

not attribute it to the Senator from Oklahoma unless he wants to say that was his philosophy, too, but it was a philosophy that, best said, the best way to give this economy more is to give tax breaks to the wealthiest people in this country, cut taxes for the wealthiest people and a thousand flowers will flourish.

Unfortunately, September 11, 2001, occurred. We found ourselves spending a lot of money for the security of this Nation and then found ourselves in two wars. This President continued to call for tax cuts in the midst of a war. He became unique in American history. No President has ever done that.

The Senator from Oklahoma, the fiscal conservative that he is, must acknowledge it is mindless to have tax breaks in the midst of a war. You know the war is an add-on cost to your overall economy and budget, and then to cut revenue—that is what he did. As a result of that action by the President and his decision to initiate a war in Iraq that has gone unpaid for now into its sixth year, we have now piled up the biggest deficit in the history of the United States of America.

The Senator from Oklahoma is vigilant on bills that come that may cost us money in the future, but his party and his President have led us into the deepest deficit in our history. Having inherited a surplus, President Bush drove us into a fiscal mess, where we are borrowing money from all over the world. The last thing I will say is this, and I know the Senator from Oklahoma is never going to agree with me, but I want to make a point. If every one of these 34 measures that he and his side objected to today had passed, it would not add a penny to the deficit tomorrow, not a penny, and not next year either. We have to pass the spending bill. These bills give permission for a museum. These bills don't spend a penny for a museum, not one.

I am on the Appropriations Committee. We sit there, and they give us a finite pot of money and say: Take your pick. You want some new programs? Go ahead, fund them, but you cannot fund the old programs if you fund the new ones. You have a finite pot of money. Make your choices.

That is what happens in appropriations and on the floor of the Senate. That is a point which the Senator and I have debated repeatedly and probably will never resolve between us. But we have a genuine difference of opinion, and the only thing I have supporting me is a statement in the RECORD from the Office of Management and Budget saying I am right, he is wrong. Don't take it personally, but it was put in the RECORD.

I say to the Senator, I don't think it was right what happened today, that we stopped consideration of 34 bills. If he wanted to have his recorded vote as no on any one of those bills, it was his right to do it. But to stop me from trying to promote treatment of people with Lou Gehrig's disease and paral-

ysis, because I think these are good bills, I do not think that is appropriate.

Today, we tried to get the Senate to rule the other way, and they did not. The Senator's side prevailed. But only three Republicans would join us, and now these bills are not likely to be passed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Illinois. I thank him for his debating skills and his heartfelt positions.

I guess the first thing I would say is the Appropriations Committee spends \$875 billion every year that is not authorized. The Senator from Illinois knows that.

The second thing I would say is there is no ability to amend any of these bills in the appropriations process, unless you are on the Appropriations Committee. So if you are not on the subcommittee, you can't amend it. If you are not on the main committee, you can't amend it.

Last year, we couldn't amend anything because the omnibus bill came to the floor without any ability to amend it. So we haven't had any opportunity to amend it. It is whatever the appropriators say goes. There is no amendment with that.

I am not going to get into the debate. I am as disgusted with Republican spending priorities as the Senator from Illinois is. I will correct the record on real accounting principles. We had 1 year, and 1 year only, of a true surplus, 1999. The rest of the years we didn't have a surplus, if you count what we borrowed from Social Security.

I would not defend any of the spending of this President or this Congress, but I will make it known the President cannot spend the first penny until Congress passes the bills. I note that over the last 18 months, his party has not been in charge. A different party has been in charge. The bills that have gone to him have been controlled by the majority party.

Look, both of us admit that our children are in tall weeds right now if we don't start doing something about our fiscal situation.

The final point I will make is most of these bills would take less than an hour. Every one of them I have communicated on and I am happy to see on the floor. Give me the right to offer one significant amendment and one amendment for every billion dollars. I will debate it for 15 minutes, have two votes, and we will be done with the bills.

Nobody is withholding anybody's right to vote for a bill. The majority leader can put any bill he wants on the floor at any time, with my agreement to never try to dilate, never try to spread it out, to only bring pertinent amendments that are germane and do that in a very short period of time. He knows that. The Senator from Illinois

has known that. That has been the way I work. I don't play the games of political position to spin something.

