

Year in 1979. Dale Earnhardt passed from living to legend. His death—like his life—transcended his sport.

To the hundreds, indeed, the thousands who knew him—and the millions who did not—he was John Wayne, Humphrey Bogart, and James Dean all rolled into one. He was a husband, a father, a mentor, and a friend. But most of all, he was like America—caring, big-hearted, open, and free. And that is why we loved him.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS AND HIS BUDGET

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise, just for a few minutes, to comment on the President's address last night and the budget that he has sent to the Congress. It, indeed, represents a new beginning, a new start, a cause for hope, a cause for optimism that is reflected in the benefits and the advantages for every family in Tennessee, as well as across the United States of America.

The budget does set a roadmap, a blueprint, as we look to the future, as we look to next year, the next 5 years, and the next 10 years. Very clearly, the President's budget does three things: No. 1, it funds America's priorities, as we have debated in campaigns over the last 6 to 8 months and debated on the floor of the Senate over the past couple years. It funds the largest debt reduction in not just the history of the United States but the history of the world. And it provides fair and responsible tax relief.

First and foremost, I believe it pays off historic amounts of debt. It provides absolutely the fastest and largest debt reduction ever seen in history—\$2 trillion over a 10-year period.

Secondly, it funds many programs that we are currently discussing and debating, and programs that we are putting together, investing in individual families, in children, in youth, in health care, and in education. It strengthens education. It allows the opportunity to modernize education. And as has been pointed out on the floor, it offers the largest spending increase of any Federal department—over 11 percent. It triples funding for children's reading programs.

In the field of health care—and the President mentioned it last night in his address—he looks in the direction of the uninsured. There are about 42, 43 million people uninsured. He addresses the uninsured by, on the one hand, saying, yes, we need to further invest in the National Institutes of Health, and continues that doubling, but he also mentioned 1,200 new community health centers that will be there tomorrow for people who are uninsured, who depend on those community health centers for their health care. That makes health care more accessible for all.

He talked about refundable tax credits, again, to lower that barrier which stands between many people, and having the appropriate access to an insurance policy that will be there for acute

care and chronic care and preventive care.

Thirdly, the President spoke loudly and clearly when he said now is the time we can take advantage of a surplus that has been generated by hard-working men and women and families out there, a surplus that reflects their dollars, their hard work.

Now is the time for responsible tax relief—using roughly one-fourth of the budget surplus—to provide the typical family of four paying income taxes as much as \$1,600 of tax relief, a 50-percent tax cut for that typical family of four making \$50,000.

I thought last night was a time when we had the opportunity to talk about the hopes and dreams in an optimistic way, with a new beginning for every family. I do want to underscore the privilege and opportunity I have of working on the Budget Committee of the Senate, where we will go into further detail over the next several days as this budget is laid out before us. It is a new beginning with the President of the United States.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Tennessee for talking about the President's budget plan. I, too, am very pleased that President Bush is keeping the promises he made to the American people when he was elected President of the United States. Congress is going to work with the President to make sure we have the balanced and responsible approach he has requested of Congress to work with him.

Let's talk about the balance that is in this plan. We have a \$5.6 trillion surplus. The first and foremost responsibility we have with this surplus is to protect Social Security. That is exactly what we do. We will protect Social Security by keeping all of the Social Security part of the surplus in the Social Security fund.

Secondly, we are going to spend more money for high-priority items. The President has outlined the high-priority items he considers are No. 1 issues facing America today—No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3: Public education, national defense, and prescription drug benefits for our senior citizens.

There is no question that many people believe they cannot afford the drugs they have to take to stay healthy. That is not a choice people should have to make. We want to make sure they do have the fundamental prescription drugs they need at a price they can afford. So we will have to spend more money in that area.

National security is the major responsibility of the U.S. Government. States and individuals cannot protect themselves from wars or from an incoming ballistic missile. We must do that with all of the States contributing to our country and our Federal Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines.

So we have to make sure our men and women in the military have the

health care, the educational benefits for themselves and their children, and the pay they deserve. These are the people on the front line. These are the people stepping up to the plate to protect our freedom—our freedom to talk on the floor today, our freedom to go to a playground and have safety on that playground. These are the people on the front line doing it. We are going to treat them well.

