

and was 20 inches long, with delicate hands and long fingers.

Danielle came through, as is her nature, invigorated and enthusiastic. You would not have known by looking at her face, except for the aura of a mother, that she had just given birth. The rest of us were emotional wrecks. When Danielle went into labor, I rejoiced at the timing and extended the weekend another day and had the pleasure of holding that baby and watching her breathe and move ever so delicately, with a thousand different expressions, and listened to all the sounds she made. Of course, I had to let Diana hold her a little, too, and her mom and dad even wanted turns.

If you would have told me that I would spend time just gazing at the miracle of life and having only that thought for hours, I probably wouldn't have believed you. But I have some great instant replay memories of that little face and those moving hands and all those blankets and the cap they use to hold in the body heat locked in my mind, and I am constantly doing instant replays for myself and thanking God for the opportunities he has given me—from finding Diana, to learning about prayer with our first child, the daughter who was born premature and who showed us how worthwhile fighting for life is, to the birth of our son, to the birth of our youngest daughter, to helping me through open-heart surgery so that I might have this chance to hold yet another generation in my hands.

I think of the prayer of Jabez in Chronicles where he says, "Lord, continue to bless me, indeed," and to that I add my thanks for this and all the blessings, noticed and, unfortunately, often unnoticed.

So now I am grampa. That is not grandfather. That is too stilted. Years ago, my daughter gave me a hand-stitched wall hanging that says: Any man can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a dad.

That is a challenge for grampas to live up to, too. Again, I note that the name is not grandpa. That is a title a little too elevated. This grampa is with an "m" and no "d." That is what I called my Grampa Bradley, who took me on some wonderful adventures and taught me a lot of important lessons, including fishing. Now it is my turn to live up to that valued name. He liked being called grampa, and I am now delighted to have the opportunity to earn that name, too. I wish I could adequately share with you the joy that is in my heart.

Now, some would say: Lilly Grace, you have been born at a scary time—a time of fear; fear of almost everything; fear of war, fear of people from other countries, fear of our neighborhoods. As an Enzi, we have faith that doing the right thing, doing your best, and treating others as they want to be treated will solve most problems, which will overcome fear.

In my job, I get to hear a lot of disparaging comments about our country

and our Government. But for you, granddaughter, you are lucky to be born in this country. I have been to a lot of places in the world now, and I can tell you that there are none anyone would trade for the United States. In my job, I often have to remind people that I never hear of anyone trying to get out of our country. I do hear of millions who would like to be here.

Now, as you, precious baby, get older, if things don't change, you will hear people who think that the Government owes them a living and all kinds of guarantees, and you will hear people portray business as greedy, and you will see attempts to keep faith and God out of your vocabulary. And all those things could come to pass, except for you. You and others will know how to do the right thing and you will value the way our country was founded and has grown.

Lilly, granddaughter, welcome to this world of promise and hope and faith and love. I am excited to have you in my life.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SALAZAR). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I missed the beginning part of the statement of my friend from Wyoming. Are you a new grandfather? Another grandchild? Congratulations.

Mr. ENZI. Thank you.

Mr. SANDERS. I have three. I often think that one of the funniest bumper stickers I have ever seen in my life is one that says: If I had known how much fun grandchildren would be, I would have had them first. So congratulations.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me take this opportunity in this few minutes to touch on a few issues that I think we do not discuss enough on the floor of the Senate; for that matter, on the floor of the House.

There are a lot of people in the United States who turn on the television every night and they hear the President of the United States and other people tell them how wonderful the economy is doing; that the economy is robust; that we have never had it so good. This is what they hear over and over again. And people start scratching their heads and saying: I don't quite understand it. The economy is supposed to be doing well when I am working longer hours for lower wages? Why is it that my job has just gone off to China, and the new job I have maybe pays half as much as the job that I lost? Why is it that in the last several years, actually since President Bush has been President, over 8 million Americans have lost their health insurance? Does that sound like an economy that is working well for ordinary people?

Since George Bush has been President, 5 million more people have slipped into poverty. Median family in-

come today is less than it was back when President Bush first came into office. I think we have to be honest and say, yes, the economy is doing very well, in fact, for those people who have a lot of money. In fact, what we can say today is that if you are within the top 1 percent of American wage earners, you are probably doing extraordinarily well. What we can also say is that the wealthiest 1 percent today are doing better than at any time since the 1920s. So I take my hat off to the CEOs of large corporations and to the wealthiest people in this country.

