Such abdication of leadership leaves Saddam Hussein free to build weapons of mass destruction, thus jeopardizing the security of our troops, our allies in the region, and ultimately the United States itself. Nor is Iraq the only nation that has thumbed its nose at a weakened United States.

Around the world, rogue nations are violating fundamental human rights, waging wars of aggression, and flouting international treaties. Our ability to deter these acts has been sadly compromised by an absence of leadership, a total lack of credibility. Enemies of our values and interests have judged the President's ability to lead the United States and have found it wanting. As a result, the world is a much more dangerous place.

Second, the President's actions have squandered his moral authority to lead at home. The problems of family breakdown and moral decay are the most significant that we face. Just one comes glaringly out into mind: that nearly 30 percent of our children born in this country are born to single moms, many of whom are teenagers having children.

Can the President, with the problems he has today, lead our fight in that area? The President cannot address these problems when he himself has contributed to the decay. One of the privileges and obligations of high office is to act as a role model for children. We need our President to set an example to be admired, not to be avoided. The President's ongoing adultery with an intern of barely legal age, misuse of the Oval Office, and repeated lies from he and his staff have done enormous damage to the body politic. Unfortunately, at the very time when most need strength, focused resolve, and moral leadership from our President, he has been unable to supply it. We live in a volatile world with very real dangers and very difficult problems. We cannot afford to let these dangers go unnoticed and problems unresolved by a President unable to lead.

I say all of this with great respect and with deep regret. President Clinton is a talented man who believes in America and has spent his life serving others.

Yet his immoral indiscretion, and months of lies to the Nation have tarnished his leadership ability beyond repair. None of us are without sin. But the high call of leadership demands a certain moral authority that by the President's own actions is now lost.

There is a final point to be made. Very soon the contents of the independent counsel's report will be made known publicly. The contents of this report will result in impeachment proceedings. Such hearings will surely take a heavy toll on the function of our government, on the trust invested in our civic institutions, and on the American people themselves. President Clinton could spare us this ordeal. He could quickly and decisively enable our Nation to put this sorry chapter in our history behind us and to move on. But at this point there is only one way for him to do that. Sadly and reluctantly, I have concluded that the only way for us to move forward as a Nation is for the President to resign.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak on the issue of campaign finance reform, and that I be allowed to complete my statement even if it runs into the period designated for the campaign finance reform discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, this debate about the campaign finance bill is really about a single question, and that is what should determine the outcome of our Federal elections? Should money determine the outcome of our Federal elections or should instead we have those elections determined by a balanced discussion, a complete and a balanced discussion about the differences between the candidates and the different positions they are taking? Should it be money or should it be helpful information for voters? Should it be money or should it be a robust debate on issues?

The question that I just posed has been obscured because opponents of campaign finance reform are hiding behind what I believe are mistaken Supreme Court decisions, and in doing so they have tried to equate money and speech. They argue that money is speech, and therefore to limit money is to limit speech. They say that money means more robust debate. They say that more money means more helpful information for voters. They say that even more money means more complete and balanced discussion about the differences between the candidates.

In my view, this argument does not pass the laugh test. Any reasoned observer of our Federal campaigns knows that the argument is without merit. Ask any challenger to an incumbent Senator the following question: Have not the millions more in dollars that the incumbent has been spending on his or her reelection meant more robust debate? Have not the millions of dollars that the incumbent has been spending meant more helpful information to the voters and more complete and balanced discussion about the differences between the candidates? The challenger, I am sure, would laugh out loud at that notion.

Ask any voter who has been deluged with negative television advertisements funded by very large campaign war chests whether those TV ads have produced more robust debate and more helpful information for the voters and more complete and balanced discussion of the differences between the candidates. Again, those voters will think that you are crazy to even suggest that idea. The vast increase in money spent on political campaigns has not produced more robust debate. It has not produced more helpful information for voters and more complete and balanced discussion about the differences between candidates.

More money has produced just exactly the opposite. Voters themselves will tell you that money does not equal speech. In fact, they will tell you that money is not speech and that money too often results in an undermining of our ability to meaningfully discuss issues in a campaign. They are very specific about this. Voters were surveyed by Princeton Survey Associates recently and those voters said that campaign money leads elected officials to spend too much time fundraising—63 percent of the public believes that; that money not speech determines the outcome of elections under the current system—52 percent of voters believe that.

Even more importantly, voters believe that campaign money gives one group more influence by keeping other groups from having their say in policy outcomes. They believe that campaign money keeps important legislation from being passed. They think campaign money leads elected officials to support policies that even those elected officials do not think are in the best interests of the country. And finally, the public believes that campaign money leads elected officials to vote against the interests of their own constituents, the people who have sent them to Congress to represent them.

Let me add parenthetically that in this very Senate session the killing of the tobacco bill in June, Congress' refusal now to even consider serious HMO reform in the Senate, these are recent vindications of the people's beliefs about the effects of money on our policymaking efforts.

So the argument by opponents of campaign finance reform that money is speech and that it should in no way be limited simply does not pass the laugh test with the American people. People are right that we desperately need to reform our campaign finance system. We need to reduce the amount of money raised and spent in our campaigns. We need to increase the amount of robust debate and helpful information that we provide to voters. We need to increase the discussion, the complete discussion about differences between candidates on issues of importance to the people.

The modified McCain-Feingold campaign reform bill offered to the Senate today is a big step in that direction. It

does at least two very important things. First, it will reduce the amount of big, unregulated donations from corporations and unions and wealthy individuals in our campaigns. Second, it will regulate the huge amounts of money spent by so-called ''independent'' special interest groups on advertising, which is disguised as ''issue ads'' but in fact is designed to advocate the defeat of a particular candidate.

