

prices for our citizens the way every other nation does but to try to demand that other countries raise the prices for their drugs indicates that the administration is out of touch and out of tune with the real needs and real priorities of American citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting these proposals and ask that all members of this body work together to achieve real solutions to address the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, while we are waiting for someone from our side who will manage the issue dealing with the Internet tax, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

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

FISCAL POLICY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, while this week we will take up the Internet tax issue, which is complicated and, in some ways, controversial—and I expect it will take some time—I wanted to mention something about fiscal policy for a moment and hope that perhaps this week, or in the intervening weeks, we may take up a couple of these issues.

As you know, we have a Federal budget deficit that will be in this fiscal year the largest in the history of this country, by far. They say now there will be over a \$530 billion Federal budget deficit in this fiscal year. I think everyone understands that saddling our children and their children with debt they must pay because this President and this Congress has decided we will spend money we don't have—we will borrow it and saddle someone else with the responsibility to pay it—is wrong-headed fiscal policy. It is bad for this country; it doesn't represent a value system that we should embrace, and, second, in the long-term it retards economic growth and crushes opportunity in the future for our children and those who follow them.

My hope is we will begin to address this issue of fiscal policy. We cannot spend more for defense—nearly \$100 billion more for defense and say, by the way, we don't have to pay for it. We cannot spend more for homeland security and say it doesn't count, we don't have to pay for that. We cannot cut taxes as we spend more for defense and homeland security and, as we spend more for health care, which costs more each year, say we will just charge all that. That is not a responsible thing to do.

But we have a Federal budget that is sent to us, which comes from the President, and then the Congress works on this budget plan that says a couple of things. We know we are going to have increases in health care spending. We know that because both Medicare and Medicaid represent entitlement programs, we know the cost of health care spending is increasing. We know the President is recommending very substantial increases in costs for defense. We know the President is recommending substantial increases in spending for homeland security. We also know the President is recommending making permanent tax cuts, which at this point are temporary.

The point is that this doesn't add up. It is a fiscal policy that doesn't add up. So how could we begin to make some sense of this? There are a couple of things that have happened in recent weeks which I think we need to address. This past weekend there was a story in the Washington Post about the issue of the \$145 billion mistake that was made in the estimate of the cost of the prescription drug plan for Medicare.

We are told now from press reports that the chief actuary who works on the Medicare Program knew long before the Congress voted on a prescription drug plan in the Medicare Program that this would not cost \$400 billion, as was provided for in the budget, but, in fact, would cost over \$140 billion more than that during the 10-year period. But he was told he would be fired if he informed Congress of this information. So the Congress acted without having information that was available in the executive branch because the chief actuary, who is not partisan—he is not part of the political system, he has been a career public servant and, by all accounts, an excellent one—was told he would lose his job if he informed the Congress of what this would cost.

I think there needs to be an investigation into who threatened this person's job, who had this information and refused to turn it over to Congress, who indicated it was inappropriate for the Congress to know this information before it voted on this legislation. I believe this Congress owes it to the American people to investigate that because how can we legislate in the future on issues of this type without having adequate information or without being able to trust the information that is coming from, in this case it was Health and Human Services and from the chief actuary of the Medicare Program?

I believe one way or another in the coming weeks, we ought to find a way to investigate that circumstance. I believe we owe that to the American people.

FUNDING MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, what I want to talk about, in addition to the

prescription drug issue, is the notion that—at the end of last week it was addressed—we would probably need more money for the military with respect to the fighting that is occurring in Iraq and Afghanistan. This Congress passed a supplemental emergency bill that was nearly \$87 billion—I believe it was just under \$87 billion—some months ago. We were told that would take us through the end of this calendar year and perhaps even a bit more.

The President's budget that was sent to us contained zero money requested for the activities in Iraq and Afghanistan. The reason the President recommended there would be no funding in the regular budget for Iraq and Afghanistan is because he and the administration said they could not estimate what it would cost; therefore, they recommend zero.