But you know, I just had a series of town meetings in the State of Vermont. I talked to a lot of people. The message I get back in Vermont—and I doubt it is terribly different in Colorado or any other State in this country—is that the middle class is hurting. The reality is, if you look at the cold statistics, what you find is that in America today the middle class is, in fact, shrinking. People are working longer hours for lower wages.

Today, amazingly enough, because of lowered wages huge numbers of women are now in the workforce. Yet, despite that, a two-income family today has less disposable income than a one-income family had 30 years ago. The reason for that is people are spending an enormous amount of their limited income on housing. The cost of housing is soaring. They are spending money on health care. They are spending money on child care. They are spending money on college education. At the end of the day, they do not have a whole lot left. In fact, there are many millions of families today that are one paycheck away from economic disaster.

It seems to me we have to be honest with the American people and not talk about how great the economy is but talk about an economy which is splitting right down the middle: the people on top doing fantastically well, people down below doing very poorly, and the middle class in many cases struggling against economic desperation.

The statistics with regard to income distribution in this country are staggering in terms of their inequality. We do not talk about this terribly much. I guess it is something we are not supposed to be mentioning. But the reality is that according to the latest analysis, in 2005 the top 1 percent of earners made more money than the bottom 50 percent of Americans. One percent earned more income than the bottom 50 percent, which translates to the top 300,000 earners making more money than the bottom 150 million—300,000 making more money than the bottom 150 million. While the top earning one one-hundredth of 1 percent received an average income increase of \$4.4 million in 2005, the bottom 90 percent saw their average income decline by about \$172.

What we are looking at is tens of millions of Americans working hard, and they are seeing their health care costs go up, they are seeing their housing

costs go up, they are seeing education costs go up, they are seeing the price they are paying for a gallon of gas to get them to work going up, home heating oil going up, basic supplies going up, and at the end of the year they have less money than they did the previous year. But the people on top are making out like bandits. And it is a fact, many of them are bandits, and it is high time we began to address the issue of income inequality in this country.

I talked a moment ago about income. That is how much money people make in a year. But the same phenomenon takes place regarding wealth. The unfair distribution of wealth, which is accumulated income, is even more appalling. *Forbes* magazine recently found that the wealthiest 400 Americans—400 people, not a whole lot—were worth \$1.54 trillion in 2006; 400 people, \$1.54 trillion. That is up \$290 billion from the previous year. In other words, while inflation-adjusted real wages declined for the vast majority of working people in our country, the top 400 wealthiest individuals saw, on average, a \$750 million increase per person. That is not bad, on average: \$750 million.

Today, disgracefully—and this is a issue I am going to come back to time and time again until this body does something about it—disgracefully, and despite all the rhetoric we hear around here about family values, the United States has, at 18 percent, the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major country on Earth. Eighteen percent of our kids are living in poverty. You go to Scandinavia, the numbers are 3 percent, 4 percent; Europe, 5 or 6 percent. Eighteen percent—almost one in five children in this country lives in poverty.

Since President Bush has been in office, as I mentioned earlier, nearly 5 million Americans have slipped into poverty. We have 37 million people in this country living in poverty. Almost 9 million have lost their health insurance. Three million have lost their pensions. People work their entire lives, they expect to have a pension when they retire, and in many cases corporate America says: By the way, we are changing the rules of the game; thanks for working us for 30 years, but you are not getting the pension you were promised. And median income has declined since Bush has been President by about \$2,500.

Thirty-five million Americans struggled to put food on the table last year. That is called food security. We have 35 million Americans in this country who worry about whether they are going to have enough to eat. That number is going up.

Within that reality, we have another reality in that the wealthiest people in this country are increasingly emulating the robber barons of past decades as they garishly look for ways to spend their fortunes. They have a very difficult time. If you are worth hundreds and hundreds of millions of dol-

lars, what are you going to buy? Another pair of shoes? It is hard to say. What they are doing is looking into things like yachts that are longer than football fields and all kinds of excesses to show everybody just how wealthy they are.

Robert Frank is a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*. He has written a recently published book called "Richistan." He writes in his book that households of a net worth of between \$100 million and \$1 billion, the very top of the top, spent last year on average \$182,000 on watches—on watches. I have a good watch. It worked well for 5 years. It cost me 30 bucks. But they managed to spend \$182,000 in 1 year on watches. That is what they do. It is very important that we continue to give these people tax breaks. I really do think so. If you could only spend \$182,000 on watches, clearly the President is right and we need massive tax breaks to help these folks out. But it is not just the money they spend on watches. Mr. Frank, the author of "Richistan," details how, during this 1-year period, the same economically elite households spent \$311,000 on automobiles. How many cars do you buy for \$311,000? I don't know how many cars people need. And \$397,000 in one year on jewelry. Obviously, the stress is very great figuring out how you are going to spend that money, so they had to spend on average \$169,000 on spa services. You are sitting around, it is a tough thing, what new watch do you buy? What new vehicle do you buy? It is tough, and you need spa services. That is where they are spending the money.