Of course, we must have a public education system that allows every child to reach his or her full potential with a public education. We want no child in our country to be left behind. If we can get the resources to these children at the earliest levels, where they have basic reading skills in the third grade, where they have the ability to do simple basic math in the fourth grade, then we will give them the tools they need to be able to learn algebra and calculus and the more complicated math and science and reading opportunities they must be able to address. So we are going to fund those priorities at a higher level.

We are going to pay down the debt at the greatest rate we can. We cannot pay down the debt fully because people would not be able to invest in Treasuries. We want that very safe investment for our people. And we want to invest for the United States. We want our Government money to earn interest. We don't want it to sit there. We will have some debt, but all of the outside-owned debt is going to be paid down, \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

Last, but certainly not least, we are going to give tax relief to every American. Every American who is working will get tax relief under the plan put forward last night by President Bush. We are going to simplify the tax system. We have a five-rate structure today: a 15-percent bracket, a 28-percent bracket, a 31-percent bracket, a 36-percent bracket, and a 39.6-percent bracket. We want to lower all of those rates and only have four: a 10, 15, 25, and a 33.

I thought the President said it very well last night. He thinks anyone in the 15-percent bracket should pay no more than 10 percent of his or her income to the Federal Government. As well, we don't think any American should pay more than one-third of what they make to the Federal Government, so the top bracket would be 33 percent.

What does that mean in real terms? It means that one in five taxpaying families with children will no longer pay any income tax at all. It will completely remove 6 million American families from the tax rolls. A family of four making \$35,000 would get a 100-percent Federal income tax cut—off the rolls. A family of four that makes \$50,000 would receive a 50-percent tax cut, receiving approximately \$1,600 in relief. A family of four making \$75,000 will receive a 25-percent tax cut. We are going to give real relief to every working American.

We are also going to increase the earned-income tax credit to make sure people who are coming off welfare know that it is better to work and there is a reward for working rather than being on welfare. These are the effects that tax relief can make for every American.

We will also double the child tax credit to make sure every family with children will have a \$1,000-per-child tax credit rather than the \$500-per-child tax credit they now have. We want to make sure that you can deduct your charitable contributions, even if you don't itemize deductions. We want to eliminate the death tax because we don't think someone in America should have to sell their family-owned business or their farm just to pay taxes to the Federal Government. This is not money that has never been taxed. It is money that was taxed when it was earned and taxed when it was invested. There is no need to tax it again. We have a projected \$5.6 trillion surplus, and we do not think people should have to pay taxes and sell a small business and take away all the jobs in that small business just to pay taxes to the Federal Government.

We do want to lower the Federal tax burden on the families of our country at the same time that we are paying down the debt so it will be the very minimum amount of debt required to have Government securities. We do want to prioritize spending so we are covering the costs that we know are a priority—public education, a strong national defense, prescription drug options under Medicare. These are the things where we will increase money, and we will flat line expenses that we don't need to increase.

Some people say: You mean you are actually going to not spend more in a Government program? Well, doesn't every family budget that way? Does a family spend the same amount every year on the same items? No. Maybe your children need more in clothes this year or maybe they don't need more in clothes. Maybe they are OK on clothes, and so you can buy the new computer. You make choices in a family. That is what we need to do in the Federal Government as well.

It is time we had a balanced approach. Every time I hear somebody criticizing the tax cut plan, it is because they want to spend more money. We are making Social Security secure. We are going to give more benefits under Medicare. My goodness, why would we want to spend more and more money when we have a surplus and when we are prioritizing the needs of the Government and when the taxpayer dollars don't belong to Government.

That is the real difference. A lot of people around here think tax dollars belong to them. Tax dollars belong to the people who earn it, and they should have the choices to spend it the way they see fit for their families. This is not money I worked to earn, and I shouldn't make the decisions on how to

spend it except for the overall national good. The overall national good should not take more than 33 percent of anyone's salary, and it should take the lowest amount that is absolutely necessary because this is money people work very hard to bring home for their families.

I applaud the President for a balanced approach, for giving tax relief to every American who is working, for paying down the debt at the greatest rate that we have ever seen, for prioritizing our spending to increase national defense, public education, and Medicare prescription drug benefits, and to make sure all of our programs are sound and solid. We can do these things if we are responsible stewards of the taxpayer dollars and if we remember that the taxpayer dollars do not belong to the Federal Government except to the extent absolutely necessary. They belong to the people who earned them.

