

It is true that Russia agreed to join the partnership for peace at this summit—as they previously agreed to do last year, before abruptly changing their minds at the OSCE summit in Budapest. At this summit, Russia continued to express strong opposition to the expansion of NATO.

Mr. President, summit diplomacy has a long and distinguished history. Historically, summits have succeeded when the parties had clear agendas, pursued their interests consistently, and were ready, willing, and able to meet each others' concerns. And if agreement is not reached, history shows it is better to state the disagreements clearly rather than paper them over. In the case of the Moscow summit, it is clear that President Yeltsin was not in a position to address our concerns. We should admit that forthrightly and respond appropriately. Congress will respond by looking closely at all forms of aid to Russia—especially aid to the government. Certain types of aid such as democracy support, or Nunn-Lugar funding for nuclear clean up still promote important American interests. Other aid programs may not, and may be halted.

The United States must remain engaged with Russia. It was and is our hope that democracy and free market reforms will prosper. We hope that the Russian elections planned for this year and next year proceed on time—and that they are free and fair. But Russia is not our only strategic relationship—we have other interests in other areas. That is why I support the President's decision to visit Ukraine. That is why NATO expansion should not be subject to a Russian veto. And that is why we cannot allow Iran to become a nuclear weapons state.

WAS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, it does not require one to be a rocket scientist to realize that the U.S. Constitution forbids any President's spending even a dime of Federal tax money that has not first been authorized and appropriated by Congress—both and House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

So when you hear a politician or an editor or a commentator declare that "Reagan ran up the Federal debt" or that "Bush ran it up," bear in mind that the Founding Fathers, two centuries before the Reagan and Bush presidencies, made it very clear that it is the constitutional duty of Congress to control Federal spending.

The fiscal irresponsibility of Congress has created a Federal debt which stood at \$4,856,766,568,058.09 as of the close of business Wednesday, May 10. This outrageous debt (which will become the debt of our children and grandchildren) averages out to \$18,436.37 on a per capita basis.

PRESERVING MEDICARE FOR OUR SENIORS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Medicare Program and the need to protect it from drastic cuts. The Republicans have announced their plans to cut the Medicare budget by over \$250 billion in order to fund tax cuts for the rich.

Let me start by saying that I want to make sure that we keep the care in Medicare. I believe that the basic values of honoring your father and your mother should be the anchors of our public policy.

I do not believe our seniors should have to pay almost \$900 more in out of pocket health care costs each year. I do not believe that the typical Medicare beneficiary should have to see 40 to 50 percent of his or her Social Security cost-of-living adjustment eaten up by increases in Medicare cost sharing and premiums.

We cannot let this happen. We owe it to our mothers and fathers, and to our family members.

Last week I spoke at the White House Conference on Aging. It was an impressive gathering of 2,500 seniors and senior advocates from all over this Nation. Many of the delegates were current or former doctors, lawyers, administrators, business owners, nurses, social workers, gerontologists, and senior service providers.

The delegates were charged with coming up with a navigational chart to meet the needs of our seniors today and to take us into the 21st century.

The White House Conference on Aging came at a very crucial time in our history. We all know that our senior population is growing and growing rapidly. Demography is destiny. We must anticipate the future and what their needs are and what they will be.

At the end of the conference, the delegates voted on priorities. Ensuring the future of the Medicare Program was one of the top five priorities. More specifically, the conference stated that the United States should:

... reaffirm the covenant that it established with the American people 30 years ago with the enactment of Medicare and act to maintain and strengthen the program's structure and purpose, its fiscal solvency, and widespread public support.

... continue to protect older Americans and disabled Americans, especially those on low and fixed incomes with respect to health care affordability and access, giving special consideration to the burdens imposed by co-payments, deductibles, and premiums.

... ensure that programmatic changes safeguard the viability of the Medicare trust funds.

... ensure that any changes to Medicare provide access to a standard package of benefits which includes affordable long term care, strengthens the program's financial well-being, preserves the social insurance nature of Medicare, enhances the quality of care and improves the program for beneficiaries within the broad context of health care reform

There is much talk about another contract with America, but I believe the real contracts we must honor are

Medicare and Social Security. We must preserve the covenant that we established with our seniors and their families to provide them with health insurance for their old age. Seniors have worked hard all their lives, paid their dues, paid into the system.

