

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business until 12 noon, with the first 30 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee, and the second 30 minutes under the control of the majority leader or his designee, and the remaining time shall be divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BUDGET

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, as we begin to debate the budget sent to us by President Bush, there will be a lot of discussion in the Chamber about spending restraints, about being conservative, and so on. The budget sent to us by President Bush proposes the highest budget deficit in the history of our country. I will be going to a hearing later this morning on the proposal to spend \$82 billion more on Iraq and Afghanistan. That is not in the budget. It is an emergency request.

The President's proposed budget, with a deficit well over \$400 billion in history, is short by somewhere around \$80 billion that will be spent on an emergency in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it also uses the Social Security trust fund, which could not be used for other purposes. So the real budget deficit is around \$650 billion, which is a very serious problem. Our fiscal policy is off track, and we need to get it on track.

We are going to talk about spending issues as we go along in this budget process. There will be some discussion about big issues, and some about small issues.

Let me talk for a moment about two issues that represent, I think, a profound waste of taxpayers' money.

Let me introduce you to Fat Albert. This is an AEROSAT blimp, an AEROSAT balloon. Fat Albert has been around for some while. In fact, Fat Albert is tethered about 20,000 feet above the ground with thousands of feet of cable, and it is used with camera equipment to send television signals into Cuba to tell the Cuban people how wonderful life is in our country. Of course, they know how wonderful life is in our

country, which is why they get on a boat to try to cross the waters to come to America. And if they decide not to get on the boat, they can simply tune into a Miami radio station and hear a little about America. But we are sending television signals into Cuba through TV Marti, which has been funded by the American taxpayers for 16 years.

We are broadcasting television signals which no one can see because Castro easily jams the signal. We did for a long while televise it from 3 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock in the morning. My guess is that, even if the signals got through, there aren't a lot of Cuban people up at 3 o'clock in the morning watching television. But, nonetheless, the signals don't get through because they are jammed by the Cuban Government.

For 16 years, despite the fact that we are broadcasting signals which no one can see, we have spent \$189 million broadcasting signals from Fat Albert, tethered 20,000 feet above the ground, to Cubans who can't see it.

This year, what does the budget request? The budget request is to double the funding for TV Marti. It is unbelievable. People will not understand this when they look back and say, Wait a second; they spent nearly a quarter of \$1 billion sending television signals no one could see for over 16 years? They will say, do you mean that at a time with record deficits the President wanted to double the budget for television signals no one can see?

Fat Albert once got loose with 20,000 feet of tethered cable following it. Fat Albert wandered into the Everglades. So the thing gets loose and goes over the Everglades, and they are chasing it with helicopters. Finally, it lands on the top of some trees in the Everglades. They had to find a way to get it off. Helicopters had to come down and commandos rappelled down to salvage the equipment. It is a comedy of errors.

But the administration has a plan now. They have decided they are going to get rid of Fat Albert, or maybe continue to use it but only part time. Now they want to buy an airplane for \$8 million so they can send an airplane up to send television signals to TV Marti to the Cuban people who can't see them; \$8 million for the airplane, \$11 million for the broadcast, and \$2 million for maintenance on the plane.

It is like Katy bar the door; it is as if there is no deficit.

It is unbelievable to me that we are going to continue to spend money we do not have on something we do not need, and send television signals from an aerostat balloon and now an airplane that viewers cannot see. This does not pass the laugh test.

I am not a fan of Fidel Castro. I want the Cuban people to be free. I want democracy to come to Cuba.

But our country has decided, with China and with North Vietnam, both Communist countries, the best way to move a Communist country in the

right direction is through travel and trade, through engagement. We have followed that rule with Communist China and Communist Vietnam, encouraging people to travel there and encouraging trade with both. The sole exception is with Cuba, where we have had an embargo for over 40 years. Fidel Castro has lived through 10 U.S. Presidencies. His message to the Cuban people is, of course, Our economy is in tatters; we have a 500-pound gorilla with its fist around our neck with an embargo.

