

appropriated. But these questions and concerns have now been addressed, and should not hold up this treaty.

Second, critics have claimed that New START will impede current and planned missile defense efforts.

They point to language in the preamble of the treaty that notes the inter-relationship between offensive and defensive strategic arms.

They point to the unilateral statement issued by Russia upon signing the treaty indicating that our missile defense plans could prompt Moscow to withdraw from the agreement.

And they note that the agreement prohibits both countries from converting additional ICBM silos or submarine launch tubes for missile defense interceptors.

These arguments are without merit.

First, the preamble language simply acknowledges what we all know: that there is a relationship between strategic offensive and defensive arms. It will not inhibit our missile defense efforts in any way.

Similar language can be found in the original START agreement, and it has not inhibited our missile defense efforts over the past two decades.

Second, the Russian unilateral statement is not a part of the agreement, and the United States is not bound by it in any way. In fact, the United States issued its own unilateral statement clearly stating that it will move forward with its missile defense plans.

Again, it should be noted that the Soviet Union issued a similar unilateral statement when START was signed and it had no impact on our missile defense plans.

Finally, regarding the prohibition on converting additional ICBM silos and SLBM launch tubes for missile defense interceptors: simply stated, our military has no plans to do so. This doesn't block the United States from anything it plans or wants to do.

It is actually cheaper to build new missile defense launchers than to convert existing launch tubes or silos. And the treaty places no constraints whatsoever on that construction.

The Secretary of Defense, the unified military leadership, and the head of the Missile Defense Agency have testified this treaty will not harm missile defense.

These concerns have been raised, debated, and answered. It is time for ratification.

Mr. President, the choice before us is not New START and the treaty that some of my colleagues would prefer to have. Rather, the choice is between New START and no arms control treaty at all. To me, that choice is easy.

Either we make progress on reducing our nuclear arsenals and lay the foundation for further reductions including on tactical nuclear weapons or we do not.

New START is in our Nation's national security. Every day that passes without ratification is another day without inspectors on the ground in

Russia and a decrease in mutual transparency and trust.

The Senate has a long tradition of overwhelming support for treaties like this one: the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was approved 93-5; the 1991 START agreement which was approved 93-6; and the 2002 Moscow Treaty which was approved 95-0.

There is nothing in this treaty to suggest that the vote on its ratification should be any different. This should be an easy step for the Senate to take, a step that should be taken in the spirit of protecting our Nation and the world from the devastation of a nuclear war.

I urge my colleagues to support this agreement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The Senator from Georgia.

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from California on her remarks. As a member of Foreign Relations, I voted to bring the treaty to the floor. However, there is another pressing matter I wish to discuss this evening.

The Senate now has before it the START treaty, but on a parallel track we have before us the question of financing the government through the end of the fiscal year next year. There are three alternatives available to us. One of them is a continuing resolution through the end of next year. One of them is a continuing resolution that is modified with an Omnibus appropriations that is put on top of it which I understand is the plan. There is a third option which is the short-term CR. It is that question I rise to address for a few moments.

Forty-three days ago, I ran for reelection to the Senate. For 2 years, I traveled the State of Georgia campaigning for my reelection. Throughout that campaign, there were three guiding issues on which I focused. One was tax policy. At a time of economic recession and high unemployment, the worst thing for us to do is to raise taxes of the American people and, in particular, small business, which hires the majority of the people. That is No. 1.

No. 2, I campaigned on the fact that we didn't have a revenue problem nearly as much as we had a spending problem; that we needed to ask of ourselves, as Senators, what every American family has had to ask of themselves at home. They have sat around the kitchen table, looked at what their income was, looked at what it now is, looked at priorities and reprioritized. Times have been tough, and they have been difficult. They did that because they had to.

They don't have the luxury of credit and borrowing as our government has, which takes me to the third point I ran on in the campaign; that is, that unsustainable debt will make this democracy an unsustainable country.

One of the things I understand a little bit about from having been in the real estate business is leverage. Leverage is a powerful thing to be able to do things, but too much can destroy even the best of people or the best of ideas. We are rapidly approaching a time where we owe entirely too much money.

