

things at this moment in time which we can do.

If we do not invest at this moment in time in education for future generations, how shortsighted we are. My friends on the Republican side of the aisle do not view the educational issue as many of us do. Their idea of education is a voucher plan to help those who would send their children to private schools.

I certainly can sympathize with these families struggling to do that. My wife and I sent our kids to Catholic schools and I attended Catholic schools. But our first obligation as a government is to the 90 to 95 percent of the students in public education, the kids in Minneapolis or Chicago or Los Angeles or New York who want to have the very best schools and the very best teachers.

The President has proposed money for teacher training to improve their skills so they can continue to bring the next generation forward well versed and well trained in the technology with which we are dealing.

There were statistics given to us yesterday about some of the things that have happened during the Clinton administration which are often overlooked by the critics of the President's budget. Let me tell you two or three which I think are amazing.

Record budget deficits have been erased. Do my colleagues know the Congressional Budget Office suggested that this year we were going to have a deficit of \$455 billion? That was their projection when President Clinton came to office. President Clinton came to Congress and said: I have a plan that is going to turn this around. Instead of deficits, we can move America forward.

Some of us believed the President was right. In fact, I voted for the President's 1993 plan. There were Members of Congress running around hollering, "The sky is falling if the President's plan passes; it will be nothing but a disaster." I invite those Members of Congress to look out the window at the bright blue sky of our economic prosperity because of the President's leadership in 1993, because Members of Congress, all Democrats, and Vice President GORE, who cast the tie-breaking vote, made a courageous decision. Some of my colleagues in the House of Representatives lost their next election because of that vote. If it is any comfort to them, they did the right thing for America, and history has proven them right because instead of the anticipated \$455 billion deficit this year, we are anticipating instead a surplus of over \$100 billion. What an amazing turnaround.

We have had the largest paydown of debt in the history of the United States. Those who argue the Democrats are not fiscally responsible cannot really say it at this moment because President Clinton's leadership and the following of Members of Congress have led to the paydown of more than \$290 billion in debt over the last 2 years, and we can continue to do that.

The President is right, this should be our highest priority. We collect every single day in America \$1 billion in taxes from individuals and businesses and families to pay interest on our debt. If we follow the President's lead and eliminate the publicly held debt, it will dramatically reduce those interest payments, and that is good for this country. That is money that can be spent on good programs for education and health care and given back to families in the form of tax cuts.

We have seen Government reduced and diminished in size. We have seen as a percentage of the gross domestic product the percentage spent on Government coming down. This is what America asked for; this is what they received.

Of course, with the President's budget, there will be a great amount of debate. The Congress will get its chance. The Republican leadership in the House and Senate can come up with its work product and put it next to the President's, and we can make our choice.

I will tell you this. It should be measured by one standard: Does it meet the test of common sense? Will the proposals coming out of this Republican Congress keep America moving forward? Can they explain to families across America that we should break with a policy that has done so much for so many in this country? I think they are going to be hard pressed to do it. But it is the nature of our deliberative process that they will have that opportunity.

Mr. President, at this time I am prepared to yield the floor and the remainder of our morning business time to my colleague from the State of Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, first of all, if it is all right with my colleague from Illinois, I will speak on two matters. I thank him for his eloquence. It turns out on some of the issues that my colleague raised, we are not 100 percent in agreement, but I think Senator DURBIN is a Senator who speaks with sincerity and marshals his evidence for his point of view. I think Democrats are very lucky to have him as a Senator speaking for our party and for the country.

#### CHECHNYA

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, yesterday I spoke about what is happening in Chechnya. I believe I should speak out about this. I hope other Senators will, as well.

I have a letter that I ask unanimous consent be printed in the RECORD. This is a letter to President Putin.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, February 8, 2000.

President VLADIMIR PUTIN,  
*Russian Federation, The Kremlin,  
Moscow, Russia.*

DEAR PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN: We are writing to express our deep concern over the

conflict in Chechnya and your response to the humanitarian tragedy there. We recognize the importance of Russia's territorial integrity, and your government's obligation to protect its citizens from terrorist and other acts of aggression. This responsibility, however, does not and cannot justify the use of indiscriminate force against civilians and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of persons.

Since October 1, the Russian military offensive in Chechnya has involved a relentless bombing and artillery campaign that has killed thousands of innocent civilians and displaced over 200,000 people. Reports from those fleeing Chechnya detail incidents of widespread looting, summary executions, detentions and rape.

As you know, Russia has assumed obligations under the Geneva conventions and commitments under the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention states that "armed conflicts not of an international character, persons taking no part in hostilities . . . shall be treated humanely." Article 36 of the OSCE Code of Conduct states that "if recourse to force cannot be avoided in performing internal security missions, each participating State will ensure that its use must be commensurate with the needs of enforcement. The armed forces will take due care to avoid injury to civilians or their property." Russia's campaign in Chechnya violates these commitments.

We urge your government to allow into Chechnya and Ingushetia an international monitoring mission. This mission should have unfettered access and a broad mandate to monitor and report on the humanitarian situation. Your government should immediately allow civilians safe passage from Chechnya, assist those persons who have been displaced from Chechnya as a result of this conflict and allow representatives of international humanitarian agencies full and unimpeded access to those persons in order to provide humanitarian relief. Finally, we urge your government to initiate investigations into alleged human rights abuses and to hold accountable those responsible.

President Putin, we believe it is imperative that you devote every effort to achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Chechnya. Neither the use of force in 1994-1996, which left over 80,000 civilians dead, nor the current use of force in Chechnya will enhance the prospects of a durable settlement to the conflict.

We hope you share our concerns and look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. WELLSTONE.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I will just read part of this letter:

DEAR PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN: We are writing to express our deep concern over the conflict in Chechnya and your response to the humanitarian tragedy there. We recognize the importance of Russia's territorial integrity, and your government's obligation to protect its citizens from terrorist and other acts of aggression. This responsibility, however, does not and cannot justify the use of indiscriminate force against civilians and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of persons.

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In this letter, I am urging President Putin that the Russian Government allow into Chechnya and Ingushetia an international monitoring mission.

This international monitoring mission should have unfettered access and a broad mandate to monitor and report on the humanitarian situation. The Russian Government should immediately allow all civilians safe passage from Chechnya, assist those persons who have been displaced from Chechnya as a result of this conflict, and allow representatives of international humanitarian agencies full and unimpeded access to those persons in order to provide humanitarian relief.

President Putin has made a commitment that an international monitoring presence would be allowed. This has not happened.

Finally, I am urging the Russian Government to initiate investigations into alleged human rights abuses and to hold accountable those responsible.

As a Senator, I send this letter to President Putin today. I think it is very important that he devote every effort to achieve a peaceful resolution.

Neither the use of force in 1994 to 1996, which left over 80,000 civilians dead, nor the current use of force in Chechnya will enhance the prospects for any durable settlement to this conflict.

I am sending this letter today. I am going to send a copy to the Senator from Colorado and other colleagues as well. I hope other Senators will speak out.

There is a delegation of several high-ranking officials, parliamentarians with the Chechnya Government, who are here, and they have been trying to meet with our State Department. So far, they have not been able to arrange any meeting at all.

I am not asking the State Department to recognize the official government, but our State Department has met with dissidents from China and dissidents from Russia over the years. I think these parliamentarians, these courageous individuals from Chechnya, deserve at least an audience with the State Department—whether it be with the Secretary of State, whether it be with Strobe Talbott, or whether it be with Secretary Koh who has done such a fabulous job on human rights issues.

I just want to say to the State Department today—I am going to continue with calls—I just think it is wrong to not at least meet with these

individuals. We have a massacre of innocent people going on there.

As the son of a Jewish immigrant—born in the Ukraine, who lived in Russia, and fled persecution in Russia—I understand our Government's role in the world to speak out for human rights. Our silence, the silence of the administration and our Government, is deafening. I think Democrats and Republicans need to call on President Putin to live up to his commitment to allow an international monitoring force to protect innocent civilians and to get humanitarian assistance to people. This is a moderate, modest request.

#### CAPITOL HILL POLICE SECURITY

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, in the few minutes I have remaining today, I will talk in specifics about the security situation here at the Capitol, and what is going on and what is not going on by way of living up to our commitment to Capitol Hill police officers, and also to the public.

As I said, we have made the commitment, and we should honor the commitment. You need two officers at a post for their security, much less the security of the public.

Two examples. Please remember, for those who are listening, the officer who works alone at any number of these posts is responsible for the following: Watching the x ray monitor for weapons or contraband, personally screening persons with a handheld metal detector—I say to the Senator from Colorado, we come in every day, and we see them doing this—controlling pedestrian traffic at entrances, and watching both entry and exit doors for people who try to bypass security.

That is what one officer at one post is supposed to do.

Example: Ford House Office Building, Annex 2, Third Street door entrance, 441, Third Street, Southwest. By the way, the Third Street entrance is a multiple-door entrance.

Monday, February 7, 2000, one officer was assigned to this entrance from 0700 to 1500 hours. From 1200 to 1300 hours, 512 people entered through the Third Street entrance—one officer.

The Ford Building sits directly across from the Federal Center Southwest metro station, for those who are trying to identify it.

From 0800 to 0900 hours, 215 people entered through the entrance—one officer. This is Monday, February 7.

By the way, during the highest volume of pedestrian traffic, an officer who was passing by just simply stopped and offered assistance. But that is not the way it is supposed to be.

Hart Senate Office Building, 120 Constitution Avenue, Northeast; C Street door entrance to the Hart Building. This is a multiple-door entrance that is open to staff—Government workers—from 0700 to 0900 hours. This entrance is actually directly next to Senator NICKLES' office.

Tuesday, February 3, one officer was assigned to this entrance from 0700 to 1500 hours. As I say, that was Tuesday, February 3.

From 0900 to 1000 hours, 432 people entered through this entrance, not to mention the 332 staffers—Government workers—from 0800 to 0900 hours—one officer. Just think about the number of people who are streaming in with one officer. Again, I don't know exactly who is right in terms of how this problem gets solved. I think some of our police officers believe there are overtime funds for this purpose. It may be that upper management is arguing that those funds are not available. Others say we have to have more funds to hire more people. One way or the other, either there is money there for the overtime funds to properly staff these posts or additional money is necessary in appropriation.

I just gave two concrete examples on the House and the Senate side this month of February. I don't think any Senator or anyone in any decision-making position who is responsible for the security situation here—starting with these police officers, for them, much less for the public, much less for us—can justify this. It cannot be defended.

I will say it one more time. I think it is OK for me to say it. If I say it the wrong way, it is not OK for me to say it. We lost two fine officers. Agent Gibson, Officer Chestnut, we lost them. I do believe we all said to one another that we were going to do everything humanly possible to get the very best security for our officers. No one can ever guarantee a 100-percent safe situation. What we do know is that we can do everything that is humanly possible to try to meet that goal.

I just gave two examples this month that show we have fallen way short of meeting that goal. We are not doing right by the Capitol Hill police officers. We are not doing right by the public. We have to take action.

I will give other examples over the days and weeks to come. Of course, my hope is this problem will be dealt with.

I thank Senator DURBIN for allowing me this time. Not seeing any other Senators on the floor, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WELLSTONE. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

#### THE BUDGET

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I didn't want to take any time during