Marines all over the world are now focusing on the loss of their fellow marines. They are grieving their loss. Details are emerging, but at this time we don't know everything. The area has been blocked off. As I indicated, it was quite a big explosion. We will follow this news very closely. I will do whatever I can going forward to support the U.S. military and the families of the fallen marines.

It is very important we continue to train our military—it is so important—but one of the things that has happened due to the sequester is we have cut back on our training and maintenance. That is the way the sequester was written. The bill that is on the floor—we hope to pass today—helps that a little bit. At least for the next 6 months it will allow the military some degree of ability to move things around a little bit. We call it flexibility, which is good. But we have to be very vigilant. This sequester should go away.

We have already cut huge amounts of money in deficit reduction, which is not appropriate. Our military cannot train and do the maintenance that is necessary. These men and women are marines who are training in Hawthorne, and with the sequester, it is going to cut stuff back. I hope everyone understands the sacrifices made by our military. They make significant sacrifices by being away from home, their families, and their country. The sequester needs to go away.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for 4 years, the first priority for the country and Congress has been to improve the Nation's economy and strengthen the middle class. Our efforts have paid off. It has pulled us out of the great recession; however, unemployment is still too high. Over the last 36 months, businesses created 6.4 million new jobs—good new jobs—but the economy is not back to full strength.

During the Bush years we lost a lot including our Treasury. When he took office, we had a surplus over 10 years of $7 trillion. The 10th anniversary of the war in Iraq is today. That war cost us more than $1 trillion, and we are paying for the loss of life and all the injured in many different ways. We cannot take chances with our recovery. We are pulling out of the mess economically that the President created by all the taxes and a war that was not paid for. We must renew our investments that have always made America strong, such as innovation and job training, education, preventive health care, new roads, bridges, dams, water systems, sewer systems.

To meet our country's long-term economic goals—including the deficit—we must enact policies that support a strong and growing middle class, and that is why this week the Senate will pass, as I indicated earlier, a budget, crafted by one of the most wise Senators ever to serve in this body, PATTY MURRAY of Washington. ''Wise'' is the word I chose perfectly for her because it does fit. The work she and her committee have done fully replaces the harmful sequester cuts I have just talked about with balanced and responsible deficit reduction.

The policy outlined in her budget—our budget—will save hundreds of thousands of jobs and safeguard communities by keeping police, air traffic controllers, meat inspectors, and firefighters on the job, but first we must avoid self-inflicted wounds so we can build on the success over the last 3 years. The Senate budget will continue the progress by creating new jobs, repairing crumbling roads, bridges, and train workers for high-skilled jobs. These investments are paid for by eliminating the loopholes that benefit the wealthy of America and the most profitable corporations.

I had the fortune to serve in the Senate with a man by the name of Bill Bradley, who is one of America's great alltime basketball players. I, of course, always wanted to be the athlete he was. I admired him so much and enjoyed my friendship with him. He came out today—this Rhodes Scholar and brilliant man—and said we need to eliminate $1 trillion in taxes that are unfair and unnecessary. He said that. In addition to that, our budget also makes nearly $1 trillion in responsible spending cuts across the Federal budget. Meaningful deficit reduction requires shared sacrifice which includes contribution from the wealthiest among us.

If someone owns a profitable corporation that ships jobs to China or India, Democrats in Congress cannot stop them. Go ahead and ship them. But we can keep them from getting the tax break for outsourcing, and that is what we want to do. If they are successful enough to own a second home or yacht, more power to them. That is wonderful. That is an American success story. But Democrats in Congress do not feel we should subsidize these tax breaks for their vacation home or their boat. Ending these wasteful giveaways makes sense to most people. An overwhelming majority of Americans—including a majority of Republicans—support this balanced approach.

In the last 2 years, we have reduced the deficit by $2.5 trillion. The Senate budget continues this effort without jeopardizing our economic recovery or breaking our promises to seniors and veterans. This budget keeps Medicare strong for today's seniors and preserves it for our children and grandchildren.

PATTY MURRAY is qualified to be budget chair for a number of reasons, not the least of which she was the chair of the supercommittee. She had 12 Members of Congress—6 Republicans and 6 Democrats—arrive at a grand bargain. She was pulled back because a week or so before they were ready to make their decision—which would have been spending cuts and revenue—we got a letter from virtually every Republican saying: No thanks. No revenue. So that failed.

She is qualified in many different ways to lead this committee. Her budget reflects Democratic values, and it honors the belief that success doesn't trickle down from the top; it grows out in the middle class. The Ryan Republican budget introduced earlier this week reflects an entirely different set of priorities—skewed priorities Americans have rejected time and time again. This is the third go-round. President Obama was reelected basically for a number of reasons but not the least of which is the Ryan Republican budget. They are at it again.

The Ryan budget would hand out more budget-busting tax breaks for the wealthy to pay for these wasteful tax breaks. It would end the Medicare guarantee. It would rob 50 million Americans of affordable health insurance. It would raise taxes on middle-class families. To appease the tea party, the Ryan Republican budget would risk lives and risk the recovery, and that is just too high a price to pay.

I was stunned this morning. A Republican Congressman writes an op-ed piece—I don't know if it was in the Times or the Post—saying that the Ryan Republican budget isn't good enough for the tea party and that it should be even more stringent. That is what we are faced with.

The work done by Chairman MURRAY reflects the priorities of the American people, not the wackos referred to also in the op-ed page of the Washington Post today by a person who has won a Nobel Prize for economics.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 933, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 933) to make appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other departments and agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Mikulski/Shelby) modified amendment No. 26, in the nature of a substitute.

Toomey amendment No. 115 (to amendment No. 26), to increase by $60 million the amount appropriated for operation and maintenance for the Department of Defense for programs, projects, and activities in the continental United States, and to provide an offset.

Durbin amendment No. 123 (to amendment No. 115), to change the enactment date.