

debate about rational fiscal policy, about consumption versus investment, savings over spending, and all of the elements that together make up a sound basis for future economic growth. It should be a debate about what we hold to be most important now and in the future.

That debate may never come. Yet, I deeply hope it will come, and when it does, I hope we will have an opportunity to write an amendment to the Constitution that represents our best effort, one which will stand the test of time, a balanced budget amendment that honors our past commitments, protects our future investment, and tells the American people the truth. It must be a serious obligation, not merely a statement made of good intentions.

Finally, while I believe we need an honest and fair balanced budget amendment, I know we need an honest and fair balanced budget even more. We can and we must get immediately to the real work of deficit reduction. I know I speak for my Democratic colleagues when I say we are ready to work with the majority right now to develop a budget resolution that cuts spending and balances the budget. It is an effort which requires bipartisan cooperation as well as concentration.

So, Mr. President, whatever the fate of this amendment, it is time for us to work together to fulfill that promise and renew the hope of all American people that at long last—at long last—we can accomplish what we all want and what our children deserve.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I listened very carefully to the distinguished Democratic leader's remarks. I know he is very serious about the issue of debts and the deficit that we have each year. I know he is serious about a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget because he voted for it just 1 year ago. And I believe and certainly hope that in the end, he will vote for the balanced budget amendment this year.

I believe this has been a very serious, principled debate. This legislation, which is identical to the balanced budget amendment the Democratic leader voted for last year, has been carefully drafted. I remind my colleagues that it passed the other body by a vote of 300 to 132—an overwhelming bipartisan vote after serious consideration in the debate before the House of Representatives. Our own

Senate Judiciary Committee reported it out after careful consideration on a bipartisan vote.

A number of amendments have been offered, considered, debated, and voted on, and all of them have been defeated by bipartisan votes. On one of the votes yesterday, there were actually nine Democrats who voted to table it, while eight Republicans voted against tabling it. So we are having a very serious debate here with Members voting their conscience.

We are now in the 18th day of debate on this constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. Last year, we had an extended floor debate and a vote on this exact amendment. I think the high water mark, up until this year, for debate on a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget has been about 11 days. So we certainly are giving it plenty of time for thoughtful consideration. And because of delays in getting an agreement when we might bring this to a conclusion, we apparently will still be on this amendment next week. It will have been a full month that we have taken to consider this legislation. That is fine because, in the end, I believe we are going to pass it with a good, strong bipartisan vote.

Let me quote some very strong words in support of the balanced budget amendment:

To remedy our fiscal situation, we must stop spending beyond our means. This will not require the emasculation of important domestic priorities as some suggest.

In this debate on a balanced budget amendment, we are being forced to face the consequences of our inaction. Quite simply, we are building a legacy of debt for our children and grandchildren and hamstringing our ability to address pressing national priorities.

Those are the words of the distinguished Democratic leader just last year, February 28, 1994, in support of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

With regard to the right to know, we need to work together on this. We cannot say today everything that we are going to do in a budget resolution this year or next year or in 5 or 7 years. It will depend on the Budget Committee, the vote and actions on the floor of the Senate. It will take all of us working together, no matter where we are from, what party or what philosophy.

With regard to the right to know, this is what the distinguished Democratic leader said just last year:

Congress and the President will have 7 years to address the current deficit and reach a consensus on our Nation's budget priorities. We will have time to find ways to live within our means and still meet existing obligations to our citizens, particularly the elderly.

I agree.

But this year, we debated the right-to-know amendment, and it was rejected with 56 votes against it—again a bipartisan vote.

With regard to protecting our seniors, minority leader DASCHLE last year said:

Requiring the Government to operate within its budget does not mean * * * we would be forced to renege on our current obligations to America's seniors. For my part, such a requirement would not lessen our commitment to * * * protecting Social Security.