My hope is—and I have a great relationship with the Senator from Illinois. I value his friendship. He is not "just my friend," he is a friend. It is not the collegial statement of the body, it is DICK DURBIN is my friend. My hope is that when DICK DURBIN and I can pass three significant bills out of our subcommittee that make a real difference in the world of human rights, that if we can do that, then certainly the Senate can come together on energy and all these other bills. My hope is we will do that.

I do not want to delay our staff or the Presiding Officer any longer.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO VINCENT P. FARRI

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I wish to commend Mr. Vincent P. Farri on his promotion to Lieutenant with the United States Capitol Police. Mr. Farri, a native of Maryland, joined the Capitol Police on January 31, 1989. After initial training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center he worked with the Capitol Division Building Patrol, and performed general duties until 1993. In 1993, Mr. Farri was assigned to the uniform protective detail for the President pro tempore of the Senate. I came to know Mr. Farri during this time and observed that on a daily basis he executed his duties in a highly professional, diligent and courteous manner.

In 1998, Mr. Farri served as a senior patrol officer in the Capitol Building, and occasionally worked as an acting sergeant, making rounds and supporting officers at their posts. While performing in this capacity, Vincent Farri distinguished himself on July 24, 1998. On that fateful day, an armed assailant entered the Capitol and suddenly took the lives of two Capitol Policemen. Officer Farri, hearing shots from the floor above, immediately ran to the scene where he came upon the fallen officers, and assisted in apprehending the gunman. All those who work in and visit the Capitol owe deep gratitude to the police men and women who serve and protect us, and we are especially grateful for the service rendered by Vincent and the sacrifice of his fellow officers on that day.

In September, 1998, Mr. Farri was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and worked with the First Responder Unit of the Capitol Division for approximately 10 years. His collateral duties

included training junior officers and serving with the Capitol Police Alert Team. In connection with his promotion to Lieutenant, Mr. Farri has been assigned to the Capitol Police Command Center. In this position, he provides guidance to officers in the field and serves as a liaison between the offices of the Chief of the Capitol Police and the Sergeants at Arms of the House and the Senate.

In 1946, during a lecture at the University of Chicago, Senator J. William Fulbright stated, "The legislator is an indispensable guardian of our freedom." I believe all Senators will agree that the U.S. Capitol Police are indispensable guardians of all who serve in and work for the United States Congress. Mr. Farri's 19 years of service have been an important part of that protection. I sincerely congratulate Lieutenant Vincent Farri on his promotion and assignment, and further extend my congratulations and warm wishes to Christina, his wife of 15 years, his two sons, Richard, age 11, and Paul, age 7, as well as to all of Vincent's family, including his dear mother, Mrs. Dorothy Farri.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CATHEDRAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral in Reno.

Construction on Saint Thomas Aquinas began in 1906, after Reno's sole Catholic church was destroyed by fire. Father Thomas Tubman led the effort to build a new church for Reno Catholics. He planned to construct a larger, more centrally located church, explaining that "The time has come for making the structures in Reno attractive as well as useful. The Cathedral will be one of the finest buildings in the State."

On June 21, 1908, Saint Thomas Aquinas opened its doors to parishioners with a remarkable dedication ceremony. Over 3,000 people waited outside the new church long before the ceremony was set to begin. At 10:30, dozens of priests and bishops, 120 Knights of Columbus, 2 bands and hundreds of parishioners were led by the chief of police and 16 patrolmen in a march from the convent of the Sisters of Mary to Saint Thomas Aquinas Church. Upon arriving, the Knights of Columbus encircled the new church as Bishop Grace blessed the buildings exterior. A high mass was then celebrated with the church filled to capacity. About one hundred worshipers were unable to enter, and instead waited outside the building, listening to the beautiful music from the choir and organist.

To celebrate its centennial anniversary, Reno Catholics reenacted this special ceremony last month. They joined in procession once again and marched together to the Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral, where a celebratory

mass was held. As they marched, they rejoiced in 100 years of memories at their place of worship.