The quicker way to remove Castro from office, in my judgment, is to open trade and travel to Cuba. Nonetheless, the administration does not want to do that.

So we have travel restrictions in Cuba. I have held up a poster of Joni Scott who went to Cuba to distribute free Bibles on the street corners in Havana. Do you know what happened to her? She got discovered by the U.S. Treasury Department and they slapped her with a \$10,000 fine. I held up a picture of Joan Sloat who was a retired senior bicyclist who joined a Canadian bicycle troop to go biking in Cuba. They tracked her down as she was by her son's bedside, dying of brain cancer, and they decided to slap her with a big fine and then decided to attach her Social Security payments.

They are so obsessed in this administration with the issue of Cuba it does not matter how much money they waste. We have something called the Office of Foreign Assets Control, OFAC, down in the Treasury Department. It is supposed to be tracking the financing of terrorist organizations. Do you know what? They have nearly twice as many people working on tracking Americans suspected of taking a vacation in Cuba than they do tracking terrorists' moneys that are supporting Osama bin Laden's organization. It is unthinkable that is what they are doing, but that is what they are doing.

On top of all of that obsession, what we have is a program called Television Marti which does not work, which wastes every dollar it spends, and the President says, Let's double the funding, at a time when we have the highest budget deficit in the history of this country.

There are some areas of Federal spending that ought to be abolished. I, along with my colleague Senator WYDEN and others, will offer legislation to abolish this spending. It is unbelievable.

I didn't mention that on October 10, 2003, the President held a Rose Garden event to say he was going to supplement the efforts of Fat Albert to send signals to the Cubans because they are jammed, by taking a high-tech airplane, called a Commando Solo C-130. There are only a handful in the world and we have used them in big trouble spots in the world to be able to broadcast emergency signals to people. But the President announced he was going

to use a National Guard Commando Solo C-130 to broadcast signals into Cuba. So they have been using Defense Department funds to broadcast signals to Cuba that are jammed. It is not enough, apparently, to broadcast signals from a big old aerostat balloon that the Cuban people cannot see, now we have a highly sophisticated C-130. And now even that is not enough. Now they want to buy a new airplane in this budget.

My hope is there are enough people in the Congress who understand waste is waste, not Republican waste or Democratic waste. Just waste. When it does not stand the test of common sense, and it does not even stand the basic laugh test with this kind of spending, my hope is Members of the Senate will join and decide this is the sort of thing that ought to be abolished.

One final point. I don't come here to try to abolish Radio Marti, although I don't think it is necessary. Radio Marti is broadcasting radio signals into Florida. They are often not jammed. The Cuban people receive them. I have been to Cuba and talked to the dissidents. They receive Radio Marti's broadcast. I don't propose we abolish it. But they do not see the Television Marti broadcast. We still have expensive studio space, pay expensive salaries, have aerosat balloons and now airplanes to broadcast it, despite the fact we know it is a complete, total waste of money. We know better than this. We ought to understand it and abolish it in this year's budget submitted by the President.

Let me mention one other area of spending that desperately needs to be abolished in this budget. It is not giant; it is \$8 million. But take \$11 million for Fat Albert and the new airplane and Television Marti and \$8 million here and there, and pretty soon we have a significant amount of money.

Last year and this year, the President recommended we build additional nuclear weapons—begin planning the design—and they especially talked about the earth-penetrating bunker buster nuclear weapon. Last year, the Congress said no. The President put it in his budget again this year. He wants \$8 million to revive the project to create new earth-penetrating bunker buster nuclear weapons. The implication of creating a designer nuclear weapon is, we do not have enough nuclear weapons at the moment and they are perfectly usable if we find someone crawled in a cave or carrying on operations in a cave that we want to get to that we cannot get to.