I agree. Last year, the minority leader also said:

By the year 2020, most of the baby boom generation will have retired, and those retirees will be supported by a smaller working population. In order to ensure that we can meet our commitments to future retirees without jeopardizing the standard of living of working men and women, we must seek to maximize economic growth during the early 21st century. Our current budget deficit is eating away at that growth and undermining our economic potential.

The point the minority leader made last year is that if we do not have a balanced budget amendment, if we do not get our fiscal house in order, the people who will suffer the most are our seniors. So I think the minority leader's comments—and I have many others—just 1 year ago on the constitutional amendment for a balanced budget were excellent. I agree with them. I voted with him then, and I hope we are going to vote together this time because this is exactly the same amendment we both voted for just last year.

I remind my colleagues, too, that just 1 year ago when I offered an amendment to try to block tax increases on Social Security retirees, some of the same people who are now pleading their concern for our seniors and their Social Security benefits, where were they when we were trying to block on a bipartisan vote tax increases on their retirement benefits? Where were they last year? Why were they not worried about Social Security retirees, Medicare and Medicaid, then?

Where were they last year when the President proposed billions of dollars in cuts in Medicare in his health care proposal? President Clinton proposed to cut Medicare by \$124 billion over 5 years in his health care plan. And in 1993, the President cut \$53 billion from Medicare as a part of his tax bill. Were they not worried about the seniors then? Were they not worried about Medicare then?

Look, the issue of right-to-know is another red herring; it is simply an attempt to scare seniors about Social Security. It boils down to a very simple question: Are you for a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget or not? If you are, you vote yes. If you are not, vote no. And the people will know how you feel about this. Are you prepared to explain how this year you are against the balanced budget amendment but last year you voted for it? Why? Is it because there is a different majority? I cannot believe that.

We have an opportunity here to do what is right for our country—to have the additional pressure on Congress to control spending, not raise taxes.

Everybody keeps saying, Oh, we reduced the deficit in 1993. The so-called 1993 deficit reduction bill was attempted to reduce the deficit through

massive tax increases. We can move this whole debate in a different direction. And I have been here through 22 years of trying to deal with the deficit—through Gramm-Rudman, through the Gang of 17, and through the budget negotiations at Andrews Air Force Base. Congress has tried time and time again to balance the budget, but we never quite carry through with it.

We need this constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. The American people support it overwhelmingly. This is our opportunity. And we must, must find a way to come together to pass it. I know it is going to be a bipartisan vote; one of our key proponents of the balanced budget amendment has been the distinguished Senator from Illinois, Senator SIMON.

The balanced budget amendment has already passed the House. It is up to the Senate. If we vote now, it goes to the States. The people will have a chance to decide. The only thing standing between the people's opportunity to vote on this and its passage is how the Senate will vote.

I urge my colleagues, let us begin to bring this to a conclusion. Let us quit talking about red herrings. Let us face up to the real issue and vote for a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget.

Mr. DASCHLE addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the minority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. My friend, the distinguished Senator from Mississippi, made reference to some comments I made last year. Let me respond briefly because I know there are others waiting.

I made them in earnest last year, and I stand by them this year. Nothing the Senator from Mississippi said with regard to my comments last year are any less true this year. What I said then applies now, and that is my whole point. If we are going to have a balanced Federal budget, good intentions are not enough. It is not enough to just say we are going to do it. We must be serious about it, and that is the question.

When I made those comments last year, we were serious, and we proved we were serious with a \$500 billion deficit reduction plan that laid out with specificity exactly what we were going to do.

Where is the plan this year? How are we going to do it this year? On just a hope, somehow the expectation that it is all going to magically come together?

That is what we are saying. That is why this right to know amendment is so important.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair might intervene for a moment to say to the distinguished Democratic leader, his time has expired under the previous order, and the time is now under the control of the acting majority leader. If he chooses to yield time to the minority leader to complete his remarks, up until 10 o'clock, he may do so.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I know our two leaders will be speaking at 10 a.m. for 15 minutes each. Unless there is a problem with his other colleagues, I will be glad to yield the remaining 4 minutes to the leader to conclude his remarks.

