

debt, deficits and decline, and we ought to avoid it at all cost.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. REID. I would be happy to yield, indicating that one of the things we have not talked about here today with the Clinton plan is something that we recognized very clearly in Nevada. As a result of the Clinton economic plan, in Nevada nine times more Nevada families received a tax cut than an increase. It happened all over the United States. In addition to that, businesses got tax breaks in the Clinton plan of 1993. We fail to talk about it. In the little State of Nevada, almost 7,000 small businesses got a tax break when we passed the deficit reduction plan.

Mr. CONRAD. Will the Senator yield just on that point?

Mr. REID. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. CONRAD. I asked my staff to find out in North Dakota what happened because we continually are told these are the big taxers and the big spenders. I have reported what happened to spending. Every year under the Clinton administration spending as a share of our national income has gone down—each and every year.

Big spending? I do not think so. This President has reduced spending measured against our national income. And on the tax side, in my State of North Dakota, as a result of the 1993 plan, 29,000 people got a tax cut because of the expansion of the earned-income tax credit that was included in the Clinton plan; about 1,400 people got an income tax rate increase. And who were they? They were couples earning over \$180,000 a year and individuals earning over \$140,000 a year. So 20 times as many people got a tax reduction as got a tax increase.

Mr. DORGAN. If the Senator will yield, one of the concerns I have about the proposal now for a substantial across-the-board tax cut offered by Senator Dole is that it is so at odds with what is required of leadership at this point. I said on the floor yesterday, and I will say it again, I admire Senator Dole. I think the service he has given to this country is something most Americans should be thankful for and grateful for. He has been a good public servant.

I said yesterday I would not trade one Senator Dole and his experience for all 73 House Republican freshmen who boasted they had no experience and came here and proved it quickly.

I admire Senator Dole, but the fact is a test of leadership in our country is are you willing to do what is necessary for this country? Are you willing to propose what is necessary? President Clinton came in 1993 and made a proposal that was not popular. He knew and we knew people are not going to belly up to this one and say, well, sign me up; please let me have some of that—spending cuts and tax increases.

We knew that was not going to be politically popular. We knew it was going

to be hard to do. It turned out to be extraordinarily hard to do. It turned out it passed in this Chamber by a tie-breaking vote being cast by the Vice President. So it turned out to be enormously difficult. Why? Because it was not popular. It was tough medicine. It was needed to put the country back on course. That is the test of leadership.

Mr. REID. And it was very partisan.

Mr. DORGAN. It turned out to be very partisan, regrettably. I wish it would have been a bipartisan effort to say, if we have to do some heavy lifting, let us all lift. But that was not the case. In any event, what has happened now is that Senator Dole, who has always stood here in this Chamber and said I do not agree with those who say let us have a big across-the-board tax cut and the deficits, the heck with the deficits, let us not care what happens as a result of it, he has always been one who stood in the well of the Senate and said these things do not make any sense. This does not make any sense. Now he has been convinced apparently to propose an across-the-board tax cut which will substantially reduce the revenue and substantially increase deficits. And do not trust me on that. Trust the Concord Coalition, a bipartisan organization or nonpartisan organization run jointly by a former Republican Senator and Democratic Senator who say this is going to vastly inflate the Federal deficit.

It seems to me, given the economic story we have talked about today, the question is, do we want to move in that direction again: swollen deficits, slower growth, more unemployment? Or do we want to continue with the plan that has worked for our country?

Mr. REID. I would say to my friend, in closing, we have heard a discussion here this afternoon about the economy and how the glass is half full rather than half empty. I have heard on the Senate floor, over the past month or so, the same type of discussion as it relates to crime in America; that is, "the glass is half empty, it is not half full," when we should recognize that the violent crime rate has dropped for adults. We are making progress with the approximately 40,000 new police officers throughout America. We are making great progress. We should talk about the positive effect of how crime is being attacked in this country rather than continually dwelling on the negative.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). The Senator from Georgia controls the next hour.

TAX RELIEF

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, it is not going to be the subject I intended to address, but I could not help hearing some of the remarks from the other side about how onerous it would be if we were to allow the American family to keep more of what it earns in its checking account via tax relief. I

am going to talk for just a second about it.

An average family in my State gets to keep 47 percent of its gross income. In 1950 those people got to keep 80 percent. Now they can only keep 47 percent after they get finished paying their Federal tax bill, State, local, the cost of Federal regulations, and extra costs they pay in interest payments because of the national debt that has been drummed up by an ever-increasing and larger Federal Government here in Washington.

Mr. President, 47 percent is what is left at the end of the day. I will say as long as I am here that any effort to bring relief to those average families and to allow more of their earnings to stay in their checking accounts is laudable and correct, because we have pushed the average family to the wall. That which we ask them to do, get the country up in the morning, feed it, house it, shelter it, take care of its health, is virtually impossible to do today with what is left in that checking account after some Government bureaucrat marches through it.

It is not my purpose to discuss it here this afternoon. But lowering the economic pressure on the average family in our country would do more to end the stress and the anxiety and the behavioral problems in our middle-class families than any other thing we can do. You can track the stress in those families and track it day by day, month by month, year by year, as we ratcheted up the tax pressure on those families. You can see the effect it has had on them—smaller families, no savings in their savings accounts, lower SAT scores, more members of the family having to work just to keep up; in some of them, not only both parents working but both parents having two jobs.

I am absolutely mind boggled that we would be arguing that it would be some evil and sinister thing to lower the tax pressure on the American family.

RE-CREATE A MELTDOWN

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, we are hours away from the end of the fiscal year. There are leadership meetings occurring everywhere. I have become convinced that the other side has concluded it is to their political advantage to try to re-create a meltdown here.

We have learned from reading in the paper that the now famous Dick Morris, political consultant to the White House, spent 5 months planning the last shutdown, and we see the exact same characteristics as we come to trying to bring the year to a logical and bipartisan closure. Let us remember that, unlike a year ago, we have 60,000 troops in harm's way right now in Iraq and Bosnia. We have just watched a hurricane sweep across our eastern shores, and we have families desperately trying to dig out. We are 6 weeks from an election, and we ought to get the electioneering out of the