

When you glance around the globe you find that there is a potential trouble spot in literally every continent of the world with the exception of the two poles and perhaps Australia. We find this situation in Kosovo with ethnic cleansing where our Secretary of State, several months ago said, and I believe the quote is accurate, "We will not allow the Serbs to do in Kosovo what we prevented them from doing in Bosnia." The last time I checked, Mr. President, they were doing quite a bit of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, and the situation continues to worsen.

In Iraq, we have gone from a position where our Secretary of State said we would respond with military force if Saddam Hussein refused to allow our U.N. inspectors access to any installation that they desired—would be met with military force. Now, according to Scott Ritter and other reports, the administration has been encouraging UNSCOM not to inspect.

The situation in Asia is serious. Riots are taking place in Indonesia as we speak. The nation that the World Bank a year and a half ago did a study on as a model nation for economic development, now had the privilege of seeing its President go on nationwide television in Indonesia and recommended that the Indonesian people not eat 2 days a week because of food shortages.

We have seen the administration surprised by the nuclear tests conducted by both India and Pakistan.

We have now apparently circumstantial evidence that technology was transferred to China, which either marginally or substantially, depending on which expert you talk to, increased the precision targeting capability of Russian ICBMs until recently, 12 of which were targeted on the United States of America—now are not—but in a matter of seconds could be retargeted.

Mr. President, I could go on. But the fact is that the world is a very tough neighborhood and requires a tough cop. The cop is now not on the beat and bad things are happening all over the world, which makes it even more likely that we may have to call upon the United States of America to again expend its blood and treasure somewhere in the world. The very least we can do is make sure that those men and women who we have to send somewhere are the best equipped and trained as we possibly can make them. What I greatly fear is that we may have to send them less than well prepared, less than ready, and less than well equipped, which then leads to the inevitable consequence of casualties that are unnecessary and tragic.

Mr. President, I intend to talk more on this issue. I think it is an important one. I also remind my colleagues that we—the traditional protectors of the military—have an obligation to address this issue as well as the administration. Mr. President, I thank the Chair for his patience and for presiding at this late hour.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SESSIONS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

MILITARY READINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the remarks of Senator MCCAIN from Arizona. He is a true American patriot, an academy graduate, a former fighter pilot, a prisoner of war, a person who has been a leader in this body in matters of defense. A few days ago, a Senator from the other side, Senator LIEBERMAN, made a seminal address on the need for morality, integrity and honesty in public leadership, and by the President in particular.

Senator MCCAIN's remarks, in my opinion, are equally as important. He has said some things, as a conscience of this body, on defense matters that we ought to listen to, and I am hearing it repeatedly from people I know in the military services who are concerned about the erosion of our national defense. I join with him in those concerns. I appreciate him sharing it with us, and I hope he will continue to speak out in this body as eloquently as he does on these important issues.

CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Child Custody Protection Act. Senator Spencer ABRAHAM of Michigan has previously spoken on this matter, just a few minutes ago. I have been honored to be a cosponsor of that legislation with him from the beginning and to participate in a number of different activities that he has led to try to call this legislation to the attention of the people of America, and to do what we can to see that it is brought up for a vote in this body, and to pass this legislation.

It appears to me that this legislation would be difficult for most anybody to oppose. The issue of abortion has divided our country for many years now. But the issue we are considering today is not whether abortion should be legal or not. The Supreme Court, in my opinion, erroneously took that issue away from the people, ripped it out as a matter for the democratic process, and decided and declared that the Constitution prohibits the limiting of abortions, except in certain circumstances.

But even the Supreme Court has made it clear that it is proper for a State to declare that an abortion should not be performed on a minor child unless the parents are consulted. Certainly, they have to be consulted about minor surgery—and they are consulted by their school principals and teachers if they are even given Tylenol. To perform an abortion without

parental consent is a very dramatic interference in family and parental relationships that many States have decided to protect. Even our Supreme Court, which has ruled erroneously, in my opinion, in a number of different ways on this issue, has approved that.