I love to tell the story about a lesson I learned in good politics. I know the Presiding Officer has had the same kind of lessons he has learned.

I was in Albany, GA, making a speech in November of 2009. I kept talking about 1 trillion this and 1 trillion that. This farmer at the back of the room said: Senator, I only graduated from Dougherty County High School. I don't understand how much 1 trillion is. Can you explain.

I oohed and aahed and I babbled. I finally said: Well, it is a lot. I couldn't think of a way to quantify 1 trillion.

I got home that night. My wife took one look at me and said: What in the world is wrong with you?

I said: I got stumped today.

She said: What was the question?

I said: The question was, How much is 1 trillion?

She said: What did you say?

I said: I said it is a lot.

She said: That was a bad answer.

I said: I know that, but I just couldn't think of anything.

She knows better than I a lot of times. She said: Why don't you just figure out how many years have to go by for 1 trillion seconds to pass.

I said: That is a terrific idea.

So I pulled my calculator out and multiplied 60 seconds times 60 minutes to get the number of seconds in an hour.

I multiplied that 24 times for the number of seconds in 1 day. I multiplied that times 365 for the number of seconds in 1 year. Do you know how many years have to go by for 1 trillion seconds to pass? It is 31,709 years. I put an asterisk by that because I didn't count leap years and every fourth year has an extra day. I know that will throw the number off a little bit.

We owe \$13 trillion of those dollars, not just \$1 trillion. It is an astronomical amount of money. It is an amount we must quantify and begin to lower over time in two ways. One is expanding the prosperity of the American people, because as their prosperity goes up, revenues come back to the government. First and most important, we have to get our arms around spending. I am deeply opposed to putting an Omnibus appropriations bill on the CR that is coming to the Senate and passing 12 appropriations bills in a short-time debate without the transparency we need.

I am not a Johnny-come-lately to this particular position. In the House of Representatives, when President Bush brought an omnibus budget to the House, I voted against it. I voted against it last fall on a number of occasions when we had Omnibus appropriations bills matched up coming to the

Senate floor under President Obama. It is a bad way to do business. By rolling all those things together, you don't have the scrutiny, the oversight or the understanding of where the money is going, and the tendency to push spending beyond your limits actually becomes a reality. I am one who subscribes to the fact that we have to change the way we do business. We have to make hard decisions. We have to execute some tough love. We have to have some shared sacrifice, and we to have to do it quickly.

Time has run out on the American Government and our American budget process without substantial reform, which is why it would be a tragic mistake for us sometime this week or this weekend to pass an Omnibus appropriations bill.

There is an underlying reason why I don't support that, and it is because I think a short-term CR makes a lot more sense. A short-term CR will put the Senate in the position of debating the rest of next year's spending or this fiscal year's spending under the cloud of the debt ceiling which is going to confront us in April or May or maybe as soon as the middle of March. If we pass a CR or an omnibus that goes beyond that date to the end of next year, September 30, we have no leverage to address the subject of raising the debt ceiling. It is time we stopped borrowing to spend more money we do not have.

I come at a time when I know the pending business is the START treaty, which I will address on another occasion, but to point out why I am so deeply disappointed that we are rushing to judgment on an Omnibus appropriations spending bill at a time when the American people want us focusing on spending, on the deficit, and on improving the way we do business.

I will vote against an Omnibus appropriations bill. I will vote against cloture on the bill. I will support a short-term CR. That is the best way for us to set up an occasion next year where we address our priorities in the right order and at the right time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTES TO RETIRING SENATORS

ARLEN SPECTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if you asked anyone in this body to summarize ARLEN SPECTER, I think the words that would come up most often would be he is a real fighter. ARLEN SPECTER fought to defend our Nation in Korea. He fought crime in the streets of Phila-

delphia as a district attorney. He has fought cancer and won three times. And he has fought for Pennsylvania every day he has served with us here in the U.S. Senate.

