

it wore black trench coats. Last time it was children's hunting gear. Next time it will be some other costume, but it will still be the culture of death. That is the Pope's phrase; it is how he describes the world we live in.

The boys who did the killing, the famous Trench Coat Mafia, inhaled too deep the ocean in which they swam. Think of it this way. Your child is an intelligent little fish. He swims in deep water. Waves of sound and sight, of thought and fact, come invisibly through that water, like radar; they go through him again and again, from this direction and that. The sound from the television is a wave, and the sound from the radio; the headlines on the newsstand, on the magazines, on the ad on the bus as it whizzes by—all are waves. The fish—your child—is bombarded and barely knows it. But the waves contain words like this, which I will limit to only one source, the news.

Then she goes through and lists:

. . . was found strangled and is believed to have been sexually molested. . . .

There are a number of headlines, and they finish this portion by saying:

This is the ocean in which our children swim. This is the sound of our culture. It comes from all parts of our culture and reaches all parts of our culture, and all the people in it, which is everybody.

Listen to this from the New York Times today:

By producing increasingly violent media, the entertainment industry has for decades engaged in a lucrative dance with the devil.

That was in the New York Times today. It goes on to describe a process that our young people are going through, that a former Army officer talked about being desensitization, conditioning of people, being able to do heinous violent acts that they are taking culture conditioning through a movie, music, the Internet that just constantly bombard them and it desensitizes them to the humanness surrounding them.

Dave Grossman, a former Army officer and professor at West Point and also the University of Arkansas, says that these are the same techniques that were used to great effect during the Vietnam War to increase the "firing rate"—that is, the percentage of soldiers who would actually fire a weapon during an encounter from the 15 to 20 percent range in World War II to as much as 95 percent in Vietnam.

Grossman has written "On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society," in which he discusses how conditioning techniques were used to teach Vietnam-bound soldiers.

And then it goes on and he says many of these same techniques are involved in our culture today.

Mr. President, we have got to address this. It is time to do something. I think we in the Senate have to say we are not powerless to address this. We can fight back, and we must fight back. We know this is going on in the culture today. We know it is out there. We know what is happening. We know what happened in Columbine. We also know, most of us across the country, it is likely to happen again somewhere else, in some other good high school, in some other place where this never should happen, as it has happened in the past in Paducah, KY; Pearl, MS; other places;

Jonesboro, AR; across this country. We can and we must fight back, and now is the time to do it.

I suggest two solutions. No. 1, anybody listening or watching, let's all pledge that we will change our culture, our individual culture we are involved in right now, what is it that is going on in our family, in our community, in our school, wherever we are within our culture that is part of this, and let's change it. We are not helpless to changing this. What is coming into your home right now? Do you have things coming into your home right now that are violent, that are of a nature with which you wouldn't agree, or over the Internet, magazines, video games, movies, television? We are not powerless to stop it coming into our homes. Let us all pledge to stop it.

I hope that many people across this country will start societies for cultural renewal within their communities where people can come together and say we are going to change the culture in our community; we are not going to wait on producers out of California; we are not going to wait on Washington to do this; we are going to change the culture here, now; we are going to bind together and we are going to say, what can we do in our community to reduce teen suicide, to reduce child abuse, to reduce out-of-wedlock births, to reduce the violence, the drug use, to reduce those sorts of things in our culture.

Let's not wait until it comes to us. Let's start binding together as people and forming societies to do this now. We can do it. If 10 people in any community of a limited size, say, of a quarter million, would come together and say, we are going to change the culture in our community, they could start this in their community and they could get it done. With passion, with prayer, with people of commitment, they could do it. It could happen. They could move forward. They can change their culture. We can each change our culture. Let us open our eyes and see what is happening.

The second thing I think we in the Senate need to do is create a special commission on cultural renewal. We need to address this topic. We in the Senate should have a high-level commission of people from multiple walks of life searching for the answers to two questions: One, what made this culture the way it is? How did we get to this point we are today? What made us this way? Second, and more important, how do we change it?

I will be hosting a hearing on May 4, asking about the marketing of violence, in the Commerce Committee. There we are going to be asking people to address the point about the marketing of violence in our society and how it is being used to sell various products and what we can do to stop it.

