

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington, DC, July 15, 1999.

Hon. C.W. BILL YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I was dismayed to learn about the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee's mark last Monday that cut \$1.8 billion in procurement funding for the F-22 aircraft. The Department of Defense cannot accept this decision. This decision, if enacted would for all practical purposes kill the F-22 program, the cornerstone of our nation's global air power in the 21st century.

For fifty years every American soldier has gone to war confident that the United States had air superiority. Canceling the F-22 means we cannot guarantee air superiority in future conflicts. It would also have a significant impact on the viability of the Joint Strike Fighter program. The F-22 will enable the Joint Strike Fighter to carry out its primary strike mission. The JSF was not designed for the air superiority mission, and redesigning it to do so will dramatically increase the cost. An upgraded F-15 will not provide this dominance and will cost essentially the same as the F-22 program.

I know the difficult budget environment the Congress has to deal with these days. I support your efforts to give our nation the best possible defense at an affordable cost. However, I believe the nation's defense requires the F-22. The proposed cut jeopardizes our future warfighting capability and will place our forces at higher risk.

I pledge my strongest effort to ensure the program will be delivered within the cost caps that we've agreed to with the Congress. I am confident the Department has the proper management controls to ensure the success of the F-22 program. As always, I would be pleased to discuss these matters with you at any time. But I must tell you that I cannot accept a defense bill that kills this cornerstone program.

Sincerely,

BILL COHEN.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, an article appeared on July 21 in the Marietta Daily Journal which further illuminates the nature of the Secretary's letter. It says:

Defense Secretary William Cohen criticized a House panel Tuesday—

This is the point I want to make—for not consulting with the Pentagon before voting to suspend development of the Air Force's F-22 stealth fighter jet.

"Neither I nor anyone in this building—or anyone in the Air Force—was aware of the effort underway on the part of the committee," Cohen told reporters during a photo-taking session [at the Department of Defense].

This underscores the point I was making that something of this magnitude, something of the sophistication of this system, something that we have invested \$20 billion in, something that we have spent almost two decades getting ready to launch, is not managed in this manner. It is bizarre that you would find yourself at this point, and suddenly a subcommittee decides to overturn almost two decades of thought and preparation and planning.

As I said a moment ago, we have invested about \$20 billion in this system up to this point. If you were to carry

out and carry through to the end what the subcommittee has done—and it reappropriated \$1.8 billion—we would lose another \$6.5 billion. This House Appropriations Committee action would deteriorate and jeopardize the program and violate current contractual agreements between the Air Force and the contractor.

One Pentagon source told Defense Daily yesterday:

The \$1.8 billion cut would result in \$6.5 billion in total growth, \$5.3 billion in production costs and \$1.2 billion in engineering and manufacturing development costs.

In other words, you would not be saving \$1.8 billion; you would have to bleed out another \$6.5 billion. So by this time we would have \$26, \$27 billion in this weapons system—almost two decades—but no fighters.

Anytime you develop a system of that magnitude, there have been issues that surround it. But they have all been managed. Extensive congressional oversight has been very significant over the development of the aircraft. Its problems have been dealt with and managed. As I said, we are at the point of actually inheriting this unique fighter.

There was an article in the Washington Post this morning by Richard Hallion. I will read a couple paragraphs.

There was some irony in the House Appropriations Committee's canceling production funding last week for the Air Force's next generation fighter—the Lockheed-Martin F-22 Raptor. The action came only weeks after America's military forces proved—for the third time since 1990—that exploiting dominant aerospace power is the irreplaceable keystone of our post-Cold War strategy for successful quick-response crisis intervention.

I believe everybody at this point, after the Persian Gulf, after Iraq and Kosovo, is looking anew at traditional war strategy. Who would have ever thought you could have flown the thousands of sorties that were involved in Kosovo with no combat casualties?

No issue has been more misunderstood than the F-22. The plane links radar-evading stealth with the ability to cruise at supersonic speeds and to exploit and display data from various sources to better inform the pilot about threats and opportunities.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I think the other Senators are here for their prearranged time, so I will not go on. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. DORGAN. I yield myself such time as I consume under the 30 minutes allocated to this side.

TAX CUTS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we now turn to another agenda in the Senate.

By direction of the majority party, we turn to the subject of tax cuts. It is a corner that we have navigated before in this Congress. I was thinking that it might be useful to have had Daniel Webster in this Chamber to say to Members, as he said many years ago: "Necessity compels me to speak the truth rather than pleasing things. I should indeed like to please you, but I prefer to save you, whatever be your attitude toward me."

It certainly must be pleasing to say to constituents that we would like to give tax breaks as far as the eye can see, upwards of a half a trillion, three-quarters of a trillion, and some say \$1 trillion. What a wonderful thing.

This country is doing quite well. Its economy is moving ahead with significant health. Unemployment is way down. Inflation is way down. There are a lot of things in this country to be thankful for.

