we should use it.'' So, it is gratifying to see two concerned Americans, with different backgrounds and different political views, joining forces to put some much-deserved public heat on one of the giants of the entertainment industry.

Let us also be very clear that Government censorship is not the answer. We have more to fear than to gain from putting Washington in charge of our culture.

But just as Time-Warner has the right to produce and sell its harmful wares, concerned Americans like Bill Bennett and Dolores Tucker also have the right to call upon the executives of Time-Warner to think less about short-term profit and more about the long-term good of their country.

So, I want to congratulate Dr. Bennett and Ms. Tucker for taking this initiative. I know that Dr. Bennett cites courage as one of the great virtues in his great ''Book of Virtues'' and with this bold advertising campaign, he has proven that courage and good citizenship are alive and well in America today.

Mr. President, I will just say, maybe as a suggestion, it would be well for the Time-Warner executives and Bill Bennett and Ms. Tucker to sit down and talk about this, try to work it out, try to have a dialog. I hope that there will be some meeting of the minds and some agreement to start this discussion, to start a dialog because, as I have indicated before, it is very important to Americans, particularly America's children.

NRA FUNDRAISING RHETORIC

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I was pleased to see the National Rifle Association apologize for some of the statements in their recent fundraising letter. The NRA has done the right thing. They should not have used some of that language in the first place. Alleged abuses of power by Federal law enforcement authorities are a fair and legitimate subject of debate—for Congress and for the American people. But it is wrong to impugn the motives and actions of the courageous men and women who risk their lives every day in enforcing our laws.

Mr. President, words do matter. Statements do matter. Our debate should recognize that fact. I ask that the article from today's Washington Post on the NRA apology be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, May 18, 1995]

NRA EXECUTIVE ISSUES APOLOGY FOR LETTER ATTACKING U.S. AGENTS

A National Rifle Association official apologized yesterday to law enforcement officials and others offended by a recent fund-raising letter describing some federal agents as ''jack-booted thugs.''

''I really feel bad about the fact that the words in that letter have been interpreted to apply to all federal law enforcement officers,'' NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre said in a telephone interview from Phoenix.

''If anyone thought the intention was to paint all federal law enforcement officials with the same broad brush, I'm sorry, and I apologize,'' LaPierre said.

Lapierre's apology comes after a week of steadily mounting criticism of the NRA, which began May 10 when former president George Bush revealed that he had resigned from the group in protest of the letter.

Lapierre said the letter was intended to criticize only isolated actions, primarily involving the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

But at least one section of the letter offer a more general condemnation of federal law enforcement efforts.

The letter, sent to the NRA's 3.5 million members in March over LaPierre's signature, said that ''in Clinton's administration, if you have a badge, you have the government's go-ahead to harass, intimidate, even murder law-abiding citizens.''

MORE SHELLS FALL ON SARAJEVO

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, on Monday more than 1,000 shells fell on Sarajevo—5 people were killed and 25 wounded. Yesterday Bihac was being shelled. Today a Sarajevo marketplace was hit by a mortar shell. The response to these attacks on U.N. designated safe havens reflects the United Nation's latest de facto policy: Blame the Bosnian Government for trying to defend its people, and dispatch NATO planes to buzz overhead. Meanwhile contact group negotiators are desperately trying to sweeten a deal for Serbian President Milosevic.

Let us face it, the protection of U.N. safe havens has become a fraud. The enforcement of weapons exclusion zones has also become a fraud. The United Nations is not fooling anyone even with its blame both sides rhetoric.

According to news reports, the United Nations is considering mandate reduction for its forces in Bosnia. In my view that has already happened, and without a U.N. Security Council vote.

The General Accounting Office recently released a study on U.N. operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina prepared at my request. In painstaking detail the report explains how the United Nations is not doing the job it was tasked to do in Bosnia.

The GAO report confirms what many of us already knew: that the U.N. operation in the former Yugoslavia is ineffective, that UNPROFOR is not carrying out its mandates. It also indicates that UNPROFOR has lost its credibility and has impeded NATO's ability to carry out air strikes in defense of U.N. designated safe havens and U.N. forces, facts that are very clear in light of events over the last 2 days in Bosnia.

I would remind my colleagues that even though there are no Americans participating in UNPROFOR, the United States has been subsidizing this failed endeavor for several years now, to the tune of more than $1.1 billion in direct support and $1.4 billion more in indirect support.

