

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE IN THE 104TH CONGRESS

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, with the opening of the 104th Congress, we again witness a historic transfer of power as the Republican Party takes control of the Senate and Senator STROM THURMOND earlier today replaced Senator ROBERT C. BYRD as President pro tempore of the Senate. In this transition, we are witnessing one Senate institution replacing another.

Together, these two outstanding legislators total three quarters of a century service in the Senate. Each not only has witnessed, but participated in, so much history and in the enactment of so much legislation, that Senators of my generation often are left in awe. As we prepare our legislative agendas and prepare for the upcoming debates and battles, this historic transition should not be lost upon us.

Senator BYRD, for the past 6 years, has presided over the deliberations of the Senate.

A look at the record reveals that he is indeed an institution within this institution. The senior Senator from West Virginia has served in the Senate for nearly 40 years. He has served as chairman of Senate Appropriations Committee, as the Senate Democratic whip, 6 years as Senate minority leader, 6 years as Senate majority leader, and, since 1987, President pro tempore of the Senate.

His unparalleled knowledge of the Senate's intricate rules and procedures, his overwhelming knowledge of the history of this legislative body that he loves so deeply, and, his presence in this Chamber combined to make him a most effective and impressive President pro tempore.

What an honor it has been for me personally to watch him preside. We will miss him and his presence in the chair. While there is not a stronger, more ardent fighter for the causes in which he believes and supports, no one could have been more fair or more impartial in presiding over the Senate.

Although he leaves the chair of President pro tempore, I can assure you he is not about to fade away. As the new Democratic leader of the Senate, I will need, I will seek, and I will certainly appreciate his wisdom, experience, his insight, and his foresight. I know that Senators from both sides of the aisle will continue to value the benefit of his unique perspective and the importance of this institution as well as his unique ability to resolve problems within it.

Mr. President, at the closing of the 99th Congress, the Senate approved a resolution recognizing the outstanding service Senator STROM THURMOND had performed as President pro tempore of the Senate. The resolution expressed the Senate's appreciation for the courteous, dignified, and impartial manner in which the senior Senator from South Carolina had presided over the deliberations of the Senate.

In the 104th Congress, Senator THURMOND again will occupy this important and prestigious position. Like Senator BYRD, he, too, is an institution within this institution. While a Member of the Senate, he has been a member of both political parties and a candidate for President of another. While serving in the U.S. Senate, Senator THURMOND has had highways, courthouses, Federal buildings, and schools named in his honor—honors usually reserved for those who are no longer with us. In the Senate, he has been an active participant—sometimes controversial—but a participant in the legislative struggles of our times. I have not always agreed with his positions, past or present, in those contests, but I have never seen or encountered a more worthy, a more dignified opponent or one for whom I have greater respect.

As everyone who has had the pleasure of serving in this Chamber with him knows, Senator THURMOND has been a consistent champion of the South and of conservative causes, but we also know he has been able to blend and bend when democracy took a different course. He has remained a southern gentleman of the highest order.

As the Democratic leader, I want to extend my congratulations to Senator THURMOND for his reelection as President pro tempore and welcome him back to this position. I look forward to working with him as well. I am confident that in the 104th Congress, Senator THURMOND will perform the duties of President pro tempore of the Senate in the same courteous, dignified, and impartial manner in which he presided over the deliberations of the Senate in the 99th Congress.

THE 104TH CONGRESS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today we begin a new session of Congress. I know all my colleagues are eager to move ahead with the Nation's business.

In some ways, we face circumstances that earlier generations of Americans faced as well. At the beginning of our Nation's existence, after the Declaration of Independence was signed, the former colonies busied themselves establishing legislatures and drafting constitutions.

It must have been a heady time. Men, for they were all men at that time, who had been colonial appointees began to see themselves for the first time as legislators, potential leaders, people who could steer their States' destinies.

In the State of Pennsylvania, the legislature spent several months thrashing over the outlines of a new constitution but found itself, months later, without a finished product.

Meanwhile, the life of the State continued. Citizens woke each morning, attended to their affairs, transacted their business, and seemed not to notice that they were without a constitution.

Ben Franklin pointed out the evident danger: "Gentleman," he said, "You

see that we have been living under anarchy, yet the business of living has gone on as usual. Be careful; if our debates go on much longer, people may come to see that they can get along very well without us."