We must remember who are seniors are. On May 8, we commemorated victory in Europe and the beginning of the end of World War II. Our seniors were part of the generation that saved Europe from tyranny and changed the course of history. We must never forget that.

We cannot forget them and we cannot forget who will be the next generation of seniors. They will be many of us. And the next generation after that. They will be our children and grandchildren. We must continue to ensure that all seniors now and into the next century have the resources they need for their health care. Without such resources I fear they will become impoverished, their children may become impoverished, and we as a country will become impoverished.

THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Mr. COHEN. Mr. President, in recognition of the 45th anniversary of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, I believe it is appropriate to reflect upon this country's history on the issue of civil rights and express some thoughts about the direction the country is heading today.

In 1950, when the Leadership Conference was first formed, we essentially had a system of racial apartheid in many parts of the country. It was illegal for black and white children to attend school together, it was illegal for black and white adults to marry. Black Americans were shut out of the political system—they were not permitted to serve on juries, run for office, or, in many cases, cast a ballot. There was no meaningful equal protection of the laws, especially the criminal laws. Blacks who dared to assert their political rights or buck the mores of the racial caste system, were beaten or lynched. The police and formal legal system always looked the other way. Blacks could not receive a fair trial in a court of law as racial prejudice clouded the normal American presumption that justice is blind.

Through Federal court litigation, and eventually legislative action by the U.S. Congress, many of these barriers were cast aside, the chains of Jim Crow were unlocked, and the Constitution's promise of equal opportunity began to become a reality. As the decades passed and progress was made on many fronts, other groups of American citizens—women, racial minorities, religious groups, and the physically disabled, to name a few—rose to assert the rights that accrue with American citizenship. Their claims have been simple, clear, and powerful: treat us

like everyone else in society is treated, give us the opportunities to succeed that other Americans are given as a matter of birthright, let us participate in the mainstream of American life.

So we have made progress. When in the past Jackie Robinson was spit upon and received death threats over the phone, today Michael Jordan can give genuine happiness to millions of Americans, of all creeds and colors, merely by deciding to trade in his baseball cleats for a pair of sneakers. When one of our country's greatest institutions, the U.S. Army, once had to be desegregated by Presidential decree, in modern times Colin Powell rose to lead that institution and now is one of our most popular public figures. When minorities were once threatened and intimidated from exercising the franchise, now hundreds of minorities hold public office throughout the country and dozens of minority legislators sit here in the U.S. Congress.

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights has been at the forefront of this march of progress. The principles of equality, inclusion, and tolerance that it promotes are reflected in the structure of the organization, as it is comprised of 180 different groups representing people from all walks of life, all shades of skin color, and all denominations and ethnicities. The legislative achievements of the conference are monumental—not only for the importance of the bills on American life, but for the bipartisan support that they achieved. The Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act are but a few of the conference's noteworthy achievements.

But one cannot look back fondly at successes without also thinking about our past shortcomings as well. Here we stand, a generation after the civil rights revolution, and we must ask how history will judge us. Have we done all we could to make our society more just, opportunities more available, tolerance and understanding more pervasive, violence less prevalent? Have poverty, intolerance, and ignorance been marginalized or have our actions or omissions led to the marginalizations of the poor, the uneducated, and others occupying the bottom rung of society?

Any honest appraisal must conclude that our record is mixed. Progress has been made in many areas, but we are going backward in others. Our problems were once simple and clear issues of equal justice that could be solved merely by changing the law. Our current problems now bear on complex social conditions that few can explain and even fewer know how to solve.

There is also new unrest in the country that is manifesting itself in ugly ways. Extremists seek to place at odds peoples and communities that have been traditional and genuine allies. The ethos of tolerance, dialog, and reconciliation are being subverted by those who, appealing to baser instincts,

seek to balkanize America. And remarkably, there are those who now want to move to a color-blind society, based on the make-believe view that racism and intolerance are things of the past and that our centuries of overt discrimination have had absolutely no bearing on the current condition of the least fortunate members of society. It is as if many believe that the Emancipation Proclamation and Civil Rights Acts were written at the time of the Magna Carta and the beating of Rodney King happened centuries, not just years, ago.

