Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton.

The fact that we haven't balanced the budget since 1969 demonstrates that talking about balancing the budget is far easier than actually doing it.

Many budget balancing plans have been proposed over the years, yet even the most well-intentioned of them have not brought about balance, just larger deficits.

The pervasive growth of government makes it painfully obvious that in a government where politicians exhibit compassion by spending other people's money, we cannot be assured our budgets will ever balance without the moral authority of the Constitution to enforce it.

The latest budget proposal from the White House illustrates the real need for a balanced budget amendment.

Although President Clinton's plan is billed as being balanced, it really isn't—the deficit would increase next year and early reports from the Congressional Budget Office say the Clinton plan would remain about $80 billion short of balance in 2002. Seventy-five percent of the President's deficit reduction would not occur until after the year 2000, meaning the Clinton administration will never have to make the tough choices it will take to eliminate the deficit. In other words, talk about it but leave it up to somebody else to do it. And most disturbing, instead of cutting spending and asking Washington to sacrifice, the President's budget raises taxes by $76 billion and asks, once again, that the taxpayers step forward and sacrifice. I can think of no more compelling justification for enacting the balanced budget amendment.

Despite guarded optimism in Washington about reaching agreement this year to balance the budget, surveys show most Americans do not believe the deficit will be eliminated by the target date of 2002. They realize that all the laws, goals, plans, and pledges may not be strong enough to hold back the tide of rising deficits.

Even if the budget were to be balanced in 2002, there is nothing to stop a future, less-vigilant Congress from picking up where the big spenders left off. The constitutional protections guaranteed by the balanced budget amendment remain our best hope of enforcing future fiscal restraint.

Mr. President, I am greatly disappointed by the efforts of some of our colleagues who have chosen to use Social Security as a shield to disguise their opposition to the balanced budget amendment. Most of us have come to the conclusion this is nothing more than a transparent political ploy to defeat the amendment, while playing to the fears of senior citizens by demagoguing the Social Security issue.

I have absolutely no doubt that if the Social Security concerns were erased today, another problem with the amendment would crop up tomorrow, and we would once again find ourselves in the position of being a single vote short of passage. This is already evident through the lineup of amendments we have been considering the last few weeks.

I wonder if my colleagues are aware of the massive tax increase the American people would be forced to accept if we did indeed factor Social Security surpluses out of the budget process.

Between 2002 and 2007 alone, the tax hike required to bring the budget into balance would amount to $706 billion. Yes, $706 billion.—That dwarfs the record-breaking $265 billion tax increase President Clinton ushered through Congress in 1993.

As their share, taxpayers in my home State of Minnesota could face a total Federal tax hike of about $12 billion. That is an average household tax increase of $1,085 per year. And again, that is just from 2002 to 2007.

Mr. President, Social Security is facing serious problems, and reforms are needed to ensure that retirement benefits will continue to be available to all Americans. But taking Social Security off budget does nothing to help the trust fund remain solvent.

We all know that, by law, any Social Security surpluses must be invested in Treasury securities. Without serious reform, as long as the Government is allowed to grow and to continue its deficit-spending ways, it will still borrow from the trust fund, leaving nothing but IOUs to future beneficiaries.

Therefore, first and foremost, we must overhaul the way Washington spends taxpayer dollars by imposing some constitutionally mandated fiscal discipline. We must pass the balanced budget amendment and we must take appropriate actions to protect and preserve the trust fund.

While I understand the arguments of those who have supported the various Social Security amendments during this debate, a more reasonable approach would be to take Social Security off budget after the budget is balanced. Congress should begin considering legislation that ensures Social Security benefits will be payable for the current and future generations, stops the use of trust fund surpluses on other Government programs, and puts real assets in the Social Security trust fund.

For now, let us face it: we will never achieve a balanced budget if Social Security is taken off budget and omitted from our deficit calculations. President Clinton himself has come to that very conclusion.

Mr. President, a bipartisan coalition in Congress is committed to passing a balanced budget amendment in 1997 because we believe the taxpayers deserve a responsible Government that pays its bills and saves for the future.

We also support passing the balanced budget amendment in 1997.

Ending deficits and lowering the national debt will free up public and private resources for more productive and innovative uses in the global economy of the 21st century. On a more personal level, working Americans will benefit directly when a balanced budget leads to lower interest rates that could save a middle-class family about $125 a month in lower mortgage, car, and student loan payments.