But also, as it happens, during that same year, 400,000 qualified young people in this country couldn't afford to go to college. They didn't have enough money to go to college. Our Nation is in desperate need of a well-educated workforce. We all know that a ticket to the middle class in many cases is a college education. So while the richest people in this country are spending \$182,000 a year on watches, we have hundreds of thousands of kids who cannot go to college.

The decline of the middle class, combined with the growing income inequality in our Nation, is a national scandal, and it is something we must address. I think it is high time Members of Congress kind of look beyond the wealthy campaign contributors who fund the operations in both the House and the Senate and begin to deal with the needs of the middle class and working families.

Obviously, there are a lot of issues out there as to how we can improve the economy. We can go on for hours talking about that. There are a lot of thoughtful ideas here in the Senate and in the House. But let me mention five areas, at least, where I think we should be paying some more attention.

First, I think we have to reorder our national priorities. What we have to say to the wealthiest people in this country: President Bush has given you

hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks, and yet we have children in this country who are hungry, we have millions of children who lack health insurance, we have kids who are going to inadequate schools. You know what. We are going to rescind the tax breaks that have been given to you so that we can take care not only of our children but we can take care of those people who are disabled.

I don't know about Colorado, but I can tell you in Vermont one of the serious problems we have is higher and higher property taxes. One of the reasons the property taxes for education are going up is because the Congress has not kept the promises it made in terms of funding special education. Special education, as you know, is a very expensive proposition, so local school districts have to come up with the money the Federal Government promised but has not committed. I think we should be adequately funding that and actually keeping the promise we made to special education.

We should make sure our seniors get what they need.

Our veterans—I am proud to say we are beginning to make some progress in adequately funding the needs of our veterans, but more needs to be done. We have to begin to stand up for all Americans and not just for the wealthiest.

When my Republican friends talk about tax breaks and tax breaks for the richest people in country, I say enough is enough. At a time when we already have the most unequal distribution of wealth and income, the very richest who are doing phenomenally well do not need more tax breaks.

Second, I think we have to take a very hard look at our trade policies. I think it is clear to anyone who has studied these issues that NAFTA, CAFTA, permanent normal trade relations with China, and other trade agreements were essentially written by large multinational corporations in order to benefit large multinational corporations, and they have done that. They have done that. What is going on as a result of many of our trade policies is that corporate America is shutting down plants in America. We have lost 3 million good-paying manufacturing jobs in the last 6 years. In my own State of Vermont, we have lost 25 percent of our manufacturing jobs in the last 6 years. We are beginning to see the loss of many good-paying white-collar information-technology jobs—jobs going to China, jobs going to India, jobs going to low-wage countries all over the world.

On the other side, what we are seeing, because of these trade agreements, is increased poverty in Mexico, for example, as a result of NAFTA. As a result of NAFTA, 1.3 million small farmers have been driven off the countryside, off the farms they held for generations, because they couldn't compete with cheap American corn. Poverty has increased. But we do have the good

news, I guess, in Mexico: as a result of this NAFTA stuff, there is one gentleman named Carlos Slim Helu, a big guy in telecommunications coming from the poor country of Mexico, now the richest guy in the world, worth \$60 billion; he passed Mr. Gates. You have a guy worth \$60 billion, poverty in Mexico increasing, and small farmers driven off the land.

We can create trade agreements which work for working people in this country and working people abroad, not for the CEOs of large corporations, and that is what we have to do.

I think given the failure of trade agreements, it is time to take a moratorium to stop these trade agreements until we get them right.

On another issue, we have discussed, as you know, a whole lot about the SCHIP program. I strongly support what the leadership here is trying to do. But let us be clear. Let us be clear. While it is a good step forward, bringing 4 million more kids into the SCHIP program, there are millions of children, after we pass this legislation, or if we can override the President's veto, who will still not have health insurance. We are living in a nation in which 47 million Americans have zero health insurance. Even more are underinsured.

I met recently in Burlington, VT, with a group of young people who said: Yes, they have health insurance. They have to pay 50 percent of the cost of the health insurance. There is a large deductible. So at the end of the day, despite the health insurance they have, they are paying out a lot of money for health care.

It is time that we place on the table the fact that we are the only Nation in the industrialized world, the only one that does not have a national health care program which guarantees health care for every man, woman, and child.