It is somewhat in this spirit that I approach the beginning of the 104th Congress. We, too, will be judged less by our rhetoric than by our accomplishments.

Today, I offer the first five bills that my Democratic colleagues and I will seek to move in this Congress. They are bills that speak to three critical areas I believe should be the focus of our efforts in the 104th Congress—economic opportunities for working American families, the values in our social fabric that bind us together as a society, and a determination that we end business as usual in all aspects of Government.

The first bill, S. 6, is designed to be for American workers today what the GI bill was for American soldiers after the Second World War. The Working Americans Opportunity Act takes the funds now used for 20 major job training programs and turns them into vouchers so Americans can buy the training and education they need themselves. In this way, we can streamline and consolidate nine job training laws to focus more services and to redirect the funds to the people who need the training in the first place.

Our limited job-training resources should be directed to those who will benefit from training, not siphoned off to support the administrative costs of overlapping, fragmented, and outdated programs.

The GI bill is rightly credited with lifting American productivity, economic growth, and living standards. It did that by giving all returning GI's—millions of men and women in the aggregate—the ability to go back to school and make up for the years they sacrificed to their Nation's service in war.

It was not only well-deserved reward for veterans. It was one of the best investments the Government ever made. The GI bill more than repaid its costs many times over in worker income, in productivity, in economic growth, in State and Federal taxes, in virtually every other way.

At the end of the cold war years, we're not facing an army of returning veterans. We are facing a society that is emerging from a preoccupation with military spending and the military sciences, and turning to cope with a new world of technological advance that holds enormous promise for those who can learn to participate in it.

Our bill, therefore, will consolidate old job training programs and put money directly into the hands of those who need training, not to bureaucratic overhead. Americans need the tools to enter fully into the new technological workplace. That is what our first bill will do. It will be a workers' GI bill to

give those in older industries, in plants that are relocating abroad, or in regions where people's job skills do not match employers' needs the chance to learn new skills, make themselves employable, enter new industries, and move forward with our growing economy.

S. 7 is the Family Health Insurance Protection Act. It includes the measures that even the anti-health-care-reform crowd last year said they wanted. Let us find out if they are being straight or are just pulling another one over on the American people.

Democrats think it is way past time to act. Not only are health care costs for ordinary people going through the roof, they are also going to bust the Federal budget, and we all know who's going to pay for that when it happens.

It is consistent with the goals outlined in bills introduced by both Republicans and Democrats and with the vision the President outlined in a letter to the congressional leadership last week.

Our health reform bill is straightforward and sensible.

It prevents insurance companies from raising rates because you get sick. Why? Because health insurance is supposed to be a pooled risk. The insurer, as well as the insured, takes a risk.

Our bill also prohibits refusal of insurance because of preexisting conditions. The condition of being human makes us all susceptible to illness, accidents, and bad luck. That is what insurance is supposed to compensate for, not to profit from.

Jean and Greg Puls of Sioux Falls, SD, know this all too well. Their 10-year-old son, Matthew, has diabetes. When Jean's employer switched health policies, the new insurer refused to cover Matthew. Jean and Greg faced a frantic search for an insurer who would.

They were turned down by dozens of companies and were finally forced to purchase an out-of-State policy that still won't cover Matthews's diabetes for a whole year.

Jean Puls says that for all the money they have paid into the health care system, they have been unable to get the simple peace of mind they seek. And she is right. A system which produces this result is not right.

Our bill requires all insurers to offer Americans one plan of insurance coverage as good as that which covers any Member of Congress—Democrat or Republican.

If we deserve it, then certainly so do the people whose tax dollars pay our wages.

Our bill lets people who are self-employed deduct their insurance premium costs just like big corporations can. That is the minimally fair thing we can do for American farmers and self-employed store owners, accountants, mechanics, and lawn-service operators, all the millions of people who have taken the real risk of earning their own income by their own hard work

and enterprise. Let them deduct their health insurance costs, too.

Our health reform bill prohibits insurance companies from hiding important information in the fine print. We need truth in labeling. People who market beef have to tell consumers how many grams of fat their product contains. It is about time the insurance companies told us what their fat content is. Why should not Americans get the same accountability from health insurers as we expect from food producers and toy manufacturers?

Our health reform bill calls for standard forms. An inflamed appendix taken out in Seattle doesn't demand anything different than an inflamed appendix removed in Boston.

