

ought to be able to say to those working poor that we understand, when they work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, they ought not to be continuing to live in poverty.

Mr. President, those issues are going to come back to us and we will address them, I guarantee you, before the end of the session.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed as in morning business for up to 25 minutes.

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

THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION OF PRESIDENT CLINTON

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to make the most difficult and distasteful statement, for me probably the most difficult statement I have made on this floor in the 10 years I have been a Member of the U.S. Senate.

On August 17, President Clinton testified before a grand jury convened by the independent counsel and then talked to the American people about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, a former White House intern. He told us that the relationship was "not appropriate," that it was "wrong," and that it was "a critical lapse of judgment and a personal failure" on his part. In addition, after 7 months of denying that he had engaged in a sexual relationship with Ms. Lewinsky, the President admitted that his "public comments about this matter gave a false impression." He said, "I misled people."

Mr. President, my immediate reaction to this statement that night it was delivered was deep disappointment and personal anger. I was disappointed because the President of the United States had just confessed to engaging in an extramarital affair with a young woman in his employ and to willfully deceiving the Nation about his conduct. I was personally angry because President Clinton had, by his disgraceful behavior, jeopardized his administration's historic record of accomplishment, much of which grew out of the principles and programs that he and I and many others had worked on together in the new Democratic movement. I was also angry because I was one of the many people who had said over the preceding 7 months that if the President clearly and explicitly denies the allegations against him, that of course I believe him.

Since that Monday night I have not commented on this matter publicly. I thought I had an obligation to consider the President's admissions more objectively, less personally, and to try to put them in a clearer perspective. And I felt that I owed that much to the President, for whom I have great affection and admiration, and who I truly

believe has worked tirelessly to make life tangibly better in so many ways for so many Americans.

But the truth is that, after much reflection, my feelings of disappointment and anger have not dissipated, except now these feelings have gone beyond my personal dismay to a larger, graver sense of loss for our country, a reckoning of the damage that the President's conduct has done to the proud legacy of his Presidency, and ultimately an accounting of the impact of his actions on our democracy and its moral foundations. The implications for our country are so serious that I feel a responsibility to my constituents in Connecticut, as well as to my conscience, to voice my concerns forthrightly and publicly. And I can think of no more appropriate place to do that than on this great Senate floor.

I have chosen to speak particularly at this time before the independent counsel files his report because, while we do not know enough yet to answer the question of whether there are legal consequences of the President's conduct, we do know enough from what the President acknowledged on August 17 to answer a separate and distinct set of questions about the moral consequences for our country. Mr. President, I have come to this floor many times in the past to speak with my colleagues about the concerns which are so widely shared in this Chamber and throughout the Nation that our society's standards are sinking; that our common moral code is deteriorating and that our public life is coarsening.

In doing so, I have specifically criticized leaders of the entertainment industry for the way they have used the enormous influence they wield to weaken our common values. And now, because the President commands at least as much attention and exerts at least as much influence on our collective consciousness as any Hollywood celebrity or television show, it is hard to ignore the impact of the misconduct the President has admitted to on our culture, on our character and on our children.

To begin with, I must respectfully disagree with the President's contention that his relationship with Monica Lewinsky and the way in which he misled us about it is nobody's business but his family's and that even Presidents have private lives, as he said.

Whether he or we think it fair or not, the reality is in 1998 that a President's private life is public. Contemporary news media standards will have it no other way. Surely, this President was given fair notice of that by the amount of time the news media has dedicated to investigating his personal life during the 1992 campaign and in the years since.

But there is more to this than modern media intrusiveness. The President is not just the elected leader of our country. He is, as Presidential scholar Clinton Rossiter observed, "The one-man distillation of the American peo-

ple," and as President Taft said at another time, "The personal embodiment and representative of their dignity and majesty." So when his personal conduct is embarrassing, it is sadly so not just for him and his family, it is embarrassing for all of us as Americans.

