

deepest sympathy to the Bessette family who lost two daughters in this terrible accident. As a father, this is a loss I cannot begin to imagine.

It seems that no family should have to endure the level of tragedy that has befallen the Kennedys. I will say to the Senator from Massachusetts: America mourns with you and the Senate mourns with you, your family, and the Bessette family as well.

Elaine and I want to express publicly what we have said privately, which is that you and your family and the Bessette family are in our thoughts and prayers. May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

(The remarks of Mr. HATCH pertaining to the introduction of S. 1406 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, once again, I thank my dear friend from Illinois for allowing me to proceed, and at this point I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, under the order that was previously stated, I yield 3 minutes in morning business to the Senator from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator from Maryland is recognized.

RECOGNITION OF ROBERT TOBIAS

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Robert Tobias for his distinguished service at the National Treasury Employees Union, including four terms as its president.

Admired by his friends and adversaries alike, Bob Tobias has garnered respect as an effective advocate and constructive mediator during his tenure at the NTEU.

Bob and his wife Susan reside in Bethesda, MD, and we are very proud to have them as residents of our State. However, Bob is a native of Michigan and received a bachelor's degree, as well as a master's degree, in business administration from the University of Michigan. Bob completed his education at George Washington University, where he received a law degree. He built upon his formal education with substantial legal experience as a labor relations specialist for General Motors Corporation in Detroit and with the Internal Revenue Service.

When Bob first joined the NTEU in 1968, he became its second staff employee. During his 31-year tenure at NTEU, Bob served the organization in numerous capacities and saw the staff grow to more than 100 members with seven field offices across the country. Now representing more than 150,000 Federal employees at the Internal Revenue Service, Customs Service, and other agencies, NTEU is a strong voice for public servants on Capitol Hill and with the other branches of Government.

Starting at NTEU as a staff attorney, Bob later served as general counsel and

executive vice president, supervising a staff of 45 attorneys and field representatives nationwide, as well as the litigation and negotiations staff in the NTEU training program. His dedicated and skillful performance in these positions led to his election as President of NTEU in 1983 and his subsequent reelection on three occasions.

Under Bob's guidance, NTEU has been an influential voice for Federal employees and has waged many successful battles on their behalf. From challenging the line-item veto, to securing the right to picket for Federal employees, to obtaining the payment of over a half billion dollars in back pay from the Nixon administration, Bob Tobias has achieved wide-ranging victories for our public servants.

In addition to his talent for successful litigation, Bob Tobias has worked with the Government and its agencies to improve the status of Federal employees and to enhance their ability to serve the public. For example, he is credited with wide-ranging IRS reforms, rendering the tax-collecting organization a more efficient and responsive public agency. He is credited with instituting the first negotiated alternate work schedule for employees and the first cooperative labor management program for onsite child care.

Because of his extensive interaction with the agencies that employ Federal workers, Bob is highly regarded as an expert on how to improve Government. Many different organizations have sought out his expertise on these matters and, among others, Bob is now a member of the President's National Partnership Council, the Federal Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health, the Executive Committee of the Internal Revenue Service, and the American Arbitration Association.

Because of his dedicated leadership on behalf of our Federal workers, his consensus-building approach to Government reform, and the highly professional manner in which he carried out his work, Bob Tobias leaves a powerful and enduring legacy as President of the NTEU. I am pleased that he will continue in the public realm since he is planning a career in public policy teaching and writing.

Again, I congratulate Bob Tobias on his outstanding service at NTEU and his terrific record as a public servant on behalf of the American people, and I wish him all the best in the years ahead.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

ANOTHER TRAGEDY IN THE KENNEDY FAMILY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to say a word about the tragedy which has befallen the Kennedy family and the Bessette family, as we learn about the terrible circumstances involving

the plane crash last Friday. When my wife came in in Springfield, IL, Saturday morning and said that she had just heard on the radio that John Kennedy's plane was missing, our reaction was the same: Could this be another tragedy for this family?

