

I was beginning my last 4 years in high school in the 1930s. That is when mechanically sliced bread first came along. "The greatest thing since sliced bread," we hear. That goes back to the 1930s.

The promise made to America's senior citizens for an effective prescription drug benefit is left for another day. Help is not on the way.

A weakened economy and rising health care costs are the main reasons for the growth in the number of the uninsured. When people lose their jobs, they often lose their health coverage.

The number of unemployed men and women has increased by about 2 million since January 2001, so it should come as no surprise that the number of uninsured is also going up, up, up. Health insurance premiums also increased by 12.7 percent during the past year, making coverage less affordable for employers and workers.

According to the Census Bureau, the number of people with employment-based health coverage dropped in 2001 for the first time since 1993. What is the response to this situation from the Bush administration? What is the response?

What? I can't hear you. A deafening silence.

In 2001, the 30 top earning corporate executives took home \$3.1 billion, an average of \$104 million. We are talking about the 30 top earning corporate executives. What did they do to earn their money?

They bilked shareholders. The 30 top-earning corporate executives took home \$3.123 billion, an average of \$104 million.

Why be a U.S. Senator? Why be a Senator? Why be anything else? Become a corporate executive. Not all of them are like that, but there are some bad apples there.

Compared to the national median income in 2001, these 30 corporate executives earned the equivalent of 73,955 households. I would never believe it, but these 30 corporate executives earned the equivalent of 73,955 households.

What is the response to this inequity from the Bush administration? What? A deafening silence. Have I lost my hearing? What has happened? Here I am, 85 years old, and I have no ear plugs in all these years. What? A deafening silence. Deafening.

Unfortunately for the American people, it is not a record on which to look back with pride. It is a record that rejects compromise in favor of obstinance. It is a record that rejects progress in favor of partisanship. It is a record that puts politics ahead of the American people.

As for the appropriations bills, the ranking member of the full committee, the senior Senator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS, and I have urged the administration and the House Republican leadership to move closer to the Senate levels in these bills. The 13 bills approved by the Senate Appropriations

Committee total \$768.1 billion. These bills are consistent with the committee allocation approved by a vote of 29-0 in June. The bills are consistent with the \$768.1 billion allocation that was approved by the Senate Budget Committee when it reported its budget resolution last March. The bills are consistent with the \$768.1 billion allocation that was supported by 59 Members of the Senate when the allocation was voted on during floor debate on the Defense Authorization bill on June 20.

The Senate bills do not promote an explosive growth in spending. The big growth in the bills is for the 13-percent hike proposed by the President for Defense and the 25-percent increase proposed by the President for homeland defense. The fight with the President is over the Senate's desire to provide a 2.6 percent increase for domestic programs, barely enough to cover inflation.

Clearly, a bipartisan effort in the Senate has produced good pieces of legislation. But progress on these bills is at an impasse because the House leadership, under direction from the administration, will not move beyond its arbitrary funding level of \$759 billion. Just \$9 billion between us, \$9 billion. Yet the administration will not move. On the other hand, someone asked Larry Lindsey, the President's top economic adviser, at the White House the other day: How much will the war cost? Maybe \$100 billion, maybe \$200 billion. That is nothing.

That was his response. That is nothing.

Yet we have come to a standstill because of \$9 billion that the Appropriations Committee in the House and the Appropriations Committee in the Senate believe is needed for domestic programs that benefit the Nation's families, children, and veterans.

By its calculated machinations, the administration is turning its back to the needs of the American people at the exact moment where those needs are reaching the breaking point.

This should not be about political winners or losers. This year, of all years, we should not play political games with the appropriations bills. But it seems as if the administration is more than willing to roll the dice with these important bills. And I fear that their gamble will come up snake eyes.

Time and again, the President called on Congress to pass the Defense appropriations bill before the break for the election. I agree with the President. We should pass that bill. The Senate's bipartisan Defense package is \$1.2 billion above the House-passed level. The Senate, which some claim is uninterested in defense and in the security of the Nation, provided significantly more resources for our soldiers, sailors, and airmen than the House. This Senate has answered the call and responded to the needs of the military. Congress should not pinch pennies at this time for the men and women in our Armed Forces, and I continue to urge the

House to move closer to the Senate level.