The President is a role model who, because of his prominence and the moral authority that emanates from his office, sets standards of behavior for the people he serves. His duty, as the Reverend Nathan Baxter of the National Cathedral here in Washington said in a recent sermon, "is nothing less than the stewardship of our values." So no matter how much the President or others may wish to compartmentalize the different spheres of his life, the inescapable truth is that the President's private conduct can and often does have profound public consequences.

In this case, the President apparently had extramarital relations with an employee half his age and did so in the workplace, in the vicinity of the Oval Office. Such behavior is not just inappropriate, it is immoral and it is harmful, for it sends a message of what is acceptable behavior to the larger American family, particularly to our children, which is as influential as the negative message that is communicated by the entertainment culture.

If you doubt that, just ask America's parents about the intimate and frequently unseemly sexual questions their young children have been asking them about and discussing since the President's relationship with Ms. Lewinsky became public 7 months ago. I have had many of those conversations with parents, particularly in Connecticut, and from them I conclude that parents across our country feel much as I do that something very sad and sordid has happened in American life when I cannot watch the news on television with my 10-year-old daughter anymore.

This, unfortunately, is all too familiar territory for America's families in today's "anything goes" culture, where sexual promiscuity is too often treated as just another lifestyle choice with little risk of adverse consequences. It is this mindset that has helped to threaten the integrity and stability of the family which continues to be the most important unit of civilized society, the place where we raise our children and teach them to be responsible citizens, to develop and nurture their personal and moral faculties.

President Clinton, in fact, has shown during the course of his Presidency that he understands this and the broad concern in the public about the threat to the family. He has used the bully pulpit of his Presidency to eloquently and effectively call for the renewal of our common values, particularly the principle of personal responsibility and our common commitment to family. He has spoken out admirably against sexual promiscuity among teenagers in clear terms of right and wrong, emphasizing the consequences involved.

All of that makes the President's misconduct so confusing and so damaging. The President's relationship with Ms. Lewinsky not only contradicted the values he has publicly embraced over the last 6 years, it has, I fear, compromised his moral authority at a time when Americans of every political persuasion agree that the decline of the family is one of the most pressing problems we are facing.

Nevertheless, I believe that the President could have lessened the harm his relationship with Ms. Lewinsky has caused if he had acknowledged his mistake and spoken with candor about it to the American people shortly after it became public in January. But, as we now know, he chose not to do this. This deception is particularly troubling because it was not just a reflexive and, in many ways, understandable human act of concealment to protect himself and his family from what he called the embarrassment of his own conduct when he was confronted with it in the deposition in the Jones case, but rather it was the intentional and premeditated decision to do so.

In choosing this path, I fear that the President has undercut the efforts of millions of American parents who are naturally trying to instill in our children the value of honesty. As most any mother and father knows, kids have a singular ability to detect double standards. So we can safely assume that it will be that much more difficult to convince our sons and daughters of the importance of telling the truth when the most powerful man in the Nation evades it.

Many parents I have spoken with in Connecticut confirm this unfortunate consequence. The President's intentional and consistent statements more deeply may also undercut the trust that the American people have in his word.

Under the Constitution, as Presidential scholar Richard Neustadt has noted, the President's ultimate source of authority, particularly his moral authority, is the power to persuade, to mobilize public opinion, to build consensus behind a common agenda, and at this the President has been extraordinarily effective. But that power hinges on the President's support among the American people and their faith and confidence in his motivations and agenda, yes, but also in his word. As Teddy Roosevelt once explained, "My power vanishes into thin air the instant that my fellow citizens, who are straight and honest, cease to believe that I represent them and fight for what is straight and honest. That is all the strength that I have."

Sadly, with his deception, President Clinton may have weakened the great power and strength that he possesses of which President Roosevelt spoke. I know this is a concern that many of my colleagues share, which is to say that the President has hurt his credibility and, therefore, perhaps his chances of moving his policy agenda

forward. But I believe that the harm the President's actions have caused extends beyond the political arena.