We know it is not zero. We know we are spending \$5 billion a month—\$4 billion in Iraq and \$1 billion in Afghanistan. If we are spending \$5 billion a month or \$60 billion a year, it is unfathomable to me that we get a budget request from the President that says, "I recommend nothing at this point because I will later on ask for an emergency appropriations."

Late last week we heard perhaps more money will be needed than was otherwise expected and that Congress would be asked to appropriate this on an emergency basis.

It is clear to me we will do whatever is necessary to protect the safety of the troops we have sent to Iraq. There is no question but that when we ask American men and women in uniform to fight for this country and to defend this country's interest and then to send them overseas, there is no question we have an obligation to protect them and provide for their safety. If they need more equipment, if we need to spend more money to provide for their safety, this Congress, in my judgment, is going to do that.

Let me make a point about all of this. In addition to providing the supplemental emergency funding that was necessary for the Pentagon some months ago—almost 6 months ago now—we also were requested by the President to appropriate \$20.3 billion for reconstructing Iraq.

I offered an amendment in the Senate to strike that spending. It was the largest proposed spending cut for this fiscal year that was offered in the Congress. The single largest spending cut that was offered last year is one I offered on the floor of the Senate to strike the \$20.3 billion for reconstructing Iraq.

I came up short. I had over 40 votes for the amendment, but, nonetheless, it did not prevail. I want to explain why I did that and why it has relevance today.

I proposed striking that funding for a very simple reason: We did not target Iraq's infrastructure. When we decided to displace Saddam Hussein and send American troops to Iraq, we did not

target their roads, bridges, dams, or electric grid. That is not what we targeted. We did not try to bomb Iraq in a way that destroyed their infrastructure.

It is my judgment the American taxpayers should not be required to rebuild the Iraq infrastructure. Iraq has the second largest reserves of oil in the world, next only to Saudi Arabia. In fact, one of the troops who came back from Iraq with the National Guard unit from North Dakota told me one day he was standing in an area in Iraq, in some sandy area, and the bottom of his boots became black with oil.

There is a great deal of oil in the country of Iraq. I believe, based on Ambassador Bremer's testimony of how much oil they would be pumping this year and next year, that when they get to 3 million barrels of oil a day, which is something they will reach very soon, they will have \$16 billion of net export value of oil in Iraq—\$16 billion a year. That is \$160 billion of net export value of oil in 10 years. That is above and beyond that which they need to use in Iraq.

It seems to me with respect to the reconstruction of Iraq, it makes a great deal of sense for a country with the second largest reserves of oil in the world to be told the Iraq people ought to use Iraqi oil to reconstruct Iraq. It is not the job or the burden or the responsibility of the American people to reconstruct Iraq.

I lost that debate in the Senate and lost the vote. So now we have just under \$20 billion available to reconstruct Iraq. There is a very thick booklet that describes the reconstruction of Iraq. There is a jobs program for Iraq paid for by the American taxpayers. There is a housing program for Iraq paid for by the American taxpayers. There is a highway program for Iraq, a health care program for Iraq, a security program for Iraq, all paid for by American taxpayers. There is marsh restoration and there is the creation of ZIP codes, all paid for by the American taxpayers.

Since I lost that vote on the floor of the Senate and since nearly \$20 billion was then appropriated for the reconstruction of Iraq, paid for by the American taxpayers, I have watched the progress of that reconstruction and I noticed, for example, some of the things that were happening in Iraq with respect to expenditures. I have been bothered about it, but nonetheless I had my vote and I lost that vote.

Then last week, I learned we are short of money for the troops in Iraq, and it is very likely an emergency supplemental request will need to be passed by the Congress and, indeed, we will pass it if it is necessary to support the troops in Iraq. I checked and discovered at the last count, somewhere close to \$17 billion—\$16-plus billion—remains unspent with respect to the reconstruction funds that were appropriated by the Congress for Iraq. It seems to me what we ought to do is

transfer that unexpended reconstruction funding and use it for the benefit of the support of the American troops in Iraq.