The programs are different in Germany than Canada, than in the United Kingdom, than Scandinavia. They are all different. But essentially what every other major country on Earth has said is that health care should be a right, not a privilege—a right.

Meanwhile, we spend twice as much per person on health care as any of the people of any other country. Yet, if you look at the health care index situation, our infant mortality rate is very high; in many countries people live longer than we do.

Our health care system is disintegrating and the time is long overdue that we have the guts to take on the pharmaceutical industry, the insurance industry, and move toward a national health care program which provides health care to all people as a right of citizenship.

Lastly, I am on both the Energy Committee and the Environmental Committee. Both committees are working very hard on one of the great crises facing our planet today; that is, global warming. It is clear to me that as a nation, we have got to radically

change our course, which for many years under President Bush has almost denied the reality of global warming. We have got to move away from that and not only understand its severity but move in an aggressive way to reverse greenhouse gas emissions and to make sure our kids and our grandchildren can live on a planet with the quality of life we enjoy today.

In addition to that, as the tragedy in Minnesota a few months ago indicated, our infrastructure is in very serious shape. The engineers tell us we need to spend over a trillion dollars to rebuild our bridges, our culverts, our waste water systems, and our water plants.

In my view, we should be investing substantially in sustainable energy, in energy efficiency, in solar technology, in wind technology, and geothermal. When we do those things, we will accomplish two goals: No. 1, we are going to reverse global warming, and, secondly, we will create millions and millions of good-paying jobs. Instead of spending \$10 billion a month on the civil war in Iraq, we should be rebuilding our infrastructure and moving away from fossil fuels to energy efficiency, to sustainable energy as we take a leadership role in this world to reverse global warming.

Let me conclude by saying it is no secret that the American people now are not looking terribly favorably on the White House or the Congress. I can understand why. I think one way we can begin to win the respect of the American people is to at least acknowledge the reality of their lives, to acknowledge what is going on, and then to begin to start addressing some of those problems.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN JOE WAGGONER

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, it is with sadness that I come to the floor today to pay respects to one of our former congressional leaders who passed away earlier this week.

Congressman Joe Waggoner represented the Fourth District of Louisiana from 1961 to 1979. Literally up until the last weeks of his life, he stayed very active in the Fourth District. He was active on what went on there both at a political level and a civic level, lending his voice to many important efforts in the community—and I emphasize literally up until the last few weeks of his life.

He was always engaged, always open, always welcoming to leaders coming

into the Shreveport area. He was not from the big city in that district, Shreveport, LA; he was from a small town called Plain Dealing. It was actually a very fitting name for this Congressman because he was a very straightforward, plain-speaking, progressive-leaning Congressman from this small town called Plain Dealing of only a thousand people. That small community of loving and supportive families, made up of farmers and small business owners and churchgoers, provided a great foundation for Joe Waggoner as he grew and came into his professional life and then became a Congressman from this small town. He was down to earth, he was honest, and he was a Congressman who represented his constituents with a lot of enthusiasm and intelligence. He was a Congressman who would see an issue from all different sides and then make the best decision he could. His favorite saying was: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." So he was always quite courteous and respectful in the way he treated other people.

He was a natural leader. He was a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II, and after returning from service there, he began his political career as a school board member. Throughout his career, he carried an enthusiasm and excitement and energy for school issues and for the children of the Fourth District in our State. In 1961, he won a special election after longtime U.S. Representative Overton Brooks died in office and again continued that great tradition of representing the Fourth District.

I can't name all the things Joe did for our State. It would be such a long list. But there are a few things that cannot be overlooked. Because of Congressman Waggoner's work in his congressional district, Barksdale Air Force Base is now one of the largest and strongest Air Force bases and is home to the mighty 8th Air Force. This base had been scheduled to close some decades ago, but because of his efforts and others, led by many of the business and civic leaders in that district but primarily because of this Congressman, Barksdale is not only open, but it is now going to be the proud home of U.S. Strategic Command's Cyber Command.

Joe was also known for being a pioneer of interstate highways in their early days, wanting to put Shreveport on the map. Shreveport and Bossier City today are growing in large measure because of his fierce advocacy for ports and airports and transportation hubs, as well as the Barksdale Air Force Base.

Along with my predecessor, Senator Bennett Johnson, Joe's efforts created a whole new image for Shreveport because of the work they did regarding the Red River. With their hard work they opened it to trade and transportation. Also, this river is now home to several "floating" casinos that have transformed Bossier City and Shreveport, LA, from very sleepy small towns