We have now discovered that there is a problem. We have discovered that people are taking children across State lines, from one State where parents have to be notified—third parties are intervening in the family relationship and are taking children across to another State that doesn't have that law, for the purpose of having an abortion performed on them.

In my view, the right of parents to be involved in these major decisions affecting their minor children is a fundamental thing and ought not to be lightly transgressed. State parental consent and notification statutes are an important protection for fundamental parental rights. Let me say that the issue before us today is not whether States should have such laws—some do, some don't—the issue before us today is whether we will allow these important and clearly constitutional State laws to be circumvented.

The purpose of this bill is simply to preclude some third party from trampling on the rights of parents by advising a minor child to have an abortion, and then assisting them by taking them across a State line to a State where they can have one.

This legislation before us today would forbid a third party from transporting a minor child across the State line for the purpose of an abortion, without the parent's knowledge or consent, in order to evade compliance with the law of the State where the parent and child reside. This is hardly a radical or extreme proposal, and the bill is necessary. It is constitutional and it is carefully and narrowly drawn.

Senator ABRAHAM has done a superb job in drafting this legislation. He has listened to those who have expressed concerns about it, and he has constantly revised and improved it. It is an exceptionally fine piece of legislation, in my opinion.

Mr. President, let me say that I believe this bill is necessary. In the Judiciary Committee hearing we had, we heard horrible stories. One involved Joyce Farley's 13-year-old daughter and one involved Eileen Roberts' 14-year-old daughter. In both cases, these young girls were secretly transported across the State line by adults seeking to hide the fact of the pregnancy from the children's parents. In both of these cases, these young girls were taken from a State that had a parental consent statute to one that did not. In both of these cases, the young girls suffered serious complications from these legal, but botched, abortions.

Parenthetically, Mr. President, let me state that recently in the New York Times there was an op-ed piece by a former abortion doctor who, according to the first paragraph in the article,

had performed 45,000 abortions. He said that, for a number of reasons, parents ought to be involved in these decisions, and that parental notification laws are correct, and that the pro-abortion forces undermine their own efforts and their credibility when they oppose them. He pointed out that children should be consulting with their families for these kinds of situations.

And from a medical point of view, he pointed out that when a child is transported a long distance to a medical center to have an abortion, perhaps she has not had good adult advice as to whether or not that is a good doctor or clinic. When she goes there, she is then returned at a long distance to the home of her parents. Many times, he noted, there are complications. Parents need to be aware and to be watching the child to help her if complications occur. And he said return visits to the abortion clinic for checkups are little done when a child has a long distance to go back to the clinic. So for health and medical reasons, he believes that children ought to consult with and have the approval of their parents before they obtain abortions. Of course the laws of each of those States—and the Supreme Court rulings—require that there be an option for a child who is pregnant to go to court and get an order for an abortion without notifying a parent. So there is an option, required by the Supreme Court decisions.

Mrs. Farley testified that her daughter was taken out of state for an abortion by one Rosa Marie Hartford. Ms. Hartford was actually the mother of the 18-year-old young man whose statutory rape of the then-12-year-old girl is what caused the pregnancy. In other words, the woman was trying to cover up the criminal activity of her son. The son later pled guilty to statutory rape.

The attorney general for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania testified concerning his efforts to prosecute Mrs. Hartford under state law for interfering with the custody of a minor. Those efforts may or may not ultimately prove successful. Attorney General Fischer testified concerning the difficulties of pursuing such a case under state law, and strongly recommended passage of this bill.

This issue does not involve a few isolated cases. An attorney for the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, has acknowledged this. Attorney Kathryn Kolbert stated, and I quote: "There are thousands of minors who cross state lines for an abortion every year and who need assistance from adults to do that." We have seen several examples of abortion clinics which openly place advertisements in the yellow pages in nearby states that have parental consent statutes. These advertisements proudly proclaim: "No parental consent."

Thus, these clinics are openly encouraging the evasion of state laws, and something needs to be done about it. Because of the interstate nature of this problem, a Federal solution is required.

