

that I want to mention quickly, and then I will stop.

First, the tax cut relief. In the entire Gore package—we have a \$4.5 trillion surplus—do you know how much tax cut relief there really is? The Vice President says he has \$500 billion, but that is, once again, one of these numbers which, if you look behind it, is not really there. The net tax cut relief in his package is \$147 billion out of a \$4.5 trillion surplus.

The American people are paying \$4.5 trillion more to the Federal Government than the Federal Government needs to operate. That is what the surplus is. Everyone in this room, everyone in America who pays taxes is paying taxes which the Federal Government does not need to operate. It adds up to \$4.5 trillion. And all that the Vice President can agree to give back in the way of a tax cut—and it is not really a tax cut, returning taxes that do not need to be paid—is \$147 billion out of \$4.5 trillion. It is incredible.

That number distinctly reflects the view that any money that comes to Washington is not the money of the taxpayers; it is the money of the people who live in Washington. It is the Vice President's money; therefore, he does not have to give it back. It is the Government's money. They don't have to give it back. Not in my view. Not in Governor Bush's view, which is that it is the taxpayers' money. It comes out of your pocket. It is your taxes. It is your money. If the Government has too much of it, let's give it back.

The second item that I want to highlight is this retirement savings plus plan, which is a brand new major entitlement of huge proportions and a massive increase on the next generation. This is only a 10-year number shown on the chart. That number explodes, as you move into the outyears, into trillions. It is the most significant major entitlement ever put on the books of the American Government, in my opinion—if it were to pass. It will exceed Medicare by a huge function in the outyears, as we head toward the year 2030, I believe. But it will at least be competitive with Medicare as a massive new entitlement program.

Who is going to pay it? The next generation. Our kids. My daughter who just got her first job. She is out of college, which we are very happy about because we don't have to pay tuition. She got a job, which we are even more happy about. Unfortunately, around about 10 or 15 years from now, assuming she keeps her job, she is going to be paying taxes at an outrageous rate in order to support a brand new entitlement put on the books by Vice President GORE, if he should become President. That, to me, is a little number in there that seems little in this package, although it is huge—obviously, even in this package; \$750 billion on the upper side. That is not talked about much but should be looked at by the American people as they consider who they are going to vote for in this coming election.

Mr. President, I appreciate the courtesy of the Senator from Idaho in allowing me to proceed for a little extra time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, may I ask where we currently are in the order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We should be proceeding to H.R. 4444, but if the Senator wishes to speak on a different subject, he certainly can ask unanimous consent to do so.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for as much time as I consume.

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

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Hampshire, first of all, for being on the floor this morning to discuss what I think is a very important issue. For any of us who were listening to the Senator from New Hampshire and the Senator from Massachusetts, let me see if I can get this together.

If you are for the Gore prescription drug health plan, then you are going to have a major premium increase, and you may get the plan in 8 years. It will be a Government plan, and it will be a major Government takeover of health care for the seniors in this country. And it will be limited to no choice.

If you accept what Governor Bush is proposing, then you have a substantially greater choice. The plan is back to the States, where doctors and nurses and local health care delivery systems deliver it, and you do not move toward a major federalization of health care.

We had this debate in 1992 and 1993. About 70 percent of the citizens of the country said: We don't want the Federal Government as the deliverer of health care and health care components, including prescription drugs.

Is there a difference in the debate today? Not at all. Do the seniors of America want the Federal Government to control their health care or do they want to control it themselves with optimum choices, similar to what we as employees of the Federal Government have today? The Federal Government doesn't control our health care. We choose. We pay some premium, obviously, to offset the costs, and we have choice in the marketplace.

I think as the debate goes on through September and October, the clear differences will come out, and they will be very simple. I think it is important that we think of it that way. It is called "Gore and the Federal Government and health care," or "George W. Bush and you and your choice at the local level delivering health care for yourselves with optimum choices and flexibility."

THE DEMOCRATS' STRATEGY

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I have to respond to something that was in to-

day's USA Today paper, September 8. I know the Presiding Officer is a member of our leadership. Let me, for a few moments, tell you what he and I are going to expect in the final month of this Congress. I am quoting now an article about Senate minority leader TOM DASCHLE. It is reported here that they have a simple strategy; the Democrats have a simple strategy for winning the final negotiations over spending.

In other words, they want to spend more of your money than we are proposing to be spent by some billions of dollars. Here is their strategy, and he admitted it: Stall until the Republicans have to cave in because they can't wait any longer to recess. That means shut the Congress down and get out on the campaign trail. Why? Well, because 18 of the 29 Senators seeking reelection are Republicans this year and 11 are Democrats, and there are a lot of vulnerable Republicans, according to Senator DASCHLE. He says, "We only have one vulnerable Democrat, and he happens to be just across the river." I think he was probably referring to Senator CHUCK ROBB.

