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Senate

(Legislative day of Monday, January 30, 1995)

The Senate met at 10 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman, of the Washington Hebrew Congregation.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, the Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Rock of Ages:

We whose lives are forever in motion, from moment to moment, from place to place, even from life to death, we turn to Thee, Creator of all, who alone remains eternally the same in this ever-changing world.

Though we be but specks of dust in this vast universe, not knowing why and for what purpose we were brought into life, we are still Thy creatures and Thou art the very source of our being. In this moment of prayer and in spiritual linkage with Thee, we partake of Thine eternity and glory in the faith that Thou hast set meaning and purpose for our existence. Amen.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. I thank the Chair.

SCHEDULE

Mr. HATCH. As the President pro tempore said, this morning time for the two leaders has been reserved and the Senate will immediately resume consideration of House Joint Resolution 1, the constitutional balanced budget amendment.

For the information of all of my colleagues, according to the consent agreement entered last night, Senator DOLE or his designee will move to table the Daschle motion to commit at 12 o'clock noon tomorrow. Therefore, there will be debate only today on the pending amendments, so there will be no rollcall votes during today's session.

Also, the Senate will recess between the hours of 12:30 to 2:15 for the weekly policy luncheons to meet.

I notice my friend and colleague from Wisconsin is here and would desire to speak, so I yield the floor.

Mr. KOHL. I thank the Senator.

Mr. President, I ask to speak as if in morning business.

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

REDUCING GUNS IN AMERICA

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, last week was Schools Without Violence week in the Milwaukee public schools. However, last Monday, at the same time that students in my alma mater, Washington High School, were preparing essays on a theme of "Peace Begins with Me," gunshots shattered that peace. In the first shooting ever in a Milwaukee classroom, a 19-year-old former student shot a high school senior in the arm and leg. He was fortunate that he was not killed.

In the aftermath, one concerned mother stated:

Washington High School is a place of learning for kids. They should feel safe

enough to learn. For this to happen here is unfair.

Mr. President, this is not just unfair. It is unacceptable. Young people should be able to concentrate on their biology and math classes and not on avoiding bullets.

Of course, there is no easy cure for the violence that is riddling our streets and ravaging our schools. We need more police, more prisons, and better family structure. However, I do believe that in the last Congress we passed three measures which can begin to make a difference: The Brady Act, the Youth Handgun Safety Act, and the assault weapons ban. I do not believe that any of these bills infringe on anyone's second amendment rights, and I am a strong supporter of these rights.

First, the evidence strongly supports the fact that during the 11 months that it has been in effect, the Brady law has helped save lives. According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Brady law has resulted in approximately 2 percent of all applicants being turned down from purchasing firearms because they were ineligible. Fugitives, rapists, murderers, and convicted felons have been arrested while trying to purchase guns.

In my own State of Wisconsin, which has a 2-day waiting period and a background check on handguns, more than 800 convicted felons have been prevented from buying handguns in the past 3 years.

Second, as we all know, homicides involving firearms, especially among our Nation's young, are on the increase. The risk of being murdered by a firearm in the United States has more than doubled since 1966. But for young people aged 15 to 19, it is much worse. The rate has increased nearly seven times. In our America of 1995, far too many of our young people are being killed and far too many of our young people are killing each other.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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The problem of young people and guns has concerned me ever since I came to Washington. Last year, we finally made some progress. We enacted the Youth Handgun Safety Act as part of the crime bill which makes it a Federal crime to sell a handgun to a minor and for a minor to possess a handgun under most circumstances. Our measure had bipartisan support, from Senators CRAIG and THURMOND to former Senator Metzenbaum, from the NRA to law enforcement. It is not a total solution, but it does take a step toward stemming the violence.

Finally, we have all read reports that some House Members want to repeal the ban on assault weapons as part of a new crime bill. I believe that this would be a terrible mistake. Have we forgotten about the 1989 massacre of innocent schoolchildren in Stockton, CA, and have we forgotten about the Long Island Railroad commuters who were ruthlessly gunned down just last year?

The ban on assault weapons is supported by almost 80 percent of the American people and numerous police organizations. Law enforcement claims that these are the weapons of choice for gang members and drug kingpins and that repealing the ban would ensure that gangs outgun police officers who walk the beat. In any event, to repeal the ban would be to reopen a partisan political wound just at a time when we are trying to work together on behalf of the American people. For that reason alone, Senators DOLE and HATCH deserve credit for not including a repeal in their crime legislation.

Yes, things have certainly changed from when I was a student at Washington High School. Back then, we did not have to worry about gangs and drugs and assault weapons and broken homes. Young people were not raised in front of TV sets that bombarded them with senseless violent images. And now for many young people guns, crime, and violence are the only way that they think they can get ahead.

Mr. President, this is not the kind of a world that our children deserve, but it is one in which too many do in fact live. And so I look forward to working with my colleagues in the 104th Congress to reduce the number of guns in school and the number of young people with guns.

I thank the Chair.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of House Joint Resolution 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 1) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

The Senate resumed consideration of the joint resolution.

Pending;

Daschle motion to commit the resolution, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Daschle amendment No. 231, to require a budget plan before the amendment takes effect.

