

approach to our national system of oil-spill prevention and response. We enacted that bill just 17 months after the spill, really a very short time, given the scope of the legislation.

This landmark piece of legislation created a new national framework that focuses on both prevention of spills and response to spills. It was written to reduce the chances that we will ever have another spill of the magnitude of the *Valdez* anywhere under the American flag. That act, and the actions it mandates, has already vastly improved the response to lesser spills.

I want to point out some of the things it has done. We have greatly increased the response time—that is, decreased the time it takes—we have increased the ability to respond in time to spills that may take place in our waters. As a result of that act, we have spill response equipment pre-positioned in strategic locations all over the Nation. The national and area contingency plans required by OPA '90 are the primary reasons the response to oilspills has become so quick. Unlike when the *Valdez* disaster occurred, if a spill occurs today, it should literally be a matter of minutes before a plan is put into effect and executed. By requiring contingency plans in advance, OPA '90 forces planning for potential spills in a comprehensive manner.

Mr. President, the main goal of all parties involved in that act was the prevention of future disasters. That is the only true way we can ensure that we will keep the beaches in Alaska and throughout our Nation free of oil.

I have thanked many Alaskans who have served on the regional citizens advisory councils for the improvements they have helped bring into being.

Mr. President, at my request, that act was amended to assure that there would be specific Alaska provisions in it. In addition to the national measures put into place by OPA '90, it contained, at my request, a number of measures specific to Prince William Sound in Alaska. It required the installation of a marker and light on Bligh Reef. It required tankers in Prince William Sound to be escorted by at least two tugs and to have two local pilots on the bridge. It required the creation of a vessel traffic control system for Prince William Sound, including an alarm system to warn if vessels deviated from the routes they had designated at the time they left the pier.

It prevents the *Exxon Valdez* tanker from ever entering Alaskan waters again, no matter what name it sails under or how many structural improvements it undergoes. That provision is largely symbolic, but it goes to the heart of how Alaskans feel about that disaster.

The only true way to ensure that we will never have to clean Alaskan oil off Alaska beaches again is to implement the plans and maintain the systems that OPA '90 requires.

I hope that the Nation will not lose heart, that it will continue to fund the

facilities and the pre-positioned equipment that we require. For a 10-year period that began in 1996, we have created in Alaska an Oilspill Recovery Institute in Cordova. We also have an oil-spill lab with a trust fund created to assure that funds are available to respond to oilspills throughout the United States.

Let me close by saying that I want to report to the Senate that many of the species that were affected by the oil-spill are making a strong comeback. Mother Nature in the sound is responding. The environmental efforts that we have made and the progress we have made with putting into effect the new prevention measures have, in fact, deterred future spills.

It is my hope that one day one of my grandchildren will ask me, Grandpa, what is an oilspill? I believe that we have gone a long way to making oilspills of the magnitude that I saw 10 years ago today a memory. I hope it remains a memory.

Mr. President, I thank my friend for yielding.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AL-LARD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to consideration of S. Con. Res. 20, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 20) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal years 2000 through 2009.

The Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the staff of the Senate Budget Committee, including fellows and detailees named on the list that I send to the desk, be permitted to remain on the Senate floor during consideration of S. Con. Res. 20.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent the list be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the list was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STAFF LIST: SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

MAJORITY STAFF

Amy Call.
Jim Capretta.
Winnie Chang.
Lisa Cieplak.
Allen Cutler.
Larry Dye.
Beth Felder.

Rachel Forward.
Alice Grant.
Jim Hearn.
Bill Hoagland.
Carole McGuire.
Mieko Nakabayashi.
Maureen O'Neill.
Kristin Omberg.
Cheri Reidy.
Brian Riley.
Amy Smith.
Bob Stevenson.
Marc Sumerlin.
Winslow Wheeler.
Sandra Wiseman.
Gary Ziehe.

MINORITY STAFF

Amy Abraham.
Claudia Arko.
Jim Esquea.
Dan Katz.
Bruce King.
Lisa Konwinski.
Martin Morris.
Jon Rosenwasser.
Paul Seltman.
Jeff Siegel.
Barry Strumpf.
Mitch Warren.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Kelly Creighton.
Alex Green.
Sahand Sarshar.
Lamar Staples.
Lynne Seymour.
George Woodall.

Mr. DOMENICI. On behalf of Senator LAUTENBERG, I ask unanimous consent that Sue Nelson and Ted Zegers be granted the privilege of the floor during consideration of the resolution.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask consent the privilege of the floor be granted to the following members of my staff, of the Budget Committee staff on the Republican side: Austin Smythe and Anne Miller.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the presence and use of small electronic calculators be permitted on the floor of the Senate during consideration of the fiscal year 2000 concurrent resolution on the budget.

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

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I assume we are now on the resolution and time is now running under the 35 hours that remain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I am quite sure my friend Senator LAUTENBERG would concur that we all know, more or less, what the issues are. We have gone through the Budget Committee and most of the major issues have been debated there and amendments offered—some accepted, some failed. I don't think there is really any reason we cannot finish at a reasonable time and take this recess if Senators on both sides cooperate.

I urge that on my side also. There is tentatively, on my side—I know when we talk to them that it is not going to

remain this way, but they are talking about 30 or 40 amendments, almost all of which are sense-of-the-Senate amendments. We will never get out of here if that happens. Normally the minority has about twice as many. So add that up and we will have 120. We could just start voting now and we would not go home for the recess. So I urge we consider our own well-being and what is really necessary to get this job done.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am constrained to say to the Senator from New Mexico, I thought I had problems on the supplemental bill.