It is high time that we review our support for this flawed policy. The facts are clear: This operation is a failure, an expensive failure. It seems to me that increasingly UNPROFOR's real reason for being is to prevent a change in policy, specifically to prevent the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia.

Mr. President, I simply urge all of my colleagues to read the GAO's report. I believe that after reading it, one would be hard pressed to argue that this operation is worth Bosnia being denied its fundamental right to self-defense.

I say, along with Senator LIEBERMAN of Connecticut, it is our hope that we will be able to vote on lifting the arms embargo in the Senate some time in June. It seems to me that everything is falling apart and we are getting less and less response from the United Nations. I must say I have no quarrel with the U.N. Protection Forces, the men and women there. They are certainly exhibiting courage and bravery. But it seems to me that the time has come for a total review of our policy. I suggest to the President of the United States that he provide the leadership in this review and that we do it as quickly as possible.

I thank my colleagues and I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to comment on Senator DOLE's remarks on the floor of the Senate today with reference to violence in the United States in the mass media of America and its role in terms of violence. I want to commend the Senator for making the point. Those two American citizens, one Democrat and one Republican, have no idea what a service they are doing for the people of this country, if they can just get the media to understand that they, too, have a responsibility. They have lots of freedom. But where is all the violence coming from? We are making excuses and talking about it all the time, as if Government is to blame and this is to blame. The truth of the matter is people are just seeing so much violence, and they are outdoing each other to show us a different and new way that is becoming part of some of American citizens' lives. They see it, and they do not have regard for life.

Mr. DOLE. The children see it.

Mr. DOMENICI. Yes. Then you have 14-year-olds committing the acts they have seen on television 50 times. Sooner or later—we cannot legislate in that area. It is very difficult. Sooner or later we have to come to our senses, and I commend the Senator for his remarks.

Mr. DOLE. I thank the Senator.

FRESHMAN FOCUS ON THE BUDGET

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, our freshman focus group continues today and will continue on through the next week.

I rise today to express my surprise and my disappointment at the position the administration has taken, and, indeed, the other side of the aisle, with regard to the budget, with regard to Medicare, line-item veto, unfunded mandates, the rescission package, and the balanced budget amendment. In fact, on every issue that has come up since the beginning of this Congress, we have had the same approach, we have had the same reaction. And that position is to resist—''obfuscate'' has been used; that is a new word to me, but I think it means ''don't do anything''—and oppose with no alternative; to simply say no with no sign of leadership as to what an alternative solution would be to those issues.

It is surprising, Mr. President, and disappointing to me that the President 2 years ago made a great issue out of change. He was going to bring to this place change, new Democrats, a reinvention of Government, a more user friendly Government, reduce the size. Great rhetoric. Except when it comes to doing it, when it comes to the tough part—and it is tough to change; it is tough to make changes in systems that have been there; it is tough to make changes in programs that have built up about them a constituency. And so it is tough.

Talk is easy, but it is not easy to make the change. It is not easy to come to the snubbing post and really have to do it.

Instead, it is really easy to revert to the old system, and that is more Government and more spending and more programs. That is the easier way to go. It is one that makes it less politically volatile and one that we do.

Never mind that the programs have not solved the problems. Never mind that nearly everyone I think in this country believes that Government is too big and too intrusive and too expensive, a Government with nearly 3.5 million employees, thousands of programs, and literally hundreds of agencies and advisory groups.

And, of course, even the administration argues for cuts. Secretary Shalala recently announced a major revision. I think it involves 2,700 jobs—2,700 out of 62,000. That is hardly a major revision.

But now, we do have a chance, Mr. President, to do something significant. We do have an opportunity for the first time in a very long time to make some significant changes, not only to reduce the cost.

The budget argument is not just about dollars, although that is particularly important and significant. The real discussion and the real debate and the real opportunity is to take a look at Government and to examine now what the role of Government will be, to examine where we want to be in terms of the Government in the year 2000, when we move into a new millennia, what kind of a new century that we want to prepare for our children and our grandchildren if we do not do something by then. If we do not make changes by then, this Government will be able to afford only the entitlement programs and interest.

We will have this year, in a couple of months, a vote to raise the debt limit to $5 trillion. And before the next 2 years is over, before the first Clinton administration is over, we will be having $6 trillion in debt. Some say, ''Well, that doesn't matter, particularly. Debt does not matter.''