The 105th Congress has a historic opportunity and obligation to leave a legacy of responsible governing for the generations to come. The path is well marked: To one side leads the road to bankruptcy and America's fiscal ruin; to the other, the path of political promises which may or not be kept; while directly ahead lies the trail of discipline, discipline, discipline we must—pursue the road to prosperity and accountable governing marked by passage of the balanced budget amendment.

Mr. President, I thank you. I yield the floor.

Mr. REID addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that Jerry Reed, a congressional fellow, be allowed to have floor privileges during the pendency of Senate Joint Resolution 1.

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

SOCIAL SECURITY AND THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, people continually talk about using Social Security. ''Let's use Social Security until we balance the budget, and then after that we will not use it any more.''

That argument says it all, Mr. President, because, if you use Social Security, it makes it pretty easy to balance the budget. If we want to really balance the budget let's do it the right way, the hard way, the honest way. Let's not use the surpluses—this year alone over $8 billion. That is the easy way to balance the budget. But it is not the right way.

Dorothy Ray from Reno, NV, wrote to me:

> I urge you to fight all attempts to cap, cut, tax, or otherwise cut Social Security benefits and to focus on the real causes of the Federal deficit. Social Security is an earned entitlement that does not contribute 1 cent to the Federal deficit. We workers and retirees and employers have paid and continue to pay special taxes. We fund Social Security. The Federal Government has no right to borrow our Social Security and deplete all the reserves which we contributed for this purpose. Please fight all attempts to cut or rob us of our earned benefits.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> DOROTHY RAY.

I heard also from Sparks, NV, from Bernice Murray. She wrote to me:

DEAR MR. REID. In reference to your stand on Social Security I stand behind your views 100 percent. I have lived in Nevada since 1946, and most of that time in Sparks. I am 72 years old. My husband just passed away January 17, '97. My only income now is his Social Security. I agree with what you are trying to accomplish, and please keep up the good work. Us older Nevadans need you.

Mr. President, not only do the older Nevadans need this, but all Nevadans. All Americans need this.

The Social Security Program is for people over age 62 or 65 who are now receiving the benefit. But it is the benefit for future generations. All across America, as we speak, in certain specific regions there are huge amounts of money being spent on television, on radio, and in newspapers against people like Senator REID from Nevada. These ads say, ''Why won't REID support a balanced budget amendment?'' I say to those people that are spending these hundreds, thousands, and millions of dollars on these ads all over the country that I do support a balanced budget amendment. I just do not support theirs. I support mine, the one that excludes Social Security. This isn't some new-found religion for Senator REID. I have been doing this. This is the 4th year. I have offered my amendment every year, and will continue to do so until we prevail because the people about whom I speak, Bernice Murray, Dorothy Ray, and others cannot afford hundreds of thousands of dollars in the State of Nevada to run ads. All they can do is write their letters hoping that right will prevail. It has so far. I hope it will continue.

We need to balance the budget. We need to do it though, Mr. President, the right way. I have heard people say, ''We will never be able to balance the budget without using Social Security.'' Well, we can balance the budget without using Social Security. It is going to be harder, and we may not be able to do it by the year 2002. But we can do it. And, when we accomplish that, we will have prevailed in righting one of the biggest wrongs in the history of this country; that is, depleting these trust funds for purposes other than what the money was paid in for by employers and employees.

For many people in America today, Social Security is the only money they get. Only 50 percent of America's workers have access to pensions. That does not count Social Security. Most people working in America, and especially women, have no hope of ever getting a pension. To enshrine in the Constitution any amendment that would guarantee to the American workers that these contributions are no longer going to be protected I believe is wrong.

How much of an impact does Social Security make on the lives of Americans? Nationally, in December 1995, benefits were paid to about 44 million Americans. This includes 27 million retired workers, about 5 million widows, a few widowers, 4 million disabled workers, and more.

The monthly average benefit paid to a Social Security retired worker is $720. A wife gets $354, because it usually is a wife at this stage. Most husbands have Social Security benefits. Wives have not up to this stage. It is changing in the future years.

In the State of Nevada, we have about 229,000 people who receive Social Security benefits. Said another way, that is about 15 percent of the people in Nevada depend on Social Security for support. In Nevada, 153,000 of these people are retired, 21,000 are widows, about 23,000 are disabled, and then there are, of course, some children, about 17,000 children, whose parents have been killed or died in some fashion who receive benefits.

The average benefit in the State of Nevada is $5 a month more than the national average; $725 a month is what Nevadans get on an average from Social Security. For $725 a month, they are not able to pay for ads in the larger newspapers in Nevada, full-page ads at a cost of about $5,000. They are not going to be able to do that. Ads running in radio stations today alone will cost tens of thousands of dollars, and in television, no telling how much money.