Well, if that is the strategy of the Democrats, let me repeat it because that is what they have been doing for 3 long months: Stall, stall, stall. Yet they turn around and tell our friends in the press it is a "do-nothing Congress." I don't see how the press can mix that one up as much as they have. You have the minority leader of the Senate admitting that their strategy for the balance of September will be to stall until the Republicans cave.

Thank you, Mr. DASCHLE, for telling us your plan. We will attempt to offset those by working as hard as we can. It probably means we will be working late into the night so that we can get the work of the Congress done, get our appropriations bills finished, deal with the most important trade issue that is on the floor—PNTR—and that is, of course, permanent normal trade relation status for China.

THE PRESIDENT IS BEGGING FOR OIL

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, for a few moments this morning, before we get on with the debate on PNTR, I want to deal with an issue happening in New York City right now. Our President is up there at the United Nations Millennium Summit. Mr. President, there is something going on on the side. In a back room, the President of the United States has been sitting down with a Saudi Arabian sheik. Here is why: He is begging. The President of the United States is begging a Saudi sheik to reach over and turn their oil spigot on a little more and increase their output of oil by about 700,000 barrels a day. Why? Because in the last few days, crude prices have spiked to an all-time high of \$35.39 a barrel.

Why has that happened? Because the market has analyzed that there isn't enough oil and the demand is ever increasing, and there is no strategy in

this country to solve it. In May and June of this year, the President tried to cover his tracks by sending the Secretary of Energy to Saudi Arabia to beg, tin cup in hand. At that time, I think the press called it the "tin cup energy policy" of this administration. Well, today in New York City, behind closed doors, the President of the United States—this great and all-powerful country—is begging a small country in the Middle East for just a little more oil.

Here is what the market analysts are saying. They have said that they fear that even the 700,000-barrel increase will not be enough to curb the jump in prices for crude oil contracts in the futures market. I mentioned yesterday they jumped to \$35.39 a barrel. That is a phenomenal spike. This price is the highest since, of course, the battles of the Persian Gulf war of 1990. Why is this happening? Well, many of us stood on the floor in May and June and July and discussed the energy of our country and our energy needs. We were very frustrated at that time because we had 8 years of no energy policy. You know, AL GORE has been OPEC's best friend. There is no question about that. This administration and Vice President GORE, during their tenure in office, have allowed domestic oil production to drop by 17 percent and oil imports to go up by at least 14, and maybe as high as 20 percent. Oil imports averaged about 56 percent of all of our consumption, and now they are predicted to be well over 64 percent in the year 2020.

Of course, there is a simple reason for that: For 8 long years, this administration has had no policy. Let me tell you what Vice President AL GORE has said. He says he wants to increase the use of natural gas, although it has nearly quadrupled in price. Yet he wants to cancel existing leases. Here is his quote:

I will do everything in my power to make sure there is no new drilling, even in areas already leased by previous administrations.

Here is a man asking to be President of the United States; yet he is out in the field today campaigning and saying: I guarantee you there will be no more increased production in this country, while his President, behind closed doors in New York, is begging a foreign nation to open its valves and increase production. Does it make any sense for this great Nation to be on its knees begging Arab sheiks of the OPEC nations to increase production while we go around saying we are going to decrease production?

During the Clinton-Gore administration, there has been no energy policy, no domestic oil or gas exploration or production—in 8 long years. No new oil refineries. In fact, because of a lack of policy and compliance with the Clean Air Act in this country, in the last 8 years, we have closed 36 oil refineries. That is a staggering amount. We have closed 36 oil refineries in the past 8 years. There is no new use of coal. EPA has tried to shut down coal fired plants

and are now suing some in the East because they don't think they are in compliance with certain standards. There is no new nuclear power. In fact, quite the opposite has happened. We have tried here to solve the gridlock over the production of energy and electricity by nuclear power, only to have items vetoed time and again by the President.

Now, yesterday, the President said oil prices are too high. Gee whiz, Bill, where have you been all summer? You're darn right they are too high. You have done nothing about it nor has your Vice President, except to say we will shut down production. He even went on to say that it will impact not just America but it could result in a world impact, and it could result in the specter of a recession here or abroad if oil-producing countries do not raise production to bring down soaring crude prices.

Well, what about production in our country? What are you doing here, Vice President GORE? I will tell you what you are doing here. You are saying: I am not going to allow new drilling; I am going to shut off the areas where you can drill. I don't want to see more production in this country.

That doesn't make a lot of sense.