Debt does matter, as a matter of fact. Debt takes money out of the economy; money could be invested for other things. Maybe more to the point, the cost of interest will be soon the largest single line item in the budget. This year nearly $260 billion for interest alone. So it is significant.

It seems to me the measure of good Government is to be able to look at programs and see if, in fact, they are doing the job, to measure the output, to measure the results.

Unfortunately, I think it is fair to say that Government over the years in a nonpartisan way, when problems are not resolved by a program, we say, ''Well, this needs more money.'' And that may or may not be the case.

The fact is it is more likely that what happens is that you need to change the program, you need to change the application of the funds. And to suggest that results will be different if you continue to do the same thing is kind of a fantasy. It gives us an opportunity to look at duplication. And there is great duplication. There is redundancy.

There are 160 programs that have to do with moving from education to work. Now, everybody wants to do that. That is a great idea, and we should do it. It is a significant effort. But we do not need that many programs. They continue to add on.

There is a list of them. It is sort of interesting. I think it was in the newspaper 2 days ago. Actually literally hundreds of basically advisory committees no one has ever heard of in the world. Quite frankly, if they disappeared, none of us would know the difference. So we need to do some of those things.

Despite the first opportunity in 40 years, what is the strategy? I am afraid the strategy of the opposition is to object, to resist, to criticize, to filibuster. Let me say that filibuster is not the old classic filibuster where you stand on the floor for 72 hours and fall over from exhaustion. What filibuster is is hundreds of amendments that pile up so that we do not go anywhere, so that nothing happens, and that is what is happening around here. And that is too bad. Every issue this entire year has been handled that way. We do have to do something about that.

Medicare is an excellent example. I do not think anyone can doubt that you have to do something about Medicare. It is not a brandnew idea. We have known it is coming. Medicare was started in the sixties. I believe there was one point where 19 million people were involved in the beginning. Now that is doubled. The first year in Medicare, I think, was a $1.2 billion expenditure. This year it is a $165 billion expenditure and going up at a rate of 10 percent a year, one that we cannot maintain.

The trustees, which include three members of the Cabinet, have just given a report saying that unless we do something, in 2 or 3 years the program will be calling on the reserves and in 7 years it will be broke. We cannot let that happen. So we have to make some changes.

The proposal that is being made is to reduce the percentage of growth from 10 percent a year to 7 percent a year. That is still a pretty good growth. That is the growth of health care in the private sector plus inflation.

Some say, ''Well, there are more people.'' The fact is it increases the per capita spending which takes into account new participants. It increases the per capita spending from about $4,800 a year to $6,400 a year, and yet this will be attacked as a cut.

What is the alternative? The alternative is Medicare goes broke. We can fix it. We can fix it, but we have to change, and we can do that.

Mr. President, the opportunities are great. We are now dealing with a budget that continues to grow and, under the administration's plan, the deficit continues as it is as far as one can see. The package grows. The total package over $1.5 trillion a year grows at 5.5 percent a year. We are suggesting that we reduce that growth to about 3.5 percent a year. Hardly a cut.

So we have a great opportunity, and I think the point is that voters said to us in 1994, and voters have said to us before, we have too much Government, that Government costs too much, that Government is not user friendly as it should be, we have overregulation. And that is true.

I do not say those things particularly as criticisms, but just as a recognition of where we are, but with the happy thought that we can change that, and that, of course, is what is so remarkable about our democracy, what is so remarkable about our Government.

Let me tell you that even though the request for change on the part of voters, on the part of citizens, on the part of you and me is not a new idea. It has been done for years. In the 1800's and every generation there was substantial change in Government. Now it becomes more difficult. Government is larger, there is more bureaucracy, there is more lobbying, there are more people who are constituents of programs, and it becomes much more difficult, but not impossible at all.

As a matter of fact, I can tell you having been home, and going home every other week, I find my people, the people I represent in Wyoming, want some change. They know there is going to be some change, there is going to be some pain as there always is when you make your budget fit in your business

or in your family. And that is where we are.

I think it is an exciting opportunity. We need to take a look at our objectives. Our objectives are to make Government more responsive, to take those areas, such as welfare, where we are committed to helping people who need help and fix the program so that we help them help themselves, and that is the way it ought to be.