I am afraid that the misconduct the President has admitted may be reinforcing one of the worst messages being delivered by our popular culture, which is that values are fungible. And I am concerned that his misconduct may help to blur some of the most bright lines of right and wrong in our society.

Mr. President, I said at the outset that this was a very difficult statement to write and deliver. That is true, very true. And it is true, in large part, because it is so personal and yet needs to be public, but also because of my fear that it will appear unnecessarily judgmental. I truly regret this. I know from the Bible that only God can judge people. The most that we can do is to comment, without condemning individuals. And in this case I have tried to comment on the consequences of the President's conduct on our country.

I know that the President is far from alone in the wrongdoing he has admitted. We, as humans, are all imperfect. We are all sinners. Many have betrayed a loved one, and most have told lies. Members of Congress have certainly been guilty of such behavior, as have some previous Presidents. We must try to understand the complexity and difficulty of personal relationships, which should give us pause before passing judgment on them. We all fall short of the standards our best values set for us. Certainly I do.

But the President, by virtue of the office he sought and was elected to, has traditionally been held to a higher standard. This is as it should be. Because the American President, as I quoted earlier, is not just the one-man distillation of the American people but today the most powerful person in the world, and, as such, the consequences of his misbehavior, even private misbehavior, are much greater than that of an average citizen, a CEO, or even a Senator.

That is what I believe Presidential scholar James David Barber, in his book "The Presidential Character," was getting at when he wrote that the public demands "a sense of legitimacy from, and in, the Presidency * * * There is more to this than dignity, more than propriety. The President is expected to personify our betterness in an inspiring way, to express in what he does and is (not just what he says) a moral idealism which, in much of the public mind, is the very opposite of politics."

Just as the American people are demanding of their leaders, though, they are also fundamentally fair and forgiving, which is why I was so hopeful the President could begin to repair the damage done with his address to the Nation on the 17th. But like so many others, I came away feeling that, for reasons that are thoroughly human, he missed a great opportunity that night.

He failed to clearly articulate to the American people that he recognized

how significant and consequential his wrongdoing was and how badly he felt about it. He failed to show, I think, that he understood his behavior had diminished the office he holds and the country he serves and that it is inconsistent with the mainstream American values that he has advanced as President.

And I regret that he failed to acknowledge that while Mr. Starr and Ms. Lewinsky, Mrs. Tripp, and the news media have each in their own way contributed to the crisis we now face, his Presidency would not be in peril if it had not been for the behavior he himself described as "wrong" and "inappropriate."

Because the conduct the President admitted to that night was serious and his assumption of responsibility inadequate, the last 3 weeks have been dominated by a cacophony of media and political voices calling for impeachment or resignation or censure, while a lesser chorus implores us to "move on" and get this matter behind us.

Appealing as that latter option may be to many people who are understandably weary of this crisis, the transgressions the President has admitted to are too consequential for us to walk away and leave the impression for our children today and for our posterity tomorrow that what he acknowledges he did within the White House is acceptable behavior for our Nation's leader.

On the contrary, as I have said, it is wrong and unacceptable and should be followed by some measure of public rebuke and accountability. We in Congress—elected representatives of all the American people—are surely capable institutionally of expressing such disapproval through a resolution of reprimand or censure of the President for his misconduct, but it is premature to do so, as my colleagues of both parties seem to agree, until we have received the report of the independent counsel and the White House's response to it.

In the same way, it seems to me that talk of impeachment and resignation at this time is unjust and unwise. It is unjust because we do not know enough in fact, and will not until the independent counsel reports and the White House responds, to conclude whether we have crossed the high threshold our Constitution rightly sets for overturning the results of a popular election in our democracy and bringing on the national trauma of removing an incumbent President from office.

For now, in fact, all we know for certain is what the President acknowledged on August 17. As far as I can see, the rest is rumor, speculation, or hearsay—much less than is required by Members of the House and Senate in the dispatch of the solemn responsibilities that the Constitution gives us in such circumstances.