And it will not be done better or worse because of the shape of a payment form. Meanwhile, we are talking about millions of wasted hours by doctors, nurses, administrative staff, and, not least, the American taxpayer just to get reimbursed for the health care our premiums are supposed to cover.

Our health care reform bill just asks the private insurance market to do what Government is trying to do. Let it get rid of the bloated bureaucrats. Let it cut the overhead. Let it streamline and serve its customers, not itself.

Is there any reason that Americans have to fill out more forms, provide duplicative information more times, fight for longer on the phone with self-appointed bureaucrats in the health insurance industry than the people of any other industrialized nation? Is there any reason that an American hospital has twice as many clerical workers as a Canadian one? Does pushing paper make sick people get better? Let health care professionals practice medicine, not administer bookkeepers.

This bill represents, frankly, a downpayment on the goal of ensuring all Americans have access to affordable quality health care coverage.

Before we achieve that goal, however, other more difficult issues will have to be resolved, especially long-term care and the Federal barriers to State-level reform efforts. The bill we offer is simply a first step, but I do hope that Democrats and Republicans can again reflect the consensus these provisions have reflected in the last Congress and work together to develop compromises on the more difficult matters.

I cannot—I will not—support the passage of any reform measure, however, that increases the deficit.

When the majority leader and my colleagues on the Finance Committee are ready to move forward on the health reforms we present today, we will have to agree on appropriate offsetting savings to ensure that every reform provision is paid for over a 10-year period of time. Health care reform cannot be undertaken at the cost of more unpaid bills passed along to our children and to their children.

Our third bill, S. 8, is legislation to deal with teen pregnancy and parents who abandon their children. Our bill

does not finance orphanages. One of our Democratic colleagues, Senator CAMPBELL of Colorado, has the distinction of actually having been placed in an orphanage as a child, so he speaks from experience, not dealing in Hollywood movies. His story is one which could benefit us all. If you have not had the opportunity to read his biography, I would encourage you, Mr. President, and others to do so. It is a telling story of a man who has come a long way, given the very difficult beginning that he had experienced as a child.

He learned, as many of us now know, that orphanages are not a home. All too often, they are not even a decent substitute for a home. Even the best orphanage should never be used to undermine an intact family relationship.

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Parental Responsibility Act, instead, requires underaged teen mothers to live with their families or at least find themselves in a supervised home setting if they want to qualify for AFDC. Children having children is tragic, and the cycle can only be ended by making sure that parents of these children grow up and become adults themselves. There may be no sure-fire way to achieve this but clearly encouraging 16-year-olds to set up homes by themselves has not proved to be the answer and can never be the answer. They should stay with their families or in supervised group homes where their lives have some discipline, some guidance, some routine, some sense of grounding that will let them escape the cycle of dependency and become self-supporting adults.

In addition, teen parents should stay in school or go back to school and graduate. Our bill lets States use bonuses or benefit reductions to give teen parents an incentive to finish school. Completing high school is the first step toward self-sufficiency.

I recognize that this does not sound very flashy, but the parental shortcomings that can blight a child's life—and do blight too many children's lives today—require serious attention. The real needs of children demand sound policies, not sound bites.

Our bill also asks States to intensify their efforts to identify noncustodial parents and require them to contribute to the upbringing of their own children. States should ensure that their welfare offices can access other State records such as professional licensing, vehicle registration, and personal property records. Paternity establishment laws should also be streamlined.

I am always surprised to hear so much anger vented against young women as though they have achieved pregnancy unaided. What about the young men? Where is the heated political rhetoric aimed at them?

What about middle-class men who divorce and abandon their families? Where is the political rhetoric telling them to be ashamed of themselves? People—be they men or women—whose

actions result in parenthood must accept responsibility for their children.

So our bill on teenage pregnancy is short on rhetoric and symbols. I have long been an ardent admirer of Spencer Tracy, but anyone who thinks a 1938 movie about Boys Town has any bearing on real life children, real orphanages, or real families in 1995 is well out of touch with reality.

The bill that will be designated S. 9, the Fiscal Responsibility Act, will direct Congress to enact legislation this year that will result in a balanced budget by the year 2003. If a goal is important enough to justify amending the Constitution, certainly it ought to be important enough to inspire the real work of deficit reduction starting this year.

I have supported and voted for balanced budget amendments in the past, but a balanced budget amendment that sets forth an airy hope in the place of real promise to balance the budget is not good enough.