If, in fact, we are short of money, if we are going to need to expend additional emergency funds in Iraq, why not use the funds that are unspent at this point for the reconstruction of Iraq and, indeed, use that for the support of the American troops in Iraq, and then engage the Iraqi government—first of all the provisional government and, second, the government that takes effect on July 1—and have that government securitize future production of Iraqi oil and raise their own funds to reconstruct this country. It is their job, not the job of the American taxpayers, to have a program for housing, health care, jobs, and highways in the country of Iraq. That ought not be the burden of the American taxpayer.

When we have a fiscal policy that is desperately out of balance and we are borrowing money at a record pace—\$530 billion this year alone—I think it is responsible for us to take a look at how we might ease that burden and at least one small portion of that ought to be to revisit this proposition of a reconstruction fund for Iraq. A substantial amount of that money is as yet unspent.

Incidentally, while I am on the subject, let me also say with respect to the military funding, we need to do a much better job with that expenditure. I noticed, for example, the Halliburton Corporation—I held a hearing on this subject in the Democratic Policy Committee a couple of months ago—the Halliburton Corporation has had to now restore funding for kickbacks they made for inappropriate expenditures.

Here is a company, for example, that was billing the U.S. Government, the Defense Department—therefore, the U.S. taxpayers—they were billing us for serving 42,000 meals a day. The problem was they were only making 14,000 meals a day for the American troops. Somehow 28,000 meals got lost. They were overbilling by 28,000 meals a day. I come from a small town of about 300 people. I can understand somebody overbilling for 10 meals, maybe 100 meals, but 28,000 meals a day? That is absurd.

That is the sort of thing that the American taxpayer reads about and is angry about, and should be because there is a substantial amount of money being wasted, yes, even in these defense contracts. That is something the American taxpayers expect better of with respect to the use of their funds.

I want to come back to this central point. I think it is time we revisit this question of reconstruction funds for Iraq. I suggest we do that by deciding that which is yet unspent be used to support the American troops because we are told there is not sufficient money to do that at this point, and I believe, because it is not the American taxpayers' burden to reconstruct Iraq but it is the American taxpayers' bur-

den to support troops who we have asked to go in harm's way on our behalf, that this would represent a positive step and would also help with fiscal policy that now is creating the largest deficits in history.

We will be on the subject of the Internet tax issue soon, and I will have more to say on that subject later, but in the meantime I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ON THE DEATH OF STAFF SERGEANT CORY W. BROOKS

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, South Dakotans have a proud tradition of military service and volunteerism. Today, in Iraq, a new generation is carrying that tradition forward. South Dakota's percentage of its citizens serving in active duty in Iraq is among the highest in the Nation.

The spirit of service and volunteerism runs throughout South Dakota's towns and neighborhoods, and young children grow up learning that they have an obligation to one another, to their communities, and to their country. The families of South Dakota look upon the service of our young men and women with great pride, because they are carrying the values of South Dakota across the world and bringing freedom to the people around the world and the people of Iraq.

Alongside our pride for our soldiers' service comes an awareness of the cost. As our soldiers shoulder much of the burden of battle, so, too, must our communities shoulder a greater burden of grief.

We were reminded of this yet again this past week.

On April 19, SGT Keith O'Donnell, a native of McIntosh, SD, and a member of the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion in the North Dakota National Guard, was injured when an explosive device detonated during his patrol.

South Dakota this week also mourns the death of Staff Sgt. Cory Brooks, from Philip, SD. SGT Brooks was a Combat Engineer in the 153rd Engineer Battalion. SGT Brooks' death comes just 1 week after the death of another member of the 153rd, Specialist Dennis Morgan, from Winner, SD.

Cory Brooks was typical of South Dakota's youth. He grew up playing backyard wiffle ball in the summertime and football in the fall. He was a loving son, a good student, and a caring friend.

Ray Rhodes, the father of Cory's closest friend and one of Cory's high school football coaches said, "He was just like family. He was one of those kids you love to work with. He was