Dole amendment No. 232 (to instructions to commit), to establish that if Congress has not passed a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution by May 1, 1995, with 60 days thereafter, the President shall transmit to Congress a detailed plan to balance the budget by the year 2002.

Dole amendment No. 233 (to amendment No. 232), in the nature of a substitute.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would like to just continue where I was yesterday. I appreciate the comments of my dear friend from Wisconsin and the leadership he is providing on the balanced budget amendment as well.

Yesterday I brought up a Balanced Budget Act debt tracker, and you can see by this tracker that since we have been debating—we are now in our ninth day—since we have been debating the balanced budget amendment, each day the national debt has gone up \$829,440,000. That was day one. As you can see, each day that we are debating this amendment, the deficit that the American taxpayers are owing is going up by that amount. It is a steady climb. As of yesterday, we were up to \$6,635,520,000. As of today, the ninth day of our debate, we are now up to \$7,464,960,000.

The trend line is straight up and we have only debated this 9 days. The President's budget does not do anything about that. As a matter of fact, his budget is going to go on at about \$200 billion a year in deficits.

Today I added this other bar to this balanced budget amendment debt tracker. The debt, as I said, is now increased by \$7,464,960,000 in just the 9 days we have been on this balanced budget amendment. A staff member told me this morning, regarding the balanced budget, in an attempt to balance his own budget at home he spends \$50 a week for groceries. This \$7.4 billion that we have just spent in 9 days, putting us into more bankruptcy—that \$7.4 billion would buy that staff member groceries for 2,871,138 years at \$50 a week. So you can see how big this really is. If you look in the Wall Street Journal yesterday there is a very clever article related to the debt.

I ask unanimous consent it be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Feb. 6, 1995]
IF YOU BOUGHT 2 TRILLION COPIES OF THIS
PAPER * * *

(By Stephen Moore)

Today, President Clinton releases his fiscal 1996 budget. Already the Associated Press is reporting that officials claim the budget "proposes to abolish or consolidate hundreds of government programs, reducing federal spending by \$144 billion over the next five years." No doubt the president will firmly insist that this is the most tight-fisted, penny-pinching budget in 20 years.

Why is this so predictable? Because this is what every president since Richard Nixon has said. But 20 years ago the federal budget

was \$370 billion. Today, Mr. Clinton will request almost \$1.6 trillion. Even adjusting for inflation, the federal budget is twice as large as it was during the last years of the Nixon presidency. Besides, without the sleight of hand of baseline budgeting, President Clinton's new budget calls for a \$50 billion increase in spending from the current budget. And that was \$70 billion more than was spent the year before that. Yet the budget-busting news is bound to be greeted with a national yawn of unconcern.

Why is there more public outrage when we learn that Washington wastes \$100 on Al Gore's famous ashtray than that it wastes nearly \$1.6 trillion on everything else? Much of the problem seems to be that 1½ trillion is an incomprehensibly large number. So here are some simple ways to picture how enormous the U.S. government is today:

One trillion dollars—\$1,000,000,000,000.00. That's 12 zeroes to the left of the decimal point. A trillion is a million times a million. It would take more than 1½ million millionaires to have as much money as is spent each year by Congress.

One of the highest-paid workers in America today is basketball superstar Shaquille O'Neal, who reportedly earns about \$30 million a season in salary and endorsements. He is rich beyond our wildest imaginations. But he'd have to play 33,000 seasons before he earned \$1 trillion. It would take a Superdome full of Shaquille O'Neals to have enough to pay all of Congress's bills each year.

Here's an experiment. What if we were to try to pay off the \$4 trillion national debt by having Congress put one dollar every second into a special debt-buy-down account? How many years would it take to pay off the debt? One million seconds is about 12 days. One billion seconds is roughly 32 years. But one trillion seconds is almost 32,000 years. So to pay off the debt, Congress would have to put dollar bills into this account for about the next 130,000 years—roughly the amount of time that has passed since the Ice Age.

Even if we were to require Congress to put \$100 a second into this debt-buy-down account, it would still take well over 1,000 years to pay the debt down.

Try this one on for size. Imagine a train of 50-foot boxcars crammed with \$1 bills. How long would the train have to be to carry the \$1.6 trillion Congress spends each year? About \$65 million can be stuffed in a boxcar. Thus, the train would have to be about 240 miles long to carry enough dollar bills to balance the federal budget. In other words, you would need a train that stretches the entire Northeast corridor, from Washington, through Baltimore, Delaware, Philadelphia, New Jersey, and into New York City.

Former Office of Management and Budget Director Jim Miller calculates that if a military jet were flying overhead at the speed of sound and spewing out a roll of dollar bills behind it, the plane would have to fly for more than 15 years before it reeled out 1.6 trillion dollar bills.

Here's a challenging one: If you laid \$1 bills from end to end, could you make a chain that stretches to the moon with 1.6 trillion? Answer: without a sweat, with billions and billions of dollars left over. In fact, they would stretch nearly from the Earth to the sun.

The newspaper tabloids report that O.J. Simpson is paying some \$55,000 a day in legal fees. The trial would have to last 26 million days, or almost 100,000 years, before the lawyers earned \$1.6 trillion.

This year the White House want to spend three times as much as America did to win World War I, which cost roughly \$500 billion in today's dollars. Adjusted for inflation, the combined cost of defeating the Nazis and the