Today, Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral prominently stands in the heart of downtown Reno and will forever remain in the hearts of Catholics who have worshiped here in the last 100 years. I am pleased to honor Saint Thomas Aquinas Cathedral today. I know that it will continue to serve Nevadans as an outstanding religious institution for another 100 years.

RECOGNIZING ELIZABETH ANN "BETSY" RIEKE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Ms. Betsy Rieke, a woman who has served my State and the West for nearly three decades. Like many of us in this body, Ms. Rieke is an attorney. Her specialty has been water issues, and, as many of my colleagues know well, being a water lawyer in the West is not a job for the faint of heart.

Ms. Rieke's experience in water law began in Arizona, where she served as Chief Legal Counsel and Director for the Department of Water Resources under former Gov. Bruce Babbitt. Ms. Rieke then served as an Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science in the Clinton administration. During her tenure, she helped negotiate the 1994 CALFED Bay-Delta Accord in California. This landmark agreement brought together numerous Federal, State, and local agencies and environmental enthusiasts to resolve a looming environmental and economic crisis. Honored several times for her important role in securing this accord, she did so in her trademark fashion—by bringing people together, leading difficult discussions, and helping parties find solutions to meet the community's diverse interests and goals.

In 1998, Ms. Rieke brought her expertise to Northern Nevada where she serves as the area manager for the Lahontan Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation. In such an arid place, she's been responsible for irrigation, wetland restoration, wildlife protection, and maintaining drinking water for one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Like she did in Arizona and California, Ms. Rieke showed great leadership as she brought many Federal, State, municipal, tribal, public and private interests together to reach the historic Truckee River Operating Agreement to be signed next month—an issue close to me and important to many Nevadans.

I also appreciate her work with others to preserve and restore Nevada's desert terminal lakes, their wildlife, and habitats. She has fostered relationships and cobbled together agreements that have improved Pyramid Lake, and she has advised me on ways to restore Walker Lake. While many people have been working very hard, for many years, to restore Nevada's unique natural resources, Ms. Rieke's determination, focus, and tireless efforts provided leadership for these efforts.

I extend my most sincere gratitude to Betsy. Nevadans are certainly fortunate to have had such a talented, skilled, and committed individual working on their behalf.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to mark the anniversary of a great tradition, one that ties my home State of Illinois with the nation of Greece. The Special Olympics, which brings people with intellectual disabilities together for athletic competition, began 40 years ago this month.

In fact, the first Special Olympics were held on Soldier Field in Chicago. It all started when a young woman named Anne McGlone had an idea. She was a physical education instructor at West Pullman park on the southeast side. The Chicago Park district came to her to ask if she had any ideas to help kids with special needs.

Anne McGlone ran with it. She asked the Kennedy Foundation for a one-time donation of \$25,000 to put on the first Special Olympics. On July 20, 1968, about 1,000 athletes from 26 American States, and Canada, got together and ran, swam and played hockey.

Anne McGlone, now Anne Burke, went on to law school. She is now on the supreme court of the State of Illinois. But she kept working on the Special Olympics along the way.

With the continued support of Eunice and Sargent Shriver and the Kennedy foundation, the Special Olympics grew. Today, the Special Olympics is a huge international movement that has brought together millions of people with intellectual disabilities in 175 countries around the world. I congratulate the Special Olympics for 40 years of empowering people with intellectual disabilities.

Last summer, the Special Olympics summer games were held in Shanghai, China. Next time around, in 2011, they will be held in Athens, Greece. It is fitting for Greece, with its proud Olympic tradition, to host the Special Olympics, and I wish the Greek Government every success as it prepares to host the games.

Closer to home, the next Special Olympics winter games will be held in 2009 in Boise, ID. And even closer to home, just as Chicago hopes to host the next Olympic games in 2016, I hope that one day the Special Olympics will come back to Chicago, where it started 40 years ago.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK VAN BUER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a selfless public servant from my great State of Illinois, Mayor Frank Van Buer, of DeKalb, who passed away July 23, 2008, after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Mayor Van Buer was born in Savanna, IL, on the banks of the Mississippi River. While in high school, Frank worked as a union laborer and