To hear about this number of amendments is staggering.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I am going to attend a hearing for about 25 or 30 minutes, and we will have a Budget Committee Senator down very shortly. In the meantime, Senator STEVENS is given whatever privileges I have.

I yield to Senator THURMOND as much time as he desires. I will give him that time off the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

BAD NATIONAL DEFENSE POLICY

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, bad national defense policy is about to get us into serious trouble—again. As I speak, United States Armed Forces are in direct danger because they are being used as social workers in a very dangerous country—Haiti. Most Americans will be greatly surprised that I am saying the United States Army is still in Haiti. Why are most Americans surprised? Because it has been more than 4 years since the September day in 1994 when the President sent a force of 20,000 troops to this island. Despite what the United States did in Haiti, not much has changed, except that the United States force has become tiny and in a great peril. No elected official has been able to bring peace or democracy to Haiti. Factional fighting has immobilized the government and stymied efforts at economic recovery. The factionalism has provoked assassinations and bombings reminiscent of the bad old days.

Fortunately, Congress has been put on-call by a voice of honesty coming from our uniformed ranks. Last month, General Wilhelm, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command, directly and honestly described the mounting danger surrounding his troops. The 500 United States military personnel left to help prop up Haiti are doing mostly social work and spending much of their time defending themselves from attack. Let me be clear about what kinds of work our troops in Haiti are doing. They are not fighting an enemy. They are involved in tasks like digging wells, providing medical services, and training police and military officers. Such work might be understandable if it contributed to stability. It is not. The 500 United States troops still in Haiti spend much of their energy just

trying to protect themselves against those they came to help. Unfortunately, it is now difficult for the administration to accept a clearheaded understanding of these dire circumstances and call for a pullout. Doing so will concede the failure of a peacekeeping mission regularly touted as one of the shining achievements of recent years.

The list of the administration's failed peace missions is long and growing. I am unconvinced that trying to resuscitate these failed nation-states is in the U.S. vital interest. The costs of U.S. involvement in peacekeeping are not in our national interests and should be reduced. The price tag of the Bosnia mission, for example, has already hit \$12 billion, with no end in sight. Haiti has cost more than \$2 billion. However, today the 500 soldiers in Haiti—mostly Army reservists rotating through on short-term assignments—remain in Haiti at a cost of about \$20 million last year.

The question is simple: Is it in the United States' best interest to have our troops in imminent danger, preoccupied with defending themselves against people whom they have come to help, who have shown little inclination for reform at a cost of \$20 million annually to America? This is the path down which the administration has taken the United States. We are now involved in a steady run of civil wars without clear solutions which involve failed nation-states. We will soon drown in this kind of foolishness. Stemming civil wars should not be the main strategic challenge for the United States. These kinds of misadventures do not really engage the strategic interest of the United States. Certainly, such ill-conceived adventures do arrogantly endanger our troops.

Because of this, I call on the administration to swiftly withdraw the 500 service men and women who are currently in Haiti.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. STEVENS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

The Senate continued with the consideration of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, today we begin our annual pilgrimage to establishing a budget for the next fiscal year. The first year of the new millennium is almost upon us, and we are moving at a fairly rapid pace to get this budget into place, as contrasted to

some of the experiences we have had in the past. I commend our chairman, Senator DOMENICI, for his lending the urgency that he has to getting this job underway.

Lest it be misunderstood, Mr. President, that does not mean I agree with everything that we have come up with. But we are moving the ball, as they say, and we will have a chance to amend or debate the budget resolution as it passed the Budget Committee.

As we begin our work on a budget for a new century and a new era in our Nation's economic history, we do it with the knowledge and the satisfaction that at long last, America has put its fiscal house in order.

At the same time, we still face serious long-term questions. The key question facing Congress is whether we meet those challenges and prepare for the future, or whether we will yield to short-term temptation at tomorrow's expense.

Democrats are committed to focusing on the future. Our top priority is to save Medicare and save Social Security for the long term by reducing our debt and increasing national savings. We also want to provide targeted tax relief for those who need it most, and that is the average middle-class family in America. We want to invest in education and other priorities.

Our friends, the Republicans, have a different view. Their plan focuses on tax breaks, largely for the wealthy. These tax breaks, whose costs would increase dramatically in the future, would absorb resources that are needed to preserve and to save Medicare.

That, when you get right down to it, is really the main issue before the Senate: Should we provide tax cuts, many of which will benefit the wealthy, or use that money to save Medicare? It is as simple as that.

Of course, there is a lot more to the budget resolution before us, so let me take some time to explain why I, like every other Democratic member of the Budget Committee, strongly opposed this resolution. There are four primary reasons.

First, as I have suggested, it fails to guarantee a single extra dollar for Medicare. Instead, it diverts the funds needed for Medicare to pay for tax cuts that, again, benefit the wealthy fairly generously.

Second, it does nothing to extend the solvency of the Social Security trust fund. In fact, it could block President Clinton's proposed transfer of surplus funds to help extend solvency.

Third, I think it is fiscally dangerous. The resolution proposes tax cuts that begin small but that explode in the future. Some are around \$13 billion in the first year the budget goes into place, up to \$180 billion—\$177 billion—expected in the tenth year, just when the baby boomers are beginning to retire.

And fourth, it proposes extreme and unrealistic cuts in domestic programs. These could devastate public services if