

Senator KENNEDY and Senator REID asking, I think almost a year ago, for this matter to be considered.

Mr. HATCH. You may have done that. The administration has fought us on these issues, and frankly—

Mr. DURBIN. The administration supports our position.

Mr. HATCH. They do now and they didn't then. They support it now for crass political purposes.

Let me say one other thing. The Senator has been on the Judiciary Committee. He knows these are hot-button issues, and hot-button issues are very difficult issues to handle. He knows I want to solve these problems. But he also knows that there is a wide disparity of belief in both bodies, and it is almost impossible to bring everybody together and solve every problem, just like that. We have done our best.

Mr. DURBIN. We have not had a vote on this floor on this, have we?

Mr. HATCH. We have on the LIFE Act. It is part of the bill.

Mr. DURBIN. In terms of what we have proposed—the three bills we have proposed—I don't believe we have had a vote on the floor on them.

Mr. HATCH. I don't think we have.

Mr. DURBIN. There are a number of people who have criticized Congress because we can't act in a bipartisan fashion. Frankly, we don't get a chance to act, if we can't bring a bill to the floor—and if we can't have amendments and if we can't have debates and votes.

Mr. HATCH. One reason why it is difficult to do so is because of the wide disparity of different beliefs, and if one House or the other won't let it come to the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. If the only matters that we can consider are matter of consensus, what in the world has this Chamber turned into? Why are we afraid of debate and amendments?

Mr. HATCH. That is not my point. In this climate, any single Senator can stop anything. In the House of Representatives, any block of Members can stop anything. These are hot-button issues, and I think it is pretty amazing what we have been able to get done.

Mr. DURBIN. Let me reclaim my time.

Mr. HATCH. Can I make one last comment with the indulgence of my friend?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield.

Mr. HATCH. President Clinton properly signed the 1996 immigration bill. But now weeks before election day he seeks to turn the 1996 act on its head.

I, too, want to help constituents. But putting several million people who violated the immigration laws ahead of the line of the 3.5 million people who are legitimately waiting and have waited for years to come here legally, it seems to me, is wrong.

Mr. DURBIN. I was happy to yield to the Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Especially under these circumstances.

Mr. DURBIN. But I certainly want to add a few things.

Mr. HATCH. I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this image is being created under this immigration act that we are talking about people who managed to sneak into the United States illegally and who have lived their lives in violation of the law and are now trying to sneak into citizenship. There are people like that, I am sure, but they are an extremely small minority.

The vast majority of people we are concerned about are people such as Sarah. Sarah is a 19-year-old girl in southern California. She was born in Mexico and adopted at the age of 4. English is her primary language. She lives at home with her family. She is adored by her parents and her five older siblings. She is also an illegal immigrant. Why is she an illegal immigrant? It turns out that Sarah's parents made a crucial mistake at the time of adoption. They didn't apply for citizenship. The family wrongly assumed that she automatically became a citizen when they completed the formal adoption procedures in the California courtroom. No one told them they had to file separately for citizenship. It was only last year when they decided to take a trip to Mexico and asked for a passport that they realized Sarah is here illegally.

Is this someone who managed to sneak across the border and is living in violation of the law?

There are thousands of Sarahs who are, frankly, looking for relief in Congress and who can make a contribution to the United States.

But the fact that we have not brought a serious immigration bill—but for one H-1B visa bill—before Congress is the reason this President has put his foot down and said: Congress, don't go home until you address this problem.

There are people such as Sarah across America who deserve fair treatment. Frankly, they have been ignored.

I count the Senator from Utah as my friend. But I have to say that the Senate Judiciary Committee has not taken up this issue. They have ignored it. He identified the reason: It is controversial.

When you talk about immigrants, there are a lot of people who say I know how to exploit that issue. Let me tell you something. I know that is the case in my home State of Illinois. But I happen to be the son of an immigrant. I am very proud of the fact that I serve in this Senate as the son of immigrants. And many of us in this country look to our parents and grandparents as immigrants with great pride.

We should look at immigration fairly and honestly and in a legal way. You can't do it if you run away from a debate on immigration law the way we have in the Senate for the last two years.