So we are there. We need to take the bull by the tail and look the problem in the eye. The objective is to have a solution. We can find it, taking a look at the role of Government, better ways of doing it, less Government in our lives, in responsible financial condition. We can do it, and I think it is a great opportunity. We will be talking about it this week. I think it is a watershed opportunity. We will make some big decisions this week over where we will be when the century changes in 7 years.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ASHCROFT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

THE BUDGET

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Wyoming. I must say that his remarks are both compelling and accurate and reflect the opportunity which we face in the U.S. Senate and for which the people sent us to the U.S. Senate. A job well done and items well stated, because they understand what happened here on May 11, just a few days ago, when Republicans annunciated their view for a brighter economic future, for financial stability, for fiscal integrity for the United States of America.

On that day, Senator DOMENICI, and other members of the Budget Committee, passed a resolution that would reduce spending over the course of the next few years by a trillion dollars. It is a budget resolution that brings our budget into balance by the year 2002. When this happens, it will be eligible for categorization as one of the eight wonders of the world. It is one of those things people have said could not be done.

But free people have the right to shape the tomorrows in which they live, and if we want to shape a tomorrow in which our children will live in a constructive way, we will have that kind of discipline which puts us on a balanced budget path and an enforceable balanced budget path by the year 2000 which sets us on a path for fiscal sanity and economic responsibility.

The plan that has been annunciated, the plan brought forth by Senator DOMENICI, is a plan for which he and members of the committee should be commended. I personally want to make that special effort to thank them.

These plans just do not happen in a vacuum. Someone has to make the tough judgments, someone has to be willing to take the tough stand, someone has to be willing to make the commitment, and Senator DOMENICI has done so.

His resolve, his commitment, his dedication, his courage has not been matched on the other side of the aisle. What has been the Democratic response to the Republican plan? Well, we have had ad hominem attacks, misleading charges, empty rhetoric. At this momentous time in our history that requires decision, that requires courage, that requires commitment, the Democratic Party seems committed only to partisanship and to politics.

So I think it is important that we ask again today where is their alternative? Where is their plan for a balanced budget? You and I and other Members in this Chamber endured a balanced budget debate, and we fell 1 vote short—1 vote short—because many on the Democratic side changed their votes to vote against a balanced budget this year. They said over and over again, ''All we need is the will and the courage, and the determination to balance the budget. We don't need an amendment.'' Well, now we have Senator DOMENICI who stands up and announces with will, courage and determination a balanced budget. And where are those who would support the balanced budget? They are not to be found. They were not to be found in the vote for the balanced budget amendment, and they are not to be found in the discussion of an actual balanced budget—except for criticism, except for partisanship. It is time that we have a united, bipartisan effort to achieve a balanced budget.

I suggest that critics of our balanced budget plan, brought forward by Senator DOMENICI, ought to heed the counsel of the 16th President of the United States. In Lincoln's words, he put it this way:

> Those have a right to criticize who have a heart to help.

You have a right to criticize if you have a heart to help. Well, we confront a fiscal crisis as great as any threat that we have confronted in this Nation, any threat we have ever faced, and calls for the maintenance of the status quo are insufficient. They are, in fact, irresponsible. Those who would criticize the move toward responsibility by instituting or institutionalizing the status quo are really saying they want to embrace irresponsibility. Inaction today will ensure decline for America tomorrow.

Now, the story of our financial crisis has been told many times on this floor, but it bears repeating. If we do not act dramatically and quickly to balance the budget of the United States, we will find ourselves in a position of bankruptcy. If unreformed Medicare will be bankrupt in just 6 years, is this the alarmist position of partisan politicians? No, this is the announced report of the board of trustees of the fund which supports Medicare. And three members of that board are members of the President's Cabinet.

There is a crisis in Medicare funding. We will not have the resources in the hospital trust fund in order to make the payments if something is not done. Yet, what has been the response of those who have said they want to balance the budget, but all we need is the will, the determination and the commitment to do it, and we do not need the balanced budget amendment? Well, they are just criticizing Senator DOMENICI and his report that would provide us an opportunity, a roadmap, which would carry us to a balanced budget. Medicare will be bankrupt in just 6 years. There is a real need for commitment and action.

Without changes, we face a tremendous load of debt, and not only debt but the interest payments on the debt. In 2 more years, we will be paying more interest on the national debt than we spend in the entire defense budget of the United States of America. That seems incomprehensible, that just the interest on the national debt will be more than we spend in defending the interests of this country worldwide. By the year 2000, the national debt will reach close to $7 trillion. We must act now to balance the budget. We cannot continue to mortgage the future of the children of this country because we refuse to have the discipline to balance our budget.

