

Frumin, Elizabeth MacDonough, and Peter Robinson who work for the Senate. I do not know their political registration—I do not know if anyone does—they really do a good job. They advise the Chair to make appropriate rulings, and we have a lot of extremely complicated rules in this body. You think you have them figured out one day, and the next day you are told there is some nuance that you did not know or did not understand.

I go to the parliamentarians on a frequent basis and always am convinced I get the best information they can give me. I know everyone who sits in the chair where the Senator from Michigan now sits feels the same way. They are to be complimented. The many people who watch C-SPAN should know one reason this body functions so well is the advice we get to keep this unruly body as ruly as possible.

In addition to the parliamentarians, we have the Legislative Clerks, Dave Tinsley, Kathleen Alvarez, and Donnee Gray. When the roll is called, they make sure the Senators are counted when they say "yes" or "no" on the votes, and then there are people running in and out of this body, and sometimes it is hard to keep track of them, and they do a perfect job. Additionally, they keep track of all the amendments that are sent to the desk, and that is not an easy task.

Then there are the Journal Clerks, Scott Sanborn and Myra Baran, who keep the Senate Journal, and they do a wonderful job.

We have a CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that is the envy of the world. If somebody gets recognized in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, that is really an important day in the life of people. That is all done by these wonderful people who make sure we have a good record.

Behind me is the Democratic cloakroom where Trisha Engle, Paul Ordal, Joe Lapia, and Erik Pederson work. To my right is the Republican cloakroom. In there are people we never see. They take hundreds of phone calls every day from Senators and staff: When is there going to be a vote? Are we going to have to vote today? Is Senator such-and-such there? Would you get this message to them? If there is something that does not go right, they are the ones who get the brunt of the phone calls complaining about things. But they do a great job, again, allowing this body to run as well as it does.

In addition to the people I have mentioned, there are a very few select people who are the people who give the floor leaders the information we need to make sure we do the right thing, so when we go to the Parliamentarian, we have done what we are supposed to do.

On my side of the aisle, I have people on whom I depend every day for information, Marty Paone, Lula Davis, Gary Myrick, and Tim Mitchell these people we depend on so much for important information. They are really good at what they do.

On the Republican side, it is the same thing. We have Dave Schiappa,

Denise Ramonas, and Malloy McDaniel, on whom the Republican floor leaders depend. I have to be frank that sometimes, when one of my people is off the floor, I have no problem going to one of the Republicans and saying: David, here is a question. Will you answer it for me?

So we are very fortunate to have these dedicated public servants who really make this great Capitol of ours operate as well as it does as far as the Senate is concerned.

I have left out so many important people. There are the people who are the security officials. They are here, and if one looks around, they can see them, but they do not notice them because they do their job so well. We have people who, of course, are armed; others are not. If something did go wrong, these people are some of the best trained in the world to take care of whatever contingency might arise.

That is why, when I speak to an elementary school, secondary school, or college, I tell the young people they should consider public service as a vocation, whether it is running for elective office, seeking a point of office, or going to work in another capacity for the Government, as the people I have mentioned today—people who devote their lives to seeing that our system of government works.

There was a period of time not long ago when people in high public office said the Government was the enemy. I have never believed that. I still don't believe that. I believe that government is our friend and that we look to government to help in situations when we cannot help ourselves. An example is the September 11 disaster that took place in New York City and behind us at the Pentagon. To whom did we look? We looked to the Government to help.

If I had been doing my work, I would have had all the names, but I thought it was totally appropriate—in light of all the good things said about a few select people yesterday—that we mention the scores of people who each day make this Senate a pleasant place to work and make it the best job in the world. The Presiding Officer, and this Senator from Nevada, believe we have the best jobs in the world. I don't know how a job could bring more satisfaction than working on the problems that face the people of our respective States and the country. I, like the other 99 Members of this body, am grateful to be here, but I think I speak for every Senator in recognizing the many talents that make our job pleasant and make the body run as efficiently as it does.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

Senate will now resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3009, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3009) to extend the Andean Trade Preference Act, to grant additional trade benefits under that act, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess pending the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 10:25 a.m., recessed until 11:26 a.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. JEFFORDS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

#### OUR NATION'S FISCAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORZINE. Mr. President, I rise this morning to speak about a troubling and increasingly apparent problem that I think concerns the fiscal affairs of our great Nation. Each passing month, each passing quarter, we become more certain in our recognition that the fiscal strategy of our Nation is one that is undermining our future capacity and security as a nation.

I believe we have a failed fiscal strategy as a result of the overreaching tax cuts that we had last year, along with, obviously, the very significant changed circumstances—economically and with our war on terrorism. We have seen a projected surplus of \$5.6 trillion over the succeeding 10 years virtually evaporate. As I say, each passing month and each passing quarter we get new verification of that.

Today, I read in the newspapers across the country that the latest indication of this is becoming even more apparent. Today's reports indicate that revenue is coming into the Government at a rate much lower than earlier projected. There is now a reason to believe we will have a \$70 billion revenue shortfall from the projections that occurred as recently as a month and a half ago, 6 weeks ago. It is about a \$70 billion revenue shortfall, which will push our budget deficit for this year,

by many estimates, up to \$125 billion. A unified budget deficit of that magnitude is hard to believe in the context of where we have come from, and I certainly believe that requires rethinking our fiscal strategy if we are to be responsible about how we manage the fiscal affairs of this Nation.

That is a doubling of the previous estimates of the unified deficit and, frankly, it doesn't even count the new spending that is expected from President Bush on requests that will deal with antiterrorism and homeland defense. For individual spending, whole life, trying to manage budgets, I consider this a stark and dangerous problem that could undermine the fiscal and, ultimately, the economic health of the Nation.