I believe the talk of impeachment and resignation now is unwise because it ignores the reality that, while the

independent counsel proceeds with his investigation, the President is still our Nation's leader, our Commander in Chief. Economic uncertainty and other problems here at home, as well as the fiscal and political crises in Russia and Asia, and the growing threats posed by Iraq, North Korea, and worldwide terrorism, all demand the President's focused leadership. For that reason, while the legal process moves forward, I believe it is important that we provide the President with the time and space and support he needs to carry out his most important duties and protect our national interest and security.

That time and space may also give the President additional opportunities to accept personal responsibility for his behavior, to rebuild public trust in his leadership, to recommit himself to the values of opportunity, responsibility, and community that brought him to office, and to act to heal the wounds in our national character.

In the meantime, as the debate on this matter proceeds, and as the investigation goes forward, we would all be advised, I would respectfully suggest, to heed the wisdom of Abraham Lincoln's second annual address to Congress in 1862. With the Nation at war with itself, President Lincoln warned:

If there ever could be a proper time for mere catch arguments, that time is surely not now. In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and eternity.

I believe that we are at such a time again today. With so much at stake, we too must resist the impulse toward "catch arguments" and reflex reactions. Let us proceed in accordance with our Nation's traditional moral compass, yes, but in a manner that is fair and at a pace that is deliberate and responsible.

Let us, as a nation, honestly confront the damage that the President's actions over the last 7 months have caused, but not to the exclusion of the good that his leadership has done over the past 6 years nor at the expense of our common interest as Americans. And let us be guided by the conscience of the Constitution, which calls on us to place the common good above any partisan or personal interest, as we now in our time work together to resolve this serious challenge to our democracy.

I thank the Chair. I thank my colleagues. I yield the floor.

Mr. KERREY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I do not know if the distinguished Senator from Connecticut said anything between the time I left my office and came here to the floor with which I disagree, but in the time that I watched him from my office and listened to his words from my office, and from what I have heard him say in conclusion, I have come before the Senate and I don't disagree

with a single word that the Senator from Connecticut has said.

I have passed a few words my way at the direction of the President from time to time, some of them a bit more harsh than I would have liked and preferred. It is sometimes my nature to say things a little too loudly than is deserved in a particular situation. And I have at the same time praised, as I heard the distinguished Senator from Connecticut do, the President's numerous accomplishments. And they are numerous. I do not question his patriotism. I do not question his instinct for service. I have praised his job as Commander in Chief and have said to the country that there is no better example than Bill Clinton that a civilian with no military service can be our Commander in Chief and can learn as he did, the hard way in Somalia. There are tremendous responsibilities that come with that job; and he has listened to the men and women who serve our country. He has been an exceptional Commander in Chief.

I praised him on a number of other occasions where he has performed in a remarkably generous and good-hearted way.

I have found, as the Senator from Connecticut did, much with which I disagreed in his statement. I believe it is important for those of us who serve, especially in leadership responsibilities, as I do on the Democratic side, chairing the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, to come and say that this is not just inappropriate behavior.

I have heard the Senator from Connecticut and his leadership in calling our attention—by that I mean those of us who serve here in Congress. We all get, from time to time, a bit isolated. I work hard and long trying to do the best that I can for the people of Nebraska. It doesn't give me much time to watch daytime television, to watch what is being broadcast, to listen to what is being said, to consider how this could damage the moral fiber of our Nation, especially the moral fiber of our children upon whom we depend for so much. And he has come to us and told us what is going on and called to our attention that we need to be mindful of the things that we say and the things that we do because our young people will very often do as we say, far less than they do as we do—they will follow our example.

