

bit about what it is like to be on the bottom of the economic ladder.

I encourage everyone in the Senate to some morning before we vote on the minimum wage again to get up and go downtown to a homeless shelter and talk to a young woman whose husband left her, who has two or three children, who has no skills, who has no money, and who has no place to live. Talk to her about her experience working at minimum wage. When she works she loses AFDC. When she works she is told she cannot save any money to prepare for her first month's rent and 1-month security deposit. There is not any way she can save money to try to get an apartment to shelter her and her kids. After you have talked to her for a bit, think, "If it were me, how would I get out of this circumstance?" I will bet you that you would have, as I did, a difficult time understanding how you pull yourself up and out of that kind of circumstance.

I ask everybody in this the Senate as they think about the minimum wage to think about the people who are struggling to try to make a living every single day and who find now that their \$4.25 an hour buys a whole lot less than it did 6 years ago. We are now near in terms of purchasing power a 40-year low in the minimum wage. And we ought to pay as much attention to the needs of those at the bottom of the economic ladder as we seem to day after day to pay for those at the top of the economic ladder. My hope is that we will—Republicans and Democrats—understand that there are people who have no voice out there, or who feel they have no voice, and that we should raise our voices on their behalf. There are people out there who work hard but still feel they have no hope. We ought to offer hope to those people. That is what we ought to be about.

The easiest thing in the world is to be negative. The easiest thing in the world is to oppose and reject. The hardest thing in the world is to be a builder and to try to understand what is right and what improves life in this country. I hope we can decide in a bipartisan way to do that in the coming day or two, or week, when we discuss once again the minimum wage.

THE ISSUE OF TAXES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, on the issue of taxes, today is tax day, April 15. And there will be a lot of discussion—I think even later this morning—on the floor about taxes. I do not think anyone in this country particularly likes to pay taxes. I understand that. I personally take great pride in paying taxes to help create wonderful schools that will educate our children. All of us ought to beam a little about that. We created opportunities in our country—building roads, building schools, doing a lot of things that have made life better in our country. So I understand that. But I understand that on tax day most people would prefer to pay a less-

er amount of taxes, and most people do not very much like the Tax Code that we have. It is too complicated. It is sometimes unfair. And there is not any reason that we ought to have a Sears Roebuck-style catalog in order to try to have to read through and understand the rules of our Tax Code. We ought to be able to do this simpler than that. I hope working together that we will find a way to do it.

But I want to focus on a couple of things in the Tax Code that kind of relates to what I was talking about on the minimum wage. There is always a way for the bigger interests to fill the hallways out here with really smart people who conceive of ways themselves to avoid paying taxes, or of ways for someone else to pay a little less in taxes. I will give you some examples of that. We have a provision in our Tax Code that I have talked about half a dozen times that says to companies close your plants in America, move it and your jobs overseas, get rid of your American workers, hire foreign workers, get a foreign plant and foreign work, produce the same product, and then ship it back to our country and we will make you a deal. If you do that, we will give you a tax cut. Most people would think that cannot be the case. Anyone who proposed that would have about a 2-second political life. No. That is true. It is in the Tax Code. I have tried to get it out of the Tax Code. I lost last year by a 52 to 47 vote on the Senate floor. We are going to vote on that again this week. I am going to offer an amendment to the immigration bill that proposes that we shut down the insidious tax loophole that encourages somebody to shut their American plant, move their U.S. jobs overseas and then produce the same product and ship it back into our country. We will have another vote this week on that.

We also have had this debate about the budget balancing proposal that was vetoed by the President. And it is interesting. When you take a look at some of these details that are put into these large pieces of legislation, which by the way alters in favor of the line-item veto which I supported—I am delighted the President will now have that—but in that big budget bill there a number of little provisions. Let me cite one of them.

