

taken and also because of the very, very skillful diplomacy—very skillful diplomacy—of the Secretary General, I would like to thank the Secretary General for his effort.

We haven't dotted all the i's and crossed all the t's, and we have not seen the specifics, but I believe as a United States Senator that his mission was a sacred mission. I am very hopeful that we will have a political settlement. I am very hopeful that diplomacy will have worked, and I think the world will be better for that. Whenever we can avoid loss of life, let's first do that.

So we all wait to see. From what I have read, from what I have heard, and the Secretary General is a man who is very careful with his words, when he says he believes this will be acceptable to the United Nations, to the Security Council, I don't think he would have said that unless there is good cause for it.

So I am very hopeful that this will be acceptable to the Security Council, and we will have a resolution to this conflict without having to go to war, without having to take military action.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, let me briefly talk about this campaign finance reform bill that is coming to the floor. By the way, this, I think, will be the business of the Senate this week. This is a core issue. This is the core problem, and this is going to be a real important debate for our country. I think it should be very clear to everybody in the country where all of us stand.

I know we have differences. Probably the Chair and I have differences on this issue. But I can't help but believe that we can't get some good things done together, because I can't but believe that any of us who have been through these campaigns just hate this system. It is just crazy.

I remember when I ran in 1990 in Minnesota the first time around. It was as if the only thing that mattered was how much money you had in terms of who gets to run, in terms of whether you have a viable campaign, in terms of who wins, in terms of what issues get discussed, in terms of who the people are who have access to the Congress all too often, as opposed to so many of the people who don't.

This is a core issue, and if you believe that each person should count as one and no more than one in a representative democracy, all the ways in which big money have come to dominate politics severely undercut our democracy. As a matter of fact, I think it is part of what has led to this serious decline of participation of our citizens which really can only lead to decline of our democracy.

So there are many concerns that people have, and they care about a lot of issues that are important to themselves and their families. But the prob-

lem is, they don't believe that their concerns are of much concern in the Halls of the Congress or, for that matter, the White House, because they believe that the political process in Washington, DC, has become so dominated by big money and special interests.

How important it is that we at least take some steps toward eliminating some of this corrupting influence of this big money and try to begin to make these campaigns sane, try to begin to make these campaigns at least a little bit more of a level playing field.

The Washington Post had an editorial today:

McCain-Feingold is already a limited bill.

I agree. I wish we had the clean money-clean election option passed by Maine and Vermont, but McCain-Feingold is a very important step forward.

For lack of votes, the original proposals meant to clean out the stables of congressional campaign finance almost all have been dropped. Congress's indignation with regard to financing of presidential United States campaigns somehow does not extend to the financing of its own.

Well, I would just ask people in Minnesota and people in the country: Please be vigilant. Please keep an eye out on our work. Do not let the U.S. Senate block reform. And do not let the U.S. Senate pass some piece of legislation that has that made-for-Congress look with a great acronym which pretends to do so much and ends up doing so little.

That is the worst of all cases. I'd just as soon we not do anything as opposed to passing something which we claim will make an enormous difference but really does not and will just add to the disillusionment of people in our country.

So I just say, this will be an important week. This is going to be an important debate. I hope we will get some things done.

For my own part, if the majority leader will let us, I will have a set of amendments that will apply to the Congress. I will have a set of amendments that will apply to our campaigns which will be an effort to begin to go after some of the influence of big money in congressional campaigns along with some of the other things that we will be talking about, like soft money.

If I cannot bring those amendments to the floor in this debate, I will bring these amendments to the floor in the next bill that comes up or the following bill that comes up, because I do not think there is any more important issue that is facing this country.

So to Minnesotans and to people in the country: Please hold all of us accountable. Do not let people get away with blocking reform. Do not let any of us get away with passing some piece of legislation which has no teeth and makes really no difference at all. Make sure that we take some steps in this U.S. Senate that will at least get some

of this big money out of politics and at least move us a little bit more toward elections as opposed to auctions going to the highest bidder.

Mr. President, I think that I have about run out of my time. I yield the floor to my colleagues from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR ABRAHAM RIBICOFF

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate an extraordinary life. We in the U.S. Senate have lost a former colleague and a leading light of the U.S. Senate—Abraham Ribicoff.

Abe Ribicoff, Mr. President, was born and raised in New Britain, CT. He was the son of poor Polish immigrants. Yet this humble son of Connecticut rose to become one of our State's and our country's most distinguished public servants. He served in this body for 18 years—beginning in January of 1963 and retiring in 1981.

One of the highest honors I have had in public life, Mr. President, was to succeed Abe Ribicoff in the U.S. Senate, and I take great pride in the fact that in 1981 Abe Ribicoff placed my name in nomination for this office.

Abe Ribicoff believed fervently that the highest calling one can have in American life is public service. He obeyed that calling as few Americans ever have. He is the only person in our Nation's history to have served as a State legislator, a municipal judge, a U.S. Representative, a Governor, a Presidential Cabinet Secretary, and a U.S. Senator.

But to appreciate Abe Ribicoff, it is important to understand that he did more than occupy an impressive collection of public offices. What distinguished Abe Ribicoff from his peers, from his predecessors, and from those who have come after him is not the number of offices he held, but the manner in which he held them. Abe Ribicoff brought to his life's work integrity, candor, high principle, an unshakeable faith in America's Government, and a deeply held belief in the goodness and decency of our people.

Abe Ribicoff had the rarest and most important of all qualities we seek in public leaders—courage in the public arena. Time and again, in ways large and small, he demonstrated a commitment to principle even in the face of fierce opposition. He was willing to fight for what he believed to be right. And he fought hard, though always—always—in a decent and honorable manner.

In Abe Ribicoff's politics, there was no place for meanness, no place for personal attacks. He understood the importance of public opinion, but he never relied on polls to shape his political decisions. He was guided not by emotion, not by numbers, but by judgment, by reason, and by principle.