We are going to make sure we are responsible stewards of those dollars that people have worked so hard to support their family.

I will work with the President of the United States to be a responsible leader with the very important duty we have to the people who elected us to the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we have a few minutes remaining on the time allocated for us in morning business. I thank my friend from Texas. I certainly agree with her analysis of where these surplus dollars belong. That is the bottom line.

Obviously, we have a responsibility to fund the programs that are there, programs that are important, the programs that genuinely belong as a responsibility of the Federal Government. We have a responsibility to ensure that Medicare and Social Security are there for people when they need it. We have a responsibility to pay down the debt. Those of us in my generation have spent the money, and we are going to let the younger generation pick up the bill. That is not what we want to do. We clearly have that responsibility.

Not everyone agrees, of course, on how to do that. That is the purpose of this body, to debate the various options. Generally, the debate centers on the amount of expenditures in the Federal Government, the size of the Federal Government.

There are those who believe the Federal Government has a responsibility to do most everything for everybody, to be the governance of the whole country. Others believe there is a constitutional limit on the kinds of things the Federal Government should involve itself in, that in fact the real issue ought to be to support local and State governments, the governments closest to the people, to do most of those things.

So that debate goes on and will, I suppose, go on for a very long time. I was very impressed with the President's talk last night. Apparently, most people in the country were, according to the kinds of polling and questions that were asked in terms of his command of the issues. I think everyone was impressed with that. I don't think there is any question but that the President has strengthened his presentations as opposed to when he was a candidate. Somebody wrote that when he stepped into the Oval Office, he kind of transformed. That may be so.

More important, of course, was the message that was sent, the things the President put out as priorities. Again, I was impressed that he is now seeking to implement those things he talked about and ran on in the election. That is neat. That is what you are supposed to do—put out the issues you are going to be for, and when you are elected, you do it. I think that is excellent.

I also believe one of the refreshing things about this speech last evening was that it was a little different direction from what we have been talking about over the last 8 years—a little different direction in putting some priorities on things and funding things even more than perhaps they have been funded. At the same time, we are seeking to control the size of Government and put a 4-percent growth rate on discretionary spending. It was as high as 8 percent last year, and it was 16 percent in some agencies. That is too high. Again, that depends on your point of view.

I was very impressed with the President's presentation. Obviously, it will be debated and discussed. We have already had a good deal of discussion about the size of it. That seems kind of interesting. We will talk about it some more.

The size of the Bush tax cut is fairly modest, as a matter of fact, by historical standards. Going back to President Kennedy, he recommended a tax reduction that was 2 percent of the gross national product. President Reagan had a tax reduction that chose 3.3 percent of the gross national product. President Bush's proposal is 1.2 percent. That is less than either of the others in terms of the gross national product. All this stuff we hear about it being so out of size—apparently, comparatively it is not.

Also, I think it is kind of interesting to look at the next 10-year projection of total income, which is about \$28 trillion. The tax relief over that same 10-year period is about \$1.6 trillion. I never thought I would say \$1.6 trillion isn't a lot because it is; but compared to the total, it is a small, or relatively small, percentage. I think that is something to keep in mind.

Also, as you look at what happened in terms of having surpluses, in relation to spending here, there is a substantial difference. Average discretionary spending, during the time when

we were without a surplus, was about 2 percent over the last couple years. With the surplus, it has been 6 to 8 percent.

Now I don't argue the fact that some of the spending is the kind of spending we want to make. I am persuaded—and I have seen this in my own State legislature and here certainly—when there is a surplus, the growth of government goes up substantially. It goes up almost uncontrollably. So I think the idea of doing the three or four basic things the President set out last night is substantially right. One is to provide the money for those things that are key priorities in our Government activities. Two is to pay off the national debt under the proposition that it would be paid off in 10 years—all that can be paid off under the economic circumstances. And then we will have a tax return to the people who have paid the dollars.

We are all interested, of course, in those issues, in those activities that are out there, such as education. I was home this weekend, and we talked a little about how we see our State, our communities, our public lands, and our families in Wyoming in 10, 15 years. Interestingly enough, the most common thing, actually, was education and the economy—jobs. Of course, we all want our kids to have the best education but there is quite a little interest in having job training and education. Everywhere you go, education is always there.

This proposal has the Education Department at an 11.5-percent increase—which is the most in a very long time—to go for young people in preschool and reading and those things.

