

discussed, debated, amended, worked on very hard as it has been over the last several days, and will likely go into tonight. We expect to pass that supplemental by unanimous consent later tonight, and thus the vote we just took will be the last vote prior to the recess. The next vote will be on Tuesday, April 29. I will notify Members of the exact time on Tuesday, the 29th.

Again, there will be no further roll-call votes between now and the recess.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise to congratulate the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee. Frankly, no matter how difficult, we did produce a budget resolution. Obviously, it is less than unanimous in terms of the likes and dislikes for this proposal, but I submit it is far better for the Senate and for the people of this country that we have a budget resolution than we not have one at all.

Obviously, there will be opportunities to differ during the year, and there are provisions that will be difficult to maintain and to enforce. The truth is, we do know when we do not have a budget resolution, regardless of how contentious it is, we are inviting chaos. We are inviting a delay in almost every one of the processes that are ordinary and normal to this case without a resolution. There are plenty of Senators who do not agree with that. That is why the vote is 50/50. That is exactly what voting is for. Someone wins; someone loses. In this instance, the Vice President did what is provided for in our Constitution, provided the one-vote majority, and now we have a budget resolution.

I am hopeful that the implementation of that budget resolution, contrary to what has been said this evening by the other side, will be good for this country. I am confident that it will be better for this country than not to have one. Of that, I am positive.

Could there be a better one? Maybe, but there cannot be a better one and get votes in the Senate to have that as a budget resolution. If we could, we would have. This is the best we can do.

I compliment Senator NICKLES, the new chairman, and all who worked with him. Obviously, the decorum, the demeanor, in getting this done requires more than a chairman. It requires a ranking member and the ranking member deserves our accolades.

In addition, I guarantee there are plenty of staff hours and toil and work on both sides of the aisle that went into this resolution. I commend each and every one of the staff who worked so hard to get us to this point.

Last but not least, I commend the majority leader for his dedicated and diligent work in helping the chairman get us to where we are today.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. NICKLES. I thank my colleague, Senator DOMENICI. Personally, my ad-

miration for him has gone up dramatically, recognizing that he was either chairman or ranking member for 22 years of the Budget Committee, and every year he was chairman, he was able to get a budget passed. It is not an easy process. I also thank him because he has given me some excellent staff and they have been a great asset. Hazen Marshall is the chief of staff who put together a great team, many of whom were former employees of my very good friend.

Senator DOMENICI, who is now chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, is doing a fabulous job. This year we will have an energy bill and it will be passed out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. When marking it up, it had a lot of amendments. We had a lot of amendments on the budget package in committee and on the floor, and I am sure we will in the energy bill, but I am sure we will have an energy bill to contribute to our country's energy security.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EASTER

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the Senate will soon recess. Members will travel. Many will go home, meet with constituents, visit with friends, and attend Rotary Club lunches, Veterans of Foreign Wars rallies, and other important civic events. Some members will travel overseas, visiting U.S. troops and military facilities around the world in order to get a first-hand look at conditions and morale, or meeting with U.S. embassy personnel for detailed assessments of world events. After the contentious debates and harried schedules of past weeks on Capitol Hill, some Members may just relax and enjoy the beauty of spring. Spring, ah spring.

Spring is such a gentle season. The air is soft, the earth is moist, the new leaves and blades of grass are tender, not like the superheated air of summer that parches the earth, toughening leaves and drying lawns into crispy, crunchy deserts. Even the colors of springtime are gentle, all soft purples, buttery yellows and pale pinks of lilac, daffodil, and hyacinth. Only later, in the summer sun, come the vibrant oranges, deep reds, and gaudy color mixes of sun- and heat-loving flowers like marigolds, zinnia, and geranium.

In this most gentle of seasons, the contrast between the beauty outdoors and the images saturating the airwaves is difficult to reconcile. Images of war waged in distant cities in a distant land, of gunfire, bombs, of ambushes, of

sudden death and the loss and anguish of families both here and there, do not seem to match the mood of springtime, with its message of birth and life and growth. But the holiday that Christians celebrate this season contains all of these paradoxes. Easter is tragedy and loss, capture and death, as well as rebirth and new life, life everlasting.