To suggest that a balanced budget amendment in and of itself solves the problem is a copout. It is all show and no delivery. It is like a young man who gets his first job and his first credit card. He charges up to the limit, and then he promises, as soon as he has paid it down, he will straighten up and pay his balance every month. But in real life we know that does not happen. He pays down just enough to go on another spending spree, or get another credit card with a new spending limit.

Balancing the Federal budget has been a Republican campaign promise for so long it is hard to remember which budget they are talking about. They said they intended to balance the budget in 1980, when they elected Ronald Reagan. Then they said they were going to balance it after 1984, conveniently not in the year he was actually running for reelection. Then they said George Bush was going to balance the budget. But what does the record show? Unfortunately, it shows the opposite.

In 1980, when President Ronald Reagan took office, he was poised to present to the Congress a plan to reduce the deficit as he promised. At that time, when the Republicans had the majority in the Senate, the national debt was just over \$1 trillion.

It was a debt that took 200 years to accumulate, 200 years of expanding the Nation to its westernmost limits, with all the roads, rails, bridges needed, 200 years encompassing a Civil War, two world wars, Korea, Vietnam, 200 years of creating the American dream. Almost \$1 trillion is a lot of money. And we have a lot of country to show for it. But it took President Reagan a mere 8 years to more than double that 200 years' worth of debt.

What do we have to show for it? It then took President Bush just another 4 years to add yet another trillion. So today, Mr. President, the heirs of that budgetary tradition say they are going to increase defense spending; they are going to cut taxes for the wealthy;

and—guess what?—they are going to balance the Federal budget. It sounds like *deja vu* all over again, to paraphrase somebody we all know—Yogi Berra.

I support, as I said a moment ago, a balanced budget. So do a majority of Democratic Senators. The difference between our position and that of many of our Republican colleagues is that we have already taken some very tough votes to do it. The last Congress, the 103d, passed the President's first budget which cut \$500 billion in real defined and detailed spending over 5 years.

We are reaping the benefit of our work now in reduced deficits, and a healthy, growing economy. The President deserves credit for offering that budget in 1993 and for fighting for it.

We knew in 1993 that our deficit-cutting work that year would be only the beginning. Now it is 1995, and we know another installment of spending cuts is due. We say that we should do what we did in 1993—lay out the honest, detailed, and real cuts that will bring the deficit onto a downward path.

The balanced budget amendment, standing alone, simply provides a process by which something should be done over the next 7 years. Our bill says, let us start doing it now.

We have to pay attention to the numbers. When you balance your household budget, you do not do it on the assumption that you are going to win the Publishers' Clearinghouse Sweepstakes on January 31 so the mortgage payments will be taken care of. You balance a household budget by looking at what you earn, what you spend, and where the numbers do not add up. So let us do some looking.

If we are going to balance the budget by 2003, as the Republicans tell us they will, it is going to mean we start right now, this year, and start for real.

There is a very real and expensive price in delay. If anyone wants to put off any heavy lifting for a year or maybe 2 years, before putting us on a path to balance the budget by 2003, they're going to cost us another \$160 billion in debt. That is debt on top of the \$3-trillion debt that the Republicans have already given us. It is debt that could be avoided by reducing the deficit now instead of delaying.

There is another reason for acting now. It is called interest on the debt. It is a price every American taxpayer pays, whether he knows it or not, and whether he likes it or not.

If we do nothing about balancing the budget for 2 years, to get past the next election before taking the tough actions needed to balance the budget by 2003, all of us will be chipping in an extra \$91 billion in interest to pay for these election-year promises. It is nice to have people make promises in election years. But nice feelings cannot justify \$91 billion in additional interest on the debt. The price is too high.

If we wait until 1997 to start balancing the budget, we will pay another \$303 billion—on top of the \$3-trillion

debt—that could be avoided simply by acting now rather than later.

The bill I am introducing draws on our past experience with balanced budget rhetoric and requires that we actually start now, this year, to do what we are willing to do to make our effort a meaningful part of the U.S. Constitution.

Last, but in some ways, most important of all, is the bill we call S. 10. That is the Comprehensive Congressional Reform Act. It is a bill with three titles. It builds on the compromise legislation that was developed last year, but blocked at the end of the session.

