

education and spend it as they choose? That is what it is all about. That is what this debate is about. That is what a balanced budget is about—to be financially and fiscally responsible, and also to reduce the interest rates so that the economy will grow.

That is what tax relief is about—middle class tax relief, which the President promised when he ran. He has never delivered. That is what \$500 per child is about, so it goes to families. That is what regulatory relief is about. It is not a matter of regulation and specifics. It is a matter of being able to grow an economy where there are jobs and prosperity. That is what our agenda is about, Mr. President.

The final argument, of course, will be that basic argument of do you follow the suggestion that says it is the Government's task to regulate these, and let us get more government, more regulation and more involved? Or do we release this dynamic private sector to create jobs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

#### WHERE AMERICA IS GOING

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and my friend from Wyoming for his leadership on this freshman focus, a time where freshman Members of the Senate have an opportunity to get up and talk about issues of importance to the country from a perspective of those of us who are relatively new in this body. I think he is right on target to talk about the issue of the economy and where this country is going.

We have a President who is running around the country talking about how this is the healthiest economy that we have seen and we are doing great and everything is fine. It actually reminds me of another President in an election year 4 years ago, who was going around the country trying to convince the American public that the economy was fine and everything is great and this is a healthy economy and we are moving forward. The American public, frankly, did not buy it.

The reaction was very simple: What country is he living in? What country is he leading? Does he not have any understanding of what is actually going on in the economy, what we are dealing with here, that in fact the statistics show that, out of recessionary years, this economy is the slowest growing economy since the 1950's? This is not a robust economy.

The Senator from Wyoming was right on target as to why this is not a growing economy. It is the same reason that the previous President had problems saying it was a growing economy, and that is because this President and the previous President raised taxes on the American public. They took more money out of their pocket and sent it here to Washington. It had a real effect

on their take-home pay and had a real effect on their ability to be able to provide for themselves and their families. That has a ripple effect through the economy, from consumer confidence and their willingness to consume to the real issue of just paying bills.

I think we may be seeing a repeat here. I know many of us who are in this Chamber now were here as Senators or Representatives during the 1993 Budget Act, when President Clinton went out and said we have to raise taxes and we said this is going to have an effect. It is the same type of tax increase that was put forward in 1990. Many Republicans—I was in the House at the time—many Republicans fought it and said President Bush at that time was making a mistake; it would hurt the economy and drag the whole economy down and this country down. A lot of us believed it would bring the President down. It did.

Then 1993 comes around and President Clinton did not learn from the mistakes of President Bush and pushed forward through another tax increase—and, I might add, more entitlement programs, more regulation, more on people's backs. Many of us said, "Learn your lesson from 1990. That is not going to help the economy. That is not, in the long run, going to balance this budget." He said, "No, we have to do it." They did it.

As a result, coming out of this recession in the early 1990's, we have had one of the slowest recoveries in history. Job growth, yes. We have had jobs. But I think if you talk to most of the people, the kind of jobs being created are not the kind of jobs that will support a family. You hear Members on both sides of the aisle talking about that. The reason is oppressive regulation, oppressive taxation.

Almost 25 percent of the income of the average family in America goes just to pay taxes to Washington, DC. That is a peace-time high. By the way, I like to compare that to what it was back in 1950 when the average American family—same family, average-income family—did not pay almost 25 percent of their taxes to the Federal Government; they paid 2 percent of their income to the Federal Government in taxes. Now it is almost 25 percent.

Do we wonder why people feel squeezed, why they do not feel they have the opportunities to provide for a family anymore, why both husband and wife have to work? If you are a single parent, what do you do? You work two jobs and you struggle to provide for your children.

What we do here is what they did 3 years ago: Put even more taxes on the American public. We believe that is not the answer. We have stood up this year and said the answer is not to take the American public for more, not to regulate the American public more, but to put Government on a diet so we can allow the folks back home to take a little bit more out of their paycheck for their own use, not Government use.

So we proposed this irresponsible thing. People got on the floor and said this was such an irresponsible thing to let people keep more of their own money to help provide for their families. As the song goes, "That's my story and I'm sticking to it." My story is that American families should keep more of their money.

We are going to continue to push for a tax cut for American families. We will continue to push for a tax cut to create growth and opportunity in capital gains and helping small business people, because creating jobs is the real answer here. Creating good quality jobs is the real answer here. Growth is the answer—not further taxation, but liberating people. Money should go out and be invested in capital resources so we can create more high-quality jobs in this country. We will continue to push for that.

We will continue to push for regulatory reform so Government does not stifle the creativity of Americans by regimenting them into some model that we believe in Washington, DC, is the best for everyone. We are going to go out and do the things that are necessary to make this country prosperous and moving forward.

I just hope that the President will come to the realization that tightening the belt here in Washington ever so slightly—and frankly, that is all we are talking about in this balanced budget—tightening the belt here in Washington so we can give just a little bit more to working families is not cruel. It may be cruel to some bureaucrats in town, but it is not cruel to American families. It is not cruel to Americans who want good-paying jobs, outside in the private sector, not just here in Washington.

I am hopeful we can somehow come to an agreement that this is not the healthiest economy, that the spin doctors of the campaign of 1996 for the President are not going to win the day to try to convince the American public what they know is not true, that this economy is booming and healthy and the best it has ever been. We should get down to trying to address the real economic insecurity that American workers have, the real problems of raising families in this country, and do something about it on a bipartisan basis in this Congress.

I am hopeful we can do that. We should be able to do that. I am looking forward to the opportunity to make that happen. I yield the floor.

Mr. INHOFE. I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania. I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended by 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this has been a very enlightening morning listening to both Democrats and Republicans refuting this myth that seems to