The story of Easter is monumental. It is theater for the ages, unmatched by Sophocles, Euripides, or Shakespeare, because it is true. Easter is the history of one man, his life and death highlighted in the annals of history as few individuals are. Though full of miracles beyond wonder and betrayal beyond believing, the story of Jesus of Nazareth ends on a stirring note of hope. His death, the price of life everlasting for mankind, offers solace and hope to the families who have lost sons and daughters, husbands and wives, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Indeed, the Easter story offers comfort to all of us.

When you have lived as long as I have, and when you have been as blessed as I to have and have had many good friends over the years, you must also live with the loss of those friends and loved ones. Not a day passes but that the untimely loss of my grandson Michael does not make my heart ache. It was 21 years ago this coming Monday. Recently, my colleague and good friend, the former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, passed away at the age of 76. I miss him. There is where he sat—there. At that desk at the end of the back row. That is where he sat, I miss him. I miss my faithful and loving little dog Billy, who died last year. All things in this life must pass. But their memories warm my heart and their friendship is etched in the laugh lines on my face. My belief in the Creator and in his promise of life everlasting in his presence gives me support and comfort.

Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;

We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

The poet William Wordsworth wrote that, in his ode, "Intimation of Immortality."

This coming Sunday is Palm Sunday, marking the triumphal entry into Jerusalem by Jesus, our blessed Lord. It is a joyous day, but shadowed now by the foreknowledge of what is to come on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday—dark, sad days relieved by the miracle of Easter Sunday. On Easter Sunday, our spirits are lifted by the wondrous news of the resurrection and the ascension. Those are uplifting words: resurrection and ascension, rebirth and, for Jesus, a homecoming to sit at the right hand of the Father, His Father. My Father. Your Father.

On Easter Sunday, surrounded by fresh spring flowers, pretty Easter dresses and baskets of brightly colored Easter eggs, we again see Spring in its best light. We see it in the light of renewal and hope. We see it in the amazing story of Private Jessica Lynch of Palestine, WV. The State of West Virginia, and the entire nation, rejoices in her safe recovery. Her homecoming will be a day to remember forever. My thanks, and the Nation's thanks, go out to the brave and honorable Iraqi nationals who risked so much to bring her aid and the daring service personnel who rescued her.

Mr. President, a poem that I memorized long, long years ago reminds us all of how we are touched by the presence of others:

A Persian fable says:

One day a wanderer found a piece of clay,
So redolent of perfume
Its odor scented all the room.
"What are thou?" was the quick demand;
"Art thou some gem of Samarcand?
Or spikenard rare in rich disguise,
Or other costly merchandise?"
"Nay, I am but a piece of clay,"
"Then whence this wondrous sweetness,
pray?"
"Friend, if the secret I disclose,
I have been dwelling with the rose."
Sweet parable! And will not those
Who love to dwell with Sharon's rose,
Distill sweet odors all around,
Though low and mean themselves be found?
Dear Lord, abide with us, that we
May draw our perfume fresh from thee.

Mr. President, the rose that has perfumed this humble piece of clay is my wife Erma. In 49 more days, God willing, we will celebrate 66 years of marriage. It has not all been a level voyage. There have been ups and downs, as there will be in every marriage, but they have been good years, filled with many Easter mornings.

And now, as I look forward to watching my great-grandchildren hunt for their Easter eggs in the green grass, I am grateful for the opportunity to see so many generations grow up. My sense of hope for the future is redoubled, as it is each Easter time.

It must have been at Easter time when William Jennings Bryan penned those words from "The Prince of Peace:"

If the Father deigns to touch with divine power the cold and pulseless heart of the buried acorn and to make it burst forth from its prison walls, will he leave neglected in the earth the soul of man, made in the image of his Creator?
If he stoops to give to the rosebush, whose withered blossoms float upon the autumn breeze, the sweet assurance of another springtime, will He refuse the words of hope to the son of men when the frosts of winter come?
If matter, mute and inanimate, tho changed by the forces of nature into a multitude of forms, can never die, will the imperial spirit of man suffer annihilation when it has paid a brief visit like a royal guest to his tenement of clay?
No, I am sure that He who, notwithstanding his apparent prodigality, created nothing without a purpose, and wasted not a single atom in all his creation, has made provision for a future life in

which man's universal longing for immortality will find its realization.

