

afford to invest in America, we are walking away from what is essential for our competitive edge. When I hear the Republican leader stand and say we cannot afford these investments in America anymore, I wonder what his vision is when it comes to our competitive edge. I think it is important that we maintain that. The President is going to do that, I believe, in the context of responsible budgeting.

For the record, we had a deficit commission proposed on a bipartisan basis last year by Senator CONRAD and Senator Gregg, and it was a commission that came up for a vote on the floor of the Senate. Does the Senator from New Hampshire remember what happened? We failed to pass this deficit commission when seven Republican Senators, who were cosponsors, came down and voted against it.

The President had no choice at that point but to start an executive commission, on which I was proud to serve, and that executive commission did not have the binding authority that the legislative commission did, which was defeated by the Republicans on the floor of the Senate. So, now, as they pose for holy pictures in deficit reduction, they want us to erase that memory of seven Republican Senators, cosponsors, who turned and reversed their position when it came to this deficit commission.

I served on this commission. The one thing the commission reminded us of over and over is that when we hit the deficit brake, do not hit it too soon or we can skid off the road. We can be back into a deeper recession if we are not careful.

There is good news—not as much as we would like, but there is good news. A CNN opinion research poll released this morning said the percentage of the American people who felt things are going well is up 14 points since December. And the polling director said: We have not seen numbers like this since April of 2007. One likely reason for the change is the public's growing optimism about the economy. Why is it that this good news about the economy makes the Republicans feel so sad and gloomy? It is an indication we are moving in the right direction.

When the Senator from Kentucky gets up and says: Government just creates debt, it does not create jobs, that was not the speech we heard when we extended the tax cuts. Exactly the opposite was said on the floor of the Senate. Republican Senators stood up and said: Give tax cuts to people, and they are going to be able to spend more money for goods and services and have more confidence in the future.

That was a government decision—a government decision endorsed by the President and a strong bipartisan majority in the Senate and the House. The government can work in a positive way.

Let me say one word about health care. I listened carefully as Republican after Republican came to the floor to

decry the notion that there would be a government-administered health care plan. Now, it is not a government health insurance plan; it is private health insurance administered through the government and insurance exchanges to give everybody a chance to have health insurance. But those on the other side who stand up and decry government-administered health insurance plans are, in fact, insured under a government-administered health care plan called the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

So I would basically say this: We all know the Hippocratic Oath, and we all know the saying “Physician, heal thyself.” I would say to those Republican Senators calling for repeal of health care for the rest of America, first, Senators, repeal your own. Step away from the government-administered health care plan. If you find it so objectionable for the rest of America, then reject it when it comes to your own health insurance. Members of the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, I think without exception, are all members of the government-administered health care plan. If it is good enough for Members of the Senate, why is it not good enough for the rest of America? I think that is the basics.

Let me close by saying this: When it comes to trade agreements, I believe we should have good ones, ones that are fair to American workers and businesses, ones that are enforced when there are unfair trade practices. But we have to be careful as well that we have a tax code that also rewards good conduct by American businesses.

Our Tax Code currently subsidizes America corporations that want to ship production overseas. Why in the world would we spend a dollar in our tax money to reward a company that wants to remove a job from America? Over and over again, we have begged the Republicans to join us in a bipartisan effort to end this subsidy for shipping jobs overseas. That would be a good way to build the economy here in America, create good-paying jobs here at home, and invest in a country which has a bright future if we do not get caught up in the political rhetoric of the day.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

TUCSON TRAGEDY

Mr. KYL. Madam President, I would like to call timeout from this partisan discussion to speak for a moment about the events in Tucson of January 8. It is the first opportunity I have had to address my colleagues about the tragedy of that day. The theme I would like to discuss is the goodness of people because if I have gotten any lesson from this, after meeting and talking with all of the people whom I could who were involved in this tragedy, the overwhelming notion of the goodness of people is what I am most left with.

Tomorrow, Senator MCCAIN and I will offer a resolution in support of the victims of the shooting, offering condolences to those who were lost and their loved ones and our prayers for the recovery of those who were injured and expressing appreciation to those who engaged in real acts of heroism. We will have time more formally to talk about it when we do that tomorrow, but I wanted to share some thoughts from my heart based on my interaction with the people over the last 2 weeks after this event occurred.