This bill is constitutional. As I have stated earlier, the Supreme Court has upheld the types of state parental notification and consent laws that this bill would help to bolster. It is specious to suggest that this bill would unduly burden the right to an abortion. The bill does nothing more than prohibit the evasion of constitutional state statutes.

This bill is a valid and appropriate exercise of Congress's authority under the Commerce Clause.

I was a Federal prosecutor, Mr. President, for nearly 15 years. A long-term Federal statute is the Mann Act. It has for many years—many years back, I think, since 1913—prohibited the interstate transportation of women or girls across State lines for prostitution or other immoral purposes. That is a Federal law. The constitutionality of the Mann Act has been upheld by the Supreme Court since the early 1900s. It is a very close analogy to the Child Custody Protection Act, which would preclude the transporting of minor girls across State lines to evade State parental involvement laws. Any constitutional objections to this bill, in my opinion, would be without merit and would certainly fail.

Also, this bill is very narrow in its scope. It does not prohibit interstate abortions. It does not invalidate any state laws. It does not establish a right to parental consent for residents of any state that does not already have a parental consent law. It doesn't even attempt to regulate the activities of the pregnant minor herself. It only reaches the conduct of outside parties who wrongfully usurp the rights of parents that are guaranteed by state law.

Some suggest that the bill should be narrowed further, to exempt the interference with parental rights, if the adult is a relative of the child, they could interfere with the parents' rights. I would disagree with that.

This bill would not prevent the minor from seeking counsel from an aunt or grandmother or anyone else. It would prohibit aunts and grandmothers from violating the rights of the child's parents by secretly driving the youngster to another state for an abortion without telling the parents. I personally wonder whether it might be worse to have a grandmother or an aunt interjecting themselves in between the parent and the child, than to have some stranger do it. The result is the same. It is the same. It is the parent who has the responsibility, who brought the child into the world, and who has raised the child. The destructive impact on the family could be greater in that case.

In any event, the grandmother isn't the parent, and the aunt isn't the parent; and neither relative nor stranger should have the right to circumvent parental involvement statutes.

If a well-meaning grandmother wants to be helpful, in most situations she should encourage the child to confide in her parents. In the rare cir-

cumstances where that would not be appropriate, and the child is intent on obtaining an abortion, the judicial bypass procedure could be used.

That is, a child could go to a court, and the abortion could be authorized by the judge. The child could go to court in those circumstances.

In summary, this bill is narrowly crafted, it is well written, it is necessary, and it is constitutional. The House of Representatives passed this bill with a strong bipartisan majority of 276 to 150. I urge my colleagues to do likewise.

We need to ensure this bill receives a vote on the merits. We are apparently going to have to invoke cloture to even get it up for a vote. There is a strong determination—I consider it an extreme commitment—to support anything that favors abortion by too many Members of this body.

This is a reasonable bill. This is a fair bill. It is an appropriate action by the Congress of the United States involving interstate commerce. As a Federal prosecutor, I prosecuted those who transported stolen motor vehicles—ITSMV, Interstate Transportation of Stolen Motor Vehicles, stolen property, lots of those kinds of cases. This is one type of case that is quite appropriate for us to legislate on.

I hope that every Member of this body will vote for it. It ought to pass overwhelmingly. It is good public policy.

I, again, congratulate Senator Abraham for his determined and skilled legislative leadership in crafting and presenting this outstanding piece of legislation.

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

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, September 9, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,548,476,705,773.12 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-eight billion, four hundred seventy-six million, seven hundred five thousand, seven hundred seventy-three dollars and twelve cents).

One year ago, September 9, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,408,443,000,000 (Five trillion, four hundred eight billion, four hundred forty-three million).

Five years ago, September 9, 1993, the federal debt stood at \$4,389,196,000,000 (Four trillion, three hundred eighty-nine billion, one hundred ninety-six million).

Ten years ago, September 9, 1988, the federal debt stood at \$2,600,050,000,000 (Two trillion, six hundred billion, fifty million).