These people cannot pay for the ads, but the large corporations are helping pay for these ads or are paying for these ads. Why? Because they know, Mr. President, that if we balance the budget the right way and do not use Social Security benefits and we really want to balance the budget, they are probably going to have to chip in a few dollars or take longer or they are going to have to make more cuts. So they are willing to spend money up front to save them a few dollars.

In the State of Nevada, $2.1 billion was paid into Social Security last year. Drawing out of that was far less than $2 billion—about $1.4 billion. The rest went to surplus, the surplus the people in this body want to use to mask the deficit. I say they should not be able to do that. These moneys should be set aside for Social Security recipients.

Social Security in every State plays a vital role. It is a program that keeps people off poverty. It gives people dignity. It is not only in Nevada. This is the way it is all across the country. In fact, the amendment I offered, which was defeated by a vote of 55 to 45, had two very courageous Republicans from different parts of the country who voted in favor of it. The senior Senator from Arizona voted for it; the senior Senator from Pennsylvania voted for it.

In addition to that, we now have held up in the House the balanced budget amendment. Why? Because some very courageous sophomore Republicans are saying we will vote for a balanced budget amendment but we want to exclude Social Security benefits. My office has received some phone calls about people in this body on that side of the aisle who are now considering offering amendments of their own. I hope that there will be further thought given to that, that we will exclude Social Security from the calculations of the balanced budget amendment.

Social Security is the major source of income for 63 percent of all the beneficiaries. For 63 percent of the people who draw Social Security benefits, that is all the money they get. It is for this group that I am most concerned and speak on their behalf today. They are not going to run ads in the newspapers. They are not going to be able to pay for television or radio ads. But their thoughts are just as important, their ideas are just as important as the people who are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to get out the message that they want to be able to mask the deficit.

Currently, about 90 percent of older households get Social Security benefits. Benefits keep about 15 million Americans above the poverty line and even more from near poverty. While this is nothing to be proud of, I think it is something we should reflect upon as to how much better we are doing. Today, 10.5 percent of our senior population falls below the poverty line.

It was just a few years ago that we had poorhouses where people who had no money went. Most of the counties—the States helped a little bit—had poorhouses for these people. The difference between poorhouses and no poorhouses is this program we call Social Security.

So I am concerned about approximately 44 million Americans and 229,000 Nevadans who depend on this program to maintain their dignity. This is by no means the time to turn our backs on the success of this program or the citizens who rely on this program. We must listen to the people who tell us: balance the budget but do not do it using Social Security.

The vast majority of Americans agree with my position in spite of the ads, in spite of the media blitz. The Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, NBC, CNN have all run polls showing that about 75 percent of the American people support balancing the budget but without using Social Security.

Franklin Roosevelt said upon signing the Social Security act, ''We can never insure one hundred percent of the population against one hundred percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against a poverty-ridden old age.''

This statement, given in August 1935, was visionary because we have done just that. We have given dignity to the old of America. They do not have to live in poverty. You can see the impact of this program, which I have said on this floor is the most successful Social Security program in the history of the world. It is my hope that Members on both sides of the aisle will think long and hard about the impact of the balanced budget amendment on Social Security and vote accordingly.

News accounts indicate that the Republican leadership is open to modifying the underlying amendment. I understand that as we speak some are shopping language they believe would address this issue. As long as they focus on Social Security, I am willing to do that. I have been very narrow in my advocacy on this floor. While I think some of the other ideas about capital budgeting, emergencies and the military are good, I am not willing to focus on those amendments. I want to focus on Social Security and the importance I think it plays in our society, and therefore I hope those who are shopping amendments will shop in a very narrow fashion and wind up supporting the amendment where we give continued dignity to the seniors of this country.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today, on behalf of the people of Ohio, to express our deepest sympathy to the families of all those who have suffered injury and loss of life in this weekend's tornadoes, flooding, and other natural disasters. Our hearts certainly go out to everyone who has suffered, at this time of their need.

I personally experienced the Xenia tornado of 1974, and I know how awful such devastation can be. When I saw the pictures over the weekend of the homes totally torn apart in Arkansas, I was reminded of what I saw in 1974 in Xenia, OH. I was assistant prosecuting attorney at the time. We heard the tornado was coming and got down in the basement. After the tornado had passed over, I literally crawled out of the basement of the building, what was left of it, and looked at Xenia and saw the unbelievable devastation. So I have some understanding of what the people of Arkansas and the people of other States are going through with regard to these natural disasters.

