

Mr. President, I wanted to share my thoughts on this subject.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I appreciate the statement of my friend from Florida.

I would say, in terms of who the villain is in the deficit we are facing right now, there are two big villains. One is the war, and then the economy. As we started losing economic ground, a downturn back in March of 2000, people didn't realize for every 1 percent change in economic activity it translated into \$45 billion in revenue. In other words, as the economy is rebounding now, the revenue is coming back up. Even continuing in the effort, the war effort—which I am afraid is going to last for quite a while—we are going to be facing end strength problems and that will have to go on.

I believe the best thing we can do is do it through the economy. At the same time there are certain things that have to happen in America. We have to do something about roads in America. I probably have as many townhall meetings as anyone. I suggest the Senator from Florida does, too. I can't remember one I have had where they haven't said something about roads.

In Oklahoma what they say is, we can always tell when we are around Thanksgiving time, when we have family coming in, we have friends coming in, we can always know when we get to Oklahoma because of the roads. I add to the Presiding Officer, when they come from Texas they make that comment about Oklahoma roads. So we do have a very serious problem. It seems to be more serious in my State.

Part of that is due to the donor status we have had for quite some time. Of course, we have not had the money with which to do it. I feel an obligation, and believe it is very appropriate for conservatives, to get out and vote in favor of this type of an infrastructure program. This translates directly into jobs, translates directly into the economy, translates directly into increasing economic activity and additional revenue that will come into Government.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAMBLISS). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

One such crime occurred in Greenwich Village, NY. There, a 36-year-old man was assaulted by a group of 15 men on his way to a gay bar. Another man on the street yelled an anti-gay slur, and when the victim turned to see who had yelled at him, he was punched in the back of the head.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

TAIWAN'S PEACE REFERENDUM

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, for the past 54 years, Taiwan and the United States have been allies in the international arena, democratic partners and friends. In times of need and turmoil, both countries have always come to each other's aid. In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Taiwan immediately offered help to Americans through the U.S. Government. In recent months, Taiwan has offered humanitarian aid to post-war Iraq.

Today Taiwan is being threatened. Taiwan's planned referendum on March 20, 2004 has been called a move toward Taiwan independence. Some say it will push Taiwan to the "abyss of war." Such rhetoric is a distortion of Taiwan's true intentions. In the face of an overwhelming military threat against Taiwan, Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's peace referendum asks Taiwan voters whether they should buy more anti-missile weapons if the People's Republic of China refuses to withdraw its 496 missiles targeted at Taiwan and whether Taiwan should open up talks with the People's Republic of China about issues of peace.

Taiwan's democratically elected president, President Chen, has made it clear that he continues to hold to the "five no's" of his inauguration speech, including the promise not to hold a plebiscite on the issue of Taiwanese independence. The referendum merely aims to avoid war, free its people from fear and maintain the status quo.

Taiwan, our ally and friend, is a democracy. Its people have every right to hold their referendum this March 20. Taiwan's referendum law is a basic

democratic right that the United States should support rather than denigrate. The future of Taiwan must be determined peacefully, with the express consent of the people of Taiwan. Since its establishment, the United States has been the foremost champion of liberty and democracy in the world. We can, therefore, not afford to tell the people of Taiwan not to hold a referendum. There can be no double standard when it comes to exercising democracy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RONALD C. FOSTER

• Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I pay tribute to Ronald C. Foster who will soon be retiring after an illustrious 33-year career with one of America's leading companies, the Atlanta-based United Parcel Service, UPS. First hired in October of 1966, Ron's 33-year corporate career led him from Kentucky to Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania, and ultimately to Washington, DC.

Ron started his career as a non-management hourly employee unloading UPS tractor-trailers in Lexington, KY. Promoted to the ranks of management 2 years later, Ron worked in UPS operations while attending the University of Kentucky, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Economics in 1972.

Ron held a series of managerial positions of increasing responsibility within the UPS Human Resources department which led him to become one of the company's senior Human Resources officials. In 1996, Ron Foster transferred to UPS' Washington, DC, Public Affairs office, where he represented the company on Capitol Hill and focused on labor relations, safety and human resources related public policy issues. At the time of his retirement Ron served as one of the company's most senior Public Affairs executives, as he coordinated the legislative and political activities of UPS Public Affairs managers both in Washington and in select state capitals.

Ron Foster's accomplished business career has been most noted for his unwavering loyalty to UPS and to his uncompromised dedication to integrity regarding business ethics and values. Ron will be remembered for the respectful and professional manner in which he treated all UPS colleagues. Ron's ability to deal fairly and equitably with people from all walks of life, a trait that is all too uncommon in today's society, was legendary among the UPS family.

Ron has been a very good friend to this Senator and I am happy that he will be spending his retirement years at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, GA. I congratulate Ron for a lengthy and highly successful business career, and more importantly, to wish Ron and Jo Foster a healthy and happy retirement.●