

the people in Nevada and in other States represented in this body.

These legislative accomplishments should include meaningful prescription drug benefits that help people—not the HMOs; a meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights—benefits to ensure the American people receive the urgent medical care they need rather than an HMO litigation protection bill; meaningful funding for education; that is, funding for school construction, repair, and modernization rather than denying States any Federal assistance to maintain our Nation's schools.

We always hear that this takes away from local control. No one on this side of the aisle wants to take local control away from schools.

We have many programs that we have worked on that have been very helpful in school districts.

I have not heard a single person from the Clark County School District, the sixth largest school district in the country—basically Las Vegas—complain about too much Federal money, or too much Federal control. Quite the opposite. The calls I get are for more help, especially school construction and repair and modernization.

I think we need a meaningful tax cut; that is, a significant tax to ensure we can still pay down the debt rather than a tax cut of such magnitude that we forget our current obligations; targeted tax cuts, for example, that would allow a child to go to school not based upon how much money the parents have but how much ability they have. A tax credit to allow the parents to deduct up to \$10,000 a year per child would be most helpful to the American people. That is what we call a targeted tax cut. Of course, we need a minimum wage increase.

Speaking of Governor Bush, the reason Governor Bush has not been an advocate for a minimum wage increase is the State of Texas has one that is almost \$2 an hour less than the Federal minimum wage.

In some States, the wages are much higher. You have some jurisdictions that have a minimum wage as much as \$11 an hour. But here we don't. We have a \$5.15 minimum wage. We want to increase it 50 cents an hour. We are getting all kinds of static for trying to do that. We need to do that.

Campaign finance reform: Certainly with this campaign season, people understand how we have to do something to take money out of campaigns. We need to have campaigns more meaningful. It shouldn't be how much money you are able to raise. It should be what the merits of your claims are.

As we get closer to Halloween, the debt of the American people should scare them more than any ghost. Instead of giving them treats, this Republican Congress, in my opinion, played a dirty trick on the American people. They are scheming to drive a stake through the heart of the positive Democratic agenda—an agenda that could make a real difference in the lives of working people.

We do not have the legislative accomplishments that we need. Instead we have accomplishments that could have been.

I know that there are others here wishing to speak. We have a limited amount of time.

I see my friends from Illinois and Minnesota. I would be happy to yield my time to either of them.

How much time does the Senator from Illinois desire?

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask for 20 minutes.

Mr. REID. How much time do we have, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Forty-five minutes.

Mr. REID. I give 20 minutes to the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized for 20 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President. I ask the Chair to advise me when I have consumed 10 minutes.

Thank you, Mr. President.

THE AMERICAN CHOICE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me follow up on a statement made by the Senator from Nevada about the choice the American people are facing in just a very few days.

I think if you believe that governing America is easy business, then the choice is easy, too.

I happen to think that the set of circumstances the next President will face is pretty challenging.

I can recall only a few years ago on the floor of the Senate when we spent most of our time debating deficits and talking about constitutional amendments to end deficits. But now we are debating surpluses. What are we going to do with the extra money?

We believe on the Democratic side that the first obligation has to be to reduce the national debt so that our kids don't carry that burden, and strengthening Social Security and Medicare. We believe that after we have met those obligations, we should target tax cuts to help the middle-income and working families deal with problems that are meaningful, problems such as paying for college education for their kids.

We believe on the Democratic side we should be able to deduct up to \$12,000 a year of tuition fees paid for your children in college. I have taken that across the State of Illinois, a pretty diverse State, and it is widely accepted. People believe that is an excellent change in the Tax Code.

We also want to give families—working families, single mothers, too, for that matter, who need to have good quality day care—an additional tax credit so they can afford to leave their kids in safe day care. We say to the mother who wants to make the sacrifice to stay home with the kids, you deserve a tax break too; you are making a sacrifice. Our Tax Code should

recognize that. That is targeted tax cuts the Democrats support.

So many people have aging parent and grandparents. We want to increase the deductibility of expenses incurred in caring for their parents. Baby boomers have noted their parents need extra help as they live a longer life. They need extra assistance. We want to be there. The Tax Code should support families who do their best to help relatives, to help their parents.

We believe, bringing this together, we can keep America moving forward because we won't be embarking on a risky tax scheme, one that has been proposed by Governor Bush. The idea of \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts, 40 percent of which go to the wealthiest people in America, is a bitter pill to swallow. Who are the top 1 percent wage earners in America? People who make over \$25,000 a month, over \$300,000 a year. Governor Bush says these poor struggling people making only \$300,000 a year need a tax break, \$2,000 a month worth of a tax break.

