

that their children or grandchildren would have to pay at the time of their death, but that is exactly what we are doing with out Federal budget.

It is immoral to bequeath nearly \$13 trillion of debt to our children and grandchildren. And most of the American people agree with me. I know this, because when people come into my office asking for money for a particular project, I always ask them the same question. That question is: is this particular priority worth putting your children and grandchildren further into debt? And it's remarkable, their attitudes immediately change, and many of them reconsider.

So the problem isn't that the American people aren't willing to sacrifice and make hard choices. The problem is that Congress hasn't had the guts to tell the truth about what we can and can't afford. We in Congress don't want to say no to anything. We want to have it all.

Over the past 10 years, Congress has increased spending at rates that would stagger the average family. Between 1995 and 2004 the growth in median income for wage earners in our Nation was 6 percent. There is not a single department in the entire Federal government that has been asked to restrict its growth in spending to less than 10 percent. The most frugal department, the Treasury, increased its spending by 10 percent or more than 1.5 times the level enjoyed by median income earners. The Department of Labor, guardian of the interests of the average workers, grew its spending by more than 99 percent or 16 times the increase earned by the workers it represents.

Those are the facts. Congress needs to wake up and smell the coffee. Unless we change course, start prioritizing, making hard choices, and stop spending like drunken sailors, we are going to saddle our children and grandchildren with a debt so large it boggles the mind.

I have no illusions about the enormity of the task at hand to restore fiscal discipline. It's a big job, but it is nothing short of a moral imperative. In order to avoid a total breakdown of the budget and appropriations process, President Bush will need to work very closely with Congress. Given the competing priorities in this body, it could be very difficult to increase Defense and Homeland Security by 9 percent while limiting the growth in domestic spending to only 1 percent. I am prayerful the Budget Committee will recognize the reality of these numbers and allocate sufficient funding to domestic budget function areas to gain the support of an overwhelming majority of Senators. To fail to do so would invite considerably more than 67 attempts to waive the budget act and if the budget is enacted with an arrow margin, I am not sure we will have the votes to defeat all of them.

And on top of all the pressure we face to increase spending, many of my colleagues would like to permanently ex-

tend the temporary tax reforms enacted last year, which would mean even less revenue than CBO has assumed in its most recent budget projections. So if we make these tax reforms permanent, we will need to either cut most of the spending in the discretionary portion of the budget or dig ourselves into an even deeper deficit hole.

Nor has anyone in the administration or in Congress seriously address the need to control mandatory spending. More than 55 percent of Federal spending consists of so called "off budget" mandatory entitlements. These mandatory programs may be off budget when we vote on appropriations bill but their costs weigh heavily on the budgets of future generations.

We have to recognize that everything we do this year will be measured against the backdrop of ever increasing deficits. It is time to take them seriously and begin to make the difficult choices needed to restore fiscal responsibility.

This will not be politically easy and I understand that. There is no shortage of important things the Federal Government could be doing across the Nation. And, I support many of those spending ideas.

But the simple, undeniable fact is that we can't have it all. We have to make hard choices.

FIDEL CASTRO

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, when we talk about national security and human rights and our support of democracy, much of our attention focuses on Iraq, other countries in the Middle East, or North Korea. But we cannot forget that just 90 miles off our shore, a dictator named Fidel Castro continues to stomp his boot down on democratic freedoms and human rights in Cuba.

After all, the cause of freedom for the Cuban people is no less important than the cause of freedom for millions in the Middle East and other parts of the world. And let me be clear to some of my fellow Americans, Fidel Castro is a ruthless dictator that jails, tortures, and even murders those that seek liberty and democracy in his own country.

Just ask Dr. Oscar Biscet's wife. In Spring of 2003, while the world's attention was on Iraq, Castro arrested Dr. Biscet and over 70 other Cuban advocates of democracy. Dr. Biscet and his peers did not promote violence in their quest for a free Cuba. They merely asked for the God-given right to speak freely, a plea for basic human rights, and the granting of free and fair election. Instead, Castro gave them harsh prison sentences. Amnesty International has adopted all of these men and women as "prisoners of conscience."

