

foreign policy, it affects what we can spend on defense and security.

President Obama recently acknowledged the relationship between U.S. economic strength and U.S. global leadership, when he said, "Our prosperity provides a foundation for our power. It pays for our military. It underwrites our diplomacy."

Well, that is absolutely true. Our leadership is contingent on our prosperity—and our ability to pay for a robust national defense.

But massive amounts of new spending, new taxes, and European-style government programs will weaken the U.S. economy and make it more difficult for us to exercise global military leadership.

Just look at what happened last year: While \$1.2 trillion was pumped into the stimulus bill and the majority in this chamber passed a \$2.5 trillion government takeover of health care, the defense budget was practically frozen. Missile defense has been cut, and there's been a reduction in the number of interceptors in Alaska that protect us from a North Korean attack.

So, there has to be balance in spending scarce resources. There is a tipping point at which excessive social spending chokes economic growth and weakens military power.

European nations can get by with relatively low levels of defense spending and high social spending because, for decades, they have enjoyed the protection of America's security umbrella. As Mark Steyn writes in *National Review* "Sweden can be Sweden because America is America."

But if we become more like Europe, if entitlement programs begin to swallow our budget whole, will we still be able to afford the burdens of global military leadership?

I submit that military decline is not an option for the United States. As former Secretary of State Madeline Albright put it, we are "the indispensable nation."

That is what American exceptionalism means. It means that, because of our unique history, our unique power, and the unique appeal of our founding principles, America plays a special role in global affairs.

I fear that many of the policies adopted over the past year will make it harder for America to continue playing this special role. I hope that during the year ahead, the administration will pursue a more sensible and responsible course.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct. We are in morning business.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. BURRIS. Thank you, Mr. President.

Every so often in the winding history of our country there is an entire generation that rises to confront the challenges of a moment. Every so often there is a movement so powerful that it changes the course of history. And every so often there is a visionary leader, a person with singular ideas, who comes along exactly at the right time to harness the energy of a movement and capture the imagination of a generation.

These are rare figures whose names are etched into our national consciousness, whose memorials dot the landscape of our Capital, and whose words and actions help to redefine the very fabric of our Nation. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was just such a leader. He rose to prominence as a key figure of the civil rights movement, but he came to transcend both the movement and the generation that brought him to national prominence.

Earlier this week we came together as a nation to celebrate and commemorate the life and work of Dr. King. His message of equality and fairness for all inspired the transformative civil rights era and continues to resound throughout the United States even today.

The legacy of Dr. King is one that lives on through the service and goodwill of Americans in communities across the country.

And Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day serves as an annual opportunity for people across the Nation to give back and volunteer to help those who are suffering.

It was this generosity of spirit that defined Dr. King's life and work.

And by living out his selfless dedication to our fellow man, we can honor his vision and continue the work he left behind.

The fact that I stand before you today on the floor of the U.S. Senate is proof of the enduring legacy of Martin Luther King.

Out of the chaos, violence, and injustice of segregation, Dr. King found the strength to speak of peace, hope, and righteousness.

Where many saw hate and resentment, Reverend King saw an opportunity to build bridges, to seek out the humanity of those on both sides, and to appeal to the compassion that lives in each of us.

There were some who lashed out with clenched fists. But although he knew he would be met with hostility, Dr. King came to the table, time and again, with arms outstretched.

Half a century ago, most people could barely conceive of a world in which someone like me could address the highest lawmaking body in our land.

Fewer still could have dreamed of the day when a man with a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya would be sworn in as President of the United States of America.

I never thought I would live to see the day, Mr. President.

But even 50 years ago, when much of America could barely dream of such a

future, Dr. King knew this day would come.

His vision never faltered, in spite of the dark days he witnessed and the tragic violence that eventually took his life.

The march towards equality has been long.

It began long before Martin Luther King walked this Earth, and it will continue long after all of us are gone.

But so long as this great Nation endures, Dr. King's spirit will live on in our highest aspirations.

His voice rings through our history.

And although he did not live to see the promised land, his steadfast gaze still guides our every step, his booming voice sets the cadence of our march, and we know he will be waiting for us when we get there.

In the near future, a monument to Dr. King will rise on the National Mall, just a short distance from this Senate Chamber.

He will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other giants in our history: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and King.

It is fitting that this great leader should be memorialized alongside other Americans who have helped to build a more perfect union.

And as we observed Martin Luther King, Jr. Day earlier this week and as we continue to build this monument, it is my hope that we can keep his spirit alive in our hearts.

As Dr. King might say, let us keep our feet on the march and our hands on the arc of history.

Let us look to the future with the same fierce urgency that he showed us more than 40 years ago.

Let us complete this journey together, arm in arm, and make Martin Luther King's dream a reality.

#### HAITI

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, I also wish to address a matter that is impacting our hemisphere; that is, the country of Haiti.

In recent days, we have all heard the tragic news and seen the shocking images of the earthquake that devastated the nation of Haiti just last week.

Even today, more than a week after the earthquake, the full measure of this catastrophe is difficult to ascertain.

Relief workers have only just begun to go out into the cities and towns that surround the Haitian capital, and we are starting to get initial reports from the outlying areas.

Essential infrastructure has been destroyed by the earthquake. Shelter, food, and water are in short supply, and it is nearly impossible to get aid to the people who need it most.

But it is the human toll of this natural disaster that is truly the most horrifying.

Estimates have soared to include over 200,000 people who may have died, and as many as 3 million who may be injured or homeless.