If a country like ours is to send a signal to the rest of the world that we do not have enough nuclear weapons, that we believe we should design more nuclear weapons, that designer nuclear weapons make sense, and that nuclear weapons are usable, that is exactly the wrong signal to send to anyone in this world. The exclusive opportunity and requirement for us is to send a signal

to the world that nuclear weapons should never again be used in anger under any circumstance.

We have thousands of them. The loss of one would cause an apoplectic seizure among the cities in our country. There was a time when it was thought one nuclear weapon from the Russian arsenal was stolen and it caused a great seizure among intelligence organizations and others because were a terrorist able to steal one nuclear weapon and threaten to detonate one nuclear weapon in a major American city, we are not talking about 100 deaths or 1,000 deaths, we are talking about hundreds of thousands of deaths. The loss of one nuclear weapon would be devastating if it got into the hands of terrorists.

We have thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons in this country. The estimate is somewhere—of course, it is classified—the estimate range of the Russian stockpile is somewhere perhaps in the area of 15,000 nuclear weapons; ours is something less than that but not much less than that. We have thousands and thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons between us and the Russians, with some other countries who have now joined that club who have nuclear weapons but are fewer in number.

The suggestion somehow that we do not have enough nuclear weapons, that we need more nuclear weapons, and that nuclear weapons are usable, especially if we have an issue with people holed up in a cave or strategic materials holed up in a cave, that we cannot get to that, so we can lob in an earth penetrator, a designer bunker buster nuclear weapon, and that we can use it—that message from this country is a devastating message that sets back the opportunity for this country to play a leadership role in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons everywhere, making sure we do not ever have testing of nuclear weapons anywhere. It is our job, our responsibility, to be a world leader on this issue.

Given the new reality of the war on terrorism and what terrorists would like to do with respect to weapons of mass destruction, if our country does not try to do everything humanly possible to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and make people understand it is unthinkable that nuclear weapons will once again be used on this Earth, then we will have failed. Our children and grandchildren will almost certainly see at some point an expansion of those countries that have nuclear weapons, the stealing of a nuclear weapon by a terrorist organization and the detonation of a nuclear weapon in a major city in this world and perhaps in this country. We must exert every possible effort to see that does not happen.

Sending a budget that says we need to begin work on designing additional nuclear weapons, new nuclear weapons, and nuclear weapons that are designed for specific purposes such as pene-

trating the Earth and busting caves, with the implication that it is clearly something we could, should, and would use under certain circumstances, is exactly the wrong approach and a dangerous message from this country, especially.

The burden falls on our shoulders to be a leader in stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It retards rather than advances those interests to see from this administration talk in some circles that is reckless and recommendations that are counterproductive to suggest we ought to begin, again, building nuclear weapons.

In addition to this recommendation to spend \$8 million to revive the project of a nuclear earth-penetrator bunker buster, there is talk of testing nuclear weapons, resuming testing of nuclear weapons which, of course, then would be a green light for others to say, if the United States is going to test, we are going to test.

My hope is we can understand the profound danger that exists if we do not take this proliferation issue seriously and if we do not immediately assume the mantle of responsibility to be the world leader to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. This is not about a nuisance. This is not about a threat. This is about a potential catastrophe unlike anything we have discussed or thought about with respect to weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the wrong people. That is why the responsibility is such an ominous responsibility that falls on our shoulders. It is one that we can meet, in my judgment, but we have to be clear thinking.

We need a President and a Congress, together, that will reject the approach that says we should begin building additional nuclear weapons or begin researching and talking about the need for additional weapons we can use for designer purposes.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I rise today because this Senate needs to act now to save our children's future. We all know that Social Security is one of this country's greatest success stories in the 20th century. But why? Is it the hundreds of thousands of elderly who were saved from poverty or is it the millions of seniors who have retired with the stability of their monthly Social Security checks?

Actually, there are two reasons. For me, the first is an Army sergeant who served in World War II and went to the