

One in every three programs slated for elimination in the President's budget are education programs. Aside from the eliminations, No Child Left Behind is underfunded by \$12 billion, special education is underfunded by \$3.6 billion, and afterschool programs are underfunded by \$1.25 billion. How does the administration expect schools to raise the level of achievement for students without the resources needed to do it?

In today's global economy, we can ill afford to give our children any less than the best education available. As I have said many times before, education may be expensive but ignorance costs even more.

I was also appalled when I saw how little this budget provides for concrete investments in scientific progress.

In real terms, the total Federal R&D portfolio would decline for the first time since 1996. Total Federal support of research—basic and applied—would fall 0.6 percent to \$54.8 billion.

The proposed Federal Research and Development portfolio in fiscal year 2006 is \$132.3 billion, 0.6 percent or \$733 million above this year's funding level, far short of the \$2.2 billion increase needed to keep pace with inflation.

In many respects, I feel as if those who wrote this budget have forgotten the lessons of history. If we look at the groundbreaking scientific innovations over the past two centuries, we learn that an overwhelming number of them have been inextricably linked to real investments this Nation has made in research and development.

Where will we see the next great scientific achievement? Will it be here in the United States? Or will it be in China? Or England? Or Japan? Or Italy? The answer to that question lies in our willingness to make the right choices. Unfortunately, this budget does just the opposite.

While the budget contains an overall shortfall in R&D funding, I am pleased, however, that an amendment that was introduced by our colleague Senator GEORGE ALLEN and myself was accepted and included in the budget resolution. The budget had proposed to cut over \$700 million out of NASA's Aeronautics budget over the next five years. Our amendment increases subsonic and hypersonic aeronautics research and development funding by \$1.58 billion over 5 years, with an offset.

Aerospace and aviation are important assets for America and for my home State of Connecticut. In addition to its obvious national security benefits, the aeronautics industry makes a critical contribution to our Nation's economic growth and standard of living. We cannot continue to just give the minimum to aeronautics research and development if we want to be able to effectively compete in aeronautics and in the world economy. Acceptance of this amendment is a step forward in demonstrating that the United States is committed to our aviation and aeronautics industry and innovation.

If I listed every area in which this budget fails our Nation, I would be here

much longer than my allotted time. But I would like to quickly outline just a few more of the critical priorities that this budget has shortchanged in order to provide tax cuts for millionaires:

Veterans funding would be cut by \$14.5 billion. This administration constantly preaches the rhetoric of supporting our troops, yet it has consistently come up short when it comes to meeting the needs of those who have made great sacrifices for our freedoms.

Just as this budget fails those who protected our freedoms abroad, it endangers those who keep us safe here at home. It cuts firefighter assistance grants—grants that have helped fire departments buy new trucks, safety equipment, radios, hazmat suits—by 31 percent. It cuts funding for the COPS program—which supports police officers throughout our nation—by 96 percent.

We have known since the first roads of the Roman Empire that the fate of nations hinges in many respects on their ability to move people, goods, and services as efficiently as possible. Yet this budget cuts \$15.9 billion in transportation funding.

Reductions in natural resource and environmental programs would total \$29 billion over five years. This budget also fails to protect the Arctic refuge from drilling.

The budget also cuts child care assistance for 300,000 children through 2009. It is absurd to be cutting child care assistance for struggling parents at the same time that the President proposes that more low-income parents work longer hours. It is not just absurd, it is irresponsible. If you want welfare reform, you simply must have child care, as well.

This budget would terminate the Community Services Block Grant, leaving working poor families affected by the President's budget cuts with nowhere to turn for assistance.

I know that we can do better than this budget. Actually, we must do better, so that we can truly move our country forward, and do what is best for families everywhere.

#### HORIZON MINERS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, Smithers, WV, is a town of 904 residents on the banks of the Kanawha River, just outside of the state capitol of Charleston. Last October some 1,500 active coal miners and retirees, along with their wives, their children, their families, sat inside a hot and crowded gymnasium trying to cope with how, in a few short weeks, their lives had been turned upside down.

Two months earlier, a bankruptcy judge whom they had never met, and who resides in another state, vitiated their collective bargaining agreement. In West Virginia, this judge cost 270 active miners their jobs, and, along with 1,270 retirees and their dependents, rescinded their health benefits. These

folks gathered in that gymnasium trying to understand what had happened and what could be done.