Mr. DASCHLE. I appreciate very much the willingness of the whip to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader may proceed, then.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me finish very briefly.

Mr. President, I agree with exactly what the distinguished Senator from Mississippi said about what the issue is, with the exception of one word. He said the issue is very simply do we support a balanced Federal budget, a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

I think that is a legitimate question, and the answer should be yes. But it should not be are we willing to support any constitutional amendment to balance the Federal budget, any constitutional amendment. The answer is no. This is going to be with us for all perpetuity, all posterity, and if it is going to be with us that long and if it is that important and will have that far-reaching a consequence, we had better do it right because we will not get a second chance.

With that, again, I thank the Senator for yielding, and I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I may respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Again, I refer to the distinguished Democratic leader's comments last year because they were so persuasive then, and I believe they are now. I will just quote these two paragraphs and yield the time for others.

Some of my colleagues feel, as does President Clinton—

This is Senator DASCHLE speaking. that we can make these tough budget choices without amending the Constitution. I wish they were right, but history indicates they are not.

By adding a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we as a nation are embracing the principle that government should not spend beyond its means. This is a principle worthy of inclusion in the document that sets forth the limits of governmental power and protects the rights of individual citizens.

Those are the words of Senator DASCHLE, the distinguished Democratic leader. They were only 1 year ago. They were right then, and they are right now. We must pass this balanced budget amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. HEFLIN. I ask the minority leader if he will yield me about 6 minutes of time to speak on the Iwo Jima anniversary.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will be happy to yield to the Senator from Alabama.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, may I inquire whether this would be from the 15 minutes the leader has?

Mr. DASCHLE. That would be my expectation, that I will yield 6 minutes I have available on the cloture vote to the Senator from Alabama to speak on an issue of his choosing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Alabama.

THE DEADLY BATTLE ON IWO JIMA

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I rise today to remind Americans of one of the costliest battles of World War II, and the sacrifices made by the men of the United States Marine Corps. This Sunday will be the 50th anniversary of the Marine Corps landing on Iwo Jima, a place where, as Admiral Nimitz said "Uncommon valor was a common virtue."

After 36 days of fighting and at a cost of 6,821 Americans killed and 19,217 wounded, the island was captured. The cost to the Japanese defenders was over 22,000 lives. Only about 1,000 Japanese survived the battle.

The Japanese had long prepared for the February 19, 1945, invasion. After the battle was over, it was revealed that the enemy had constructed 642 blockhouses, pillboxes, and other gun positions. The marines landing on Iwo Jima were certainly stepping into the very jaws of the enemy—and I might say, the very jaws of hell.

At 9 o'clock in the morning, the massive assault wave of the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions hit the beach at Iwo Jima. A Japanese observer watching the drama unfold from a cave on the slopes of Mount Suribachi reported: "At 9 in the morning, several hundred landing crafts with amphibious tanks in the lead rushed ashore like an enormous tidal wave." Within minutes, 6,000 marines were ashore, and initial casualties were lighter than expected.

Then the pounding started as the Japanese commander unleashed hundreds of heavy artillery pieces, giant mortars, rockets, and antitank weapons that had been carefully arranged around the landing beaches now clogged with troops and materials. The ensuing bombardment was as deadly and terrifying as the marines had ever experienced. Casualties mounted appallingly on what would become the costliest single day in the U.S. Marine Corps history. By the day's end, nearly 2,500 Marines were killed or wounded.

Typical of the marine heroism and sacrifice of that first day on Iwo Jima, and not unlike what I had witnessed while serving in the Marine Corps with the 9th Regiment in the Pacific, were the actions of legendary Marine Gunner Sergeant John Basilone. "Manila John," as he was fondly called by his fellow marines, had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in recognition of his outstanding heroism at Guadalcanal. On Iwo Jima, Basilone