One was a provision which called to repeal section 956(A) of the Tax Code. There are not two people awake in America who understand what that is except the companies who are going to benefit from it. That was a little provision stuck in the bill that was supposed to balance the Federal budget that went to the President and he vetoed it, a little provision that says, by the way let us spend \$244 million making it more attractive on top of the already perverse incentive we have in the Tax Code to move your jobs overseas—repeal of section 956(A). I have asked on four or five occasions, is there someone in the Chamber of the Senate—of

course, there is no one here now because we are not having votes today—when everyone gets here who would stand up and raise their hand and say, "Yes, I support that. That is my provision. I sure like that notion. Let us provide more benefits to people who move their jobs overseas?" Do you know something? I could not find one Senator who would stand up and support it. It is like the blimps in the defense bill. We wrote in \$60 million to buy blimps in the defense bill.

So I said, "Will anyone in the Chamber tell me who thought we should spend money in the defense bill to buy blimps?" I could not find a one. It is funny how difficult it is to find people in the Senate when you discover a provision in law or a provision that is proposed in the Balanced Budget Act that would actually reward, above the current incentive, companies for moving their jobs overseas.

Most of us understand what has happened to American jobs. There have been some jobs created in the service sector, but we have lost about 3 million good-paying manufacturing jobs in this country since 1979—3 million manufacturing jobs. When you talk about manufacturing, then you are not talking about minimum wage. Manufacturing represents the seed bed of good jobs with good income in this country, and that is why I have talked again and again in the Chamber about measuring America's economic progress not by what we consume but by what we produce, because what we produce is what matters. That is what economic health is about. Do we retain a strong manufacturing sector in this country? Do we retain strong jobs that pay well in this country?

At the same time we are all talking about wanting to do that, we have in the Tax Code—and I bring it to the attention of the Senate on tax day—a provision that says we would like to reward you if you leave America. Take your jobs and go, take your plant and run, and we will give you a reward. In fact, all the rest of the American taxpayers will pay for it; \$2.2 billion is the reward for companies that move their jobs overseas—\$2.2 billion.

That does not come from me. That comes from the Joint Tax Committee. That is their estimate of how much revenue is lost in this country because we provide an incentive for those who would close their American plants and move their American jobs overseas, produce the same product they used to produce here and then ship it all back to United States. And what has happened? The only thing that has happened is that we no longer have the jobs in America. Somebody overseas has those jobs, and someone who controls those jobs makes more money and pays no taxes.

In my judgment, that is no way on tax day to celebrate. What we ought to do on tax day is talk about things we all talk about—complexity, yes. Let us simplify the Tax Code. Let us make it

more fair even as we make it more simple. But at the same time let us decide that that Tax Code ought to be neutral on the subject of moving jobs. The Tax Code ought not be tilted in favor of taking your jobs and leaving the United States of America.

Those are the kinds of issues that I think we as a Senate will have to confront in the rest of 1996. I know it is an election year, and I know some predict that not much can be done because we have all the tensions, and so on. The businesses of this country will not wait for an election. We will be hard pressed to explain to someone who is struggling out there at the minimum wage that, well, we cannot really deal with this now because there is an election coming. That is just something we cannot deal with. There is too much controversy, and we just are not able to do it. That is going to be lost on a lot of people who are trying very hard to make a living day after day.

There is not in this Senate one side of the aisle that cares a lot about people and the other side that does not. That is not the case I am trying to make. But there has been a confluence of public policies in the last year and a half that represent a more extreme view of where we ought to head—the notion that somehow the only thing that makes the American engine work is if you pour in some petroleum from the top. It is classically the old trickle-down approach; if you help everybody at the top, somehow everybody at the bottom gets damp or somebody at the bottom benefits.

Hubert Humphrey, who was our neighbor over in Minnesota, a wonderful man, said, "I have a different view of this. My view is the 'percolate up' theory in our country. You give everyone in this country a little opportunity to be able to do well and things percolate up and make this American engine run." He said "This trickle down, that is the approach where if you give the horse some hay, at some point maybe the sparrows will have something to eat."