We are making progress on the Defense package, and I hope that we can conference those bills soon. But, in order to do that, we need the House Republican leadership and the administration to be more flexible in their approach. Taking such a hard line on these appropriations bills threatens the security of the country forces Congress to gut vital domestic initiatives.

The atmosphere of the White House is a heady one. It can cause even the most level-headed occupant to focus on what is important inside the Washington beltway and to forget what is important in the rest of the Nation. I, for one, do not forget what is important to America. I recognize, as do many Members of this body, the importance of these appropriations bills to the future progress and security of this Nation. I recognize the importance of these appropriations bills to the farmers, to the teachers and their students, and to the veterans. I recognize the importance of these bills to future breakthroughs in medical research and cancer treatments. I recognize the importance of these bills to our Nation's energy independence and to our transportation network. Without these bills, promises will remain unfulfilled, problems will remain unattended, and progress will be stalled.

Tomorrow, the House is expected to debate a second continuing resolution that would simply extend the first continuing resolution through Friday, October 11, and I will recommend that the Senate approve that resolution without controversy. But we should not continue to place the Government on autopilot. We should complete work on our appropriations bills.

I urge the administration and the House Republican leadership to join this Senate in passing 13 responsible pieces of legislation that respond to the needs of the Nation, at home and abroad. I urge that arbitrary budget figures be left at the door and we complete our work before adjourning this session of Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

COMPLETING THE SENATE'S BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as people can probably tell, we are getting down to the end of this session. As such, there is a lot of business that still needs to be completed. Many of my colleague have expressed their concerns that the Senate has not completed its business for this session. We all have similar concerns. Every once in a while, I am compelled to come to the floor and explain what is going on. There is not a scorecard around here. There is not a program that anyone can follow. So sometimes it is a little difficult to know what is really happening in the Senate.

I know there is a little confusion among the American public about our progress because I go back to Wyoming almost every weekend. I go out on Friday because we usually do not have votes on Fridays. I travel to a different part of Wyoming each weekend and I return to Washington on Sunday. One of the things I have learned in my 5½ years of being a Senator from Wyoming is that it is really a big State with numerous communities. Each side of Wyoming is approximately 400 miles on a side, one of those two big square States in the West. If they had not invented the square, we would not be able to exist.

Wyoming has 267 towns and one-third of those towns do not have any population. I go to those towns, too, because there actually are people who congregate at those places. There is a post office or a school or some other public facility, or a ranch that people go to discuss issues.

For example, two weeks ago, I was invited to a pork barbecue—very unusual in Wyoming. We usually have beef barbecues, but this was a pork barbecue at three ranches north of Lusk, Wyoming in Niobrara County. The population of the entire county—and it is bigger than most eastern States—is a little over 3,000 people. Most of the population lives in one town, Lusk. The ranch where the barbecue was hosted is just three ranches north near Lusk. It turned out that three ranches north is 61 miles and then you are still not there. After driving 61 miles, you turn off the highway and drive back another 25 miles on dirt roads to get to the ranch where the barbecue was being held. During the last 25 miles, I forded a creek to get to the house.

I do not know how many of my colleagues have recently forded a creek to get to some of their constituents. But when I got to the ranch, there were approximately 200 people sitting on hay bales, listening to a band, eating the barbecue, and talking about what was going to happen in their State legislative district.

Some of our State legislative districts in Wyoming are pretty long and wind around so they have enough people within the borders to qualify as a legislative district. Previously, the record for people traveling to attend one of my meetings was no more 40 or 50 miles. That is how close neighbors live next to one another out in that part of the country. At this particular meeting, we set a new record. One of the families had traveled to over 180 miles to attend my meeting. Surprisingly enough, they still live in that same house State legislative district, which gives you an idea about the number of miles that we have travel out in the West.

One of the things I have discovered during my weekly trips to Wyoming is what the people in my home State are really thinking and worrying about. I am here to tell you they have two main worries right now.