I am sorry, but, frankly, I prefer to target that tax break to the people who really need it. A fellow such as Bill Gates at Microsoft has been very successful, God bless him for his creativity, but this man's net worth is greater as an individual than the combined net worth of 106 million Americans. Does he need Governor Bush's tax break? I don't think so. I know a lot of families across Illinois want to have a tax break to send one of their kids to college so that kid might have a chance to have a successful career and business or whatever they choose.

That is the difference. That is the choice. I think a lot of people in this election want to overlook a little history. Let me share some of that history.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

I ask unanimous consent that the time I consume asking questions not be charged against the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It will be charged against the Democratic time.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend from Illinois, does the Senator agree the best tax cut the American people could get would be if they paid down the national debt? That would give Bill Gates a break and everybody in America a break; is that not true?

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Nevada is right. If we pay down our debt, we stop borrowing to service the debt. As we stop borrowing, the demand for capital goes down. That is, the cost of capital goes down, which is the interest rate. As interest rates go down, every family in America can feel it on their mortgage payment, on their loan for school payment, or their auto payment. That is as good as, if not better than, a tax cut, if we reduce that burden on our kids and bring down the interest rates in the process.

Mr. REID. One more question I want to ask my friend from Illinois. I have a long-time friend; we went to high

school together. We were inseparable friends. He was my chief of staff until he retired 2 years ago. His mother has been very ill. She passed away last night.

The point I want to make is this: My friend's sister, my friend Gloria, with whom I also went to high school, spent many months caring for her mother in her home. She gave up her job. It was a tremendous burden, but it was her mother. She did it; she is a caring person; she gave up her life to take care of her aged mother.

Do you know what tax break she got from that? Nothing.

As I understand what my friend is saying, the Senator thinks we should spend a little bit of this surplus to give my friend Gloria a tax break so that she and other people similarly situated who are willing to take care of their mother or other loved ones—and there is no better care that can be given—should be given some kind of tax incentive for doing this; is that what my friend is saying?

Mr. DURBIN. That is exactly right. If you really believe in family values, is there a stronger family value than a son or daughter willing to sacrifice for an aging and ailing parent? If we are going to support family values with the Tax Code, shouldn't we include in that Tax Code some assistance for your friend and her situation? They would give \$2,000 in tax breaks to Bill Gates, and he wouldn't even notice it. I am telling you, your friend will, as will a lot of other baby boomers across America who are caring for their parents. That is the difference. That is the choice. It really is a graphic choice.

If you look at this chart, there has been a suggestion that having surpluses at the Federal level must be easy, so anybody can do it, yet history tells otherwise. It wasn't until halfway through the Clinton-Gore administration that we finally turned the corner, and now we are generating the largest surplus in history. We are paying down America's debt for the first time.

Look at all the red ink that occurred under Ronald Reagan and President George Bush and the early years of the Clinton administration. We finally turned this corner in the belief we could do a \$1.6 trillion tax cut for the wealthiest people and take \$1 trillion out of the Social Security surplus and use it for some privatization scheme. Frankly, I don't think that is responsible. If I owe anything to the people of Illinois and this country, it is to maintain the economic growth and prosperity we have seen.

Let me mention one other point. Basic economics says Alan Greenspan's greatest fear is inflation. Every time he thinks we are moving toward inflation, what does he do? He raises interest rates a notch and slows things down. I can also say you can create inflation with government spending or tax reductions. Injecting \$1.6 trillion into our Nation's economy through tax cuts will energize the economy and cre-

ate inflationary pressure, forcing the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates in response.

So George W. Bush gives a tax break on one hand and creates an economic circumstance that raises interest rates on the other. You get to take your new tax break and pay for a higher ARM, your adjustable rate mortgage on your home. There is no benefit to your family. There is a real benefit if you reduce the debt, the deficit of this country, and make sure our kids don't bear that burden.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. Yes.

Mr. REID. I see the illustrative chart. It appears to me every year that President Clinton has been in power, in office, the deficit has gone down. Does the Senator from Illinois—and I was in Congress in 1993 when we took a very tough vote, the Clinton budget deficit reduction act was a tough veto. Not a single Republican voted for it in the House, not a single Republican over here. AL GORE came over and broke the tie.

Would the Senator agree with me, that is what put the country on the road to economic recovery where we created 22 million jobs—the lowest unemployment in 40 years—we have surpluses instead of deficits; we have a Federal Government today that is 300,000 people fewer than when GORE and Clinton took office? Does the Senator believe that is the reason this chart is illustrated the way it is?