They are the Horizon miners. They are good, strong people. They devote themselves to their labors, and take pride in their work. They are committed, hardworking individuals who contribute much and ask for nothing more than simple fairness. And so imagine how they are made to feel, the anguish, frustration, and betrayal they are made to feel, when they learn the health benefits they labored for, the job security they toiled for, has been taken away.

One can hardly blame these workers for feeling as though the world has ganged up on them. Their former employer, Horizon Natural Resources, for which they loyally worked for many years, had lobbied intensely in bankruptcy court to eliminate the health benefits of its own employees. In a U.S. court, where every honest man should expect a fair shake from an impartial judge, these workers were betrayed by the judicial system.

The judge, with the rap of a gavel, vitiated the 1992 Coal Industry Retiree Health Benefit Act, legislation passed by the Congress and signed by the President, to provide qualified coal miners with guaranteed health benefits, a promise dating back to President Harry S. Truman's pledge to John L. Lewis in 1946. One judge overturned a 60-year-old promise that had been codified by the Congress and endorsed by three Presidents. It was a disgraceful, shameful act.

These Horizon coal miners, betrayed by their employer, beguiled by the courts, now turn to their elected representatives in the Congress for help. And, thanks in large part to the efforts of Congressman NICK RAHALL and Senators ROCKEFELLER and SPECTER, the Senate is in a position to get something done.

Building on Senator ROCKEFELLER's efforts, Senator SPECTER has introduced legislation to help the Horizon miners. I urge the Judiciary Committee to take a careful look at that legislation. I urge the committee to hold hearings, and to listen to the plight of those coal miners and their families affected by Horizon's bankruptcy. This is an issue that affects not just the Horizon coal miners, but workers across the Nation who have seen their pension and health benefits taken from them.

It is happening across West Virginia. It is happening across the Appalachian region. It is happening in Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois. In West Virginia, it is affecting elderly workers who are near retirement. What security they had is gone. What they had been promised, they have no time to get back. In such circumstances, it is incumbent upon the Congress to take action.

I urge the Finance Committee, as well as the Judiciary Committee, to consider these issues. I urge both committees to hold hearings and solicit

testimony from those workers affected. The chairman of the Finance Committee has said that his committee ought to look at the issues raised by Senators SPECTER and ROCKEFELLER in the context of a comprehensive review and a comprehensive solution. That makes sense, and I am encouraged by his statement.

Abraham Lincoln reminds us that "Inasmuch [as] most good things are produced by labor, it follows that [all] such things of right belong to those whose labor has produced them."

The Horizon miners labored for their health benefits, and they ought by right have them. Let us organize our efforts. Let us build momentum, and let us, at long last, take a stand in defense of the men and women who epitomize America's time-honored work ethic.

#### LIONS AND LAMBS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, this Sunday is special for two reasons. It is the first day of spring and it is also Palm Sunday, the beginning of the Christian Holy Week. Both events mark triumphant arrivals, of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the start of the season of rebirth, of lengthening days, warm earth, and growing things.

At this time of year, many people quote an adage to the effect that "March comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb." An unknown poet said it better:

The March wind roars  
Like a lion in the sky,  
And makes us shiver  
As he passes by.

When winds are soft,  
And the days are warm and clear,  
Just like a gentle lamb,  
Then spring is here.

The exact origins of the March saying are not clear. Observers of the weather may assert that the saying reflects common springtime weather patterns, when shifting pressure gradients create the strong gusty winds so closely associated with March. Indeed, March marks the beginning of the tornado season in North America. We have certainly seen some strong cold winds recently, shaking the few remaining dry brown leaves out of the trees and whirling them across lawns and roads. Daffodils and crocus have been lured into bloom only to be buried under snow or ice. This year, winter is still roaring in March, with howling winds, snowstorms, ice, and rain across the nation. The poet Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933) once observed that:

The first day of spring is one thing, and first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month.

We can but hope that the gentle lamb-like weather arrives soon.

Some skywatchers believe the adage has a heavenly source. They point out that the constellation Leo, the lion, is rising in the eastern horizon at the beginning of March, hence the "coming

in like a lion," while Aries, the ram, sets on the western horizon at the end of March, and so "departs like a lamb." Some Christian observers point out that March is typically a Lenten month, in which Jesus, the Lamb of God, is sacrificed on the cross, only to return in the future as the Lion of Judah to rule over the world of men.

