

your estimating is wrong, you have to have an amendment. By then, you have people who have been receiving the entitlement; right? Not so easy to change.

So I commend you on the thrust of the amendment and the remarks tonight. I think they are welcome in the debate we have had for the last 2 years.

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Let me thank the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee for those remarks. I think they are candid and appropriate to the very essence of my own that, at a time when we have an opportunity to begin to shape control over mandatory spending, we ought to take a look at this time, and we can do that in a unique period in our Nation's history which we all fought to get to. So I thank my colleague for those comments.

I ask to retain the balance of my time.

Mr. DOMENICI. I understand the amendment will take its place among the many amendments which will be at some point appropriately sequenced for votes.

Does the Senator from New Jersey wish to speak?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I listened with interest and do not want to enlarge the debate at this time. Obviously, the hour is late, but I listened with a degree of interest and care to the comments of the Senator from Idaho. And we have this debate sometimes that centers around whether the glass is half empty or half full. And we are looking at the same matrix, but I see it differently. I do not see a nation out of control. I do not see an economy that is in great jeopardy. I do not despair over what is taking place in our economic structure. Yes, we are paying more taxes in total, but that is because people's incomes have gone up and thus they are paying a larger share of the tax burden than they used to pay.

But when we look at a time when the unemployment rate compares to all-time lows, when we see inflation so well controlled, when we see the investment climate in our country so appetizing, no one knows when this is going to change, but the fact of the matter is, lots of people, lots of hard-working, what we will call modest-income people, have made good returns on their investments. And, Lord willing, they will be protected.

But why is all that taking place? Why has the stock market galloped up like it has? It is not simply because there is some kind of a speculation fever out there. A lot of it has to do with the fact that the United States is the most attractive investment country in the world. People feel secure. They know if they invest in America that they have a better chance of keeping their money safe and getting a return than any other place because of the structure of our financial being. We cannot ignore these things.

I share the Senator's view. I would like to see us paying off the debt. I am one of those who said, yes, I want to shore up Social Security. And how are we going to do it? We are going to do it by paying down the debt. The President has forecast over \$1 trillion worth of surpluses over the next 10 years. That is a pretty encouraging prediction.

So, I hope we will continue this debate on the morrow, because I think there are other people here who would also want to comment.

Mr. President, I do not think we ought to ever lock ourselves into straitjackets to say that you cannot do this unless you do that. We are sent here to exercise judgment. And when I hear the speeches of some of my colleagues, I say, well, we sound like a bunch of recalcitrant children who have to be locked in a corner or put in our seats, or we are so bad—why can't we control ourselves? I do not see it that way.

I must tell you, I have great respect for those that I disagree deeply with here. They are sent here to represent a constituency who thinks that these people, the Senators in this Chamber, are going to carry a point of view that they share. And if not, there is a test that comes every 6 years. And you can see what happens. You have either passed the test or you have flunked it; it is very decisive.

But with all of that, I just do not see this, if I might call it, self-flagellation, this beating of ourselves. Look at the facts. The economy is really good. I know that I feel better about my children's future now than I did a few years ago. I think we have proven one thing. And some would say, well, we have not, Alan Greenspan has. He is part of our crowd, whether we think we are in his league or not.

The fact of the matter is, we have inflation under control—something that was hard to believe could be done, and has not caused deflation, has not caused a crisis. Things are going along very well.

So I hope, Mr. President, we will have a chance to chat about this a little bit tomorrow, and I hope we will be able to encourage our colleagues to vote against the Craig amendment, to say that we do not have to put on the handcuffs and apologize for our behavior. I do not think I do everything right, but I know one thing: I work at what I do. And so does everybody else here.

I do not think there is anybody here who shirks their responsibility, who does not take it seriously. And I do not think I have to be put in a corner like a child and told, well, you are not going to be allowed to do this unless you do that; you are not going to be allowed to spend money. How do we know when the crisis is coming?

We have done the things we said we ought to do. We have a balanced budget. I think we are all proud of that. We can argue whether it is CBO balanced.

We say, yes it is. We all kind of believe that on a unified budget basis we are going to be seeing a slight surplus in the very short period. So I hope our colleagues will stand up and say no to limiting our ability to use our heads, to use our judgment, to take the risk of our votes and to see if we can do things without limiting our ability to act.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I think we are about ready, as soon as the clock strikes 10 o'clock, to recess. I think I have a long enough list of unanimous consent requests for all those wonderfully glowing, smiling faces lined up alongside of the dais there. We will be 1 minute or 2 past 10 before we finish.

Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that the vote in relationship to the Conrad amendment No. 2174 now occur at 2 p.m., with no second-degree amendments in order prior to the vote.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. I also ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes the budget resolution on Wednesday, there be 20 hours remaining under the overall statutory time limitation. And, finally, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes the resolution on Wednesday, the Coverdell amendment No. 2199 be the pending business.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business.

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

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: TRIBUTE TO SISTER MAURICE CROWLEY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today is the last day of Women's History Month." Throughout the month of March, we've paid tribute to the vision of women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and Susan B. Anthony, the founders of the first Women's Rights Convention 150 years ago in Seneca Falls, New York. We've recognized the historic achievements and celebrated the legacies of Ameila Earhart, Marion Anderson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Dolores Huerta and hundreds of other American leaders.

During Women's History Month, it is also appropriate that we pay tribute to the countless American women whose names and great works are known only to their families, neighbors and friends. These women may not grace the pages of history books, but their contributions as mothers, teachers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and scientists have