Mr. DURBIN. I don't think there is any doubt. It was a tough vote, and we both know some of our colleagues lost their reelection campaigns because of it, because people demagogued and said it was the biggest tax increase.

It was on the wealthiest people in the country and also the biggest tax cut in history, and it was right thing to do. It was the right medicine. People on Wall Street and the business community know we finally have a President who will take a difficult but necessary path toward bringing us to a surplus economy. That is exactly what has happened.

To think this could happen under any President, I say, is wishful thinking, because I have served under three Presidents and I can say in the early days we didn't see any indication that the deficits were going to decrease. In fact, just the opposite is true. We can see in the President George Bush era the deficits were increasing each year. It wasn't until the Clinton-Gore administration started that the deficits were reduced, leading to a surplus.

Then take a look at the overall impact to which the Senator from Nevada alludes. We are in the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States of America, 115 months. We have seen the effort made, the longest sustained surplus coming out of our Federal deficit in our history. We have seen more money generated to pay down debt than at any time in our history. What does it mean?

As the Senator has noted, the unemployment rate of this country has been coming down steadily since 1992, the election of Bill Clinton and AL GORE. We can see the unemployment rate is the lowest peacetime level in 42 years. This does not happen automatically. It isn't just something we can expect to see automatically. We have to make the right choices. Some of them are difficult. Some are painful. Some are easily demagogued in 30-second ads. These choices have paid off for America.

Let me show the Senator from Nevada some charts to back up other things he said: 22 million new jobs have been created under the Clinton-Gore administration. Is this something that is easy to do? Obviously, President George Bush couldn't do it. In his 4 years, he managed to create some 2.5 million jobs; President Reagan, 16 million under his 8-year period. But 22 million were created across this country in Clinton-Gore.

There used to be a debate whether we value work. Since I was a little boy growing up in my family, work was important. You proved your mettle as a person by going to work. Now 22 million Americans have a chance to go to work and their chance to realize the America dream.

Look at the inflation rate. This is the lowest level since 1965. Inflation being low means a lot of people can understand that their take-home pay is still worth a lot if it keeps up with inflation.

In the bad old days, we had inflation rates in double digits. Now we are down to an inflation rate that is below 3 percent. People who are always left out in this equation are the poorest in America. We see now the lowest poverty rate in two decades was in 1999. It means basically we have not just helped those the best off in America, we have tried to help everybody. That means more job creation bringing more people off welfare, and our welfare rolls are the lowest they have been in modern memory. All these positive things have occurred. The question people have to face in the election on November 7 is basically the same election question Ronald Reagan posed many years ago: Are you better off today than you were 8 years ago? For the vast majority of Americans the answer is, overwhelmingly, yes. There is a fear, of course, unless we make the right decisions and elect the right leaders, we could jeopardize that situation.

Look at Federal spending. I noticed George W. Bush goes around saying AL GORE wants to spend more and more at the Federal level, but this chart shows spending is moving in the opposite direction. Since the election of Bill Clinton in 1992, we have seen a steady decline of Federal spending as a percentage of our gross domestic product. Our spending is more effective. We are trying to do things that are important for America, and it has been evidenced in our economy and economic growth.

Take a look a little more closely at the tax cut that would be happening here under the proposals we have seen from George W. Bush. We see basically the average tax cut for the lowest 20 percent of Americans ends up this year being worth about \$18. If you happen to be in the top 1 percent, it is worth over \$4,000. As you look at these, you understand this is a clear choice.

I want to go back to one point made by the Senator from Nevada. I think it is an important one. Last week it wasn't the Democratic Party, it wasn't the Republican Party, it was the American Academy of Actuaries that analyzed the George W. Bush proposal for Social Security. This is a group that is supposed to know their business when it comes to analyzing what policy changes would mean.

Here is what they said in their release of October 27: Bush's plan on Social Security would signal a return to Federal budget deficits around 2015.

How could that be good for America? How could it be good for us to go back to a deficit situation, adding to our national debt and drawing more money out of the economy to pay interest on it, raising interest rates, creating an inflationary spiral?

They went on to say:

Texas Governor George W. Bush's plan to cut taxes and divert Social Security payroll taxes to establish individual accounts would make it all but impossible to eliminate the publicly held national debt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator asked to be advised when he had 10 minutes remaining. There are 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Chair.

The program is a pay-as-you-go system, meaning most of the payroll taxes collected now are disbursed to recipients. We say, If we draw money out of Social Security, and we know we need to have it, how do you replace it? He was asked repeatedly in the third debate: Governor Bush, how do you replace the \$1 trillion you take out of Social Security? He cannot answer the question because the hard answer to that question is the only way to replace it is to take one of three options: Reduce Social Security benefits; raise the payroll tax on Social Security; or somehow extend the retirement age beyond 67.