Thus, it seems to me what the Senator from Connecticut has done is come as an American—not as a Democrat, but as an American, as a U.S. Senator. I wish to join him and say that the President has got to go far further than he did in his speech to the Nation. This is not just inappropriate behavior. This is not a private matter. This is far more important for our country and threatens far more than his Presidency, unless we deal with it in a more honest, and as the Senator from Connecticut has said, noncondemning fashion. Lord knows, I am the

last person—the Senator from Connecticut said he was a sinner, and I am at least as big. I do not come to the floor arguing that I have superior moral authority to comment on the President's behavior. I am coming simply to say that it is far more than inappropriate, and it is, unquestionably, public. It is serious beyond our ability to do our work.

I think that we can come back as a Congress and finish out our business and perform our responsibilities and do the things that we ask permission to do and we sought the power of this office from our people to do. But there is a moral dimension to what we do that in many ways may be more important than any legislation that we enact.

So I have come here to thank the Senator from Connecticut. It was a thoughtful presentation. They were words that we needed to hear. I believe, in fact, they could become the foundation, the basis, for us to heal a wound that will otherwise not just divide Democrat from Democrat—which is likely to occur—but open up a fissure in America that will make it difficult for us to do what all of us, I believe, think is the most important thing to do, and that is to help our children acquire the character they need not just to be good working people but to be good human beings.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, I rise with the same purpose as my colleague and friend from Nebraska, to thank the Senator from Connecticut for saying what needed saying, and saying it in a manner that gives us hope at a time of profound despond.

In the aftermath of the President's speech on August 17, I commented that it was not adequate. But it was not until just this moment that the full measure of that inadequacy was presented to us in the context of the needs of the Nation, of the profound moral consequences that will arise not just from what has happened but from what might happen if we do not proceed with the measure of moral compass, but also with a capacity to understand we are all sinners. I say to my friends from Nebraska and from Connecticut, I am the oldest of the three of us and, therefore, have sinned the most. On that you may be sure.

But we have to resolve this. The Senator did not call for any immediate, precipitous action. We have a process in place—imperfect in so many respects, but in place—and in time, not distant time, a point of decision will come to the Congress, a decision will come to the Congress, and it will be for us to discharge our sworn duty. We take an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States, uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic—foreign and domestic, sir, which acknowledges that we can be our own worst enemies if we do not hew to

our best standards, knowing that we are all imperfect but have an obligation to do our very best.

In the words of Lord Mansfield in a case heard in London in 1772 (*Somersett v. Stewart*, 12 Geo. 3), the issue was a profoundly moral one. A man had a slave in England he wished returned to Jamaica to sell. That would have been legal under American law at the time. It was not legal under English law. In an epic statement, Mansfield said, "Fiat justitia, ruat coelum"—"Let justice be done, though the heavens fall." But it also could be indicated, "If justice is done with sufficient regularity and moderation, the heavens need not fall. They might even rejoice in the nation that has shown a capacity for redemption and self-renewal."

So I wish to state my profound gratitude for what you have said and done, and hope we will listen to your wise counsel. I might just say it was in so many ways representative of the very best of our Old and New Testament heritage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I was somewhat hesitant to speak at this time because I didn't in any way want to make this a partisan series of speeches, but my effort here and my intent is to make it totally nonpartisan and bipartisan.

I won't say anything today about the specifics of the substance that the Senator from Connecticut addressed. I made my comments on this subject on Monday of this week at a press conference down the hall. But I listened carefully, very intently to what the Senator from Connecticut had to say. I don't think there was very much more or less in what he had to say than what I had said earlier. I think our desire and intent, and our wishes and hopes are both the same.

Instead, I want to talk today about the Senator from Connecticut. I expected no less than this from him. He is truly one of the Senators in this body that is always standing for the right thing, trying to make sure that we do have a moral compass as individuals, as an institution. I knew that at some point he would rise and put it all into the proper perspective and that he would not go too far, that he would make us stop and think—not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Senators and Americans—about the seriousness and the difficulties that have been caused by this situation. So I want to thank the Senator from Connecticut for what he had to say, and what he has had to say on many other occasions on other subjects, and for the leadership he has provided on children and the violence and the filth they are being exposed to, and the leadership and pressure he has exerted to try to get us as a country and those involved directly in providing those films, those scenes,

to do something about it. So I thank him.