The original McCain-Feingold bill did even more, but the bill had to be scaled back to reduce the objections from some of the opponents to campaign finance reform. I stand ready to support the motion to allow a vote on the modified version of McCain-Feingold. I hope today that minority of Senators who have repeatedly denied the people an up-or-down vote on this bill will change their minds. I hope that with the historic passage of the bill by the House—representing a majority of the voters of the United States—this minority of Senators will see that they should not again thwart the clearly expressed will of the people.

I hope this minority of Senators will not want to be the single force responsible for continuing the undermining of our national political system that is accomplished each day by the millions and millions of dollars of unregulated campaign money when today they have a unique and historic opportunity to change all of that.

So, I hope those who have, in recent months, opposed the will of the people on this vote, on this issue, will vote for cloture, will give the people the up-or-down vote they very much want and very much deserve.

ANGELA RAISH

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, as most of know, Angela Raish retired at the end of July from her position as Personal Secretary to our colleague, Senator PETE DOMENICI. This is an event viewed with mixed emotions by all of us New Mexicans who have had the pleasure of working with Angela over the years. On the one hand, we are glad that she and her husband Bob are taking some much-deserved time for themselves. On the other hand, and there's always another hand, all of us who have come to know and admire her will miss our day to day dealings with her.

Twenty-one years of service to one Senator, one Senate office and one state—our own New Mexico—represent a remarkable career of attention and devotion. Ever gracious and thoughtful, she has been a wonderful friend to my staff and me. I am pleased to be a co-sponsor of Senate Resolution 272 which Senator DOMENICI introduced on Tuesday of this week. It expresses what we all feel for this lovely person and the work she has done for the Senate. We are fortunate to know her.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 2237 which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2237) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

McCain/Feingold amendment No. 3554, to reform the financing of Federal elections.

AMENDMENT NO. 3554

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time between 10 a.m. and noon is to be equally divided between the Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, and the Senator from Washington, Mr. GORTON, on amendment No. 3554.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be allowed to control the time of Senator GORTON.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield to the distinguished Senator from Alaska such time as he may need.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Kentucky, who has labored in the area of campaign finance for an extended period of time, whose expertise many of us depend upon because once again this Senate is being called upon to reform our campaign finance laws.

As with many issues, the issue of so-called reforming the laws is somewhat in the eyes of the beholder. As a consequence, I ask my colleagues to consider this legislation in perhaps a different context. The issue before this body, in my opinion, is simply: To what extent, if any, should the Federal Government regulate political free speech in America? The campaign finance debate is not just about politicians and their campaigns. At the core of this debate are the values and freedoms guaranteed by the first amendment. As a consequence, I suggest when Government attempts to place limitations on speech, it has an overwhelming burden to demonstrate why such restrictions to our fundamental freedoms are necessary. Surely the Government can no more dictate how many words a newspaper can print than it can limit a political candidate's ability to communicate with his or her constituents, yet that is precisely what the sponsors of this legislation are proposing for candidates for office.

The McCain-Feingold legislation bristles with over a dozen different restrictions on speech, provisions that I believe flagrantly violate the first amendment as interpreted by the Supreme Court. I cannot overemphasize the point that was made by George F. Will in a Washington Post editorial. He stated, commenting on the McCain-Feingold bill:

> Nothing in American history—not the left's recent ''campus speech codes,'' nor the right's depredations during the 1950s McCarthyism or the 1920 ''red scare,'' not the Alien and Sedition Acts of the 1790s—matches the menace to the First Amendment posed by campaign ''reforms'' advancing under the protective coloration of political hygiene.

One of the most serious problems with this bill is that it contains restrictions on ''express advocacy'' within 60 days of an election by independent groups. And what is ''express advocacy''?

Mr. President, if this proposal ever becomes law, we can change the name of the Federal Election Commission to the Federal Campaign Speech Police. Every single issue advertisement would be taped, reviewed, analyzed, and perhaps litigated. The speech police will set up their offices in all of the 50 States to ensure the integrity of political advertising. Is that what we in this Chamber really want? I don't think so. But that is what will eventually happen if we adopt McCain-Feingold.

I assure my colleagues, and hope they understand, that this wholesale encroachment on the first amendment would be immediately struck down by the courts as unconstitutional.

Moreover, if a group of citizens decide to pool their money and advocate their political position in newspaper advertisements and television ads, what right does the Federal Government have to restrict their right of speech? Indeed, do we want to turn over the debate on political issues to the owners of the broadcast stations, the owners of the newspapers, and the editorialists during the 60-day period leading up to an election? Would my colleagues who are supporting this bill be ready to stand up and vote to ban election editorials in newspapers and on television in the last 60 days of a campaign?

Many members of the public think we need fundamental changes to our election financial laws because in the 1996 Presidential election they witnessed the most abusive campaign finance strategy ever conceived in this country.

There is an answer to those who abuse power. And the answer does not mean you have to shred the first amendment. The answer is a very simple one. It is that our current election finance laws must be strictly enforced, something that this administration has been extremely reluctant to do for obvious reasons.

Mr. President, as grand jury indictments amass with regard to Democratic fundraising violations in the 1996 Presidential election, we learn more and more about President Clinton's use of the prerequisite of the Presidency as a fundraising tool. It is important to recall some of those abuses as we consider this debate.

You recall, Mr. President, the Lincoln bedroom. During the 5 years that