The first title will finally, and without equivocation, extend to the Congress the laws that cover all other employers in this country. It will require the Congress to abide by the Fair Labor Standards Act, which governs time and salary issues, by the Federal Labor-Management Relations Act, which provides Federal workers the right to bargain collectively, the workplace safety law, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Plant Closing and Notification Act, the Employee Polygraph Testing Act, and the Veterans Preference and Retention Act.

In addition, the Democratic congressional coverage legislation includes the civil rights laws, under which the Senate has been operating since 1991, and the Family and Medical Leave Act, which has applied to Congress since it was signed into law in 1993.

This provision is in all essential aspects the same bipartisan bill that was worked out by Senators GLENN, LIEBERMAN, and GRASSLEY last session, but which was prevented from reaching the Senate floor by the objection of a Republican Senator.

I hope and expect our Republican colleagues will join, rather than obstruct, the effort to enact these needed reforms as soon as possible this year.

The second title of S. 10 will address the problem of undue influence from special interests.

Americans learned last year that something like \$50 million was spent to defeat health care reform legislation—not just to defeat the President's bill, but to defeat any reform bill.

The special interest money groups spent more on stopping this legislation than on any other single issue, both in terms of direct lobbying and in campaign contributions.

In the closing days of the 103d Congress, the ramifications of the crusade to defeat health care reform spilled over into another important debate: The debate over whether or not to rein in the ever-present grip of lobbyists on our legislative process.

In May 1993, the Senate passed lobby reform by a vote of 95 to 2. Yet, when push came to shove, with Congress facing an adjournment deadline, our Republican colleagues invented pretexts and encouraged their talk-radio friends to help beat the lobby reform bill. As one of our colleagues noted, Republican

Senators were cheered by lobbyists lining the hallway off this Chamber after Republicans killed the lobbying bill last fall.

So let us be clear on what happened. There was no grassroots opposition to this bill. It was not ordinary citizens who wanted to kill this bill. Far from it.

It was the special interest lobbyists who could not stand it.

I am hoping that common decency will prevail in this Congress this year. The language I am offering in S. 10 is the language adopted overwhelmingly last summer by most of the Members still here in this body.

It includes the provisions the new Speaker of the House, NEWT GINGRICH, demanded be incorporated last summer. They are the same provisions that were negotiated with Catholic charities, Baptist charities, Jewish groups, and every other religious organization of any standing in this country, and which were acceptable to all of them, because they did not threaten any of their legitimate activities.

Title II of S. 10 does not affect grassroots lobbying for congressional action to resolve legitimate problems. No real grassroots group wants to kill lobbying reform. The reason for that is simple.

It is because the narrow special interest groups who would be affected by the bill can buy access, can buy attention, can buy sympathy, and can buy action with money that real grassroots groups could never hope to match. True grassroots lobby efforts offer only the populist power of their ideas.

There is not a genuine grassroots group out there that is not out-spent, out-gifted, out-junketed, and out-maneuvered by the Washington lobbying crowd. It is time to redress that imbalance.

Why is so much made of those who feel so passionately about an issue that they want to allocate private resources to influence national policy? I suggest that when a foreign-owned communications cartel can offer the new Speaker of the House \$4.5 million for a book, we should be wary of the real agenda behind that offer. I am pleased the new Speaker has now realized what an appearance that presents.

Title II of the Democratic congressional reform bill is the legislation that Speaker GINGRICH said he wanted, asked for, demanded. Then, when it looked as though it could actually prevail, it is the legislation that Speaker GINGRICH asked his supporters in the talk-show field to fight.

Title II of this Democratic reform bill also puts in the legislation our commitment to return control of Government to the American people by outlawing the practice of lobbyists providing gifts, no matter how seemingly insignificant, to Senators and staff.

The lobby and gift reform provisions are simple. No gifts from registered lobbyists. No meals, no travel, no taxi cab rides, no sports tickets, no nothing. They will not need complicated

regulations to be understood. They are that straightforward.

Who is a lobbyist? Anyone who gets \$2,500 in 6 months to work the Congress or the Government. They are required to disclose publicly who they are, what they earn, who pays them, and who they are talking to.

That is not because we in Congress do not know who they are. We know well enough. It is to tell the American public who these people are and what they are doing.

Congressional so-called reform that does not cover goodies from lobbyists is not reform. It is a smokescreen. It is telling American voters, it is back to business as usual. You voted for us because we promised reform, but we know you are going to tune out now. It is taking the American public for a ride. If we are to ignore those reforms, the American people are not prepared for a ride of that kind.