Here is GORE's new energy plan:

Don't develop proven domestic energy;

Give \$75 billion in new subsidies for new renewables and new technology.

OK. Homeowner in the Northeast: You are just about to see your costs for heat this winter go up 35, or 40, or 50 percent. The message to you, homeowner, in the Northeast is: Vice President GORE is going to invest \$75 billion in subsidies and in new renewables, and in 10 or 15 years you can put a solar cell up or we can put a wind machine out on the Adirondacks, and somehow we will generate this new abundance of energy.

That is the answer for the problem today. That is the answer you are being given. That will not work tomorrow. It will not work a week from now.

I support renewables. We ought to clearly drive ourselves in that direction as best we can. But my guess is when what is going on today translates into the price of gas at the pump, and when the oil truck backs up to your home in New York or Connecticut this winter and sticks the hose in the oil barrel and starts cranking in the fuel oil that will heat your home, and it is going to double or triple your fuel oil costs, if it is available, who are you going to blame? Who are you going to blame because of this dramatic increase?

My suggestion is that fingers deserve to be pointed to an administration that has had no energy policy, has worked to shut down all increased production, and, in fact, in a rather swaggering way has suggested we will not drill anymore. We will not produce anymore. It is somehow environmentally wrong to produce oil and energy in this

country. That is a fundamentally critical thing with which we have to deal.

We have attempted to deal with it in the Senate. We have dealt with these issues on a regular basis. We have introduced legislation to bring about that increased production. We have suggested that these great oil reserves we still have remaining in our country be allowed to be drilled, and in an environmentally safe and sound way, that we bring our production back on line.

In the nonlarge oil producing segment of our country, a segment called stripper wells, oftentimes owned by farmers and ranchers through the Southeast, the South, and the upper Midwest—if we, by tax incentives alone, would guarantee them a margin, we could see a million barrels a day come back on line—our oil; money that stays in our country and doesn't go to Saudi Arabia to buy the limousines or the G-4 jet airplanes of the OPEC sheiks.

What is wrong with that policy, Mr. President? What is wrong with that policy, Mr. GORE? Is it wrong to support domestic production at home? I think not.

This is an issue we will spend a good deal more time with in the coming days. But I thought with this press release coming out of New York today, and we know the President has been talking with the Arab sheiks yesterday, Mr. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, quit begging. Don't beg these nations to produce. Turn our producers loose. Let us produce. Let us become the great producing country again. Let us be the masters of our own destiny. Don't apologize. And don't suggest to somebody this winter when their heating bill goes up that it is some Arab sheik's problem, that they shut the oil off. No. In the last 8 years, you have shut the oil off, Mr. GORE. You have shut the oil off, Mr. Clinton, because your policies have denied production and brought production down at a time when we were increasing consumption and were the beneficiaries of that consumption by an ever increased standard of living in our country.

I am not ashamed, nor will I apologize for the citizens of my State because they want to be consumers. But I will be angry about a government that denies the kind of production that keeps the strong economy. And that is exactly what is going on. In our great country today, the only energy policy that exists in the Clinton/Gore administration is a policy of begging, begging the producing nations of this world to please turn on the valves and give us a few more barrels of oil in hopes that it will drive the price down. The analysts say it won't.

This winter, as we grow increasingly cold, I am very fearful the citizens of the Northeast and in other cold areas, especially those who still use heating oil for their space heat, will find the price tag getting even higher, and my colleagues will be on the floor asking that we offset that with Federal tax

dollars. I will not blame them for asking that.

But once again I will ask: Where was Mr. GORE? Where was Mr. Clinton for these 8 long years when they knew the day would come that there would be no oil to burn and we would have to beg to get oil?

I yield the floor. I see the principals are on the floor to continue the debate on PNTR with China. I hope we can move that expeditiously today. Thank you.

TO AUTHORIZE EXTENSION OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREAT- MENT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUB- LIC OF CHINA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. CHAFEE). Under the previous order, the Senate will resume the consideration of H.R. 4444, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4444) to authorize extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to the People's Republic of China, and to establish a framework for relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Wellstone amendment No. 4118, to require that the President certify to Congress that the People's Republic of China has taken certain actions with respect to ensuring human rights protection.

Wellstone amendment No. 4119, to require that the President certify to Congress that the People's Republic of China is in compliance with certain Memoranda of Understanding regarding prohibition on import and export of prison labor products.

Wellstone amendment No. 4120, to require that the President certify to Congress that the People's Republic of China has responded to inquiries regarding certain people who have been detained or imprisoned and has made substantial progress in releasing from prison people incarcerated for organizing independent trade unions.

