

kinds of family care problems we talked about that actually happen with childcare.

It is not right that America is not addressing some of these social needs while we are seeing these kinds of costs go up. That is why we on this side of the aisle—as well as Senator JOHN KERRY—are talking about a middle-class squeeze because it is real in people's lives. It is not the same as what is happening to the GDP or whether you are seeing disposable income which takes in dividends and capital gains at the high end and mushes them together and comes out with an average result.

What we need to do is look at what is actually happening in the lives of working men and women. Bernadette Discon's story is real. It shows how the pressure impacts on an individual's life. If she had kids, college tuition is going up 28 percent. She is paying 30 percent more for gas. That puts real pressure on a family.

It is time to recognize that economics is more than just statistics that are announced on Friday morning at 8:30 to say whether employment is up or down. It is the quality of life that goes with those statistics. A lot of people are feeling squeezed. As the Senator from Iowa said, a lot of families are feeling hammered.

It is time for a change, and it is time to recognize the reality of what is happening in the lives of middle-class Americans.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah is recognized for up to 15 minutes.

ECONOMIC STRENGTH

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I intended to come to the floor to speak about Iraq. I will do that. But I must make a comment or two about the speeches that have preceded mine with respect to the economy and what is happening.

I remember 4 years ago when the Presidential election was in full heat. One candidate said the prosperity that we have been experiencing is starting to slow down, and the economy is showing signs of being at the end of the business cycle and heading toward a recession. His political opponent said he was trying to talk down the economy for political purposes.

Well, it turns out he was right. We started a slowdown in the economy in the last two quarters of 2000. We ended up with a recession in the first three quarters of 2001. He was not trying to talk down the economy just for political purposes. He was telling the truth. This was, of course, Governor George W. Bush of Texas.

The fact is, the economy is doing extremely well, and there are those who are trying to talk it down for political purposes. This is the fact, no matter who is elected President. Whether it is George W. Bush, JOHN KERRY, Ralph Nader, or the Libertarian, or whoever

else may be out there seeking the Presidency, he or she will inherit an extremely strong economy come January of 2005. And whoever it is, if it is not George W. Bush, will take credit for that strength and say: See, because I got elected everything is now wonderful.

In fact, the business cycle does not operate that way. The business cycle does not pay attention to election days; it pays attention to long-term policies put in place. We had the recession in the beginning of 2001 because of economic pressures that built up in the nineties. We have the recovery now taking hold in 2004 that will come into play through the balance of this year and strongly into next year because of policies that were put in place over the last several years. You cannot turn the economy around by a single election. You have to put policies in place and see them go forward.

It is very interesting to see those particular items President Bush's opponents are now focusing on to say this is terrible, this is terrible, this is terrible. They have changed now because the items they used to be focused on as the bellwethers of economic activity have turned positive. They cannot use the old measuring sticks they said were so important to make the case that the President's economic plan is a failure because those measuring sticks have all turned positive and now indicate the President's policies were the right ones, so they pick up new measuring sticks and find an opportunity to blame President Bush.

I am fascinated to know that the increase in property values in New Jersey in the last few years is President Bush's fault; that when the New Jersey officials increase property taxes to go along with that increase in property values, it is President Bush's fault, and so on and so on. We will hear more of that in the months to come. Let us remember that the economy responds to a whole series of pressures. No President can wave a magic wand and create jobs, as one candidate is promising to do. Let us realize on that measure, which the President's opponents no longer use, jobs are being created now at a faster rate than the President's opponent is promising he would do if he became President. If you like the rate that the Democratic presumptive nominee is proposing for job creation, you have to like the record of George W. Bush because jobs are being created at a faster rate right now than that proposed rate.

Well, Mr. President, I rose to discuss Iraq, and I will do that in the time I have remaining. How much time do I have?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 10 minutes remaining.

IRAQ

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, there is an old statement which has become

enshrined in our society now as the alcoholic's prayer. It goes like this:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

I suggest that as we face the world today as the world's strongest power economically, militarily, culturally, educationally—in almost every category—we should view our responsibilities through the prism of the alcoholic's prayer: Grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

As I listen to the debate on Iraq, as I listen to the partisan and political comments, many of them well-meaning and properly addressed, I pray for the third leg of that saying—the wisdom to know the difference between the things we can change and the things we cannot because many of the things being raised with respect to our situation in Iraq are things we cannot change. Many of the complaints are against things we can change, but we are not because we are wallowing in complaint and self-criticism when we should be moving ahead.

Let me give you an example. The first question we need to address with respect to our military activity in Iraq and elsewhere in the region is this: Are we engaged solely in a military exercise with respect to Iraq or are we, in fact, in a world war against terrorism? We need the wisdom to get the answer to that question and know the difference because the difference is vast.

I am one who believes that we are, in fact, engaged in a worldwide war against terrorism. We must have the serenity to accept the fact that war is not going to go away if we ignore it. There are many who say there is no connection between Saddam Hussein and 9/11; therefore, we should spend all of our time going after those who dealt with 9/11 and not pay any attention to Iraq. Well, that may have been a legitimate argument prior to the time we went into Iraq, but it is now irrelevant because we are there. We are there because this body, with over 70 votes, gave the President our support for going in there; and the United Nations, by a unanimous vote in the Security Council, gave the President support to go in. This body and the United Nations overwhelmingly, along with the House of Representatives, said this is the right thing to do. We did it, and we must accept the fact that we are there, and complaining about maybe we made a mistake doesn't change the reality that we are there.

I am one who thinks we made the right decision. I am happy that David Kay, the inspector for weapons of mass destruction who went into Iraq, thinks we made the right decision. When I talk to audiences in Utah, I say: How many of you know that David Kay discovered there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq? Everybody raises