As for the seriousness of this effort, the proof of the pudding will be self-evident. If anyone is sincere about congressional reform, this is the very least they will need to vote for.

If anyone says they are serious about reform and blocks this bill, there will be little doubt that they are not serious at all.

I hope that will not happen for many reasons, but most of all, I hope it won't happen, because our democracy depends upon a higher level of trust. I hope Republican Senators will not block the gift and lobbying reform provisions, as they did last year.

Title III of the Democratic congressional reform bill is designed to reform the way congressional political campaigns operate.

Again, this proposal does not break new ground. It is the bill passed by the Senate in 1993, but which was filibustered to prevent its going to conference last year. The bill is designed to do what everyone knows needs to be done, and that is to cut the money chase out of elected public life.

Our bill would ban PAC contributions. It would outlaw for 1 year lobbying of an elected official to whom the lobbyist gave money. It would ban for 1 year contributions from a lobbyist to a Member who that lobbyist had contacted on business. It would expand disclosure of so-called independent expenditures.

It would create a flexible spending ceiling, based on a State's voting age population. It would reward candidates who agreed to comply with that spending ceiling with broadcast discounts. Its costs could easily be paid without asking for a penny from middle-class taxpayers, for instance by fees on lobbying.

In short, the campaign finance reform proposal would do what everyone is willing to say should be the law, but which too many are unwilling to actually see become law. It is time to put that sham behind us, too.

If we are serious about congressional reform, campaign finance reform is im-

perative. If we are not serious, the American people will know what conclusions to draw.

I believe these five pieces of legislation reflect the priorities Americans expect us to set and respond to the real needs people face.

The extremes have had their say. They have the luxury of certainty.

We who try to work in the center are forced to rely on what we can learn, what we can know, and to move forward with our best efforts, not ironclad guarantees, because there are no guarantees in human life.

Each of the bills we introduce today stands for a core principle in which we believe. None is startling, but I believe each is a step in the right direction. Together, they are a foundation on which to build.

We live in a tumultuous time fraught with uncertainty for many Americans. As lawmakers, our responsibility is to start restoring a sense of economic and personal security for working Americans.

Job training and education as a priority reflects the fact that we are a society made up of working people, and they must come first. If we invest in our own knowledge, our own skills, our own abilities and talents, there is not anything we cannot achieve. Give Americans the tools, and they will do the job. Our bill is the tool.

Health care reforms reflect the fact that viruses and cancers and accidents happen to people without reference to their wealth or their personal insurance status or their job status. Every American's economic and personal security is at stake. They deserve action, not excuses.

Our effort on teen pregnancy reflects the commonsense fact that work, effort, and personal discipline are part of the lives of most Americans. Indeed, they help shape most of what is worthwhile in our lives. Government programs ought to reflect that common understanding in the way they operate, too.

A Federal budget is more than a lifeless symbol of fiscal responsibility. It is the road map of our society and a reflection of our values. What are we willing to spend taxes for? Children? Schools? Jail cells? Special benefits for one or another special interest? Balancing the budget is not about gutting the government.

It is about doing what government should do: Those things for all of us as a society that none of us can do individually for ourselves. Safe drinking water and highways, clean air and a safe food supply, things that government can do if done efficiently and effectively.

Balancing the budget tells us that we're prepared to pay for the kind of society we want to be. The budget's shape matters as much as its size. It is been too big, too bloated, too long. And we want to start on the road to balancing it now.

And, of course, congressional reform is an important symbol of self-restraint at the government level. If the people elected to government cannot impose restraints upon themselves and treat themselves like they treat others, what confidence can Americans have that government will act in their best interests?

I believe, based on many statements by my Republican colleagues, that there is much common ground on which we can work, provided that we have the will to do so.

I want to offer my assurances today that Democratic Senators will work with Republicans. We always have, and we are prepared to do so again this year. We want to go to work. We want to do so in a bipartisan fashion. We believe the American people expect and deserve as much. I look forward, Mr. President, to a productive year.

I thank my colleagues for their patience.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, I would like to make a parliamentary inquiry. What is the parliamentary situation as relates to time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 hour and 40 minutes under the control of the majority leader. Senators may speak for up to 10 minutes within that.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary procedure, 1 hour and 20 minutes used by the majority leader?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will be 1 hour and 20 minutes under the control of the majority leader, and 10 minutes. The Senator from West Virginia may speak for up to 20 minutes within that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. HATFIELD. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. HATFIELD pertaining to the introduction of legislation are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. SPECTER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

(The remarks of Mr. SPECTER pertaining to the introduction of S. 17 and S. 18 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

REVERSING HISTORICAL IRONY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, the English word "irony" comes to us from an Ancient Greek word meaning "a dissembler in speech."