I do not know which theory is correct, but each is plausible and intriguing. They provide food for thought as gardeners rake out flower beds and till vegetable plots on the warm, sunny afternoons that crop out amid the rain and late snow flurries. They reassure us that, whichever is true, the world is behaving normally. If we are only patient a little while longer, the March winds will push winter along and leave the glorious spring in their wake.

Age is supposed to bring with it patience, but I find that each year I am just as eager for spring to arrive as I was when I was a boy. I may be even more eager than I was as a boy, since snowball fights and sledding down hills have been replaced with shoveling walks, scraping icy windshields, and higher heating bills. I am ready to shed my winter coat, ready to feel the sun on my face, ready to see the flowers bloom and the grass grow. I am ready to plant a few tomatoes. I may not run through the fields and woods anymore, but I like to sit outside with my wife, Erma, and watch our little dog explore the backyard. I look forward to watching my grandchildren hunt for Easter eggs in the soft, new grass.

The vernal equinox marks the first day of spring, the perfect balance of light and dark, day and night. On Sunday, for the first time each year, day and night are equal. But then the sun triumphs over the dark days of winter. Each day through the spring, the period of sunlight grows a little longer, like the grass in the yard. Each day, the birds start singing a little earlier, and continue their song just a little later in the evening.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
And all the season of snows and sins;  
The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses, the night that wins;  
And time remembered is grief forgotten  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
And in green underwood and cover Blossom  
by blossom the spring begins.

So wrote the poet Algernon Charles Swinburne—1837-1909—in his 1965 poem, "Atalanta in Calydon." In March, the daffodils, crocus, and forsythia bloom, adding their springtime yellow and Lenten purple to winter's faded palette of gray and brown. But look closely, and you can see buds swelling into life on twigs and branches. Vibrant reddish buds reassure gardeners that the roses came through the winter, and will soon grace us with their beauty and sweet fragrance. The glorious parade of bloom and blossom will soon begin.

It seems more than happy coincidence that Easter is a springtime event. Like spring itself, the story of Easter is one of rebirth, of light tri-

umphing over darkness. Palm Sunday, the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem those many years ago, is shadowed with the knowledge of the dark days to come—Jesus' betrayal, capture, and tortured procession with the cross on his back and crown of thorns on his brow. But after his death comes his resurrection and ascension, his rise from the darkness of the tomb to the light of Heaven.

Each spring, as we relive his great sacrifice for us, we can rejoice in his great promise of rebirth, even as we are surrounded by the earth's rebirth.

The celebration of birth and growth persists even in the most commercialized aspects of today's Easter celebration. Like the March winds adage, the origins of the Easter egg have been lost to time, but for untold centuries, eggs have symbolized fertility, resurrection and new life. The ancient Greeks, Persians, and Chinese exchanged eggs during their spring festivals. Some pagan traditions held that Heaven and Earth were formed from two halves of an egg.

Christian traditions have adapted this ancient symbol to the Easter ritual, wedding the ideas of earthly rebirth to spiritual resurrection. Once forbidden during Lent in the Middle Ages, eggs reappeared on Easter Sunday on the dinner table as well as being given as gifts. In Greece, eggs are dyed red to represent the blood of Christ. In Germany and Austria, green eggs are exchanged on Maundy, or Holy, Thursday. Many cultures have developed elaborate decorations for blown or hardboiled eggs, from the graphic Russian 'pysanki' eggs to those with religious symbols and scenes carefully painted on them.

Whatever the tradition, Easter eggs remain a springtime delight. The fun of making them is overcome only by the fun of hiding them and watching small hands tightly clutching decorated baskets loaded with their brightly colored bounty. Of course, today's Easter baskets are also filled with chocolate eggs, jelly beans, and marshmallow treats—some 90 million chocolate Easter bunnies, 700 million marshmallow Peeps, and 16 billion jellybeans each year, according to some reports. Older Easter food traditions, such as the hot cross buns once given to the poor by monks, and pretzels, with crossed arms resembling a person at prayer, have fallen from favor before this onslaught of sugar.

As Erma and I watch our children, our children's children, and now, our great-grandchildren, continue this happy custom, we are thankful once again for these, our blessings. Their new lives, like those of children everywhere, are treasured gifts. On this coming Easter, in this first week of spring, I know I am not alone in giving thanks.

I close with a short poem by Louise Seymour Jones, called "Who Loves a Garden." In just a few lines, she marries the spheres of heaven and earth,