

that. The President threatened to veto it.

So my final message is, Mr. President, first of all, your administration did not even raise education until Friday. We have been negotiating for a week. This is a ruse to cover up an effort by this administration to bust its own budget and to spend Social Security money. That is what this is about.

Secondly, the President proposed \$32 billion for educational appropriations. We have provided \$32 billion for education, but we have provided it so that local school districts make more decisions and Washington makes fewer.

So if the President wants to debate, let's debate about the real issue. The real issue is not how much money is spent, it is who is doing the spending.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, am I correct in assuming I am recognized under the previous unanimous consent order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized for 15 minutes.

THE BUDGET AND PRIORITIES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I listened with interest to the Senator from Texas. He is always interesting in his presentations. During my presentation, I will take issue with a number of the comments he has made.

At the start, I want to indicate it is not, in my judgment, the case that this issue of education has just recently been raised in recent days. The last few days, certainly, have included a lot of references to education by the President and by others, but going back to January and February of this year, the President and Members of Congress on this side of the aisle were pushing very hard for education changes that we think would strengthen the school systems and strengthen opportunity for education for all children in this country.

I want to speak more generally, first, and then I will address a couple of those issues. I am enormously disappointed that we come to the middle of October in this session of Congress, the 105th Congress, and find that at the end of this long, arduous Congress, we have half a dozen, maybe a dozen people somewhere in a room—Lord only knows where the room is—negotiating a third to half of the Federal budget in appropriations bills that the Congress didn't get completed.

First of all, in this year, the Congress passed no budget. It is the first time, as I understand it, since 1974—no budget. The requirement is that the Congress shall pass a budget by April 15. This Congress didn't pass a budget. This Congress, by its inaction, said, no, we don't think there ought to be a budget. That is No. 1.

No. 2, because the Congress didn't even bother to pass a budget, it didn't pass a good number of its appropri-

tions bills. So we came to the end of the fiscal year, months after when the appropriations bills should have been completed, many months after the budget should have been passed, and the Congress had to pass a continuing resolution to keep the government operating. Then we have this closed-door bunch of folks in a room making deals on how to resolve these final issues.

During this Congress, at a time when no budget was enacted and a good many appropriations bills were not completed, the Congress said no to campaign finance reform, not once, not twice, a good number of times. No, we don't want to do campaign finance reform. They said, no, we don't want to do HMO or a Patients' Bill of Rights reforming the managed care system and providing certain rights to patients in this country. They said no to tobacco reform, don't want to do that; no to the education proposals offered in the President's budget calling for reduction in class size.

Incidentally, I take issue with the charts used moments ago, and I guess most parents who have kids in school will take issue with that chart, suggesting somehow that classroom sizes are decreasing rather than increasing. I think most parents understand that is not the case in their schools. It is not unusual for kids to be going to school with 22, 24, 28, 30 children in their class. The question is, Does that make a difference? Does it make a difference for a teacher when there are 15 in the class versus 30 in the class? Does it make a difference in terms of the personal attention a teacher can devote to children with 30 kids in a class versus 15 to 18? The answer is, of course.

This Congress, in passing no budget and missing most of its appropriations bill, said no to campaign finance reform, no to tobacco, no to Patients' Bill of Rights, no to the education proposal offered by the President on school construction and reduction in class size.

In the old western movies you will recall the folks that rode themselves into a box canyon, took their hat off and scratched their heads wondering why they were being attacked on all sides. Because they road into a boxed canyon is why they are under attack. That is exactly what happened in this Congress.

Is it surprising that a Congress that doesn't pass a budget and doesn't finish its appropriations bills finds itself today, on Monday, October 12, in a situation where we are scrambling, trying to figure out who is doing what with whom, to determine what kind of spending we have in dozens and dozens and dozens of areas? Does it surprise anybody we have this kind of a mess at the end of this session? I don't think so.

The previous speaker just spoke of a robbery. He used the term "robbery" to describe the amount of money that some are proposing to be offered to deal with certain education issues. I

personally think it is a significant and exciting and wonderful investment in the young children of our country to invest in education. That is not a robbery. That is a remarkably effective investment for this country.