The English word "irony" is defined as the contrast between something that somebody thinks to be true, as revealed in speech, action, or common

wisdom, and that which an audience or a reader knows to be true.

Mr. President, permit me to give an example.

If anyone in the hearing of my voice will take out a U.S. one-dollar bill and turn that one-dollar bill over onto its obverse side, he or she will read in clear script, "In God We Trust."

Permit me to introduce another example.

Every day of each new meeting of the Senate and House of Representatives, an official Chaplain of each of those two Chambers of Congress—or a designated substitute—will stride to the dais and address a sometimes elegant prayer to the Deity.

Again, every day in courtrooms across this country, hundreds of witnesses will take their place at the front of the court chamber, put their hands on incalculable numbers of Bibles, and swear to tell the truth, " * * * so help me God."

Only today, I and several other Senators swore an oath, standing there near the Presiding Officer where he sits now, swore an oath that we would support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that we would bear true allegiance to the same, that we took this obligation, freely without mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that we would well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which we were about to enter "so help me God."

Additionally, daily, thousands of men and women in a variety of groups, and millions upon millions of boys and girls in our schools will pledge allegiance to our flag, uttering among others the words " * * * one nation, under God, * * *"

I was a Member of the Congress when Congress inserted those words into the Pledge of Allegiance.

And here is the irony: in spite of that chain of rituals that I have just related, in situation after situation, anecdotal and documented both, public school authorities, ostensibly following rulings of the Supreme Court dating from at least the 1960's, have prohibited the utterance of prayers at school functions, in classrooms, at school commencement exercises, even when the students themselves wanted to have a voluntary prayer which they themselves would compose, or even in groups or privately on public school property.

Mr. President, as I read my U.S. Constitution, such a prohibition of prayer in school flies in the face of the First Amendment, which declares, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof * * *."

Therefore, our Government is supposed to be absolutely neutral in this matter, and the Constitution provides that neutrality when it says Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, on the one hand, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,

on the other. That is absolute—absolute—neutrality.

So please note those words again: " * * * or prohibiting the free exercise thereof * * *"

That passage was explicitly written into our Bill of Rights at the insistence of none other than James Madison—commonly remembered as the father of the Constitution—based on direct appeals to Madison by Baptist ministers in Virginia who had been forced to support the official state church during the Colonial Era, and whose practice of their own religious choice had been officially denied, proscribed, or penalized by Colonial officials.

How ironic that from that understandable Constitutional safeguard in support of the free exercise of religious faith, opponents of any religion have turned that passage of the First Amendment on its head to prohibit—I said, to prohibit—the free exercise of religion in our public life and, particularly, to drive religious faith out of our public schools.

It is equally ironic that, as religion is making a public resurgence in the long atheistic former Soviet Union, our Nation, whose protofoundations stand on the sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of early colonists whose primary inspiration in coming to America in the first place—Congregationalists, Calvinists, Baptists, Jews, Catholics, Orthodox, and others—whose primary purpose in coming to America in the first place, I repeat, was a yearning for religious liberty against those who would deny them the right of religious liberty—that our Nation should be embarked on a course which, in effect, denies religious liberty to many of its citizens.

Mr. President, I have heard increasing concerns about the lack of moral orientation among so many younger Americans—about a rising drug epidemic among our children, about rampant sexual promiscuity, about children murdering children, about gangs of teenage thugs terrorizing their neighborhoods, and about a pervading moral malaise among youth in both our inner cities and our suburbs.

Is there any wonder that so many young Americans should be drifting with seemingly no ethical moorings in the face of an apparent effort to strip every shred of recognizable ethics, of teachings about values, and spirituality from the setting in which those young Americans spend most of their waking hours—our public schools?

Mr. President, in an effort to restore something of a spiritual balance to our public schools and to extracurricular activities in our public schools, I am today introducing a joint resolution to propose an Amendment to the Constitution clarifying the intent of the Constitution with regard to public school prayer.

My amendment is an effort to make clear that neither the Constitution, or the amendments thereto, require, nor do they prohibit, voluntary prayer in