One of my constituents' worries is the drought. Wyomingites are experiencing the third year of a tragic drought. People have had to sell off their livestock. When all areas affected by this drought start to sell off livestock, it drives the prices down. It particularly drives the prices down if there is a packer concentration that sets those prices.

Packer concentration is another little problem we have in Wyoming, which coincides with our State's current drought. I am sure people in America have not noticed their beef prices going down. No, their beef prices have been increasing. But the ranchers' prices have been decreasing. It is an effect of the drought—with some phony economics built in. Nevertheless, Wyomingites are very interested in the drought. My constituents also are very interested in what is going to happen in Iraq.

I was able to travel to New York on the floor of the United Nations General Assembly when the President delivered his speech to the General Assembly. Each session, the President is allowed to appoint two people from the Congress to be United Nations delegates. President Bush appointed Senator SARBANES and me to represent the Congress at the General Assembly, giving us diplomatic status and rank. It is actually very exciting. If the Ambassador is not there, we have the right to sit in the U.S. Ambassador's seat and cast votes on United Nations resolutions. We also have the opportunity to address the United Nations.

It was interesting attending the session in which President Bush delivered his speech to the United Nations General Assembly. When the President was first introduced, the people who applauded were primarily from the United States. It was a strange situation for the President of the United States because they are used to having people stand and applaud. For the General Assembly attendees, it was not a big shock about the lack of applause because we had just heard the Brazilian head of state's speech and he did not receive applause at the beginning or end of his speech.

President Bush gave his speech, giving an outstanding delivery. It was fascinating to watch the delegates around the floor as their body language demonstrated that they were loosening up. As all of you who watched the speech know, when President Bush finished, he received applause—pretty unanimous applause. He made a point, and I have to tell you that after he finished, the other heads of state, as they gave their speeches, used the theme that the President used. They took Iraq to task and Iraq heard it. Because the heads of state have talked about Iraq—and it is still talk—Iraqi officials have talked about allowing inspectors in the country.

However, we still have a long way to go. There is more important work that we have to accomplish to show the re-

solve of the United States and that we are going to disarm Saddam Hussein. If we cannot disarm Hussein, we are going to replace him. In the next week, the Congress will be debating a resolution concerning Iraq. It was introduced in a bipartisan manner in the Senate earlier today, and it is going to be one of the really important debates of this body. It will take us at least a few days to complete.

I have to tell you that after the President's speech was over, the delegates had a little time to talk among themselves. We wandered around and met other delegates, and also overheard their conversations. I was very pleased at how well the delegates accepted the President's comments about Iraq. Again, if the United Nations does its job, sticks together and does what all of the heads of states have been saying, we can solve the Iraq problem and we can solve it within the realm of the United Nations. I am sure that would be everyone's preference.

While I am explaining what is going on in the Congress, I have to backtrack a little bit because the Congress has had a little different situation this year and we have numerous loose ends that remain out there. We have heard about why the appropriations bills are stalled out. I want to take time to explain why that has happened. Homeland security is stalled out, and I want to explain why that has happened. We also have an energy conference that is out. We have the military construction and defense appropriations, that have already passed this body and passed the House and are now being conferenced. We have terrorism insurance, which has passed both bodies and is being conferenced. We have the Patients' Bill of Rights, and other bills, for which conference committees have been selected.

We work through a committee process in the Congress. The committee process allows a select group of people who are intensely interested in a particular policy area get together as a committee and they review a bill from all of the perspectives of all committee members. It is the easiest place to work a bill because groups can drop off where they have common interests in a particular section of that bill and work out compromises easier than can be done on the floor. So I would say about 80 percent of the work that we do get done is during the committee process.

One of the reasons that people sometimes think the Senate is a divisive body is that this is the room in which we debate the other 20 percent—the 20 percent that we did not work out in the committee.

One of the things you will notice is when we complete a bill, we agree on about 80 percent, which we had originally agreed upon during the committee process. It makes us look a little divisive, but it is part of the philosophy that keeps the legislative process moving. The committee process gets things done in the Senate.