The Kennedy family means so much to America, so much to the Democratic Party, and so much to many of us personally. As a young student just starting at Georgetown University in 1963, I arrived weeks before the assassination of President John Kennedy. I stood on Pennsylvania Avenue and watched the funeral cortege leave the White House for this Capitol Building, where President John Kennedy's body was held in reverence for visitation by the American people.

Then I can recall, as a college student, sitting in this gallery and looking down on this floor to watch as Senator TED KENNEDY and Senator Robert Kennedy talked about the war in Vietnam, and in the gallery across the way was Ethel Kennedy and other members of the Kennedy family. Little did I dream that the day would come when I would serve with Senator TED KENNEDY and come to know him personally. Each of us who serves with him understands what an extraordinary person he is. He, in my mind, is the best legislator on the floor of the Senate. He is so well versed, so well prepared, and so hard-working, that he is an inspiration to all of us.

We are reminded from time to time, as we were this weekend, that his obligations go beyond the Senate and certainly to a large family who looks to him for guidance and leadership in times of trial. This week, TED KENNEDY is bringing together the Kennedy family in mourning over the death of John Kennedy, his wife Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister Lauren. Our hearts go out to him and the entire family and to the Bessette family as well.

Those of us who remember that 1963 assassination graphically can recall exactly where we were at the moment that we heard President John Kennedy was shot. As we watched all the scenes unfold afterwards, one of the most poignant was that of little John Kennedy saluting his father as the casket passed in front of the church. I guess we had always hoped that because Caroline and John Kennedy had endured this tragedy so early in life that God would find a special place for them and they would lead normal, happy, and secure lives. They certainly set out to do it and did it well, both of them. Then again, a tragedy such as this will occur and remind us again of our vulnerability and fragility as human beings.

Our hearts and prayers go out to both families, and certainly to Senator KENNEDY in his leadership role in the Kennedy family. We will be remembering them as this week passes and as we address our concern and sympathy on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield to my colleague.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I commend my very able colleague from Illinois for his very eloquent remarks about this tragedy, and I associate myself with his remarks. Our hearts do go out to both families, the Kennedy family and the Besette family. The Besette family has lost two children.

My State has been fortunate to be blessed by the extraordinary leadership of the next generation of the Kennedy family in terms of Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who now serves as our lieutenant governor. So I have a direct sense of the strong responsibility of dedicated public service which has marked this family from the very beginning.

All of us are deeply struck by this tragedy. Our hearts reach out to the families. We extend them our very heartfelt sympathies. We feel very deeply about our colleague, Senator KENNEDY, who, of course, has assumed the family leadership responsibilities. We have to press on, but it really comes as a very saddening tragedy for all of us.

I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I inquire of the time remaining under morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 20 minutes under his control.

TAX CUTS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to address an issue which is topical and one that most Americans will be hearing about during the course of this week and the next. It is an issue involving tax cuts. Can there be two more glorious words for a politician to utter than "tax cuts"?

People brighten up and their eyes open and they look in anticipation, and they think: What is this politician going to bring me by way of a tax cut?

Our friends on the Republican side of the aisle have decided that they will make the centerpiece of their legislative effort this year a tax cut, a tax cut which, frankly, will have an impact on America—positive in some respects but overwhelmingly negative in other respects—for decades to come. So I think it is important for us to come to the floor and discuss exactly where we are today and where we are going.

First, a bit of history:

In the entire history of the United States of America, from President George Washington and through the administration of President Jimmy Carter, our Nation accumulated \$1 trillion in debt—a huge sum of money over 200 years. But at the end of the Carter administration, and the Reagan and Bush administrations began, we started stacking up debts in numbers that were unimaginable. In fact, today we have over \$5 trillion in national debt. Think about that—200 years, \$1 tril-

lion, and, just in the last 20 years, another \$4 or \$5 trillion in debt.

