

health reform proposal that I have been discussing with colleagues.

I come back in closing to the central reason I have come to the Chamber, and that is that in my State and in much of the country, our families are hurting and our economy is hemorrhaging. I have listed three issues where, if there was some leadership from the administration—transportation, lowering medical costs immediately, particularly on the prescription side, which has the support of Senators of both parties, the expanded access to generic drugs, and finally unemployment compensation—three steps where, with a little bit of leadership from the administration on these vital economic issues, we could take steps now that would help working families.

Let's not go the wrong way. Let's find an opportunity for Democrats and Republicans to work on key issues and go the right way, which means providing economic relief to our working families.

I know the Senator from Georgia has been waiting very patiently. I yield the floor, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

IRAQ RESOLUTION

Mr. MILLER. Madam President, I have signed on as an original cosponsor of the Iraq resolution that our President has proposed, and I would like to tell you a story that I believe explains why I think that is the right path to take.

A few weeks ago, we were doing some work on my back porch back home, tearing out a section of old stacked rocks, when all of a sudden I uncovered a nest of copperhead snakes. I am not one to get alarmed at snakes. I know they perform some valuable functions, like eating rats.

When I was a young lad, I kept snakes as pets. I had an indigo snake. I had a bull snake. I had a beautiful colored corn snake, and many others. I must have had a dozen king snakes at one time or another. They make great pets, and you only have to give them a little mouse every 30 days.

I read all the books by Raymond C. Ditmars, who was before most herpetologists of the day—that is a person who is an expert on snakes—and for a while I wanted to be a herpetologist, but the pull of being a big league shortstop out ran that childhood dream.

I reminisce this way to explain that snakes do not scare me like they do most people, and I guess the reason is that I know the difference between those snakes that are harmless and those that can kill you. In fact, I bet I may be the only Senator in this body who can look at the last 3 inches of a snake's tail and tell you whether it is poisonous. I can also tell the sex of a snake, but that is another story.

A copperhead snake will kill you. It could kill one of my dogs. It could kill

one of my grandchildren. It could kill any one of my four great-grandchildren. They play all the time where I found those killers.

You know, when I discovered those copperheads, I did not call my wife Shirley for advice, as I usually do on most things. I did not go before the city council. I did not yell for help from my neighbors. I just took a hoe and knocked them in the head and killed them, dead as a doorknob.

I guess you could call it unilateral action, a preemptive strike. Perhaps if you had been watching me, you could have even said it was bellicose and reactive. I took their poisonous heads off because they were a threat to me, they were a threat to my home, they were a threat to my family, and all I hold dear. And isn't that what this is all about?

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECEPTION FOR LANCE ARMSTRONG

Mr. REID. Madam President, Lance Armstrong is a man who has caught the attention of the entire American public and the world because of his athletic prowess, but more importantly than that because of his fighting back from devastating cancer. He is, of course, the greatest cyclist in the world today, and maybe of all time. This all occurred after he had a very severe bout of cancer. He is going to be in the Capitol building today.

A reception is going to be held for him in the Dirksen Building starting at 11:30. He is going to make some remarks around 12:00. Senators interested in meeting one of the greatest athletes of all time, or any staff within the sound of my voice, are welcome to come to 192 Dirksen to see the great Lance Armstrong.

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. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is pending legislation we certainly would like to move. We have tried very hard to get some help in this regard. This legislation gives the same number of weeks of benefits for unemployment

compensation as was given under President Bush, Sr., in the early 1990s. Only Oregon and Washington, the States with the highest unemployment in the Nation, will get a little bit more, and that is because of an extension of Congress passed in March. The March bill provided up to 65 weeks of benefits for those two States. Our bill only provides up to 7 more.

This is extremely important. We have people out of work. That might not sound like much to somebody who has a job, but to someone who does not have a job, it is everything. We have 2 million more Americans unemployed than we had 18 months ago. We have economic problems that have been kind of covered up. We have a situation where there is \$4.5 trillion lost in the stock market. If someone was going to retire with their 401(k) or their IRA, they would have to work up to 5 years more, having lost 30 to 35 percent of the value of their retirement.

I have people I welcome to Washington every Thursday. They came to me today saying they do not know what they will do because they lost so much of the value of what they will retire on. They do not know what they will do.

We need to extend unemployment compensation. We did it before under President Bush senior. There was an emergency then. We did it on more than one occasion. We only want to do it now on one occasion.

As I indicated, the bill will provide an additional 20 weeks of extended benefits for high unemployment States and an additional 13 weeks to all other States for workers who run out or about to run out of benefits.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3009

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 619, S. 3009, a bill to provide for a 13-week extension of unemployment compensation; that the bill be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and there be no intervening action or debate.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, and I will object for the leadership, as a ranking Republican on the committee that has jurisdiction over unemployment compensation for our side, there is not unanimous view that something should be done in this area. The most important thing is, for now, we object.

We would think in terms of looking at the economy and not only ways to support people who are in need at a time when the economy might be in problems down the road, but also to consider as part of a package things that would help the economy grow and create jobs.

It is essential we think in terms of expanding the economy when we put together packages that are needed for economic relief and not just to help

those who are unemployed. We look forward to working with the other side of the aisle in seeing what could we come up with in terms of a package that will help people in need but also help to grow the economy.

Since that is not part of this package, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. SENATOR JESSE HELMS

Mr. INOUE. I wish to take a moment to express my appreciation and admiration for my good friend from North Carolina, Senator JESSE HELMS.