Let me talk for a moment about the terrible tragedy that took place in my home State of Ohio this weekend, and what we possibly can do to give assistance. The southern part of our State was ravaged by the worst flooding we have experienced in at least 33 years. At least four people have died so far, and 14 counties are now in a state of emergency. Bridges have been wiped out; houses and cars have been swept away. Our thoughts and prayers go to the families of those who have lost their lives, and to all those who have been evacuated from their homes and all those who face this disaster.

Along with Senator GLENN and my colleagues from Ohio in the House of Representatives, I will be working with the administration to make sure the Federal Government helps these Ohioans get back to their homes. I am encouraged by President Clinton's swift response with Federal aid for Arkansas, and I encourage him to help Ohioans as well. We will be working to make sure everyone gets home safely as soon as possible.

Let me also talk about the tremendous job the American Red Cross, the Ohio National Guard, local volunteer groups, local fire departments, and rescue squads are doing in my home State. They have been working this weekend, they are working right now, as we speak. My hat is off to them. I send my congratulations and thanks for the tremendous amount of work they are doing. They are offering a desperately needed helping hand to some families who are having a very, very difficult time.

My wife Fran and I extend our prayers to all who have been touched in any way by this tragedy. To those who have lost their lives and those who have been forced from their homes, and to their families, I stand ready to work with all Ohioans to help their communities return to normal just as soon as possible.

PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, at this point let me turn to something I have talked about on this floor on many occasions in the past 2 years, the issue of the banning of partial-birth abortion.

When the President of the United States justified his veto of the partial-birth abortion bill last year, this is what he said. I will quote now from President Clinton as he vetoed our bill:

> There are a few hundred women every year who have personally agonizing situations where their children are born or about to be born with terrible deformities, which will cause them to die either just before, during or just after childbirth. And these women, among other things, cannot preserve the ability to have further children. . . .''

That was a quote from the President, when he vetoed the partial-birth abortion bill.

In light of those remarks by President Clinton, I hope all Americans heard the media reports last week about the shocking confession of a leader in the abortion rights movement. It turns out that in every material detail the President's comments that I have just quoted, the comments he made in defense of his veto, are false. And the confession of this leader in the abortion rights movement, the confession he made last week which I am going to talk about in more detail in just a moment, that confession shows the comments made by our President were simply not true because the fact is, President Clinton based his veto on information that was not true.

For the last 2 years, a number of us here in the Senate have been trying to ban this horrible practice of partial-birth abortion, a practice in which a baby is partially removed from the mother, partially delivered, and then killed. I believe the horror of this practice is so clear, so heinous, it should truly offer some common ground for those of us who oppose abortion and those who do, in fact, support abortion rights. In my view, one does not have to join the pro-life side in order to oppose this practice. In fact, if you look to some of the Members of the House, for example, who voted with us on this issue, who voted to ban the partial-birth abortion, many of them by their own definition would be classified as pro-choice.

So, this should be an area where pro-choice and pro-life come together. The sad fact is though, Mr. President, we were not, last year, able to get our bill banning partial-birth abortion past President Clinton's veto pen, in large measure because of the rationale used by the President, which was simply wrong. The American people were assured that partial-birth abortion was an extremely rare procedure—one that occurs only a few hundred times a year—and is only used to save mothers whose lives are in extreme danger or where the child has been malformed.

Thomas Jefferson had a good phrase for arguments like this. He called them, ''false facts.'' Because these very impressive sounding arguments, as many of us suspected, turn out to be wrong.

For those of my colleagues—and there can't be very many by now—who have not heard about the startling revelations by Ron Fitzsimmons, let me talk for a moment about them.

Mr. Fitzsimmons is the national director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers. In 1995, when the Senate was considering the partial-birth abortion bill, he was helping lead the fight against it. In fact, he went on ''Nightline'' to argue that the procedure ought to remain legal.

At that time, Mr. Fitzsimmons said that the procedure was rare and was primarily performed to save the lives or the fertility of the mothers.

Now, as we found out last week, because of Mr. Fitzsimmons' own comments, own revelations, own confession, his conscience started gnawing him almost immediately after he had appeared on ''Nightline.'' He says now that he felt physically ill at the lies that he had told. He said to his wife the very next day, according to him, ''I can't do this again. I can't do this again.''

Meanwhile, President Clinton was using Mr. Fitzsimmons' false statements to buttress his case for vetoing the partial-birth abortion bill. And, as I said last week, Mr. Fitzsimmons at long last came in from the cold. He admitted that, to use his own words, he ''lied through his teeth.''

LIED THROUGH HIS TEETH

The facts, as he now publicly acknowledges them, are clear. Partial-