I want to be clear, too. We obviously have limits in government, and government is part of the culture, but it is not the total culture. Government is limited. This is much more about all of

us joining together to say we can change these sorts of things. We want to highlight some problems such as what is taking place in the marketing of violence. Why are companies doing this? What is their mode of operation? How can we dissuade them from doing this? Because it has a profound effect throughout this culture, as the people in Littleton, CO, know all too well, as we know all the rest of the way across this Nation.

Cultures change, and we must determinedly change ours, not so much by laws as by changing our thinking about what we consume. We can do it. We must do it. We will do it. It is time we do it.

I am afraid people are getting to the point of wondering if we can. Yes, we can. As the culture moved in this direction, it can assuredly move away from it. But it is going to take a determined effort. It is going to take an effort not just of saying OK, Washington is going to solve it, or Hollywood is going to solve it, or New York is going to solve it. We each have to dig in and try to solve it in our own community, and we need to address it from here, too.

I will be pressing this on the leadership of the Senate, that we do have such a high-level special commission so we can get at these issues: How did we get to where we are? How do we get away from this? How do we solve it? And we can.

I thank the Chair, and 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. 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.

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to just briefly mention a couple of issues this morning.

First, I would like to comment on some of the statements made this weekend, especially by the Senate majority leader, but by others as well, dealing with the issue of Social Security.

This weekend, on a Sunday talk show, our colleague, Senator LOTT, indicated that he felt that the issue of Social Security reform was dead for this Congress.

Vice President GORE this morning expressed the fervent hope that this is not the case. I would join the Vice President in saying that it is not good public policy for our country to give up on the important task of reforming Social Security.

The Social Security program has been a critically important program for our country. It has made life so much better for so many older Americans for so long. The problems of our Social Security system are born of success—not failure. The success is that

people are living longer and better lives in our country. At the start of this century, you were expected, on average, to live to be 48 years old. Now, at the end of the century, you are expected to live on average to about 78 years of age—a 30-year increase in life expectancy.

For a lot of reasons—better nutrition, breathtaking breakthroughs in medical science, better medical facilities—a whole series of things contribute to the success. But the result of the success is that people are living longer, and that puts strains on the Social Security system. But we ought not shrink from the challenge of those strains.

We can solve this issue. We can make Social Security solvent for at least the next 75 years and beyond. Let's not at this point decide that the 106th Congress cannot deal with the Social Security challenge. Of course we can.

President Clinton and Vice President GORE made a proposal at the start of this Congress. Just as a starting point, they put forward a proposal to let us sink our teeth into this issue, and make it a priority.

I know there is a lot of controversy about how you might reform and change and improve the solvency of the Social Security system for the long term. But I think the best way to approach this—I agree with Vice President GORE—is for both parties to resolve that this shall be a priority; we, together, should decide to save Social Security in this Congress.

I ask the majority leader here in the Senate and others to agree with President Clinton and Vice President GORE that this ought to be job No. 1 for this Congress. Let us together reform the Social Security program, and make the changes that are necessary to extend its solvency for the long term into the future.

Again, while we do it, let me remind those who listen to this debate that the problems confronted by the Social Security system are not problems of a program that doesn't work. It works, and works well. They are problems resulting from longer and better lives for many older Americans in this country.

THE TRAGEDY IN LITTLETON, COLORADO

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to talk just for a moment about the horrible tragedy that occurred in Littleton, CO, last week.

I am a North Dakotan. I have been a North Dakotan all of my life. I did, however, leave our State to go to graduate school in Colorado. Following graduate school, I worked in Colorado, and worked, in fact, in Littleton, CO. It is a nice community, a suburb of Denver.

Last week, I was, along with all other Americans, horrified to see the pictures on television of the school shooting at Columbine High School that took the lives of so many innocent

young boys and girls, and also a teacher. And I asked myself, what is causing this? What is at the root of this kind of violence? The Littleton, CO, shooting is just the latest in a series of school shootings. Unfortunately, there have been many others in the last several years.

I can't watch the television set without getting tears in my eyes. Moments ago, I was turning on a television set and I saw the funeral for a very brave teacher who died that day in that school in Colorado. We ask ourselves over and over and over again, what has changed? What is causing all of this?