This year, we debated the energy bill for approximately 8 weeks. It did not go through committee. You were able to see the entire bill crafted and debated on the Senate floor without the flexibility found during the committee process. This occurred because the Senate Energy Committee was stopped from working on its version of the energy bill. There was some bipartisan agreement on the energy bill during the committee process, and then the committee was told to stop working on it. Consequently, it took us a long time to work through the energy bill on the Senate floor, and I do not think it is a bill that, because of the complexities of doing it with 100 votes, really reflected what could have been accomplished in committee.

We worked on prescription drugs, which is one of the most critical needs for seniors in this country. What happened on prescription drugs? It did not come out of committee. Normally the Senate Finance Committee, which has an extensive expertise on health care, Medicare, and Social Security, handles those issues. But the committee was not able to handle it. The Senate voted on three different prescription drug bills this year, which took many weeks of debate and time to discuss each one. None of them had enough votes to pass the parliamentary requirements to move forward in the Senate, even though one of them was a tripartisan bill.

There is another unique thing that has happened this year in the Senate. We are not operating with a budget. The last budget agreement ended yesterday. It presents some real complications for us to be able to get our work done. It presents even bigger complications for maintaining any kind of a balanced budget—or as close as possible—when the economy is down and a war is occurring. We need a budget, but we do not currently have a budget.

Another thing that has happened is when bills come to the Senate floor, usually each side gets to introduce some amendments. Each side is allowed to introduce and vote on their own amendments. Lately, what we have been having is a full tree. You will hear that comment around here. I need to better explain this terminology. The full tree means that one side puts in all the amendments that can be debated, so the other side is blocked from being able to offer any amendments. There were some promises in June that was not going to happen. Promises have not been kept. Once we finally were given the opportunity to put in an amendment, we have not had an opportunity to vote on it.

I mentioned earlier the extreme drought that is occurring in Wyoming. Throughout the West, we are having forest fires. The fiscal year 2003 Interior appropriations bill has an amendment that would provide for a demonstration project to show what a healthy forest could be. It does not do much, but it would allow for some dem-

onstrations to show what could be done in our forests to have the kind of forests everyone envisions. There needs to be a good debate on what we envision as a healthy forest. In the meantime, of course, the fires rage on and we are not allowed to vote on the healthy forest demonstration project.

The fire demonstration project is extremely critical to the West. About 8 million acres have burned out thus far. For people who do not deal a lot with acres, it really does not mean much to them. An acre is about the size of a football field. But that is hard to relate to 8 million acres. It is the equivalent of a four-mile-wide strip from Washington, DC, to Los Angeles that has been burned off this year. This year's fires have caused in excess of 25 deaths, and untold houses being burned to the ground. Those people who did not have their homes burned to the ground are now facing blackened stubble.

Something needs to be done about it. There are some preventive actions we can take. Outside Yellowstone Park, there is a pine beetle forest, which means pine beetles have gotten into the trees and girdled them. The beetles cut off all the nutrition to trees, and the trees die. The first year they are dead, they have rusty pine needles. Pine needles burn extremely well. After the first year, you have a dead standing tree. Dead trees burn pretty well, too. After that, the trees fall over, deteriorate, and become part of the undergrowth and create further problems.

There are things we could be doing to prevent these fires. Good stewardship of our forests would increase habitat for animals and provide more safety. We cannot do much, but we could do the worst first by being allowed to vote on an amendment to address wildfire suppression. The FY 2003 Interior appropriations bill has languished here for approximately five weeks. During the past month, we have debated the Interior appropriations bill in the mornings. In the afternoon, we have debated the homeland security bill. Again, after getting through a loaded amendment tree, we wind up in a situation where we cannot get a vote on the President's version of the homeland security bill. I think it is very discourteous to the President to not be allowed an opportunity to have a vote on his version of the homeland security bill. Why not? I suspect it would pass the same as the fire amendment.

It is a definite dilemma. Do we let the President's homeland security version of the bill pass, or do we just stifle it? If it gets stifled, nothing can happen on this policy issue. We have some work to do. It is time we did it. It could be done by allowing some votes on some key policy issues.