It begins with the proposition that Tucson likes to call itself a town, not a city. It is over half a million people. But you are all familiar with communities which, though large in numbers, seem small because people work together, they play together, and they have a sense of community and of helping and working with each other. That is Tucson, where my wife and I both attended the University of Arizona. The Safeway where this event occurred is only two blocks from my Tucson office, and the head of my Tucson office and his staff were at the Safeway that Saturday morning shopping, and they left about 7 or 8 minutes before this occurred.

Judge John Roll, who was a very close friend and attended Mass virtually every morning, had just come from Mass and had decided to come to the Safeway to express his appreciation to Representative GABRIELLE GIFFORDS. They were friends. Among other things, he wanted to tell her he appreciated her signing a letter, along with Representative GRIJALVA, that supported the Arizona Federal District Court in its desire to be named an emergency district by the commission that does that for the Federal courts because of the overwhelming caseload in that court.

Judge Roll, though he had significant administrative responsibilities, kept a full caseload himself because to do otherwise would have been to put part of the burden onto his colleagues. So he was really carrying two separate loads, administering a very busy court, and at the same time acting as a judge on all of his cases.

One of the things he and I had been working on—in fact, Senator BARRASSO, Senator LeMieux, and I had lunch with Judge Roll the Friday after the election to talk about how we could strengthen the courts, especially because of the crushing caseload from drug and immigration cases because that is the district that is right down on the border. Part of his work, which I was working with him on, was to try to find ways to ameliorate the load of this court and potentially get some additional magistrates, if not judges, to help handle the caseload.

When Representative GIFFORDS decided to hold this “Congress on Your Corner” event, many of the people on her Tucson staff went with her to the event. They are very devoted to her. I

do not know anyone who enjoys meeting with constituents more than Representative GIFFORDS. So she had several staff people there too. When the gunman came, he immediately headed for her. His intention was obviously to do her harm, but right after shooting Representative GIFFORDS, he began to shoot the people on her staff and the others waiting in line to talk to her.

This is where some of the goodness of the people comes out. I mean, I talked about the goodness of the people. Judge Roll did not have to say “thank you” to Representative GIFFORDS, but he went out of his way to try to do that. When Ron Barber, the head of Representative GIFFORDS’ Tucson staff, was shot, Judge Roll, the cameras show, pushed him down under a table and put his body over Ron Barber’s body and thus took the bullet that killed John Roll. Talk about the goodness of people.

At his funeral, everyone in Tucson and in Arizona who knew Judge Roll spoke not just of his abilities as a jurist and his public service but his goodness, his love for his wife Maureen, their three sons, their grandchildren. Incidentally, three of his grandchildren spoke. It was so moving when they talked about the love they had for their grandfather, who took a lot of time with each of them to teach them how to swim, to play basketball, and so on. The goodness of people.

Representative GIFFORDS’ staff was there. They liked her and were very willing to be with her on a Saturday morning when they could have been doing something else with their families.

Gabe Zimmerman, just 30 years old, was one of those staff people, and he, too, lost his life. My staff in Tucson really enjoyed working with Gabe. Now, I am a Republican, they are Republicans, and Gabe is a Democrat working for a Democratic Representative. That did not matter to them. They really enjoyed working together for the same constituents. And I will tell you, my Tucson staff has taken his loss very hard.

There were others from his staff who were there, one of whom is an intern we are going to see this evening. He is going to be sitting in the President’s box. His name is Daniel Hernandez. We saw him at the ceremony in Tucson at the University of Arizona on Wednesday after the shooting. He was one of the people who immediately went to Representative GIFFORDS’ aid and continued to staunch her bleeding. The goodness of people—his unselfish act to help her.

Pam Simon was another one of her staffers who were shot. I had a chance to visit with Pam in the hospital and then after. There she is with wounds. A bullet went in and out of her arm and another in her leg. She could not wait to get back to work, and she has done so now.