On Friday, I met with a high school assembly in North Dakota. We talked at great length about these issues. This morning I spent all morning at a youth detention facility called Oak Hill and talked to young folks at that facility from 12 years old on up, young people who had committed violent crimes and who are now committed to that detention facility not more than an hour from this Capitol Building.

I don't have any better answers perhaps than anyone else in America about these issues. I have some thoughts about some of it. Obviously, first, it all starts at home. There isn't a substitute for good parenting.

One of the young boys this morning at the Oak Hill Detention Center, who has been involved in drugs and violent crime, said he only had one parent. He said his parent checked on him from time to time but he said, "Checking in on young folks from time to time isn't enough."

Another part of the problem is drugs and the accessibility of drugs. In addition, a country with 220 to 240 million guns, and with seemingly easy accessibility to guns by children, makes parenting more difficult.

How about the violence children are exposed to every day? By the time children graduate from high school they will spend about 12,000 hours in a classroom and about 20,000 hours in front of a television set. Study after study after study, year after year after year shows that the steady diet of violence seen by our young people on television affects their behavior. Does it turn them into murderers? No. Does it affect their behavior? Yes, of course it does.

Corporations spend \$200 billion a year in this country advertising in the media. Yet when we are suggesting through studies that the steady diet of violence offered to our young children on television is hurting them, the same people will say, "Gee, the media has no influence on our children." If that is the case, why is \$200 billion a year spent advertising tennis shoes, jerseys, and more? If it doesn't work, why do we see it used so extensively? Of course the media has an enormous influence.

Last week, while these shootings at school were taking place, as horrifying as it was for everyone in America to watch SWAT teams move into the building and young children run from the building in panic, one of the net-

works broke for a commercial. The commercial break was to encourage us to watch a new program called "Mr. Murder." I thought to myself, I guess that says a lot, doesn't it? We are watching these children at this high school under siege by young gunmen, and then there is an advertisement for the new program, "Mr. Murder."

Is a murder program on television causing these murders in the school? That is not my allegation at all. Does it hurt our children? The pop culture of increasingly violent television, increasingly violent movies—or how about increasingly violent lyrics in music? There is a man in Minot, ND, whose young boy put a bullet through his brain. When he found his son, he was lying on his bed with his earphones connected to a compact disk that was playing over and over and over and over again lyrics to a Marilyn Manson song saying the way to end all of this "is with a bullet in your head." For 3 months, he obsessed on this kind of music, and then his father found him lying on his bed with a bullet in his head. The teacher of a young boy named Mitchell, who killed 4 of his classmates and 1 teacher and wounded 10 others, testified before the Senate Commerce Committee last June.

She talked about 13-year-old Mitchell. She was Mitchell's teacher, taught Mitchell English. He was always respectful, she said, saying "Yes, ma'am," "No, ma'am." She never saw him exhibit anger. After the killings, she said the classmates had a discussion. They discovered Mitchell had been obsessing on an entirely new kind of music—Bone Thugs and TuPac. And she told us the lyrics that Mitchell had been listening to in "Crept and We Came" by Bone Thugs:

Cockin the 9 and ready to aim
Pullin the Trigger
To blow out your brains
Bone got a gang
Man we crept and we came.

This song has about 40 murder images, like "puttin them in the ground and pumpin the gun."

That is what Mitchell was listening to.

"Body Rott," by Bone Thugs. Or here are the lyrics from "I Ain't Mad at Ya" by TuPac.

I can see us after school
We'd bomb on the first [blank blank]
With the wrong [blank] on. And from "2 of Amerikas Most Wanted:"
Picture perfect, I paint a perfect picture.
Bomb the hoochies with precision . . .
Ain't nuttin but a gangsta party.

These lyrics are from Mitchell's teacher who wanted us to know what he was listening to.

Is this part of the culture? Does this hurt our children? Is it easy to parent with these kinds of images, these kinds of thoughts coming from our television set, from compact disks? Should we think through all of this—not just at the surface with parenting, drugs, and guns—but also the issue of pop culture?

If \$200 billion is spent advertising in the media because it influences behavior, should we as parents and should we