I have had the privilege of working with Senator HELMS for the past 30 years. Although he and I do not share the same ideologies, Senator HELMS has always kept his word to me. In this day and age, "trustworthiness" is a trait that is becoming increasingly rare, particularly in the political arena. Yet Senator HELMS has remained true to himself and his upbringing. Senator HELMS is trustworthy.

Senator HELMS is a true statesman and gentleman, courteous, courageous, and compassionate. He is a man who understands what it means to do one's duty to God, country, and family. He emulates the idea upon which America was founded, the idea that each individual controls his or her destiny and has a right to pursue and achieve their dreams, and that great societies are built by people who are inspired and motivated to reach high and work hard.

Senator HELMS has, on many occasions, inspired and motivated me. He has set an example for me and my colleagues. His life is a model of one who honors and defends the Constitution, works to make our country a better place, and conducts himself with dignity and respect for others.

I thank my dear friend for the many courtesies he has extended to me throughout the years. I will miss his kindness and friendship. To Senator HELMS and his wife, Dot, I wish them many years of happiness and continued good health in the bright years ahead.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in honoring JESSE HELMS, the senior Senator from North Carolina, for his many years of service to his State and to the Nation.

While Senator HELMS has served in the United States Senate for more than a quarter-century, his earlier years were equally active and productive. Following his service in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he became the city editor of the Raleigh Times. He served as Administrative Assistant to two U.S. Senators before becoming Executive Director of the North Carolina Bank Association in 1953. The Tarheel Banker became the largest State banking publication in the State while JESSE HELMS was its editor. He was Ex-

ecutive Vice President, Vice Chairman of the Board, and Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Capitol Broadcasting Company in Raleigh, NC from 1960 until his election to the Senate in 1972.

During his service in the U.S. Senate, Senator HELMS has served as a member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry which he chaired in the 1980s, and the Foreign Relations Committee, of which he was a former chairman and the current ranking member. In 1973, he became the first Republican, as well as the first Senator from North Carolina, to receive the Golden Gavel, an award presented for presiding over the Senate for more than 117 hours. Senator HELMS was awarded a second Golden Gavel for presiding for more than 120 hours in 1974.

It goes without saying that JESSE HELMS has become a fixture and a legend in this body. While Senator HELMS and I have often differed over the years in our approaches and our positions to the many important issues that have come before the Senate for consideration, Senator HELMS has always been a force to be reckoned with. His public service has been marked by hard work and diligence. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to serve with Senator HELMS over these many years and want to join my colleagues in paying tribute to him today.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, over the course of the day, we have heard from my colleagues many of Senator JESSE HELMS' remarkable accomplishments over the course of his life. He is a husband, a father, a Senator, a Navy veteran, a defender of freedom, and a good friend. But above all, JESSE HELMS is a man of God.

I should also add that he is a man of the people. Senator HELMS has seen more Senators, staffers, and pages in his tenure than most Members, and he treated all of them like they were from his own family. He is constantly noted for his friendly demeanor to those strangers who meet JESSE for the first time, but go away from their meetings feeling like a personal relationship has just formed. Senator HELMS has always been willing to take those precious extra few minutes when meeting someone to make personal connections that endure him to many.

Rarely do people keep their convictions as strong as JESSE HELMS, especially facing the type of scrutiny that politicians do in the spotlight. Throughout his 30 years in the Senate, Senator HELMS has fought hard for the commonsense values that he brought with him from the great State of North Carolina. He has stood for the vision that our Founding Fathers imagined when they framed the Constitution. I cannot help but think that North Carolina and indeed our country is indebted to Senator HELMS for his service to our country. It has been a privilege to stand with the Senator on so many of the issues that are important to the

United States. I am proud to call Senator HELMS a colleague and a friend, and we all know how much his leadership will be missed in this institution.

Thank you, JESSE, for your continued dedication not only to the Senate, but also your country which is so near and dear to your heart.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR STROM THURMOND

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, what can I say about STROM THURMOND?

I remember, back in 1981, the Senate Judiciary Committee had a new chairman—and a new ranking member, and there were more than a few folks looking forward to the fireworks.

There was a new conservative Republican administration and new Republican majority in the Senate. The Judiciary Committee seemed destined to be one of the main ideological battlegrounds over issues that divided us then and still divide us today.

There were more than a few Washington insiders who thought that STROM THURMOND the seasoned veteran conservative Republican chairman who first made his mark on the national political scene as an advocate of State's rights—and JOE BIDEN a northeastern Democrat still in his thirties whose interest in politics was sparked, in large measure, by the civil rights movement would never find an inch of common ground—not an inch.

But I knew that was not going to be the case. I had served with STROM for eight years by then . . .

I knew his personal strengths, and admired them greatly, regardless of our political differences, and I knew those strengths would guide us to consensus rather than gridlock.

I knew, with STROM, there would be comity—not enmity.

And I knew debate would be civil and constructive rather than divisive and filled with meaningless partisan rhetoric.

STROM, as usual, didn't let me down. In his six years as chairman—and for several years after that when we switched roles—he exceeded my expectations in every way.

There were many heated debates and contentious hearings, but we weathered them and we weathered the kinds of controversies which I've seen poison the well for other committees for years afterward.

But that kind of cooperation would not have happened if it weren't for STROM THURMOND's strength of character.

It would not have happened if he were not, first and foremost, a gentleman—unfailingly courteous, respectful, and always dignified.

STROM's word is his bond, and each of us, even the most partisan political opponents knows that, in the heat of debate, under extraordinary pressure, when the stakes are exceedingly high, STROM THURMOND will always, always keep his word.