There has always been cooperation in the Senate for the 5½ years I have been here in allowing people to have a vote on their amendments. Sometimes we did some really unique parliamentary procedures in that we let two versions

be voted on side by side, even though one was an amendment to the other. During the time the Republicans were in the majority, the minority was allowed votes on their bills, but we are now not getting votes on our bills. There is some point at which you have to say: if we cannot vote on it, we will stop the process until we do get a vote. The easy way to solve that is to let us have a vote on this important healthy forest demonstration project and the President's version of the homeland security bill.

Also, let us have a vote on the President's homeland security. The significant difference in the versions is whether we are going to take away the right of the President to address certain personnel issues and make him subject, during emergencies, to stacks of regulations. Should the President have to go by huge stacks of regulations to make management decisions in a time of crisis while maintaining a secure homeland?

There is going to be a lot of frustration in the next few days because there is a great need to get the Senate's work done. We are the ones charged with getting the appropriations bills done. We need to complete the FY 2003 appropriations process. We should start that process with the budget so that we have a road map of what we are doing, and then fill in the blanks on the appropriations while staying within a balanced budget.

When I first arrived here in the Senate, we had a huge controversy. The very first thing I debated was the balanced budget constitutional amendment. People who remember 5½ years ago will remember that a constitutional amendment has a much higher criteria for passing than any other bill. It was defeated by one vote. The reason was defeated by one vote was because everybody here said we can balance the budget, and those who opposed the amendment said we can balance the budget without a balanced budget constitutional amendment.

We did balance the budget for a while. We did it. I am very proud of it. While we were balancing the budget, the economy went up. When we stopped balancing the budget, the Congress said there were surpluses available to spend beyond what was allocated for before, then economy started down. Having a balanced budget gives importance to the economy of this country. It gives people more reliance on what we are doing, and more confidence in what we are doing. At the moment, we are not instilling a lot of confidence.

Granted, there is a war going on, and a war affects the budget. And it should.

Earlier, Senator HOLLINGS had some charts when he was describing the amount of the national debt. I knew a fellow named Steve Tarver who used to live in Gillette. He used to get a hold of me on a regular basis and ask: How much is the national debt? If we are paying down the national debt, how come the interest isn't going down? It is because of phony accounting.

We have gotten on the corporations for their accounting standards. Now it is time for us to get on our own selves for our accounting methods. For example, the Social Security trust fund, it neither funds nor trusts, and we should be taking care of it.

We could pay the debt down to nothing over a 30-year period. I have had charts on the floor to show how that could be done. There are emergencies that come up. The 30 years, incidentally, corresponds with the time of a house mortgage. We buy houses, and sometimes we pass those on to our descendants. Sometimes that has a remaining bill with it, and they keep paying them down.

That is what we are doing with the country. We could take the national debt and pay it off over a 30-year period, where if we did not spend the difference on the interest payment, when we reduced it, on other things, we could pay off more of the principal. So then it would be a relatively small payment. It is a huge payment, using the interest we are paying now, which we are not able to spend on anything else at a future date. As far as the war is concerned, that would be a second mortgage on the house with a much shorter term.

So there is not any excuse for us not to be paying down the national debt in good times, and taking out second mortgages in bad times.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I appreciate the indulgence of the Chair in letting me expound on this a little bit. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. DORGAN, is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, it has been interesting, today, to listen to some of the discussion on the floor of the Senate about the economy. The reason it has been interesting is there is not a great deal of discussion these days about the economy. Most of the discussion here in Congress especially, and on the front pages of America's newspapers, has been about the subject of Iraq and national security.

That is important. There is no question about that. The issues of service, duty, honor, patriotism, national security—all of those issues are deadly serious business for our country. When we talk about sending America's sons and daughters to war, that is deadly serious business, and the Constitution has something to say about it. The Constitution provides that the Congress shall make that decision.