Senator SPECTER has witnessed three decades of progress in Washington. He is a man who has risen above party lines to demonstrate his independence time after time. But his independence was not about him; it was about the people of Pennsylvania, whom he has served with honor and dignity for 30 years, even when cancer tried to keep him from doing so.

I have known and served with Senator SPECTER for almost 30 years, and I have come to admire his service and dedication. We have not always agreed on how to solve the issues facing America, but he has always been willing to listen to me and any other Senator in the hopes of forging bipartisan agreements that would help the country. He is a very principled man, a man who does what he believes is right, even when few others agree with him.

Senator SPECTER was raised in the Midwest by his mother and a Russian immigrant father who came to the United States and later served his new country in World War I.

He first discovered Pennsylvania as an undergraduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a degree in international relations. After serving 3 years in the Air Force during the Korean war, he attended law school at Yale and established a successful law practice in what would become his home State, Pennsylvania.

Just as his father left his native land and served his new home as a member of the United States military, Senator SPECTER left his home in Kansas and served his adopted Commonwealth in a different way—first as a district attorney in Philadelphia for 9 years, and then as a U.S. Senator for the last 30 years. And he did this with his tenacity. He lost a number of elections. He kept coming back, never giving up.

As a Member of Congress, he has been a stalwart for justice, health, and education. He has presided over several Supreme Court confirmation hearings, and played a major role in many more.

He has ensured that vital and potentially lifesaving research for cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other diseases receives Federal dollars to pave the way for real breakthroughs.

One personal experience with Senator SPECTER—the so-called economic recovery package, the stimulus. He was the key vote—one of the three key votes. He was a Republican. He and the two Senators from Maine made it possible to pass that. But his passion in that legislation was the National Institutes of Health. Part of the deal was that they had to get \$10 billion. Money well spent. But it is something he believed in fervently, and we were able to do that.

He has also worked to cover children and seniors who struggle to get access

to health care they desperately need. He has done that as a member of the Appropriations Committee, where he has worked to make more education available to all students with the help of scholarships and student loans. Furthermore, his work with constituents of every stripe makes a difference every day.

Senator SPECTER is a throwback to a previous chapter in the history of the Senate—a time when moderates were the rule, not the exception.

When I came to Washington, Republicans such as ARLEN SPECTER were every place. That is not the case now. He is a rare breed and will truly be missed.

I wish Senator SPECTER, his wife Joan, and their two sons and four grandchildren the very best in the coming weeks, months, and years.

BLANCHE LINCOLN

Mr. President, Arkansas has given America a lot of which to be proud. From the late Senator William Fulbright, whom I did not know, to President Clinton, whom I do know, Arkansans have always produced proud public servants.

I had the good fortune to serve with two of the finest Senators we have ever had in this body, Dale Bumpers and David Pryor. I have said publicly—I will say again—the finest legislator I have ever served with—I do not want to hurt anyone's feelings here—is David Pryor. David Pryor was a superb representative of Arkansas and the country.

BLANCHE LINCOLN has continued that long tradition of Arkansans who have come to Washington to shape our Nation. And BLANCHE has never forgotten from where she came.

Senator LINCOLN has been a trailblazer during her time in the Senate. In 1998, she became the youngest woman to ever be elected to the Senate. She was also the first woman elected to represent Arkansas in the Senate since World War II. She was the first woman and first from Arkansas to chair the Senate Agriculture Committee.

A dozen years ago, BLANCHE was one of the youngest people in this body. But from day one, she earned a reputation for being very wise, wise beyond her years. She has always understood we are here to serve, first and foremost, and she has never forgotten that.

Senator LINCOLN once said:

I am not normally a betting person, but I say that putting your money on the American people is about as close to a sure bet as you are going to get.

BLANCHE LINCOLN always bet on the American people, and particularly the good people in Arkansas who first sent her to Washington to get things done in 1992.

Senator LINCOLN never sought the national spotlight. She has always been focused on making sure the people of Arkansas are represented fairly and forcefully. Her legislative accomplishments are too long to list here today.