Dr. Biscet is now nearly a year into his 25 year sentence for peacefully opposing the Castro regime. In a letter

smuggled out of jail to his wife in November of 2003, he described his imprisonment: "The characteristics of the cell violate the law. There are no windows. There are only walls. Always in darkness . . . The sky can't be seen." The International Committee of the Red Cross, which last inspected Cuban prisons in 1986, should be allowed back into Cuba immediately. Others suffer similarly in jail. In many cases Castro and his thugs have killed his own citizens and dissidents who advocated freedom or tried to be free.

While regular Cuban citizens suffer economic hardships, the regime in Havana has used tourism, foreign investment and commerce to strengthen its stranglehold over its people. Yet many member of Congress support trading with Cuba and lifting the travel ban. This approach will not bring democracy to Cuba.

Europe and Canada have never imposed the type of travel restrictions that the United States has imposed. The large increase in travel from people from these free countries has not led to democratic reforms in Cuba. Actually, the opposite has been happening. As Castro has collected cash from these foreign tourists, he has increased his repression.

The tourist trade in Cuba is controlled by Castro's totalitarian regime. A system of tourist apartheid has been implemented whereby ordinary Cubans are denied equal access to hotels, beaches, restaurants, clinics, and hospitals set aside for tourists. Meanwhile, tourists are put in hotels and enclaves that are literally walled-off from the rest of Cuba and every employee of those hotels must be hired through the Cuban government. Thus, the money spent at these hotels goes directly to feed Castro's government. The money tourists spend on hotels and meals is the same money used to pay Castro's thugs that imprison Dr. Biscet and other beacons of democracy in Cuba.

President Bush has been steadfast in his support for the freedom loving people of Cuba. He has threatened to veto any bills that loosen travel and trade restrictions with Cuba. He has taken a bold stand for the good of the Cuban people. The Senate has also acted. We passed S. Res. 97 calling for the release of Castro's political prisoners shortly after Castro jailed Dr. Biscet and his peers. Also, last summer we passed S. Res. 62 calling on various human rights organizations to take action in regard to the situation in Cuba.

The international community needs to address the situation in Cuba as well. Tragically, the United Nation's Commission on Human Rights that should be out front and center condemning these atrocities has Cuba sitting as a voting member.

We must continue to support advocates of democracy currently languishing in dirty Cuban jails with hardened criminals and murderers. More than at any time in our ongoing struggle to bring freedom to the Cuban

people we need to provide a consistent, unified front. We need to support the Bush Administration's policies towards Cuba. We endanger lives and prolong the suffering of the Cuban people by supporting travel and trade with Cuba.

Not many people know that I once lived in Cuba. Before Castro took power, I played alongside many Cubans for a baseball team in Havana. I saw the beautiful Cuban beaches and got to know the country and its people well. I have fond memories of Cuba and my wife Mary and I would like to go back and visit someday.

But as long as good Cubans like Dr. Biscet and others are jailed by a ruthless dictator like Fidel Castro, I will not travel to Cuba I will wait until the day I can visit a free Cuba—A Cuba that respects human rights and free speech; a Cuba where children are not brainwashed under Castro's propaganda classes and where their spirits are free, where they can grow up without fear, and where they can grow up in freedom.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL COMMUNITY PHARMACY

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute to the St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy of Crescent Springs, KY on its outstanding dedication to the community.

The St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy has been in operation for nearly 2 years now. Since then it has provided an invaluable community service by filling expensive drug prescriptions for the needy for free.

In this era of high costs for prescription drugs, it is very comforting to know that there are groups such as St. Vincent de Paul which are helping low-income people afford the prescriptions that they need. In its first 6 months of operation alone, the pharmacy has 2,000 prescriptions totaling \$180,000 in value. These efforts are made possible by concerned citizens and volunteer pharmacists that dedicate their time to this worthy endeavor.

The people of northern Kentucky, and across the entire Commonwealth, can all be proud of the dedication and kindness shown by the people at the St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy. In order for our society to continue to be at its best, we must have organizations like St. Vincent de Paul Community Pharmacy in our communities and our lives. Kentucky is in your debt, and you make us all proud.●

DEPARTURE OF LESLIE BROWN FROM RECLAMATION

• Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, today I bid farewell and best wishes to Ms. Leslie Brown, who leaves the Bureau of Reclamation's Washington office after fifteen years of dedicated service.