Sadly, children who are born this year will end up paying just a little short of $200,000 in interest on the debt over their lifetime—each child. The figure, according to the statisticians is $187,150 of interest that each child will have to pay on the national debt. It is time for their individual futures and our national future to be saved. We must act in the coming weeks and months.

Now, through shared sacrifice we can ensure that the coming generation of Americans will share in the abundant riches and opportunities of this country if we have the discipline to restrain the debt. What is the proposal of the Republican Party? How would it affect America, and how would it change Government therapeutically? How would it benefit us so we can do what we ought to do on behalf of the children of this country? What is our plan?

First, freeze congressional salaries, unless the budget is balanced by the year 2002.

Second, cut foreign aid.

Third, eliminate a number of unnecessary and duplicative programs. Just yesterday in the Foreign Relations Committee, there was a plan to consolidate the voices of America, the different representations of this country around the globe under the Secretary of State, saving almost $5 billion over the next 5 years.

Abolishing nonessential governmental agencies. Democratic attacks aside, our plan provides sufficient funds to maintain the health and integrity of a whole range of important governmental services.

These figures are important because those who would be the speakers of fear and the sowers of discontent, and

would suggest that our plan will not work, should understand that under the Republican proposal, Medicare will increase by 59 percent over the 7-year life of the plan—a 59-percent increase. Medicaid will rise at over 5 percent annually. And Social Security is totally untouched by the program between the present and the year 2002. Spending on the Social Security program is expected to increase by 43 percent, from $354 to $483.7 billion.

Indeed, Mr. President, the plan we will consider allows spending in all of Government to grow by an average of 3 percent annually, increasing by over one-half trillion dollars over the next 7 years the overall spending of Government.

In this debate over the future of our country, I am reminded of the philosopher's words: ''They sought to heal by incantations a cancer which requires the surgeon's knife.''

You cannot heal by just speaking words those things which require the surgeon's knife. The truth of the matter is that we are in a condition in this country where the scalpel of surgery needs to be applied to the cancer of national irresponsibility. We need to have the scalpel of the surgeon's knife cut out the unwanted and malignant growth which is taking over and depriving us of the ability to make good decisions regarding the future of this country.

Mr. President, we are hearing all around us the familiar cries of the discredited and irresponsible philosophy. But we should not listen to the cries of those who do not have the will, do not have the dedication, do not have the commitment, who, while they said we did not need a balanced budget amendment, they now refuse to face up to the specific personal responsibility to operate with fiscal integrity.

We were sent here by the American people with a demand and an expectation. They demand that we make the tough decisions, the same kind of decisions that are made around every kitchen table in America. When you sit down to figure out what you can and cannot afford, you set priorities to guard the vital interests of the family and you do away with those things that you can get by without. That is what the people sent us here to do. They demand that we stop business as usual in the U.S. Senate and that we embark upon something new and different for Government, and that is Government living within its means, Government that understands that there are limits. The people want the hand of Government out of their pockets. They do not want a Government handout. They expect us to listen and we ought to listen and we will listen.

Well, our budget plan goes a long way. It goes all the way to balancing the budget on a controlled, understandable, doable, achievable plan by the year 2002. It is a plan that will not only benefit the people today, but it will benefit the children. It will provide for them the opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labors, rather than just to try and retire a debt and pay interest for items that we have consumed. It is an opportunity for Members of this Congress, it is an opportunity for Members of the U.S. Senate; but more than an opportunity, it is a charge from the American public, and it is a responsibility we have to the generations to come.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to my colleague, Senator GRAMS, from Minnesota.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, if I may make an inquiry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. The Senator yields the floor to the Presiding Officer, rather than to another Senator, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. But I see that my colleague has risen, and I look forward to his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. GRAMS. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for no more than 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FRESHMAN FOCUS ON THE BUDGET

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as the Senate prepares to begin debate on the budget resolution for fiscal year 1996, I rise with my fellow freshmen to offer our perspective on the challenge ahead.

Mr. President, the individual Members of this class of freshmen Senators—11 strong—do not have much seniority. We do not chair powerful committees. But we do have one thing it seems many of our colleagues are missing—something far more valuable. We have the pulse of the people, and we always carry it.

We took the pulse ourselves, during our Senate campaigns last year. At coffee shops, truck stops, town meetings, we heard from thousands of average Americans. They talked about high taxes and excessive, wasteful Government spending. They talked about Social Security and Medicare, and wondered if it would still be around for them, their children, and grandchildren.