Investment in health care is not a robbery. That is a remarkable investment for the people of this country.

How about for family farmers? Part of this debate is what we do for family farmers in the middle of a farm crisis. No one should think that would be a robbery, to take some funds during the middle of a farm crisis and say to family farmers when prices collapse and you are down and out, we want to give you a helping hand to help you up and help get you through this tough time. That is the issue here. The issue is what are our priorities?

Let me give an example of a robbery. Yes, there are robberies taking place. I understand there is a tax extender bill that some in Congress are trying to slip in, another \$500 million little tax incentive for some of the biggest economic interests to move their jobs overseas, make it a little sweeter deal. We have a perverse incentive in our Tax Code to say if you want to move American jobs overseas, we will pay you for it, we will give you a tax break. Just take those good old American jobs, shut your plants, move them overseas, and we will give you a tax break. Talk about perversity. We have people working to try to juice that up, increase the tax break. That is a robbery. It robs America of jobs it needs, it robs us of the revenue we ought to have to invest in kids and invest in health care.

The point is, priorities. What are our priorities? What do we think is important? At the start of this century, if you lived in America you were expected to live an average of 48 years of age. Almost 100 years have elapsed and now if you live in this country you are expected, perhaps, to live to be 78. Forty-eight to 78—30 years added to the lifespan of the average American. Is that success? Yes, I think so. You could solve all the Social Security problems and all the Medicare problems, all the financing of those issues could be solved if you simply take the life expectancy back to the 1940s or the 1920s or the 1900s. However, for a range of reasons, life expectancy has increased dramatically in our country in one century.

We have invested an enormous amount in health care research, National Institutes of Health. I am one, and some of my colleagues have joined me, who wants to increase the investment in health research. We know 50 years ago if someone had a bad heart, bad knee, bad hip or cataracts, they wouldn't be able to see, they wouldn't be able to walk, and they would probably die after a heart attack. Now they have knee surgery, get a new hip, get their heart muscle and arteries unplugged, have cataract surgery, and they come to a meeting in that small

town and feel like a million dollars. All of that is possible because of research, an expenditure in health care in this country. It is remarkable. It has been remarkably effective. The same is true with education.

My colleague from Illinois is going to follow me on the floor. He will remember—and I have told my colleagues this on previous occasions—he will remember Claude Pepper, who served with us in the U.S. House. The first time I went to Claude Pepper's office, I saw two pictures behind his chair. One was Orville and Wilbur Wright making the first airplane flight; it was autographed to Claude Pepper. Orville autographed the picture before he died. And then a photograph of Neil Armstrong standing on the moon, and that photograph was autographed to Congressman Pepper.

I thought, what is the interval between leaving the ground to fly, and flying to the moon? What is that interval? It is the most remarkable investment in human potential and in education compared to anywhere else on Earth. All of the kids that went to our school, that became the best scientists, the best engineers, the best at whatever they could be the best at, and we discovered we could develop the technology, through research, to learn how to fly, learn how to fly all the way to the moon. And standing on everyone's shoulders with accomplishment after accomplishment, we have now understood that virtually anything is possible. That comes from massive investment in education. That is what the interval in the two pictures told me—that investing in America's children in education has paid dividends far beyond our wildest imagination.

That is why I come here today.

Let me make one additional point with respect to family farmers. I have talked about investment in health care and education. Investment in America's family farmers is also one of the best investments our country has ever made. We have the best food in the world for the lowest percent of disposable income anywhere on the Earth. Who produces that food? A lot of families living out there in the country, by themselves, taking risks that almost no one else takes—the risk that they might lose everything they have, this spring, this summer, this fall if a seed doesn't grow, or if a seed grows and is destroyed by nature, or if it grows and is not destroyed and they harvest it and take it to the elevator and it is worth nothing. These family farmers just inherit, by the nature of what they do, the most significant risk you can imagine.