For the majority of her 15 years at the Bureau of Reclamation, Leslie has

served in their office of Congressional Affairs with distinction and efficiency and without regard to ideology or partisanship. During my tenure both as chairman and as ranking member of the Water and Power Subcommittee of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Ms. Brown worked closely with my staff to make sure that testimony was submitted in a timely manner. She always worked to ensure that we got the information we needed from Reclamation in order to address many of the water resources issues facing Oregon and the western United States. We will miss Ms. Brown at Reclamation. With her there, we always knew we could get the information and assistance we needed in a timely manner and always with a smile on her face.

While Reclamation and those of us in this body who work with that agency are sad to see her leave Reclamation, I am pleased that Ms. Brown will continue to work with the Congress from her new post in the Congressional Affairs office at the Department of Agriculture's Rural Development—where she will continue to help Congress address the needs of rural communities throughout the United States.

Mr. President, I ask you and others in this body to join me in wishing her good luck and thank her for everything that she has done for me, for Oregon, for the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and for the Senate.●

HONORING MYRON EDLEMAN

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I today publicly recognize Myron Edleman on his retirement from the Farm Credit Council. He has had the honor of representing farmers and ranchers in American agriculture since the mid-1980s when he was first elected to his first Farm Credit System entity board of directors. Over the years, the system configurations may have changed but Myron's service to the system remains as dedicated as it was when he first walked into a board room. He has served as an association director, a bank director and as representative on the Farm Credit Council. Additionally, he has been appointed to select committees, advisory committees, search committees and other system assignments too varied and too numerous to itemize. His tenure at Farm Credit has been mutually rewarding. He takes with him friendships and associations that he will forever treasure and leaves behind a legacy of commitment and effectiveness which few involved in the system have equaled.

Myron was born and grew up in Willow Lake, SD. He was an outstanding student at Willow Lake High School and served as valedictorian of his senior class. He lettered 16 times, once a year for football, basketball, and track. He was named to All-State teams in both basketball and football. Despite an opportunity to try out as a catcher for the Chicago Cubs, Myron instead opted for a football scholarship at Kan-

sas State University. But his love, known even then, was ranching and instead of pursuing his college education, he returned to Willow Lake to go to into partnership with his father.

Returning to Willow Lake, he married his high school sweetheart, Jean Brower, raised three children, and was a vital part of this small South Dakota community. He served as an elder and a deacon of the Presbyterian Church and was a member of the Gideons. He served also on the Willow Lake Farmers Elevator board of directors for many years. He and his father worked together raising purebred Hereford bulls and today's Edleman Ranch is a fourth generation operation which he owns and operates with his eldest son, Marshall. Together they run a Red Angus commercial cow/calf operation. He is also involved with sons Marshall and Jason as joint owners of the Split Rock Cattle Company. Additionally, he is chairman of Beef Origins, a family-owned business which is involved in a computer based livestock identification program. Unexpectedly, Jean passed on in 1989.

Myron's in-depth knowledge of both the livestock and farming industries has proven invaluable in his ability to represent farmers and ranchers in a positive and effective manner. His ability to articulate that knowledge and share it in a meaningful way has also been essential to the success he has achieved as a director. And his unwavering commitment has been without peer. No matter how last minute the conference call time or how many times flights had to be re-booked. Myron has always been there, on time and on top of the issues. Add to this mix his strong personal characteristics of honesty, integrity and a keen intelligence, plus a handshake that conveys not only strength but honor, and it is easy to see why Myron is widely regarded as the most respected and effective director in Farm Credit System.

Always able to separate his personal politics and opinions from his directorial duties, Myron has worked unceasingly for agriculture and those who are part of the industry in an unbiased and professional manner. His countless contributions will be missed not only by his colleagues and his friends, but by agriculture as a whole. We are grateful for his service and wish continued success for his future. Myron looks forward to spending his retirement with his wife Anne whom he married in 1992.

It is with great pleasure that I share his impressive accomplishments with my colleagues.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM T. BESTER

• Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I would like to recognize a great American and a true military hero who has honorably served our country for 35 years in the Army and Army Nurse Corps: BG William T. Bester. Brigadier General