I am as sure that we live again as I am sure that we live today.

So my sense of hope for the future is redoubled, as it is each Easter time. That is the beauty of Easter, because that typifies the glorious promise which is ours and which the Saviour gave to us. That question, which was asked in the Book of Job: "If a man die, shall he live again?" is answered—answered—by Easter.

I recall, in the Book of John, Jesus came to the grave of Lazarus and said: "Lazarus, come forth." And Lazarus came forth, still wrapped in his grave clothes. And Jesus said: "Loose him, and let him go."

So in the midst of war there is life. In the midst of uncertainty there is faith. After each winter, there is spring.

Mr. President, I wish you and all of our colleagues a glorious Easter. May we ponder upon its meaning, and upon its reason, and upon its promise for us.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CUBA'S CRACKDOWN ON HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, it had been my intent earlier in the week to come and share with my colleagues some thoughts on the recent crackdown on human rights activists in Cuba. I was unable to do it, so before we adjourn for the Easter Passover recess, I want to take a few minutes to express my thoughts on the recent events in Cuba, and to express in the strongest terms possible my sense of outrage over what has happened.

Cuban President Fidel Castro recently initiated severe and repressive measures in an attempt to silence pro-democracy activists on the island nation of Cuba. I rise to denounce in the strongest possible terms those actions. The arrests and show trials of these individuals are well beyond acceptable norms of governance today, and they call into question the very legitimacy of the Cuban state. It speaks volumes about that state's legitimacy when its citizens are denied an opportunity to dialog with the Government authorities about the future of their nation, its political institutions, and its practices.

Over the last 40 years, there have been ebbs and flows with respect to the extent of political space granted to human rights activists and independent journalists by Cuban authorities. Last year, in the runup to the visit of former President Jimmy Carter to Havana, there was a perceptible

loosening of restrictions on civil society activities. And the Cuban people exhibited a genuine interest in and motivation toward making the most of this newly found political space. When President Carter was in Havana, he was permitted to address the Cuban people, live and uncensored, on Cuban national television. At that time, he rightfully acknowledged the ongoing democratic grassroots activities on the island symbolized by the so-called Varela Project, headed by Oswaldo Paya. This important grassroots organization has already gathered more than 20,000 signatures on petitions in support of democratic reforms.

Thanks to President Jimmy Carter, the activities of Mr. Paya are now known not only to the international community but to the Cuban people as well.

Representatives of the Varela Project presented a petition with over 11,000 signatures to the Cuban National Assembly, calling on the Assembly to act on some vital democratic issues, including free speech and free press, economic liberalization, and the release of political prisoners. While I understand that the National Assembly has responded to the Varela petitioners, it has done so in a narrowly, legalistic manner that misses the larger political issues that deserve serious consideration by Cuban authorities.

It speaks volumes that thousands of ordinary Cubans have been willing to publicly petition their government seeking change. I for one had hoped that the Cuban people's expressed desire for democratic initiatives would prompt further liberalization of the Nation of Cuba. In fact, if the Castro government abided by its own constitution, this might very well be the case.

Instead, over the past several weeks, my colleagues, my fellow Americans, and the global community have witnessed the Castro government's abrupt and repressive retaliation against Cuban grassroots democracy activists, independent journalists, economists, and other dissidents. On trumped up charges of allegedly "working with a foreign power to undermine the government," the Castro government is attempting to undermine the will of its own people, in my view, and about 75 Cuban dissidents have now been arrested and convicted.

Opposition political party leader Hector Palacios has already received 25 years in prison, and his wife, Gisela Delgado was also convicted. Civil rights advocate Oscar Elias Biscet is expected to be sentenced this week. Economist Martha Beatriz Roque, who has been consistently critical of President Castro's handling of the Cuban economy—and rightfully so, I might add—which happens to be in dire straits, received 20 years in prison for merely doing that. Three others met the same fate, including dissident independent journalist Raul Rivero, independent magazine editor Ricardo Gonzales, and economist Oscar