Of course, Social Security is to be protected; \$1.6 trillion out of the surplus would be preserved there.

Medicare, of course, comes out of the 2.5 percent on top of the Social Security. It would be there for a priority for doing some things. Pharmaceuticals: That is going to be a difficult thing, but it is something we are all dedicated to doing.

Strengthening defense, of course. It is interesting. I have had a couple opportunities to go on bases. One is in my home State. It is a missile base, Warren Air Force Base. I asked: What are your highest priorities? First was housing, particularly enlisted and NCO housing. Some of it had been there 30, 40 years. I went down to Quantico, VA, where I served in the Marine Corps. The first priority was base housing.

In this budget is a substantial amount of money for pay and housing for the military and also for health care. Then we will properly take a look at the military in general, the strategic aspects of it and weapons aspects of it. Times have changed, and the whole challenge of the military has changed. We used to go in with five divisions and tanks and artillery. Now we are more likely to have to move about a group by air and ship, and they have to sustain themselves for weeks. It is a totally different kind of thing.

I think we have a great opportunity here to meet our obligations as the Federal Government, to meet our fairness obligations with the taxpayers and return the surplus to them, and to meet our obligations to young people by paying off the debt we have incurred.

I am excited about the opportunities. If you want to look down the road, what do you see? How do you see the Federal Government? How do you see our country in 15 years? These are the kinds of things that will be important to us—to strengthen the economy with an energy policy and do these kinds of things.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CARNAHAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BURNS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate continue morning business until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. BURNS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARPER). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAYTON. 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. DAYTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I now be recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

KEEPING PROMISES ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to give my first speech on the Senate floor, mindful of what a great privilege it is to stand here and also what a tremendous opportunity it is to be of service to others.

I am also mindful that I was elected last fall for special reasons. I made some very important promises to Minnesotans, promises that I intend to keep. Foremost among them was my promise to Minnesota senior citizens to help design and pass prescription drug coverage that would be available to everyone who is presently receiving Medicare.

Far too many times last year, I saw the suffering and the fear which our el-

derly were experiencing. I saw it in their weary faces, in their eyes filled with tears, and in their trembling hands. For them, the promises of Social Security and Medicare were unraveling, promises of retirement years with reliable economic security, free at least from the financial uncertainties and emergencies. But in their lives, higher and higher prescription drug prices destroyed their financial health and ravaged their emotional well-being.

So last spring I began my "Rx Express" bus trips to Canada. Borrowing this idea from others, I took busloads of Minnesota senior citizens to Canada where they could buy the same prescription medicines at far lower prices—often for half the cost in the United States, or less, for the same medicine, produced by exactly the same manufacturer.

I rode the first bus myself, leaving St. Cloud, MN, at 7 a.m. with 42 senior citizens and returning almost 18 hours later. This was no pleasure cruise. In fact, we spent the entire time crowded together on a compact bus, stopping only for customs, a Canadian doctor's office, a pharmacist, and for dinner. As we traveled those long hours, I was struck by the awful absurdity of our trip, because we in Minnesota pride ourselves on having world-class medical care facilities. In fact, people come from all over the world to Minnesota for the best possible health care—places such as the Mayo Clinic, the University of Minnesota Hospital, and Children's Hospital. Yet here we were, enduring a miserable travel marathon so that our senior citizens—the most elderly, frail, and vulnerable among us—could save precious dollars on the costs of their life-saving medicines.

Believe me, their cost savings were very substantial. We took a dozen of these bus trips to Canada last year, and the average savings per senior was \$350. One gentleman saved over \$1,400 on the cost of his U.S. drugs for the 6 months. Another woman said to me that her life had been saved twice—once when her medicine became available, and the second time when she could actually afford them.

I will continue the Rx Express buses by donating my Senate paychecks to the Minnesota Senior Federation or some other organization that will use my contributions to continue them. However, the solution to prescription drug affordability is not to bus every Minnesotan to Canada. Rather, it is to provide prescription drug coverage to every senior citizen across America.

When I was home last week, many elderly Minnesotans asked me, when will this kind of program become a reality? For them, the need is immediate and acute. So their need for us to act is immediate and acute. Unfortunately, today Congress shows little sign of reacting with urgency to this emergency. Last year, Members deadlocked over the form this coverage should take. Some favored adding prescription drug