What does it mean to have a debt in this country? You have to pay interest on it, for one thing. The interest we pay each year on that debt we have accumulated is \$350 billion out of a national budget this year of about \$1.7 trillion. You see that each year about 20 percent of our national budget goes to pay interest on the debt we have accumulated.

The new President came in—President Clinton—in 1992 and said: We have to do something about this. We can't keep going down this path of accumulating debt and paying more money in interest. It isn't good for our current generation to be paying out that money, and certainly we shouldn't saddle our children with that added responsibility.

In 1993, he came to the Congress and said: Let us take from what we have been doing over the past 10 years and do something new. The President proposed a new budget plan—a plan that was determined to bring down this debt. That plan passed without a single Republican vote. In 1993, the Clinton plan passed without a single Republican vote in this Chamber. Vice President Gore came to the Chair and cast the deciding vote to pass the plan.

It was a big gamble. Some Members of Congress on the Democratic side lost in the next election because they voted for the Clinton plan. Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, one of my colleagues from the State of Pennsylvania, cast a courageous vote for that plan and lost in the next election.

But was the President right? History tells us he was dramatically so because in the last 6 years we have seen not only our economy grow dramatically in terms of the creation of jobs and businesses—low inflation, new housing starts, and all the positive things we like—but we have finally seen us turn the corner and move toward balance when it comes to our annual Federal budget.

Now, if you will, we are not discussing what to do as we swim through this sea of red ink but, rather, what to do with an anticipated surplus. In 6 years, we have moved from talk of a deficit to speaking of surplus.

There are two different views on what to do with this future surplus. The Republican side of the aisle is suggesting a \$1 trillion tax cut over a 10-year period of time. I am sure that is appealing to some, particularly if you are in the higher income groups in America who will benefit from this tax cut. But certainly we ought to step back for a second and say: Is that the responsible thing to do? Should we be giving away \$1 trillion in tax cuts over the next 10 years at the expense of virtually everything else?

Our side of the aisle, the Democratic side of the aisle, working with President Clinton, has a different approach, one which I think is more responsible and more consistent with the leader-

ship which the Democrats showed in turning the corner on these Federal deficits. It is basically this:

First, let us meet our current obligations to Social Security and to Medicare.

It is amazing to me, as I listen to the Republicans talk about all of our future challenges, that there is one word they are afraid to utter—the word "Medicare," the health insurance program for over 40 million senior and disabled Americans, a program which needs our attention and help.

What the Democrats and the President propose is to take a portion of the future anticipated surplus as it comes in to solidify Social Security for another 50 years and to make sure Medicare can start to meet its obligations past the year 2012.

We will have to do more, believe me. But at least by dedicating that portion of the surplus, I think we are accepting the responsibility, before we give money away for any new program or give money away for any tax cut, to take care of the programs that mean so much to American families and in the process bring down the national debt and start paying off this \$5 trillion national debt.

Is that important? It is critically important because not only by bringing down this debt will we reduce our annual interest payments of \$350 billion, but we will free up capital in America for small businesses, large businesses, and families alike to borrow money at a low interest rate.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield to my colleague, Senator BOXER.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am happy to see our colleague, Senator SARBANES, because we all serve on the Budget Committee because we know what a turning point this is for our Nation.

My friend said that with the Clinton plan we have finally turned a sea of red ink into a fiscally responsible situation. Is my friend saying—I want to make sure we all understand—that in the Republican plan for the projected surplus there is not \$1 set aside for Medicare? Is that what my friend is telling me?

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from California.

I point to this chart. I hope this can be seen because the Republican tax cut plan of \$1 trillion over the first 10 years leaves nothing for Medicare—not a penny for Medicare, as if the Medicare program itself is self-healing. It is not.

If you were going to deal with the Medicare problems—and they are substantial—you have only two or three options: raise payroll taxes and increase the amount paid by those under Medicare or cut benefits. We may face some combination of those, as painful as they will be. But they will be much worse if, in fact, we don't dedicate a portion of the surplus to the Medicare program.