

seriousness of the deteriorating weather. I recognize the subject being discussed is of paramount interest, but I hope we can strike a balance.

I thank the indulgence of my colleague.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that my friend from the State of Oklahoma wishes to make a statement regarding one of his children. I will be happy to yield without losing my right to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I appreciate very much the Senator from Nevada yielding to me. I would like to inquire of the Chair, what is the regular order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The regular order is the Senator from Nevada has the floor.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

Mr. INHOFE. All right. Mr. President, I was interested in the statement that was made by the very distinguished Senator from Washington State a few minutes ago when he was talking about those who are not represented here and the moral issue of the conduct in which we have been conducting our country over the past 30 years.

I was reminded of an experience the other day of back when we had our prayer breakfast. This was the international prayer breakfast where we had people here from all over the world, and I was in charge of international visitors, when one of the visitors who was here from Moldavia, which was a former Soviet republic that had gained its freedom, came in and he asked me a question during one of our visits that we had.

He said, "Senator INHOFE, I have a question to ask you. In the United States, how much can you keep?" And I said, "I am sorry, I do not understand what you mean." He said, "How much money do you have to give the government?" Then I got a little better idea of what he was asking.

So I asked the question—in fact, I would be a little embarrassed to tell you the answer that I gave the gentleman that was here from Moldavia. He was so proud. And he said, "In Moldavia, we have a new democracy. We have new freedoms. And when we"—they have some type of a tax collection system where every 3 months or so they collect the taxes. And he said, "Every time we make a dollar, we get to keep 20 cents." In other words, they have to pay 80 cents out of every dollar to support the government there. And he was rejoicing because this was the new freedom that he had discovered.

I got to thinking and looking at the facts, that I do not think anyone will refute, and that is that if we do not do something now about changing this pattern that we established back in the Great Society days of the middle 1960's, that someone who is born today will

have to pay not 80 cents out of every dollar but 82 cents out of every dollar just to support government.

I bring that up today because today is a day that a very important person is to be born, and that person has the name or will have the name—and maybe as we speak has the name—of James Edward Rapert. This will be my third grandchild. So it becomes a much more personal thing when you think of someone coming into this world—such as the Presiding Officer who recently had a young child named Daniel born in his family—all of a sudden it becomes personal. It comes out of the realm of the normal discussion as to the various social programs that the various Senators have stood on the floor of this Senate today talking about—the education programs, the social programs, the poverty programs, the nutrition programs, and all of these—and it becomes an issue of, what are we willing to do to those who cannot be heard, those for whom there is no lobby, such as James Edward Rapert?

I understand that yesterday the House, by a very decisive margin, with many, many of the Democrats, voted to reaffirm the commitment we have to a balanced budget by the year 2002 using real figures, not smoke and mirrors, but using real figures and using the CBO figures. In fact, I cannot imagine when I go back to Oklahoma, such as I was this weekend, everybody saying, well, what is there to debate? I mean, we have the Democrats who ran for office on a balanced budget. We have a President of the United States who ran for office on a balanced budget to the Constitution. And everyone is for it. Who is against it? And I tried to explain the reality up here is not always what it seems to be at home because this, in fact, is Washington.

So we are in a situation—I know there are several who want to be heard tonight. I just want to make a comment about a statement that was made by a very distinguished Member of the other body, John Kasich. The other day he said, "We're in a frustrating situation where we have a balanced budget amendment or Balanced Budget Act that we passed in both the House and Senate, and it was vetoed by the President, and yet we don't have anything from him." And he said, "It is like going Christmas shopping and going up and saying, 'I want to buy this tie. How much is it?' And they will not tell you.

So he said, 'I will give you \$100.' They said, 'No, that's not enough.' 'How much more?' Well, they will not tell you."

That is the situation we find ourselves in right now. So we have probably the second most significant issue facing us that we will face for maybe the last 10 years, and that is doing something about a balanced budget. We have an opportunity that is coming up any hour now, any day, certainly I hope it is going to happen prior to Christmas. When that time comes, I

hope we will all remember not ourselves, not all the nutritional programs, not all the things we talk about and how we can wisely spend the people's money that we are borrowing from future generations, but I hope we think of James Edward Rapert who will be paying for all this fun that we are having.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend from Washington said a number of things that I want to respond to. I have a great deal of respect for the senior Senator from Washington, and he and I serve together as chairman and ranking member of an appropriations subcommittee. I have found him to be an extremely easy person to work with, and I have developed during that process great respect for his legislative abilities. But I think it is important to mention a number of things that I think need to be responded to in regard to his statement.

He talks about the second crisis. The first crisis and the second crisis were caused not by the minority, which is the Democrats. The fact of the matter is that by October 1 of each year, it is the responsibility of the Congress to pass appropriations bills. The record is very clear. By October 1 of this year, the majority in the House and in the Senate had not passed bills that could be sent to the President.

The second crisis referred to by the Senator from Washington again was not created by virtue of something that the Democrats did that was wrong, the minority did that was wrong. The fact of the matter is that the majority did not pass appropriations bills. This crisis that we have is not something caused by the minority. The fact of the matter is, on October 1 the bills were not passed.

I also think it is important to acknowledge again on this floor, we hear constant talk about the fact that the majority is now pushing for a balanced budget. I think that is good. I think that is important. But the fact of the matter is that the 1993 budget plan that was passed in this body and the other body—it was the so-called Clinton plan—was the largest deficit-reduction plan in the history of this country. It reduced the deficit over \$500 billion over a 5-year period of time, the largest deficit-reduction program in the history of this country.

Yesterday it was an unusual day in the last couple years in this country. It was unusual because the stock market went down. It was an extremely unusual day that the market went down. Today it went back up. But the stock market is over 5,000, Dow Jones. The stock market has been hot. Why? Because the economy has been doing extremely well.

We have had the lowest unemployment, lowest inflation in 40 or 50 years;