 percent. Murders are down 30 percent. Armed robberies, which numbered 1,200 every quarter, are now down to the 390s. Assaults are down 15 percent compared to the first quarter of 1998.

The New Orleans story is truly a real success story in confronting violent crime and doing something about it and doing something that has been enormously successful. Chief Pennington has said this success is a result of “saturating the streets with more officers and putting them in key places” and improving the investigations of repeat offenders.

I remember, for many months, we talked about President Clinton's proposal that the Congress adopted regarding community policing. This is a real example of the fact that community policing does in fact get the job done when you have people who believe in it. This administration can be justifiably proud of their proposal, and the States that implemented it and benefited from it can justifiably be pleased with the results. Chief Pennington has not only worked with Mayor Marc Morial and the city council to hire more people, he has been able to use the COPS program to hire 200 additional officers. New Orleans has received \$8.6 million through this Federal program, dollars that have paid the salaries of extra and new police officers—obviously, money that has been well spent. Also, Chief Pennington has installed Comstat, which uses block-by-block data to track crime and find so-called hot spots in the community.

Using this data, the chief and his enforcement officials can move his offices from quiet areas to those areas that need more attention and need more police presence.

Obviously, the bottom line is these strategies and community policing programs are working. We now see actual indications and statistics which say that New Orleans is today a much safer place than it used to be, so that the thousands and thousands of people who regularly visit our cities for the numerable festivals, activities and celebrations which are part of our Louisiana culture, and particularly part of the New Orleans culture, can come to our city knowing it is a much safer place than it used to be.

I am particularly reminded of the next two weekends. We celebrate the jazz festival in New Orleans, and literally thousands of people from all over this country and literally from all over this world will be visiting our city. The good news is that they now know that when they visit these cities it is much safer than it has been in the past because of the actions of so many people who are dedicated, just as the people in Denver, to making their communities a safer place.

While we remember the tragedies in one city today in our Nation, we can also take great pride in knowing that activities by dedicated people are making a difference and that things in most communities are getting better. New Orleans is one example of that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATO'S STRATEGIC CONCEPT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, as we approach the 50th anniversary Summit