I know it was not easy. I know he has taken time to think about it and pray about it for over about 3 weeks now. I know there was probably a lot of reason not to say anything. But I also know that his conscience dictated that he had to express himself. I commend him for it and I thank him for it.

I also appreciate the fact that Senator KERREY of Nebraska and the Senator from New York, Mr. MOYNIHAN, would come here and lend his support to what the Senator from Connecticut had to say. This very day, I had lunch with the Senator from New York. Maybe the American people do not realize that we are friends off this floor and that we enjoy each other's company. And we do travel together. We get to be together with our wives and sometimes even our children. But today at lunch, with Senator MACK of Florida, Senator ROTH of Delaware, we were joined by the Senator from New York. We talked about the very serious situation in Russia. Every time he joins us, I immediately want to raise a part of the world and say, "What about India and Pakistan?" or "What about that country or this situation?" He is such a fountain of knowledge and has a wealth of experience and a tremendous understanding of history and people. I found it very informative, and I have been dwelling on what he had to say about Russia this afternoon.

I think at times like this, when our Constitution is going to be reviewed again as to what it means and when we are going to have to make decisions about what to do when we are presented with a set of facts—which may be nothing—it is going to be so important that there are some men and women on both sides of the aisle in this body, and in the other body, that can reach across the aisle and say, "What do we do?" and, most important, "What is best for our country?" With these men, and with others in this Chamber here today such as Senator HATCH, Senator COATS, Senator NICKLES, and the great STROM THURMOND, I am sure we will find a way to rise above petty politics and do the right thing, and Senator LIEBERMAN will lead the way.

I yield the floor.

Mr. THURMOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

PRAISING SENATOR LIEBERMAN

Mr. THURMOND. The Senator from Connecticut, who has just made some remarks, is one of the finest and ablest Members of this body. For as long as he has been in the Senate, and the longer I have dealt with him, I am more impressed with him. He is a member of the opposite party from me, but we can't go by party in deciding the merits of a man. We have to decide his own qualities. The Senator from Con-

necticut has impressed me as having the right qualities, which we all could emulate.

Mr. HATCH addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

GRATITUDE TO SENATORS LIEBERMAN, KERREY, AND MOYNIHAN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, in many respects, I have been pulling for the President to pull through this problem and one who had hoped that the speech he gave never would have had to have been given, and who still is very concerned about our country and how this matter is handled.

I want to express my gratitude to the distinguished Senator from Connecticut and my dear friends from Nebraska and New York, as well, for the moral compass that they have brought to the U.S. Senate floor this day, and really for the fine work they have done through the years in some of these very difficult matters.

When the distinguished Senator from Connecticut stands and speaks on these particular issues, he does so with authority because he has spoken out on so many moral issues in the past, and I think with good effect. I think it is important for all of us to reserve judgment on these matters until we have the report of Judge Starr. At that time, we can look at it and make determinations as to what should be done. There is no question that the President has been embarrassed by some of the things that have happened. There is also no question that these are difficult times for him, his wife, his daughter, and others in the administration—frankly, for all of us. Let's hope that we can approach this matter with kindness and deliberation and do the things that really need to be done in this area and, again, as the majority leader said, do what is in the best interest of our country. That may give us a number of alternatives that may be very just and worthwhile and beneficial to the country. Let's hope we choose the right path.

In any event, I express my gratitude to these members of the other party because I know how difficult it is for them to come to the floor and speak on this issue. I respect them for having done so. It is a difficult set of issues, and certainly I feel very deeply about them as well. I express my gratitude.

THE BANKRUPTCY REFORM BILL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am extremely disappointed in my good friend and colleague from Massachusetts, who has chosen to object to even proceeding to the bankruptcy reform legislation. The fact is that this Grassley-Durbin legislation has broad bipartisan support. This particular bill passed the Judiciary Committee with a 16-2 vote.

This piece of consensus legislation reflects the tireless efforts of both