

called the decade of greed, the 1980's, when we took a small company, so small it had four full-time employees, and saw it grow to the point, when I left prior to my run for the Senate, when it had 700 employees. I have commented it was the tax policies that were pursued in those years, pursued primarily by President Ronald Reagan, that made it possible for us to grow that company. But we were attacked because it was the decade of greed, and, yes, indeed, we did do well.

I would like to point out that that company that grew in that period from 4 employees to 700, now has over 3,000. The momentum that was set in place in the 1980's is carrying forward into the 1990's, and it is that company and others like it that are providing the income taxes that make it possible for us to have this kind of a budget deal.

So, as we look at the whole thing, let us understand that there are many things about it that I do not like. There are many things about it that many of the rest of us do not like. But the reason we were able to get this degree of agreement comes from the strength of the economy, and the one lesson we should learn, as we look at this budget agreement, is simply this: As important as anything else we do around here are those things that we do that will cause the economy to grow at a more rapid rate. Whether it is increasing taxes in a certain area or decreasing tax rates in another area, whether it is increasing spending on things like infrastructure and other investments, or whether it is decreasing spending on areas where there is a degree of waste and fraud, all of these things need to be done with the primary goal of seeing that the economy will increase in size.

As it does, a number of things happen. The demand on our social spending goes down. There is no better welfare project in the world than a job, and a booming economy creates more jobs for more people. And we see it in terms of the impact on Government. We should pay attention to those kinds of things.

Mr. President, I will have more to say on this as the budget process goes forward, but, while the weekend talk shows were still ringing in our ears, I wanted to make this general statement.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to continue as in morning business, on another subject, for up to another 5 minutes.

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

Mr. BENNETT. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BENNETT pertaining to the introduction of Senate Resolution 82 are located in today's RECORD under "Submissions of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

Mr. BENNETT. I thank the Chair for his time and attention and yield the floor.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

Mr. BENNETT. Noticing the absence of a Senator who wishes to take advantage of that, 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for the next 10 minutes in morning business.

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

#### REASONABLE EFFORTS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I want to call the attention of everyone in the Senate to a very important article that appeared in yesterday's Washington Post Magazine. The article profiles a woman by the name of Diane Hendel. Diane Hendel was the foster mother of twins who had been abandoned by their natural mother. In telling Diane Hendel's story, this article paints a devastating portrait of the foster care system, the foster care system not just in the District of Columbia, but the foster care system across this country.

It is Diane Hendel's story, and it is told from her point of view. But much more important, it is really the story of these two children, these twins, and what our foster care system did and is doing to them. It tells the story of these two children who were abandoned with serious physical problems, and it tells the story of the foster mother, Diane Hendel, who for 2½ years nurtured them, loved them, kept them going, became their mother.

Then this article tells the story of a foster care system bent on family reunification, that when these little children were 3½ years of age, that system decided the natural mother, who had abandoned them, was now the person that they should go to. It tells the horrifying and sad story of these little 3½-year-old children being taken away from the only mother that they ever really knew, to their new mother. All in the name of family reunification. All in the name of protecting the rights of the natural mother, without, in my opinion, any consideration for the rights not of the foster mother, but for the rights of those two little girls.

Mr. President, there are 450,000 children in foster care across this country today. These children are spending far too great a portion of their lives in a legal limbo. Early childhood years are

a crucial time in the development of any child. Indeed, there was a recent White House conference devoted to this very subject. It seems to me that as we pay more and more attention to what we all intuitively know—and that is how important the early years are in a child's development, and there was a whole magazine, in Newsweek, this past week, a special issue devoted to early childhood development. We realize, more and more, how precious and important those first few months, those first few years are, to the development of the child and who we become, and what we are is shaped in the first year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years.

Is it not time that we reexamined in society how cavalier we are about having children who have been taken away from their parents, then sit in sort of a legal limbo, for a year, 2 years, 3 years or 4 years, all the while we, in society, we adults, try to reunify these families? But all the while, all the while, these children are growing up.

Mr. President, children do not have a second opportunity to have their childhood. You never have a second chance to be 2, 3, or 4. What is happening across this country in too many cases is that children are taken, put in a foster home—sometimes multiple foster homes—all the while we, as a society, wait until that magical time when the parents have been fixed—the natural parents. They have been cured, they no longer snort cocaine, they no longer drink alcohol all the time, they no longer abuse their children, and some day we hopefully will put them back, put these children who have been removed, back with these natural parents. I think, Mr. President, that we have to start worrying about the children's rights and less about the rights of the natural parents.

Every piece of new evidence shows us, Mr. President, that the system, the foster care system, is keeping children in foster care for too long. I think this should spur us to action. If any of the Members of the Senate want to become horrified, want to see what is wrong with our foster care system, let them read this story. I think it would shock any American to read it.

The Washington Post article that I just referred to outlines how the principle of making reasonable efforts to reunify troubled families is too often misinterpreted to mean reunifying families at all costs—even abusive families that are really families in name only. Abusive parents, abusive birth parents, are, today, Mr. President, given a second chance, a third chance, a fourth chance, a fifth chance, and on and on, to get their lives back together so then they can welcome their children back home. All the while, while they are trying to get their act together, their lives together, their poor little children are shuttled from foster home to foster home, spending their most formative years deprived of what all children should have—a safe, stable, loving, and permanent home.