We listened, and we promised them that if they sent us to the Senate, we would fight to change things. We are deeply committed to change and to keeping our promises.

If life in the Senate sometimes reminds me of the barnyard conversation between the chicken and the pig, as they argued over which one was more committed to the breakfast meal: ''I give eggs every morning,'' the chicken said proudly. ''I'm committed.'' ''Giving eggs isn't a commitment, it's participation,'' snorted the pig. ''Giving ham, now that's a commitment.''

Sadly, this body too often seems content to deliver eggs when the people are demanding ham.

Mr. President, this freshmen class is committed to following through on the promises we made last November. And for the next week, we'll be focusing our attention on the Federal budget.

Year after year, when they ran things on Capitol Hill, the Democrats offered up budgets which raised taxes, sent Government spending spiraling out of control, and created massive deficits.

The voters soundly rejected that mentality in November. They looked to the Republicans for an alternative, for a budget that could turn back 40 years of spending mentality and the belief that money will fix everything, especially if it's your money and Washington can spend it.

Debate on our alternative begins today.

Whatever form it eventually takes, a budget resolution that is truly serious about America's financial future must accomplish three equally important goals:

We promised middle-class American families a budget that cuts taxes, and we will deliver.

We'll deliver for the Smith family, and the Johnsons and the Joneses, average American families where both parents work, earn $48,270, and take home $31,664, and end up sending $16,606 or more than a third of their paychecks, directly to the Government.

Families with children are now the lowest after-tax income group in America, below elderly households, below single persons, below families without children.

As one person put it, those who say we do not need a tax cut, probably do not pay taxes.

Mr. President, it has gotten so bad in my home State of Minnesota that it took until last Sunday, 134 days into 1995, for my constituents to finally reach Tax Freedom Day, the day when they're no longer working just to pay off taxes, and can finally begin working for themselves. Nearly 20 weeks, over 800 hours on the job just to pay Uncle Sam.

I applaud the distinguished chairman of the Senate Budget Committee for his courageous work on the budget resolution, but I part ways with his blueprint when it comes to tax cuts. I say we had better find a way to help the Smiths, and the Johnsons, and the Joneses.

The chairman states: ''Balance must first be achieved by reducing the rate of growth in Federal spending before tax reductions could be considered.''

That is like holding the taxpayers' money hostage, like calling tax cuts a dessert that we will share with the American people only after they have cleaned their plates. Anyone who thinks tax relief should be saved for the dessert cart has not taken the pulse of the people lately.

Middle-class American families are paying the vast majority of taxes in this country, and they are fed up. They are working longer hours, sometimes even taking on a second job, just to

meet their annual tax obligations while trying to maintain their style of living. They are still pursuing the American dream, but the ever-increasing tax burden keeps pushing it out of reach.

The $500 per-child tax credit takes money out of the hands of the Washington bureaucrats and leaves it in the hands of the taxpayers.

It is truly a tax break for the middle class: nearly $9 out of every $10 of tax relief goes to families making $75,000 or less. They are the ones who need our help the most, and we cannot ask them to wait another 6 or 7 years.

Mr. President, I promised my constituents in Minnesota that tax relief will be my top priority in the Senate, and during the next week, I will do just that.

The freshman class also promised American families that we would balance the budget. With or without a balanced budget amendment, we will deliver.

Now, my good friend, the Budget Committee chairman, and his counterpart in the other Chamber, have crafted documents the naysayers said could never be achieved.

The budget resolution we begin debating today, that brings the budget into balance by the year 2002, is proof that we are serious about living up to our pledge. Having to live within its means will be a new experience for a Congress that has only balanced its budget eight times in the past 64 years, and has not spent less than it has taken in since 1969.

Even the Clinton administration, despite all its rhetoric about shrinking the deficit, has seemingly washed its hands of the deficit problem.

Under the President's own budget plan, the deficit would increase from $177 billion this year to $276 billion in 2002, and add another $1.5 trillion to the national debt. Only Republicans have offered an alternative to this fiscal madness. And I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will find the courage to vote for a balanced budget. We're offering a plan to balance the budget, and we have done it without slashing Federal spending, without putting children, seniors, and the disadvantaged at risk. Most of our savings are achieved by slowing the growth of Government. Will there need to be some sacrifices? Yes, although the Government will have to sacrifice more than the people will. Will belts need to be tightened? Yes. But if we do not tighten the belts today, they are destined to become nooses around the necks of the coming generations, who will someday become the innocent victims of our negligence. Mr. President, as Senate freshmen, my colleagues and I heard it over and over during our campaigns: the American people are willing to make those sacrifices, if they believe their Government is serious about making change.