President Clinton, hold your ground. For those across America who are waiting for us to do the fair and right and equitable thing for immigrants,

hold your ground. Insist that this Senate, before it goes home, and this Congress, before it leaves to go back to campaign, are fair to those across America who are looking to be treated equitably and justly under our immigration system.

I am responding, of course, to what the Senator from Utah raised as an issue. It wasn't the reason I came to the floor, but I feel passionately about it.

Senator KENNEDY, Senator REID, and myself are the three major sponsors of the measure on which President Clinton is insisting. They can add, I am sure, during the course of this debate their strong feelings as well.

CHOOSING A PRESIDENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in just a few days the American people get to make one of the most important decisions that we are ever called on to make, and that is to choose a leader for our country. It appears from all of the polls that the American people just can't decide. The polls go up and down every single week. You see one candidate ahead one week and another candidate ahead the next. Frankly, the verdict of public opinion will be rendered on November 7, and we will decide the leader for the next 4 years.

Many of us believe this is a decision of importance way beyond 4 years. We think the next President is going to chart a course for many years to come.

We have to make a very basic decision.

Frankly, if you believe that the Presidency is an easy responsibility, and if you believe that America will run forward in a positive way on automatic pilot, then I think, frankly, you might be inclined to vote for Governor Bush because he has spoken in very general terms about what he thinks about America. He has made specific proposals, which are fairly radical departures from what we have been, and he says everything is going to be fine; in fact, it will be better.

Many of us, though, can remember something that perhaps Governor Bush never experienced. He was not a Governor in Texas during the period of time when we dealt with the worst deficits in the history of the United States in Washington. Under Presidents Reagan and Bush, we dealt with deficits that were crippling to this American economy. I saw it in my home State of Illinois with high unemployment and high inflation. People weren't building homes and weren't starting businesses. It was a very bad time. We were in a recession. We paid a bitter price for it—families and businesses across America. Thank goodness, in 1993, we turned a corner and started moving forward. Some of the things that have happened since are absolutely historic.

If you take a look, since March 1991—which goes back to the Bush Presidency for a few months—we have had

115 months of straight economic expansion, the longest in the history of the United States.

Governor Bush may not remember what it was like back in the old days when we would get 12 months or so of economic expansion. But that is what America truly was like.

Look at what happened to the inflation rate during that same period of time.

In 1980, the inflation rate was over 12 percent. Then it went down at the end of the administration of Jimmy Carter. Of course, it went down and it stayed down. But we have kept the inflation rate at the lowest sustained level since 1965.

These things don't happen easily or automatically. Those who think Governor Bush can come to it with little or no experience and keep it going have to answer some questions. Will he be able to do as we have done in the last 8 years—create 22 million new jobs? His father created 2½ million jobs during his 4 years; President Reagan, 16 million during his 8 years. Twenty-two million is a record, and it is a record of which we are proud. It means people have a chance.

But we can see Presidents who came on board such as former President Bush who really didn't have good luck when it came to job creation and getting people back to work.

Take a look at Federal spending.

The Republicans criticize Democrats as big spenders. Look what has happened to Federal spending as a percentage of our gross domestic product. It has gone to one of the lowest levels since 1966. We have seen Federal spending heading down and we are being criticized for being big spenders. The fact is, we have not been. Just the opposite is true: For the people often left behind, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years; African Americans and Hispanic Americans with the highest employment rates in modern memory; improvement in education scores, an indication that everybody gets a chance to improve in this country.

The overall surplus we have seen generated is the largest in our history: \$237 billion under the Clinton-Gore administration. Look at the red ink under Presidents Reagan and Bush in the early years of Clinton-Gore and how we turned the corner. There are those who think that will continue, but it isn't true. If we go the wrong way on critical decisions, we will pay the price.

The American Academy of Actuaries came out with their report last week. They took a look at Governor Bush's proposal for Social Security and they said we would return to Federal budget deficits around 2015 under George W. Bush's proposal. This group, which is nonpartisan, and is supposed to know basically more than most of us when it comes to accounting and actuarial practice, concluded that Governor Bush's plan to cut taxes and divert Social Security payroll tax for individual accounts would make it all but impos-

sible to eliminate the publicly held national debt.