Wellstone amendment No. 4121, to strengthen the rights of workers to associate, organize and strike.

Smith (of N.H.) amendment No. 4129, to require that the Congressional-Executive Commission monitor the cooperation of the People's Republic of China with respect to POW/MIA issues, improvement in the areas of forced abortions, slave labor, and organ harvesting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, the distinguished ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator MOYNIHAN, and myself have been here for several hours for the purpose of making progress on the consideration of the permanent normal trade relations with China. We both agreed that this is the most important vote we will face this year. In fact, it may be the most important vote we have had this decade. But I am deeply concerned that we are not having any of our colleagues making themselves available to come down to bring up the amendments that they say they want to offer.

Time is running out. This is the third day we have been on this bill. I thought we made some very good progress yesterday. We considered a number of amendments. But it is absolutely critically important that we continue to make that kind of progress today and next week.

I point out that the regular order of business is that if there are no amendments we ought to proceed to the vote on the legislation itself.

I want every Senator to have the opportunity to offer any amendments they may care to offer because there is no question about the importance of this legislation. But we cannot wait indefinitely. I ask my friends on both sides—on the Republican side and on the Democratic side—who have amendments that they want to offer on this critically important piece of legislation to please come down now. Time is running out.

Would the Senator from New York not agree with that?

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, I wholly agree with the statement by our revered chairman of the Finance Committee. The operative part of this measure is two pages. It is a simple statement. It came out from the Finance Committee almost unanimously.

Mr. ROTH. That is correct.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. That would be four months ago, in mid-May. There has been plenty of time to examine it. The House bill has a few additional features we find attractive and which we think we could adopt and send right to the President who would sign it. It is a bipartisan measure.

There are those who do not want this legislation.

It has been avowedly, unashamedly, and legitimately their desire to prolong the debate until time runs out. If they could just add one amendment, the measure would have to go back to the House, then to conference, then to the floor. Time would run out.

We have passed two appropriations bills. We are in a Presidential election year. That election is less than 60 days away. The desire to get back to our constituencies is legitimate and proper. Therefore, the device of delay is a legitimate, recognized, and familiar strategy.

However, this is not a matter on which to delay. The Chairman was absolutely right, this may be the most important vote we take this decade. In my opening statement, I referred to the testimony of Ira Shapiro, our former Chief Negotiator for Japan and Canada at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. He, just by chance, concluded his testimony, in the last testimony we heard, as it happened:

... [this vote] is one of an historic handful of Congressional votes since the end of World War II. Nothing that Members of Congress do this year—or any other year—could be more important.

Well, let us be about it. We look around and we are happy to see our friend from South Dakota, Senator

JOHNSON, who wishes to speak on behalf of the measure. We welcome any other Member who wishes to speak. We have heard many. The real matter before the Senate is those who wish to offer amendments. A good friend, a distinguished Senator, the chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, laid down a measure last evening. We had to juggle our schedule to go to the water appropriations measure. But he is not here this morning. He claimed a place—which is fine, legitimately—but the place is empty. When I arrived, as when the Chairman arrived, looking to start the amendment process, no one was here.

Now, sir, there can be only one response, and the Chairman has stated it. On Tuesday, I hope the Majority Leader will move to close debate by invoking cloture. It is a process with which we are familiar. We are not cutting off amendments; amendments will be in order afterwards. But we are sitting here asking for amendments, and none comes forward. This matter is of the utmost gravity, urgency, the issues that are in balance, and not just economic issues but political, military issues of the most important level. That is what is at stake. If nobody wishes to debate it, let's proceed to a final vote.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, let me say to my distinguished colleague, I could not agree more with his statement as to the importance of offering any amendments Members desire to offer. I am told we have actually been on this bill 4 days this week.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. And before we had the August recess.

Mr. ROTH. And before we had the August recess, we had discussion; that is correct.

I say to Senator MOYNIHAN, I think it is important we take some time today. I am delighted our friend from South Dakota is here. We will call upon him to make his remarks. I think it is important that the American people fully understand why this legislation is of such critical importance. It is important to our economy and to our growth. It is particularly important to provide better and more jobs to the working people of America. I can't stress how much I think it is important to agriculture in my little State of Delaware.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Did you say the "little State of Delaware"? Do you mean the first State to ratify the Constitution of the United States?

Mr. ROTH. You are absolutely right. I stand corrected.

In my State of Delaware, the people are waiting to see action on this.

For farmers, take poultry. It is critically important to the economy of my State. China is the second largest importer of poultry and has offered to cut the tariff in half. This makes a tremendous opportunity.

The same thing with automobiles. I bet the Senator didn't know this.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. I bet I did, sir, because I heard it from your very self