This Congress is serious.

Finally, we promised that our budget will protect Medicare and Social Security. For the sake of America's senior citizens, we must protect, preserve, and improve Medicare, to make sure it is there for the next generation as well.

The fact is, Medicare is in trouble, in large part due to fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement and misuse. By 1997, Medicare will pay out $1 billion more in benefits than it collects in revenue, and 5 years later, it will go bankrupt.

Again, in our budget plan, we are working to preserve, protect, and improve the Medicare System. In fact, Medicare will remain the fastest growing program in the Federal budget.

Over the next 7 years, we will spend $1.7 trillion to keep Medicare a healthy and viable health care provider for this generation of senior citizens.

Social Security must receive the same care, although as a self-funded entity it will be taken off budget and dealt with separately from other programs.

Clearly, the Government must honor its contract with our senior citizens, and the budget that Congress produces this year must ensure that the Social Security Program will survive and be there for older Americans. The best way to achieve that is to bring the Federal budget into balance.

A budget that works for America will meet the needs of all our citizens, working men and women and their children, senior citizens, and the disadvantaged, while providing middle-class tax relief, balancing the budget by the year 2002, and protecting Social Security and Medicare.

Mr. President, that is what we promised the people, and our promises were not made lightly. I remember hearing about a commencement speech given by Winston Churchill toward the end of his life. He sat patiently through the introduction, rose, and went to the podium. All he said was ''Never, never, never give up.'' Then he sat back down.

Mr. President, this committed class of freshmen Senators has taken the pulse of the people, and we are not planning to give up on the ambitious agenda they sent us here to carry out.

Like the latest chapter in the ''Die Hard'' movie trilogy, we will be here—with a vengeance—to remind our colleagues just what America's message last November was all about.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, before addressing the matter that brings me to the floor, may I congratulate the Senator from Minnesota for the very forceful and, I hope, prophetic statement. The concerns that he has raised are real. They have been addressed without large consequence in this Chamber for some 15 years now, as I can attest. And I for one, and I think many others, welcome the energy and conviction, the commitment of the freshman class, as he chooses to describe it, that came to the Senate in January. I look forward to working with him in the years ahead—months ahead—weeks ahead, to be specific.

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

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under a previous order, the Senator from North Dakota is recognized to speak for up to 20 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. Thank you very much. It is my intention to speak for a couple of minutes at the beginning and then to yield the remainder of the time to Senator AKAKA from Hawaii.

THE BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we will begin in a matter of a couple of hours the debate on the budget resolution.

I do not want anyone to despair about the disagreement that will exist on the floors of the Senate and the House on the budget. The disagreement that exists ought not to be a cause for despair, because there is not any disagreement about the destination. We all believe that the budget ought to be balanced. We believe it ought to be balanced by the year 2002, and I am prepared to support that and vote for that.

There is a vast disagreement, however, on priorities: How do you get from here to there? If we agree on the destination, there is certainly disagreement on the routes. How do you achieve a balanced budget? This is the time and this is the place to have a vibrant and healthy debate about priorities.

Now, I expect there will be some skepticism about statements from those of us on this side of the aisle, so I want to today, as we begin the discussion, quote from a Republican political analyst, author, and commentator, Kevin Phillips. This is not from a Democrat. Here is what Kevin Phillips says about the budget that is going to be brought to the floor by the Republicans.

''Anybody who thought the greed decade ended several years ago,'' Mr. Phillips says, ''hasn't yet had time to study the new balanced budget proposals put forward by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House.'' He said it is ''special interest favoritism and income redistribution. Spending on Government programs, from Medicare and education to home heating oil assistance, is to be reduced in ways that principally burden the poor and the middle class while simultaneously taxes are to be cut in ways that predominantly benefit the top 1 or 2 percent of Americans.''

Again, this is a conservative commentator writing that fiscal favoritism and finagling is what is involved here. If it was not that, he said, ''we'd be talking about shared sacrifice, with business, Wall Street and the rich, the people who have big money, making the biggest sacrifice.'' But Kevin Phillips says: