

I am in complete agreement with my colleagues about the tradeoff between tax cuts, the vast majority of which benefit people at the top, and not having the money for this investment. But to be fair in a critique here, I think all of us, Democrats and Republicans, have to understand even if we provide a benefit but we are unwilling to spend too much money for fear of being called, I suppose, big spending liberals or whatever, if you set a cap and you say only \$1,000 will be covered and no more than that, then I can tell you many of our senior citizens, and others who are the frailest and most sick, will bump up against that cap, and it will still not cover their catastrophic expenses. We have to be very careful people can afford it on the front side as well.

So whether it be too high deductibles or caps that are set too low, we have to be very careful if we say we are going to have this coverage for people and security for people, that it will be there.

CHECHNYA

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I have in hand an article, titled "Rights Group Reports Massacre in Chechnya." The first two paragraphs read:

Moscow, Feb. 22—Russian soldiers went on a deadly rampage earlier this month in a neighborhood of the Chechen capital of Grozny, killing at least 60 civilians in the worst case yet disclosed of Russian military atrocities, an international human rights group charged today.

During the attack, which began the morning of Feb. 5 in the Aldi neighborhood, soldiers, "systematically" robbed and shot civilians, raped women and looted and burned homes, according to a draft report prepared by Human Rights Watch and based on interviews with witnesses and relatives of those killed.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent this article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, February 23, 2000]

RIGHTS GROUP REPORTS MASSACRE IN CHECHNYA

(By David Hoffman)

Moscow, Feb. 22—Russian soldiers went on a deadly rampage earlier this month in a neighborhood of the Chechen capital of Grozny, killing at least 60 civilians in the worst case yet disclosed of Russian military atrocities, an international human rights group charged today.

During the attack, which began the morning of Feb. 5 in the Aldi neighborhood, soldiers "systematically" robbed and shot civilians, raped women and looted and burned homes, according to a draft report prepared by the Human Rights Watch and based on interviews with witnesses and relatives of those killed.

"Russian soldiers murdered their way through Aldi, killing more than 60 civilians who were peacefully waiting for them in the streets," said Peter Bouckaert, a spokesman for Human Rights Watch who researched the events. "These are war crimes, and they must be investigated and punished as such."

Human Rights Watch has documented two earlier rampages by Russian troops: in

Alkhan-Yurt; where 17 people were killed in mid-December, and in the Staropromyslovsky district of Grozny, where 44 died in December and January. Russian commanders have denied that their troops murdered civilians but, faced with continuing criticism from Western organizations and governments, acting President Vladimir Putin recently appointed a new human rights commissioner for Chechnya.

The new commissioner, Vladimir Kalamanov, the former chief of the migration service, promised in a news conference today to check the reports, but refused to discuss specific allegations.

According to the Human Rights Watch report, witnesses painted a consistent picture of the events in Aldi, when a large group of soldiers, "numbering in the hundreds," began killing civilians. Witnesses said residents had been summoned to the streets to have their passports checked when the shooting started.

The human rights group quoted witnesses as saying the soldiers also extorted money from residents, allowing them to buy their own lives with cash. One man who offered the soldiers rubles was told to come up with dollars, and when he offered \$100 he was killed, Human Rights Watch said.

At least two women were raped by soldiers during the rampage, the group added. Russian soldiers warned witnesses that they faced revenge if they spoke of the atrocities, so some were unwilling to talk, the group added.

Human Rights Watch said at least two sources had confirmed the deaths of 34 people, but the group has obtained the names of more than 60 people believed to have been killed in Aldi on Feb. 5. Local witnesses have stated the death toll was at least 82 persons, the group added.

Meanwhile, Russian forces continued battling Chechen fighters in the southern mountains, launching an attack on the village of Shatoi, said to be a major rebel stronghold. A battle also was underway near the Georgian border. The Interfax news agency quoted Russian sources as saying that three helicopter gunships were shot down today, an unusually high single-day toll.

Russian authorities also announced that they have clamped down on the movement of all people and vehicles in Chechnya—and sealed the border with the neighboring region of Ingushetia—in anticipation of the Chechen commemoration on Wednesday of Joseph Stalin's mass deportation of Chechens during World War II. Russian authorities have said they are bracing for terrorist acts on Wednesday, which also is a Russian military holiday.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I hope to have the opportunity to introduce a freestanding resolution on the floor of the Senate. I hope this resolution will receive unanimous support. It expresses the sense of the Senate that the Russian Federation should devote every effort to achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Chechnya, allowing to Chechnya an international monitoring mission to monitor and report on the situation there and allow international humanitarian agencies to make sure there is immediate and full and unimpeded access to Chechen civilians.

This is a question on which the Senate should not be silent. It does make a difference if we speak up. Two weeks ago, I met with members of the Chechen Government. They discussed with me the horrific conditions cur-

rently facing their homeland. I do not think any of us should be silent while this is happening.

We in the Senate should express our distress over the escalating humanitarian situation in Chechnya, and we should urge the administration to enlarge its public demands on Russia to confront it.

It is clear that the Russian Government must move immediately to allow into Chechnya an international monitoring force to monitor and report on the situation there. We need that. The world needs that. The people in Chechnya need that. It must also immediately move to assist those persons who have been displaced from Chechnya as a result of this conflict, and the Russian Government must allow representatives of the international community access to those persons in order to provide humanitarian relief.

Russian authorities agree to permit the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to engage in monitoring in Chechnya, yet it has not permitted OSCE's six monitors currently in Moscow to visit the region. The administration must demand that Russia permit the monitoring mission to go forward and take steps to expand it substantially.

The administration must urge Russia to grant human rights monitors access to the region, including those from our own diplomatic missions in the area. The administration must engage Russian authorities at the highest levels to secure cooperation in addressing the humanitarian emergency in Chechnya and in its neighboring province. It must demand Russia assist those persons who have been displaced from Chechnya as a result of this conflict and grant humanitarian organizations access to Chechen civilians to provide some relief. The civilian population in Chechnya has been victimized to an extraordinary degree, and it is in desperate need of humanitarian aid. The Senate should not be silent on this question.

Finally, the administration must urge the Russian Government to achieve a peaceful resolution and durable settlement in a manner consistent with Russia's obligation to the international community.

We must strongly support the OSCE mediation process. The Russian Government acknowledged the OSCE's competence in serving as a mediator and achieving a political settlement to the conflict in Chechnya during the war of 1994 to 1996. However, to date, the Russians have rebuffed repeated efforts by the OSCE to mediate the current conflict. The administration must increase its efforts to persuade Russia to implement an immediate cease-fire and accept OSCE-mediated negotiations.

As this conflict drags on and the number and intensity of human rights abuses by Russian forces in Chechnya increase, the administration must support the creation of a United Nations

commission of inquiry to investigate serious violations of international humanitarian law by Russian forces.

We must confront the suffering of the Chechen people. As many of my colleagues know, the recent Russian assault on the Chechen capital of Grozny was one more campaign in a continuing series of Russian military offensives in Chechnya. In September, I expressed my concerns to Yeltsin and Putin about the humanitarian tragedy that was, for the second time, unfolding in Chechnya. It is hard to imagine that after the use of force in Chechnya from 1994 to 1996, which left over 80,000 civilians dead, the Russian leadership could again see the use of force as enhancing the prospects for a durable settlement to this conflict. But the Russian leadership has again chosen use of force, and the current tragedy before us has now reached unimaginable heights, as evidenced by the piece today in the Washington Post.

Russian forces have used indiscriminate and disproportionate force in their bombings of civilian targets. This has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilian and displaced countless other. Russian authorities maintain a virtual ban on access to Chechen civilians by media and international humanitarian agencies resulting in our having to rely on the personal testimony of refugees fleeing the fighting to determine the nature and extent of the crisis and best means to provide humanitarian relief.

These testimonies are horrific: incidents of widespread looting, summary executions, detentions, denial of civilians safe passage from the fighting, torture, and rape.

Many civilians report being detained at the Chechen border as they tried to flee the fighting. They tell of brothers and fathers who had simply been denied safe passage out. It is fundamentally unacceptable to deny any civilian the right to flee the fighting—to trap them in this dangerous war. And where do these trapped civilians go? Into detention camps. No one needs to be reminded of the systematic torture that took place in detention camps set up to detain Chechens in the 1994–96 Chechen war. That event stains the memory of the Chechen people and it is happening again.

One twenty-one-year-old tells of the horror in the camps:

About fifteen or twenty soldiers were standing in two lines with rubber sticks. . . . When I was running through the corridor, each soldier beat me with the sticks. They made us undress and started checking our clothes. They took away the clothes they liked. . . . For a week, I had to sit in the jail almost naked.

In addition to this torture, young men report that in order to be released from the camps their family members must pay outrageous bribes to camp officers and upon release, must sign papers saying they suffered no harm in captivity.

Then there are the numerous reports of rape. In one Chechen town a six-

month pregnant 23-year-old woman was raped and murdered. Her mother-in-law was executed in this same incident. And Mr. President, many incidences of rape and sexual abuse go unreported. For many women in towns and villages all over Chechnya the shame is simply too great—they won't come forward to report these horrible crimes. Chechnya's culture and national traditions make it difficult to document case of rape and sexual abuse—unmarried women who are raped are unlikely to be able to get married, and married women who are raped are likely to be divorced by their husbands. The effects of these rapes on Chechen society will be profound and long lasting. I remind the Russian leadership that rape is war crime.

Two weeks ago I sent a letter to acting President Putin expressing my deep concern over the deteriorating situation in Chechnya and the Russian government's response to the humanitarian tragedy there. I urge the Russian government to move quickly to resolve this situation in a manner consistent with Russia's obligations to the international community and urge the Russian leadership to begin now to investigate and prosecute those responsible for human rights abuses in Chechnya—it promised to do this after the last Chechen war but failed to do so.

I urge my colleagues to communicate their own concerns to the Administration and the Russian government in whatever manner you think best. We cannot remain silent. We must fully condemn the use of indiscriminate force against the civilians in Chechnya and denial of humanitarian relief to Chechen civilians. We must remind the Russian leadership that the world is watching.

This congress and this administration must express to the Russian government that it should devote every effort to achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Chechnya, allow into Chechnya an international monitoring force to monitor and report on the situations there.

That is what this resolution I have submitted to the Senate, on which I hope we will have a vote, calls for. We must call for allowing international humanitarian agencies immediate, full, and unimpeded access to Chechen civilians in order to provide humanitarian relief.

This resolution, on which I hope we will have an up-or-down vote or it will be unanimously accepted by the Senate, calls for several things. It calls for the Russian Federation to devote every effort to a peaceful resolution, to allow into Chechnya an international monitoring mission to monitor and report on the situation, and to allow international humanitarian agencies immediate and full access to Chechen civilians. The people of Chechnya deserve no less.

I have no illusions. I do not think adopting a resolution automatically

turns the situation around, but I do believe the Senate should not be silent, that we must support this resolution, and we must send this message. We must stand up for human rights.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

MEASURES PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 2081 AND H.R. 6

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for their second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the first bill.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2081) entitled Religious Liberty Protection Act of 2000.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the rule, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

The clerk will read the title of the second bill.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the marriage penalty by providing for adjustments to the standard deduction, 15-percent rate bracket, and earned income credit and to repeal the reduction of the refundable tax credits.

Mr. WARNER. I object to further proceedings on this bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the rule, the bill will now be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. WARNER, Mr. HUTCHINSON, and Mr. CLELAND pertaining to the introduction of S. 2087 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MIGRANT WORKERS

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, every time we have a recess and there is an occasion to go home, invariably we all learn something of significance that helps us in our service in the Senate. I thought I would take to the floor of the Senate today and speak about something I learned, something I experienced which I wanted to highlight. Right now, it is an issue that is sort of a low light in this body.

Earlier in this Congress, Senator BOB GRAHAM of Florida and I introduced a bill to fix our H-2A guest worker program that affects agriculture. Preceding that, Senators GRAHAM and WYDEN and I met with the Secretary of Labor and pleaded for the administration to come forward with some sort of fix to relieve the pressure on the farm labor system. There are enough workers, but you have to settle for an illegal system to conclude that there are enough workers. The Secretary assured