We ought to understand in this country that the American economic engine works best when all of the American people are working. The incentive in the minimum wage is to try to be fair to those at the bottom of the economic ladder. And it is not fair to say after 6 years, 6 years of freezing you, because you lose purchasing power year after year, that we are going to continue to do that. That is not fair. And it is not fair to those on the minimum wage that our Tax Code on tax day contains a provision that says, "By the way, the job you aspire to"—you are on minimum wage, but you aspire to a better job, a manufacturing job perhaps—"is gone, because in our Tax Code we paid somebody to take it out of America." That is not fair either.

There are provisions, it seems to me, that we can and ought to agree on as Democrats and as Republicans that represent a fair economic approach

which would benefit this country, all people of this country, even those who do not have the capability of sending an army of special interest folks to surround this Chamber as we debate their favorite issue.

Mr. President, we will have a great deal of discussion on these issues this week, I am certain, and my hope is that we will, on the first question I asked today, answer with reasonable unanimity: Should there be a minimum wage? I hope most Members of this Chamber will answer yes.

And if they answer yes, then let us spend the rest of the time asking the question: If there should be a minimum wage, then what is a fair level for that minimum wage? Is it fair having it frozen for 6 years? When the top of the economic ladder gets a 23 percent pay increase to an average \$3 million a year, is it fair then to say to the bottom, at the lowest rung of the economic ladder, "By the way, we will freeze your pay for 6 years?" I do not think that is the answer most people would come to if you think about it reasonably and you think about it in the context of what would be best for the millions of people in this country at the bottom who are struggling very hard to make ends meet.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I make a point of order that a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 241

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senate Resolution 241 be temporarily set aside until Tuesday, April 16, at a time to be determined by the majority leader after consultation with the Democratic leader.

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

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, under the previous order, I am recognized during morning business for a period of 90 minutes. I ask unanimous consent that during this period I be permitted to yield portions of my time to other Members without losing my right to the floor.

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

TAX DAY

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, if he were still alive, President Roosevelt would say April 15 is "a day that will live in infamy." We have all come to know this very special day as one of great dread in our country, as we come to grips with the enormous burden

every American family, every Georgia family, every citizen comes face to face with—the direct burden of Government and the enormous consumption of the wages of labor that are consumed by the U.S. Government and government in general.

Depending on what you count, today Americans work from January 1 until about June 31 for the Government before they are able to keep the first dime for themselves, their families, their educations, their dreams. I think Thomas Jefferson must surely have many times rolled in his grave because he could never, ever have anticipated that there would come a time that nearly half the resources of those who labor for it are removed from those families and those individuals and sent to some government to redetermine what ought to be done with the wages of the person who earned it.

To just quickly summarize—and I am going to yield to my good colleague from Tennessee—but in my own State, I have asked that a picture be made of the average Georgia family. This is the perfect day to reveal what that picture looks like—April 15. That average family earns about \$40,000 a year. Both spouses work and they have two children. Remember, now, they earn around \$40,000 a year. They spend \$4,183 in Federal income tax liability of the \$40,000. They spend \$3,118 in FICA taxes. They spend another \$844 in other direct and indirect Federal taxes. They forfeit \$5,061 in local taxes, State and local. This family's share of the new regulatory apparatus we have been building for the last some 30-odd years—this is an unbelievable figure—is \$6,615. This family's share of added interest costs because of our \$5 trillion national debt is \$2,957. That comes to \$22,778, 51 or 52 percent of all wages. Every average family in Georgia is working half time for somebody else—the Government.

America depends on these families to raise the country. We ask them to house the country, to educate the country, to feed it and clothe it, transport it, and see to its health. But we only leave them half of all their earnings to do this great work that we have depended upon for so long. The end result is middle America, the average hard-working family, has been marginalized, has been literally pushed to the wall because of the consumption, the insatiable consumption of Government.

I would have to say this is also the result of certain elitists in our country that have concluded that this average family in Georgia is unable to make decisions for itself and that decisions about its future, its health, its welfare are best made by some Washington wonk in the belly of one of these buildings in the Capital City, and it is better that their wages come here so that some bright person can determine how best this family ought to be preparing for its future and its needs.