They highlight a fact that is equally disturbing to me and to a lot of my colleagues, which is that this year we are going to use Social Security payroll taxes that people had thought would be put in place to build up the Social Security trust fund almost completely, if not entirely, to fund these deficits.

I think this is a misuse of the Social Security contributions. I think it is one that the American people would be troubled with if they understood what was happening. I think it would require us to truly rethink our overall fiscal strategy. We should not be using Social Security funds to pay for anything other than Social Security, let alone financing these tax cuts that are a misallocation of resources relative to our Nation's needs—particularly, at a time when we are asking people to sacrifice on a whole series of issues regarding our national security.

I think I speak for many, if not most, Democrats in emphasizing this point, particularly as it relates to the Social Security trust fund.

In the long term, raids on Social Security threaten the security of hard-working American families. But there is also a second danger with regard to Social Security that is equally as important as the fiscal danger, and I think that is very important, quite obviously.

Last December, President Bush's Social Security Commission prepared privatization plans that call for deep cuts in Social Security benefits. In fact, it talks about taking \$1 trillion out of the Social Security trust fund for transitional costs to a privatization program.

Under these proposals that are on the table, some of the cuts in Social Security may be as much as 25 percent for those who will be retiring in about 20 years and could be as much as 45 percent for later retirees.

Think about that: 25 percent to 45 percent. The average Social Security benefit for an American is \$10,000. We ought to put that in context. If we are going to take 25 percent, or \$2,500, away from that \$10,000 or, God forbid, the 45 percent, or a \$4,500 cut, and apply it to the \$10,000, one wonders how our seniors are going to meet their fi-

nancial obligations with this poor social safety net.

Mr. President, \$10,000 is not lavish, but the idea of a \$5,500 benefit seems pretty scary in a world where one can spend that much on prescription drugs in a given year, before even paying for rent and other needs. Certainly in New Jersey—and I am sure this is the case in Vermont—nobody is going to be living high on the hog on \$10,000, and certainly not \$5,500.

We have a real issue with privatization of Social Security, as well as with this fiscal problem. They come together, and this is what I wish to talk about.

I know a lot of people believe we have to fight these cuts, and we probably will over the long run, because most people think they are just wrong. But we also need to make sure Social Security has the resources to maintain the benefits structure that is in place. The entire Social Security shortfall, according to the Social Security actuaries—that is the administration itself—is \$3.7 trillion over the 75-year measured period. That may sound like a lot of money, and I guess it is.

I sit at Everett Dirksen's old desk, and he used to say: A billion here, a billion there is a lot of money. Mr. President, \$3.7 trillion is a lot more money, but it is not a lot in the long-term fiscal potential of our Nation. In fact, last year's tax cuts alone will cost the Nation, over that 75-year period, \$8.7 trillion. So we have \$3.7 trillion to secure Social Security, and there is an \$8.7 trillion tax cut. We can put those two together and say: Where are our priorities? What should we be emphasizing?

The Social Security shortfall is less than a half of the cost of last year's tax cut. Some tax cut was very good, and most of us would argue that is very much the case. It is just a matter of whether it is overreaching and whether it is, in the context of today's world, something we should continue to pursue.

Like most Democrats, I am fully committed—I actually think most of us in this Chamber are committed—to protecting and defending Social Security. This is an issue that deserves full and complete debate. Unfortunately, a number of folks, for political strategy reasons—particularly the leaders in the House and also President Bush, I suspect—have been trying to push this issue to the back burner. I do not think we can do that in this context of the deteriorating fiscal health of the Nation. We need to have this debate about the future of Social Security in front of the elections this year so that the American people can express their points of view.

Interestingly, the chairman of the Republican National Committee just this week, Gov. Mark Racicot, said Congress should debate Social Security privatization this year. I embrace that statement and think he is right. As a matter of fact, Mr. LEVIN, the distin-

guished Senator from Michigan, and I have sent a letter commending Governor Racicot for making his statement and encouraging that debate.

Social Security is going to impact every American—those retired today but, more importantly, those who will be retiring in the future.

I call on my colleagues in the House and Senate to get on with this privatization debate so that the public can make its choice whether they believe we ought to privatize, whether we ought to pull out and undermine guaranteed benefits that the American public has come to expect.

I do not think they are aware of the nature of some of the recommendations that have come out of the Commission, so-called "Save Social Security," that President Bush put together and came up with its report that would lead to 25- to 45-percent cuts in Social Security benefits.

I come here today to make two points. We have a serious reason to have a debate about the changed conditions of our fiscal policy. They are going to put pressure on a whole series of choices we make. As we go deeper and deeper in debt, and as we erode that \$5.6 trillion that was the basis of how we made our judgments over the last 18 months, and certainly with regard to that tax cut, we need to understand that the world is different today, and it is particularly different as to how we are going to fund and secure Social Security in the months, years, and decades ahead. I, for one, think we need to get on with that debate, a fair debate, because it is important for the American people to participate in that process.

I hope all of us will stand up for those issues in which we believe. I certainly do, and I believe my colleagues on this side of the aisle believe strongly that Social Security should be placed first in our fiscal priorities, right after securing our national security and national defense.

Those are the points I wanted to make because I believe the numbers are real, they are telling, and they make it very clear that we need to have this overall review of our fiscal strategy in the context of a very seriously deteriorating situation.

I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, my understanding is a cloture motion has been filed on the motion to proceed on the Andean trade bill; is that correct?