The other people who were shot there—Christina Taylor Green was the

9-year-old. The things that were said about her remind me so much of my granddaughter, my youngest granddaughter. The hugest heart you can ever imagine, athletic and yet studious, interested in government—all the things you would want in a young woman. President Obama spoke eloquently about her in his remarks on that Wednesday. She was taken to the event with a friend who just wanted to expose her to Representative GIFFORDS and a little bit about our government.

Dorothy Morris. Now, I did not know Dorothy, but I knew her husband George. They had communicated with me, and I visited with George a couple of times after this event. He is a retired marine. I will tell you, he is having a hard time with this because he said that Dot, his wife, would follow him—in his words, “She would follow me to hell.” Well, she is obviously in a different place, and he is going to be as well. But the fact is, she did not particularly want to go that morning, but he is a Republican, he wanted to go talk to Representative GIFFORDS because he thought he could talk to her just in the way that we do about issues and have a good conversation with somebody he did not totally agree with.

Dorwan and Mavy Stoddard. Dorwan was killed. His whole recent life was devoted to service at his church. I visited with Mavy at her home. Her two daughters were there and a very good friend of ours, Ed Biggers, from Tucson, who also attends their church. The kindness of all of those people and the way they talked about the others involved, as well as, as you can see, the members of family and friends helping each other, was, as I said, an impression that will stick with me forever.

Phyllis Schneck, who everyone agreed was a wonderful grandmother, spent her winters in Tucson—she lived in New Jersey.

All of these folks were human beings with friends, with family, with futures, and to have all of them taken from us is a real tragedy.

What can we take from that? At this time, I think I have gone almost 10 minutes. Tomorrow, I will mention some of the other heroes. I will take a second with some of them, though.

Bill Badger, a retired Army colonel, did not want to talk about his heroism, but he helped to subdue the assailant.

Anna Ballis, who has two sons, both of whom are U.S. marines who have done repeated tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, was in the Safeway, came out, and immediately began administering to Ron Barber. I went to visit Ron in the hospital at the same time Anna had gotten there, a few minutes before, and Ron was holding her hand the entire time, saying: This is the lady who saved my life. Just a tremendous act of selfless courage on her part and showing again the wonderful humanity of all of the people there.

Steve Rayle, a doctor, a former emergency room doc, was there and helped to subdue the assailant and so on.

There are many others. We will talk about some of the others tomorrow when we express more formally our views on this resolution. I know all of our colleagues will want to join us in supporting this resolution to let the folks of Tucson know we appreciate what they have endured here, we appreciate the heroism. Our prayers are with the victims, and our hearts go out to all of those who were injured in some way or other.

From this, among the lessons we learned is that people have innate goodness. We all have a side of us that we wish we did not have sometimes too frequently expressed on the floor of this body. But maybe for a little while, we can acknowledge the fact that there is goodness in everyone, and I saw so much of that in all of these people drawn from all over the community, different walks of life, different political parties, different ages. Yet when they came together, what was most obvious? It was their sacrifice and their goodness. I think that is something that should be a lesson to all of us.

Tomorrow, I will speak more formally, as I said, about this resolution. But I am deeply grateful for the expressions of condolence and support all of my colleagues have presented to me and to Senator McCAIN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I certainly grieve and also appreciate all the remarks of the distinguished Senator from Arizona. What a tragedy. But there are heroes there as well. I thank the Senator for his comments.

DISTURBING FISCAL SITUATION

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, in recent months President Obama has frequently discussed our Nation’s disturbing fiscal situation.

He is right to do so.

Our yearly deficits and accumulated debt hang over the futures of our children and grandchildren like a sword of Damocles.

Though he was late to the table on this issue, President Obama seems to have finally recognized the frustration and anger of the American people over our Federal fiscal policy.

Recognizing that you have a problem is an important first step, and I applaud the administration for speaking about our Nation’s structural deficits.

But this is a critical issue, and any solution will require that those responsible give a full and fair accounting of the policies that led to this crisis.

Unfortunately, rather than own up to his administration’s complicity in our fiscal imbalance, the President prefers to blame our current and future fiscal problems on the previous administration.

For this President, the buck always seems to stop over there.

This trope is getting old.

Well before citizens began organizing against this administration and its historic spending spree, the President and