Let me just say, on these issues—I am going to speak about the economy, but I have been troubled lately by some of the things I have read about national security, especially about a new doctrine that is being developed, or has

been developed, and announced by some, talking about preemptive strikes—that our country has a right to preemptively strike a potential adversary. That has never been this country's approach to dealing with international affairs.

I think about this notion of preemptive strikes, and I think about how we might feel, as a country, if some other countries in the world said to us: Oh, by the way, we have a new policy. Our policy is: preemptive strikes on neighboring countries that we worry might very well threaten our national security interests.

We need to have a long, thoughtful, and sober discussion about that kind of policy change. And I expect we will do that.

First, however, we will debate a resolution on Iraq here in the Senate beginning this week. Again, as I indicated, that is a very serious business. My hope is that our country will speak with one voice on these issues, we will work through it, and then speak with one voice. And my hope is that voice will be a voice that says: It is best always, to the extent we can, especially dealing with a problem like this, to confront the country of Iraq with, if necessary, coercive and by-force inspections in Iraq, to rid that country of any weapons of mass destruction they have, and do so with coalition partners, other countries around the world, that are willing to, and that should, assume that burden with us. But that is for another time, and I will speak another day on that subject.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me talk, just for a moment, about the economy.

I have listened to some of the discussion, and I know there is a tendency to talk about the economy and to talk about, the other side is to blame. It is always the other side that is to blame. It does not matter which side you are on, you are just pointing in the opposite direction. And I suppose there is some blame that can be availed to virtually everyone in Government for our problems with respect to the American economy.

I worry, however, there is not very much attention being paid to the economy. Today's speeches in the Senate represent a departure because in most cases nobody wants to talk about the economy these days.

We have very serious, relentless, difficult problems in the American economy. Just take a look at what is going on in the economy. More people are out of work. More people are losing their jobs. More people are losing money in their 401(k) accounts. The stock market is behaving like a yo-yo.

The big budget surpluses that we were told last year would last forever—most of us did not believe that, but that is what we were told: These budget surpluses will last for as long as you

can count, so plan on the next 10 years of having consistent surpluses, and let's spend it now in the form of tax cuts—well, those surpluses have now turned into deficits, and big deficits. Big surpluses have turned into big deficits.

On top of all that, we have corporate scandals that have developed and been unearthed in recent months in this country that shake the confidence of the American people in this economy of ours. I will talk just a bit more about that in a while.

But I am not here to say the President is solely to blame for what is going on. I do wish he would provide more leadership at this moment and say, yes, the economy is in trouble, instead of having Larry Lindsey trot out here and say: The fundamentals are sound. Let's hang in here. Don't worry about it.

This economy is in significant difficulty. I think it is time for us to recognize that. It is time for us to have an economic summit with the President, invite the best minds in this country to come together, have the executive branch, the President, and the legislative branch sit down together and evaluate: What do we do about a fiscal policy that does not add up?

It is true, as my friend from Wyoming just said, we do not have a budget this year. Why don't we have a budget? We have a fiscal policy that does not add up. There isn't anybody in this Chamber who can make sense of this fiscal policy, and they know it. It does not add up. This fiscal policy was a policy developed a year and a half ago, in which we were told: We will have surpluses as far as the eye can see, so let's have a \$1.7 trillion tax cut over 10 years, and then hold our hands over our eyes and think things will turn out just fine. Well, they have not turned out just fine.

I think it is incumbent on us, on behalf of the interests of the American people, to sit at the same table and decide we are all constituents of the same interest, and that interest is the long-term economic progress and opportunity here in the United States.

We need an economy that grows. There is no social program we have worked on in this country—none—that is as important as a good job that pays well. There is no program we work on that is as important to the American people as a good job that pays well because that makes virtually everything else possible. If we do not have an economy that grows and expands and provides opportunity, then we have some significant future trouble.

Let me talk, just a little, about what it means when our economy isn't doing well. I spent time this morning at a hearing. The airline industry came in. We had a hearing in the Commerce Committee. The airline industry lost \$7 billion last year—\$7 billion.

We have carriers that have filed for bankruptcy; more probably will. And they say: Look, we have a huge problem. Fewer people are flying. Some