There is the choice, America. A choice for the next 4 years is whether we will continue to make sure that we invest in America, keep the economy moving forward, use fiscal discipline and fiscal conservatism, if you will, to make sure we pay down the national debt. I don't believe, nor does Vice President GORE, for that matter, that we should risk the Social Security system by taking \$1 trillion out of it, something that Governor Bush couldn't even explain in the last debate. How do you take \$1 trillion out of Social Security and then go ahead and spend the \$1 trillion, except at the expense of Social Security recipients? Are you going to cut the benefits? Are you going to increase their payroll taxes? Are you going to change the retirement age?

All of these things are options that none of us want to face. If you take an approach, and he suggested you may have no other alternative, you may find yourselves battling away at a stock market which looks a lot like the roller coaster at Coney Island in Senator MOYNIHAN's home State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The time of the Senator is expired.

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, be recognized for 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

WORK OF THE SENATE

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Nevada. I commend my friend and colleague, the Senator from Illinois, in raising these issues. I commend him because he has presented the facts to the Senate.

We never had an opportunity to vote on the 1996 Immigration Act. To represent that we did is not stating clearly the facts. That was wrapped into a conference report on an entirely different appropriation, which was a take-it-or-leave-it, after the legislation passed, I believe, 97-3, with strong bipartisan support, and it was after days of hearing in the Senate that the Republicans took that and added these provisions, some provisions which the Senator has mentioned.

This figure of 4 million is a traditional way of distorting and misrepresenting a position, and then disagreeing with it. That is poppycock. It is red herring. The Senator from Utah ought to know better than that because that is completely inaccurate.

I can understand the frustration that many feel about this issue, and I commend the President for attempting to try and deal with it.

When we had this Latino Fairness Act, two prominent Republicans, the Senator from Florida and the chairman of the immigration committee, made

statements in favor of the position outlined by the Senator from Illinois. They were prepared. They understood that there may have been differences here, but they spoke to it.

The President is in a commendable position. I thank him for his leadership in this. I again thank the Senator from Illinois for bringing this matter to the attention of the Senate. I am very hopeful that we will stay the course on this until we get some action on this, another proposal that has a moratorium on the deportation of individuals, which has been passed through the House on the suspension calendar which addresses one of the regrettable aspects of the 1996 act. That has the bipartisan support of Chairman HYDE of the Judiciary Committee, and LAMAR SMITH from the immigration committee, which virtually passed unanimously in the House. I am hopeful we will pass that, as well.

Halloween is here. I am watching the clock that is over the Senate right now. It has not been corrected. I don't know whether the goblins are out here, as well, but Halloween is here. While the Nation observes this occasion only once a year, for this Republican Congress, every day is Halloween. This is the Halloween Congress: lavishing treats on the wealthy and cruel tricks on average families.

If he is elected, Governor Bush will borrow the idea and have a year-round Halloween White House in which powerful special interests hold sway and working families are left out and left behind. He said no to working families in Texas and he wants to say no to average Americans for 4 more years this time from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. He wants to say no to Social Security, no to Medicare, no to a fair prescription drug benefit for senior citizens, no to the Patients' Bill of Rights, no to improving the public schools, no to health care for uninsured children, no to fair tax cuts for average families, no to fighting hate crimes, no to fairness for lawful immigrants, no to gun safety laws.

There is no clearer example of how our Republican friends have kowtowed to powerful special interests than the tax bill before the Senate. Rather than meet the urgent priorities of the American people, Republicans have spent the past 2 weeks huddled behind closed doors to produce a quarter-trillion-dollar tax package tilted overwhelmingly toward the powerful and not toward the average families.

In fact, the top 5 percent of taxpayers will receive a greater share of the tax breaks under this Republican tax scheme than the bottom 80 percent of all taxpayers combined. There is little to distinguish this plan from the previous discredited proposals by the Republican leadership in Congress and by George W. Bush. In many ways the items in this package are even more cynical.

The Republicans know that millions of Americans are deeply concerned