But rather than be discouraged in the face of our failures, and lament about the difficult challenges ahead, we must find hope in the progress that has been made and summon the resolve to redouble our efforts to remake our society to bring us closer to the ideals we hold dear. The work of the Leadership Conference is not done. We are a better society as a result of its 45 years of dedication to equality and we will be a better society due to its work in the future.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, on August 19, 1944, Parisians rose up in defiance of their German occupiers as Hitler ordered his army to destroy the city. His generals, however, delayed the order, and American and Free French Forces liberated Paris on August 25. Meanwhile, General Patton was racing eastward toward the German border and Rhine River. To the north, British Forces led by Field Marshal Montgomery swept into Belgium and captured Antwerp on September 4. On September 17, about 20,000 paratroopers dropped behind German lines to seize bridges in the Netherlands. But bad weather and other problems hampered the operation.

Adolf Hitler pulled his failing resources together for another assault. On December 16, 1944, German troops surprised and overwhelmed the Americans in Belgium and Luxembourg, but they lacked the troops and fuel to turn their thrust into a breakthrough. Within 2 weeks, the Americans stopped the German advance near Belgium's Meuse River. This offensive in the Ardennes Forest of Belgium and Luxembourg became known as the "Battle of the Bulge," because of the bulging shape of the battleground as it appeared on a map. It was to be among the war's most bloody battles. Although Hitler's men knew they were beaten, it became clear that complete victory over Germany would have to wait until 1945.

Soviet Forces entered Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria in January 1945. The Germans had pulled out of Greece and Yugoslavia in the fall of 1944. But held out in Budapest, the capital of Hungary, until February 1945. Vienna fell to Soviet troops in April. By then, Soviet troops occupied nearly all of Eastern Europe, a sign of victory then, but,

in retrospect, also an ominous harbinger of the nature of the post-World War II world.

The Allies began their final assault on Germany in early 1945. Soviet soldiers reached the Oder River, about 40 miles from Berlin, in January. Forces in the West occupied positions along the Rhine by early March. British and Canadian Forces cleared the Germans out of the Netherlands and swept into northern Germany as the Americans and French raced toward the Elbe River in central Germany. Hitler ordered his soldiers to fight to the death, but large numbers surrendered each day.

The capture of Berlin was left to the Soviets. By April 25, 1945, they had surrounded the city. From a bunker deep underground, Hitler ordered German soldiers to fight on. On April 30, he committed suicide. He remained convinced that his cause had been right, but that the German people had ultimately proven weak and unworthy of his rule.

Grand Adm. Karl Doenitz briefly succeeded Hitler as the leader of Germany, almost immediately arranging for Germany's surrender. On May 7, 1945, Col. Gen. Alfred Jodl, Chief of Staff of the German Armed Forces, signed a statement of unconditional surrender at General Eisenhower's headquarters in France. World War II in Europe had, at last, come to an end. Fifty years ago, the Allies declared May 8 "V-E Day"—Victory in Europe Day. America could now concentrate all of its strength toward the battle still being waged in the Pacific, which would last for 3 more months.

Today, the world celebrates a victory that represented the triumph of good over unspeakable evil, and the promise of a peaceful future for a Europe battered and torn by the bloodiest war in its history. May 8 is particularly special this year, since it marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the European chapter of World War II.

As the Allies had advanced in Europe, they discovered the horrifying remnants of the Nazis' "final solution." Hitler had ordered the imprisonment of Jews and members of other minority groups in concentration camps. The starving survivors of the death camps gave proof of the terrible suffering of those who had already died.

Today, we are familiar with those faces and pictures of death and destruction, but that familiarity has not led to understanding in many cases. We have the Holocaust Memorial Museum as a reminder of the past and as a warning to future generations of the grave dangers that are the ultimate fruits of hate, division, depravity. Victory in Europe Day, then, is also a time to reflect and to ask ourselves how such brutality could have been inflicted on the human race, and how it can be prevented from ever occurring again.

Hitler's rise to power was based upon a message of hate, of pitting one class