That is why this country, for 60 or 70 years, has said we want to try to help farmers when we have these price depressions, we want to build a bridge to help them over the price valleys. That is what this fight has been about in recent days here in Congress. That is what the President's veto is about—about trying to get this country to say,

during a time of severe crisis in family farming, during a time of abject price collapse, where the price of wheat has gone down 60 percent in 2 years—our farmers in North Dakota have lost 98 percent of their income in 1 year alone. Ask yourself, in any city, on any block, any occupation, what would happen to you if you lost 98 percent of your income? Would you be in a severe crisis? Despite that, what do we do about that? Can we extend a helping hand? Can we say, during these tough times, that we want to help you over this valley because we want you in our future?

Family farmers matter to this country. If we lose family farmers, we will have lost something about ourselves that is very important—broad-based economic ownership, with families living on the land and producing America's foodstuffs. That is what the fight is about. I am not saying one side is all right and the other side is all wrong. But I am saying to those who say that farmers aren't worth it at this point, just let them float in some mythical free market, that we just don't have the money, or those who perhaps would say if you use the money to save family farmers, it is "robbery"—I don't understand that.

This, after all, is about priorities. What are our priorities? What is important to us? A hundred years from now, everybody in this room will likely be dead. The only way anybody might determine about our value system as a people is to look at how we chose to spend our resources. What did we think was important? Education? Family farmers? Did we think it was important to deal with health care? What were our priorities?

President Clinton, at the start of this year, asked for the education priorities dealing with school construction and class size. He asked, at the start of this year, to deal with health care issues—Medicare, managed care, and the Patients' Bill of Rights. He asked, at the start of this year, for a tobacco reform bill. He asked, at the start of this year, for campaign finance reform.

Sadly, we now come to the 12th hour and we have a bunch of folks sitting in a room somewhere trying to negotiate probably a third of the Federal budget, or a third of the Federal spending, by themselves. I just think that is a terrible way for Congress to conduct its affairs. My hope is that when all of these fights are done and the dust has settled, we will have achieved a result that says the priorities for us at this point are to try to save family farmers during a time of crisis, the priorities for us are to invest in our kids and our schools, and the priorities for us are to decide that, in the future, we ought to do our work in Congress the way the law describes. Let's pass a budget, pass some bills, do the regular order, and not end up another session the way this session appears to be ending.

Mr. President, I know that the Senator from Illinois is waiting to speak. Let me also say, as I conclude, that the

Senator from Illinois has been very active on the issue of tobacco legislation, as well as education issues. I think he has been a remarkably effective addition to the U.S. Senate. It has been my pleasure to serve with him in the 105th Congress.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 20 minutes.

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

THE 105TH CONGRESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me say at the outset to my friend from North Dakota, whom I served with in the House of Representatives, he has been not only our floor manager of debate during the course of this 105th Congress, but he has also been an active leader for his State. The leadership he showed along with Senator CONRAD, as well as Senators DASCHLE and JOHNSON of South Dakota, during the crisis that faced their States earlier when they dealt with floods and fires—it seems like all the furies at once—was the type of leadership that is extraordinary, and I thank him for that.

I know we are going to have even more discussion in the days ahead about the current agricultural crisis in his State. I see his colleague, Senator CONRAD, on the floor and I know that they are going to carefully monitor the debate going on now about an omnibus spending bill to try to do their best to help struggling farmers in their State—and, I add, in my State of Illinois, which has its own share of difficulties.

I have brought to the floor here a volume, which those of us in the Senate know very well, and perhaps those in the gallery may recognize, and those at home may find new. It is "The History of the U.S. Senate" compiled by one of our colleagues here, Senator ROBERT BYRD. He is the preeminent Senate historian. He has written this history to try to capture what the Senate means and what it has meant to the United States. I have seen it several times, and I have read portions of it. I am determined that I am going to finish it from cover to cover soon. I looked through it to try to remember if there was another Senate that you could point to that was parallel to what we are seeing here today.

This is the conclusion of my first 2 years in the U.S. Senate, representing my home State of Illinois. Prior to that, I served for 14 years in the House of Representatives. I am no stranger to Capitol Hill, but I am a newcomer to this body. I am surprised that I stand here today on October 12, some 12 days into the new fiscal year, and say that we are still here. We were supposed to be gone, supposed to have finished our