I do not think any of those is a popular option. I hope we never have to face them, but if Governor Bush is going to propose massive changes in Social Security, then he has to face the music and explain it to the American people before the election.

I would like to address a separate issue, but one equally important in this debate over the next President of the United States.

U.S. OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENTS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the pace of U.S. deployments and the use of force overseas has been a hot issue in policy debates in Congress and on the

campaign trail. Presidential candidate, Governor George W. Bush, says that he will put an end to the Clinton Administration's "vague, aimless and endless deployments;" that he would replace "uncertain missions with well-defined objectives."

So the question is: Has the President improperly committed our forces overseas in major missions and at an unprecedented rate compared to his predecessors? I don't think so. I want to take some time today to look at the deployments in question and at deployment statistics. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the lists of deployments, so Americans can judge for themselves if they think there were missions that the military should not have undertaken.

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

(See Exhibit 1.)

Mr. DURBIN. I want to look at why a deployment of between 10,000 and 30,000 soldiers to the Balkans, or deployments of several thousand military personnel at a time for disaster relief or humanitarian aid could disrupt a military that has a combined force of about 2.2 million active and reserve personnel.

The hardships suffered by our men and women in uniform are painfully real and should not be understated. I salute the sacrifices our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are making everyday to defend our national security. Many of these hardships have arisen because the world has changed drastically and so has our military.

Our military has changed from a post-World War II forward-based force to much more of a projection force. When we talk about deployments going up, we are talking about times when we send our forces away from their home bases and their families. After World War II, we had a half million troops stationed in Europe, but with their families, if they had families. Those troops were not considered "deployed," because they were based there. So when people talk about a massive increase in deployments, they are generally not counting those who are stationed in overseas bases.

That is how having 10,500 soldiers in the Balkans today can be considered and counted as a major deployment, but stationing a half million troops in Europe from the end of World War II through the 1980s is not even counted as a deployment by classic definition.

Our military has also changed drastically. It used to be a force of mainly single, young men. Today, our forces are filled with married men and women, many of whom also have children. So deploying them on repeated missions overseas, along with frequent job changes, as well as being overworked at their home bases, creates serious hardships for family life.

I submit today that many of the problems encountered by our men and women in uniform are related to the ways our military is organized and

managed, based on the assumptions developed following our experience in World War II. I recommend to my colleagues an excellent, thoughtful paper, entitled "It's The Personnel System," by John C. F. Tillson of the Institute for Defense Analysis. His paper explores the personnel and organizational assumptions that underlie the military, as well as the intersection of deployment tempo, personnel, or job-changing tempo, and operating tempo at home bases.

These are complex problems that require serious thought. I think it is very sad that these issues would be reduced to a conclusion that the United States must pull out of our leadership role in the world instead of addressing those problems head-on.

What are those unending missions that the Clinton Administration has gotten us into? Most of them were inherited from the Bush administration or Ronald Reagan's administration, or even earlier ones.

Of the 100,000 troops currently deployed long-term away from home, only 10,500 or a little over 10 percent are deployed by the Clinton Administration—to the Balkans. The rest of the major long-term deployments were inherited, including deployments in Japan, the Korean peninsula, the Persian Gulf, and Navy deployments in the Western Pacific and the Mediterranean, as well as the mission that went wrong in Somalia. The only other major mission that the Clinton Administration took on that it did not inherit was to Haiti; and contrary to what Governor Bush said during the second Presidential debate, that mission is over.

I have seen many figures bandied about claiming that the Clinton Administration has used force at a much greater pace than Presidents Bush and Reagan before him. Where do these claims come from?

For example, an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal on October 18th by Mackubin Thomas Owens from the Naval War College and the Lexington Institute, says that:

Deployments have increased three-fold during the Clinton years.

He further stated:

These deployments have included some combat missions, but have consisted primarily of open-ended peacekeeping and humanitarian operations—48 missions, to be precise, from 1992 to 1999.

Apparently, a 1999 Congressional Research Service report, *Instances of Use of United States Armed Forces Abroad, 1798–1999*, was used to substantiate these claims. Specifically, the CRS report shows that during the Reagan and Bush administrations there were 17 and 16 uses of force overseas respectively. This compares to 49 uses of force overseas during the first 7 years of the Clinton administration.

Unfortunately, reading the CRS report this way is a gross misrepresentation of the facts and an absurd misuse of the CRS report, which was intended