

So this reported progress from this week is something that is very gratifying and pleasing to me and leaves me very optimistic about the future. It is a wonderful part of the world.

THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in a few minutes we will be formally addressing the issue surrounding the Small Business Administration. Thus, I would like to briefly comment on the importance of small business in this country, how the Senate is responding, and to put a little bit of perspective around the importance of the United States doing everything it can—whether it is with the regulatory burden, whether it is in making resources and capital available, or opening up other opportunities for small businesses in this country—how important that is to overall economic growth.

Benjamin Franklin once said: He who would fish must venture his bait. Fortunately, in America we have millions of creative and driven women and men and even teams ready to cast their reels. Fortunately, we have the Small Business Administration ready to help them. You might say that the Small Business Administration is an entrepreneur's bait and tackle shop.

I believe by today's action in a few moments we will be passing the Small Business Administration's 50th Anniversary Reauthorization Act of 2003. This Federal agency has helped more than 20 million Americans start, grow, and expand their businesses. It has become the Government's most effective instrument for economic development. With its help, small companies have grown from a handful of employees to literally thousands. The vitality of the American economy is due in no small part to this agency, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

Thanks to today's legislative victory, this pivotal agency will continue working with America's job creators to grow the economy, to boost the economy, and to expand the economy.

Just how important are small business owners? Those innovators create 60 to 80 percent of new jobs nationwide. Sixty to eighty percent of new jobs are created by small businesses. They generate more than 50 percent of the gross domestic product. Small business owners are the heart of the American marketplace, and their contributions to jobs and productivity is its lifeblood.

In my home State of Tennessee, 97.1 percent of all businesses are small businesses. From the year 1999 to the year 2000, Tennessee's small businesses added a net total of 36,806 employees, and 12,000 companies with fewer than 100 workers employed 44.9 percent of the State's nonfarm sector workers. Workers and consumers depend on the small business sector to generate jobs, products, and services. The Small Business Administration helps fuel the creativity and the dynamism of this vital

sector of the economy. And it has been extraordinarily successful.

Take, for example, one restaurant chain, the Outback Steak House. It may come as a surprise to some, but the Outback Steak House does not have its headquarters in Australia. No. It has its headquarters in Tampa, FL. In a little over 10 years, the Outback Steak House has grown from a really small restaurant operation into a dining phenomenon.

In February of 1990, the 2½-year-old company employed approximately 300 people and had a net worth of less than \$2 million. That year, there was an injection from the Small Business Administration. Ten years later, the restaurant chain employs not 300 people but 38,000 people. That \$2 million has grown into revenues of the dizzying amount of \$1.16 billion. The Outback Steak House now has restaurants in 48 States, 13 countries, and places as far away as Seoul and Rio de Janeiro.

Staples is another dazzling example of a Small Business Administration injection of help with a catalytic effect. It started as a single office supply store in Brighton, MA, in 1986. The office supply store is now the country's largest operator of office superstores, employing more than 58,000 people, with annual gross sales of \$11.6 billion. It in turn is offering services and products to small businesses to help them cut their own costs in the hopes that they might also grow to such proportions.

At a macro level during the last 4 fiscal years, just one financing program within the Federal agency has helped create 1.3 million new jobs—newly created jobs all by this one financing program.

Over that same period of time, a second lending program at the agency—a program called the 504 Loan Program—helped create and retain an additional 445,000 jobs.

HUBZone is another program that has been a job creator. In the last 2 years, this program which targets severely economically distressed areas, has helped create over 30,000 new jobs.

These are just a few of the examples—a smattering—of the programs at the SBA that have helped and worked so effectively to add new jobs to the economy. The SBA, it should be said, is just one of the many efforts that are made by this body and by our Government to support job creative policies.

We think simply back to the 2003 Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Act. We provided 23 million small business owners with tax cuts averaging, through that one bill, \$2,200 each. In fact, small businesses received 80 percent of the benefits of the reduction in the top marginal tax rate. That 2003 Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Act quadrupled the amount that small businesses can expense for new capital investments, and that in turn will lead to new investment in technology, in machinery, and new investments in equipment.

This legislation is yet another example of this body, our Government,

working with the President to create jobs and economic growth. Together with the Small Business Administration reauthorization, these pro-growth policies—these policies that create jobs and grow the economy—will increase productivity and make every consumer's dollar go further.

Remington Electric Shaver magnate and pitchman Victor Kiam once observed:

Entrepreneurs are simply those who understand that there is little difference between obstacle and opportunity, and are able to turn both to their advantage.

I think with the passage of this bill we can include ourselves—this body—in that description as well.

I applaud my colleagues for supporting the Small Business Administration, which in turn will reach out in support of America's most important job creators, the small business owner.

ROSH HASHANAH

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this evening at sundown, Jews around the world will gather to begin their observance of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and the beginning of the high holidays.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which will be observed over the next 10 days, are the most significant of all Jewish holidays. They are a time for celebration. They are a time for thanksgiving. They are a time for family. They are a time of reflection and of atonement.

Many today all over the world are reflecting over the last year and what that last year has brought, and also to look ahead to that next year with those hopes of what will come over the next 12 months. It is believed that on Rosh Hashanah, God records the destiny of all mankind in the Book of Life.

It is my hope that as we pray, we will do so for the enduring faith in God, and also with the strong, the fervent hope for the strength and the courage and the boldness and also the compassion to see us through these very difficult times for America and the world.

So as we end this week, I would like to wish all of my colleagues and all of those around the world who observe these holidays a very happy and a very healthy and a very sweet new year.

L'shana Toua.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S AGENDA FOR IRAQ

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, as a Member of the Appropriations Committee, having had the opportunity to listen carefully to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld lay out before the Senate and to the American people President Bush's agenda for Iraq, I think I need to share my dismay at some itemization of the President's requests.

We all know, due to the lack of internationalization and the go-it-alone approach in Iraq, that the cost in blood and in money is almost exclusively

American. That contrasts with Desert Storm over a decade ago when George Bush, senior, led that war. While the United States did the lion's share of the fighting, the financial cost, at least, was offset—not quite but almost entirely—by our allies.

In this case, a unilateral or near unilateral preemptive effort, alienating our allies, has led us to a situation where, on the heels of the \$70 billion supplemental appropriations of a short time ago, the President has now asked for an additional \$87 billion in yet another installment, and there will be more to come from the American taxpayers. This is at a time when our budget is deep in red ink, having gone from budget surpluses from the last years of the Clinton administration to now record deficits.

To put this \$87 billion in some perspective, that is roughly three times what the Federal Government spends on K through 12 education for an entire year. At a time when we are told we do not have the money to come up with the additional \$8 billion for Leave No Child Behind, we have an \$87 billion request here. This is, again, due to a woe-lful lack of postwar planning for our circumstances in Iraq.

Much of this money will go for equipment and pay and resources for our troops in the field. There, there will be no quibbling. There will be strong bipartisan support for that. My own son fought with the 101st Airborne in Baghdad. No one is more supportive of our troops than I. Although out of that immense amount of money, no doubt we do need to scrutinize it carefully to make sure the money is well spent.

But on the other \$20.3 billion request for reconstruction—and when George Bush says reconstruction, keep in mind he is not talking about repairing things that were damaged in the war. He is talking about building whole new water systems and communications systems and roads and schools and housing systems that never have existed before. So it was with some interest that I looked at what some of the components are of our taxpayers' money that George Bush recommends that we authorize in this body.

There is \$164 million for the curriculum for training the Iraqi military. This doesn't involve any training organization hiring any troops or policing. This is for a new textbook for a few for curriculum training—\$164 million?

There is \$100 million to finance 500 experts for investigating crimes against humanity at \$200,000 per expert; 500 at \$200,000 per expert to investigate crimes in Iraq; \$20 million to protect 400 judges and prosecutors at \$50,000 a crack—\$50,000 a person, or 400 judges. That is just this year. Heaven knows what this is going to be in the future.

There is \$100 million to enroll 100 families of five in a witness protection program at \$200,000 a person. Mr. Chairman, \$200,000 a person for witness protection in Iraq? I think you ought to be

able to hide someone pretty well for \$200,000 a pop. Yet this is going to cost us \$100 million.

There is \$10 million for 100 experts to assist prison reconstruction for 6 months at \$100,000 each. These experts must be much cheaper than the \$200,000 experts for crime investigation because prison construction is only \$100,000 per piece but we are going to have 100 of them.

There are 100 experts advising Iraq on how to build prisons in Iraq. There is \$400 million—we are getting into big money—for two new 4,000-bed prisons at \$50,000 a bed; 4,000 prison beds at \$50,000 a bed.

I have a lot of constituents in my State of South Dakota who live in homes that do not cost \$50,000 a bedroom by far. Yet here we are building this immense infrastructure in Iraq with American taxpayers' money at the time we are being told, no, we don't have the money to help our police and law enforcement in South Dakota and across the country. We don't have the resources for so many other needs which we have. We are deep in debt and every dime of this is being paid for from the Social Security trust fund?

The list goes on:

There is \$150 million to begin work on a \$500-\$700 million children's hospital with all the latest technology. We all want to help the children of Iraq, but I have to tell you that we have children in South Dakota—particularly on our Indian reservations—who have access to virtually no health care at all. We have people in rural areas with hospitals that are on the verge of closing because of the lack of Medicare reimbursement. We have hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes across America that may not last a year given the inadequacy of Medicare reimbursement, particularly in the rural areas.

We have teaching hospitals that train the next generation of medical experts in America that are financed on fumes and do not know where their money is going to come from for next year. Yet we have this kind of expenditure request.

There is \$100 million to build seven new cities, complete with 3,258 houses, roads, elementary schools, two high schools, a clinic, a place of worship, and a market—seven new cities with new high schools.

I have high schools all over South Dakota that can't pass bond issues, that are falling down, that do not have infrastructure, and that literally are a danger to the pupils. President Bush says he would veto legislation that would include money to help rebuild and renovate schools in America. But guess who is getting the new schools. It is not us. We are going to borrow more money out of the Social Security trust fund in order to do this. This is President Bush's priorities? What does that reflect on his values? Think of it.

There is \$54 million for comprehensive technical and business process studies for a computer network for the

Iraqi postal system—\$54 million for computer studies for the Iraqi postal system. Where I come from, you can buy a lot of computers for \$54 million. You could run a pretty good postal system in a small country with that. This is just for computer studies—\$54 million. Think of the hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, schools, daycare centers, afterschool programs—think of what you could do with that kind of resource.

There is \$9 million to reengineer the business practices of Iraq's postal service, including instituting ZIP Codes. How has Iraq made it for these thousands years without the Americans helping them develop a ZIP Code? It is amazing. How have they struggled? How can we expect these people to live without our taking money out of the Social Security trust fund to help them develop a ZIP Code? What a generous thing for this administration to do for other people on the other side of the planet on our dime, borrowing money to do it.

We have another \$2 million for garbage trucks at \$50,000 apiece. Apparently, for these thousands of years the Iraqis have been unable to collect their garbage because they did not have a modern garbage truck. They had other vehicles for doing this. We are going to provide 40 of these at \$50,000 a pop.

I can tell you that I have a lot of people in communities in my State wishing they had some help for their infrastructure—whether it is garbage, sewage, water, or a lot of other things. A lot of communities are struggling but they don't have the resources for this kind of help.

I am not suggesting that we cut and run from Iraq. I am not suggesting that the United States doesn't have a significant role to play in the reconstruction of that sad country. We are all glad Saddam Hussein is gone. Heaven knows what is going to be in its place.

We have demonstrated that we can win wars unilaterally. But winning the peace, this President should have learned long ago, requires significant international assistance. Now that our allies have been largely alienated, it looks as if it is going to be our dollars and our blood to do it.

There is \$20.3 billion, and the list of these kinds of things goes on and on.

I think this requires serious scrutiny. I think this deserves debate in this Senate. Our friends in the Republican leadership have told us they don't want to segregate these issues from the financing of our troops because they don't want the embarrassment of having a debate on this and amendments offered and the possible rejection of some of this. Apparently their goal is to wrap the whole thing up into one huge \$87 billion item and anybody who dares vote against that will have their patriotism challenged. They will be told they are not good Americans because they are not supporting our troops.

We need a little sanity here. We need an opportunity—not to reject everything in the rebuilding of Iraq, but we have a role to play. We will step to the plate to do our share.

But this administration has been told in no uncertain terms that this shouldn't be exclusively our obligation; that when we do some rebuilding it shouldn't be at such a fabulous level of extravagance far beyond what any American community could possibly come to Washington and ask for.

Our people deserve better. They deserve to know what is in George Bush's request. They deserve to have some up-and-down votes, and this shouldn't be rushed through in a manner that the people do not actually understand what they are buying into with an agenda such as this.

I know we are going to go to markup on this supplemental request very quickly next week. The difficulty in shoving this thing through so fast is that the American taxpayer will have no idea what was in this thing. They will be told it is \$87 billion—a huge number. Who knows what that means until you explain in some detail what you could buy with that kind of money.

I think we need to have a national debate about America's role in the world and about the level and scope of the contributions that America is making in rebuilding this country. Why has this administration failed to attract international financial support? If you cannot get their troops, why not at least some financial resources for this rebuilding? Why has that failed, as well? We need to know that.

We need to know what will follow. I assure this body, this is not the last request. This is an installment. There is much more to come, both militarily and potentially in rebuilding.

What has happened to the Iraqi oil revenue? Is there a possibility of turning some of this into loans rather than flatout grants? We are told we cannot loan the money because Iraq already has a lot of debt. Their debt is primarily to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Apparently, it appears we are going to put repaying their debts ahead of the American taxpayer, ahead of our financial needs. We are saying we have to give grants because these people have to pay off their loans to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait before they can do anything for us.

We have water projects in South Dakota. We have sewer wastewater problems. We have roads, railroads, all kinds of infrastructure that is underfunded. Those communities are being asked for matching funds. Many projects in South Dakota and across the country are done by loans. And we have a grant level at \$20.3 billion, with mind-boggling levels of expenditure, for purposes that would leave any American citizen shaking his head.

We do not want to delay anything unnecessarily. There are some urgent needs in Iraq, particularly for our

troops. We need to take care of those needs and have some certainty.

I hope in the course of this debate the American people are considering the use of their dollars, that there be considerable scrutiny and the people understand what this President wants them to buy into. If that comprehension is out there, there will be a lot of unhappiness in the land if, in fact, this Senate is unable to break out some of these expenditures; if we have to pass this up-or-down vote in one massive \$87 billion item—three times America's education budget—for purposes that would make royalty blush.

Our people deserve better. The Senate deserves an opportunity to consider these issues with much more care than is being suggested.

We will learn more, no doubt, about the details of some of the proposed expenditures from the Bush administration in the days to come. I hope we have a very real, sobering debate about the use of our constituents' money and whether this is the best use—some of it, no doubt, is; but much of it, I submit, is an outrageous abuse to the American taxpayer.

I yield the floor.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I was quite moved by my colleague from South Dakota and his comments about the war, the budget and the choices that the Senate is going to have to make. I thank my colleague for discussing such specific, detailed, and passionate comments, and raising the awareness of some of the very substantial issues at stake in making such a compelling argument as to why this discussion should continue for some reasonable length of time so these issues can be aired and the American people can have a better opportunity to come to their own conclusion based on facts as the Senator outlined this morning.

I commend the Senator and thank him. Other colleagues will speak of the issues, including the international challenges that face America, as well as the domestic challenges.

LIE AND BUY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on September 18, 2003, the Bureau of Justice Statistics released its annual report on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, also known as NICS. According to its report, approximately 136,000, or 1.7 percent, of the 7.8 million of the gun checks performed by the NICS system resulted in a denial. Since its inception, the NICS database

has prevented approximately 976,000 individuals from illegally acquiring a firearm. The report went on to note that 66 percent of the rejections were due to a felony record or outstanding warrant, and about 14 percent were rejected for a domestic violence misdemeanor conviction or restraining order.

Earlier this year, the Americans for Gun Safety Foundation released a report entitled, "The Enforcement Gap: Federal Gun Laws Ignored." The report analyzed the Justice Department's record enforcing and prosecuting gun laws. The report examined prosecution data acquired under the Freedom of Information Act from the Justice Department for fiscal years 2000 through 2002. The AGS study reveals a significant gap between the number of Federal gun crimes committed and the number of Federal prosecutions initiated.

The report found that 20 of the 22 major Federal gun laws are rarely prosecuted. The two statutes consistently enforced are laws against the use of a firearm in the commission of a Federal crime and a felon in possession of a firearm. The 20 laws that address other illegal firearm activity, including gun trafficking, firearm theft, lying on a criminal background check form, removing firearm serial numbers, and selling guns to minors are rarely enforced according to the AGS study.

The statistics in the AGS report are startling. According to AGS, in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, U.S. Attorneys filed only 578 cases against individuals who lied on the criminal background check form to purchase a firearm despite the fact that over 100,000 people were denied purchases for that reason. President Bush and Attorney General Ashcroft pledged to vigorously enforce the gun laws on the books, but the AGS report seems to indicate that the Bush administration has failed to live up to the promise. I believe vigorous law enforcement is a critical step toward reducing gun violence. I urge the Justice Department to step up its efforts to prosecute not only people who commit gun crimes, but those who illegally seek to buy a gun.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CAROLYN "KELLY" EARL DAVIS

• Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I am delighted to honor a Minnesotan who recently reached the age of 90, after having spent much of her life in dedicated service in her community. Carolyn "Kelly" Earl Davis was born on September 21, 1913, the daughter of Dr. George Earl and Lillian Earl. Growing up, Carolyn, affectionately known since childhood as "Kelly"—the name given to her by her brother, Rol—loved to play baseball. She was an all-star player whose exploits on the field were greeted with exhortations of "Slide, Kelly, slide!"