Part of the reason to be thankful for that is, in 1993, some of us in Congress had the vision to steer this country to a different course. If we remember, in 1993, we were facing a \$290 billion Federal deficit—\$290 billion. The economists told us that for the rest of the decade we would have anemic economic growth and deficits.

We passed a piece of legislation in this Congress. I voted for it. I was proud to do so. When people said: We're going to blame you for voting for that, I said: Don't blame me. Please give me credit for it. I won't run away from that vote.

It was a tough, hard vote. It increased some taxes, mostly on those in top 1 or 2 percent, and it cut some spending. It was tough economic medicine, but it signaled to the country we were going to put this country back on track with a responsible fiscal policy that would lead someday to a balanced budget.

We passed that by one vote in the House and one vote in the Senate—one vote. We did not get one vote from the majority side—not one. We provided all of the votes to pass that legislation at that point. We were widely criticized for it. In fact, we had Members on the other side predict that it would lead to a depression; it would lead to massive unemployment; it would collapse our economy; it would be awful for our country.

This country has had unprecedented economic growth, declining unemployment and low inflation. There are more people working and there is more home ownership. And now we find, instead of a \$290 billion budget deficit, budget surpluses ahead.

What happens at the first sign of surplus from this bridge on the ship of state? At the first sign of surplus, the majority party decides it is time to abandon the bridge and go down and get the champagne, pop the corks and pass out money to everybody—well,

not to everybody—pass out money to all the friends from the ship's crew.

Let's talk about what all this means. They rely on some vision for the next 10 and 20 years that we will have surpluses forever. Of course, this comes from economists that cannot remember their home phone number—telling us what is going to happen 3, 5, and 10 years from now. Those in the majority party say: Because we have all of this good economic news, although we didn't participate in helping make that happen—we voted against that economic plan in 1993—we are now deciding we are going to offer tax breaks of unprecedented size.

This is what is proposed. The tax breaks that will come to the floor of the Senate and will be on the floor of the other body today have as their priorities that we will not provide any money to make Medicare solvent. We won't provide any money for our domestic priorities: education, health care, defense, and other key investments. We will provide no money for debt reduction. One would expect when times are good, we ought to be able to begin reducing the indebtedness we incur when times are bad, but there is no money for debt reduction and no money for Social Security solvency. We are going to have a tax cut of \$792 billion.

That is the GOP priority. That is not new. That has always been their priority. It is full speed ahead on our priority, and everything else can wait.

If you have a pie and you show who get the tax breaks, here is how the pie gets cut. If you are in the top 1 percent of the income earners of this country, you get this large piece. If you are in the next 4 percent, between 95 and 99, you also get a large piece of the pie. But the lowest 20 percent of the income earners of this country get this little sliver, just a crumb off the corner. It is always the same, and it never changes. The big tax breaks go to the upper-income folks, and the rest are left with tiny crumbs, if any at all.

This chart shows the same thing. The top 1 percent get a \$23,000-a-year average tax cut. The bottom 60 percent of the wage earners in this country get a \$139 a year tax cut. This chart shows what is going to happen over the next 20 years. The period of time 2000–2004, 2005–2009, the cost of the GOP tax grows substantially. In the second decade, it literally explodes. It will head us right back to the same circumstance we had before of huge Federal deficits.

This chart shows the same thing in a different style. These are back loaded, exploding tax breaks that benefit the upper-income folks and will, in my judgment, lead to very significant risks for this country.

I will ask this question over and over again: If this is your priority, just tax cuts above everything else, and tax cuts that go largely to the upper-in-

come folks in this country, do you decide, then, that Head Start, for example, is not important because the domestic discretionary portion of this budget is fixing to be shrunk like a prune? You look at the kind of cuts that are necessary in all of the programs that make this a good country, the investment in our children, the investment in nutrition, the investment in health care, you will find massive cuts in all of those programs in order to pay for tax breaks that say to the folks in this country: We believe if you are in the top 1 percent, you ought to get \$22,900 back in tax refunds each year because we think you contribute the most to this country. And if you happen to be in the lowest 20 percent of the income earners of this country, we have designed a plan that says you are going to get about a \$1.59 a month.

Is that surprising? No. It is the GOP plan from the beginning of political time. It is what they have always proposed. It is what they always fight for. It is always at the expense of every other priority.

We are going to have a big debate about this and should have a big debate. I believe some tax cuts are appropriate, if they are fashioned the right way and they don't put this country's economy at risk. But I believe they ought not come at the expense of Head Start, education, health care and so many other key priorities, and especially paying down the debt during good economic times and making sure we extend the life and solvency of Medicare and Social Security. That ought to be part of the priority that comes out of this Chamber as well. That is what we will try to force in this debate on tax breaks in the coming days.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. JOHNSON addressed the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, does the Senator from North Dakota control the time?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois controls the time.

Mr. DURBIN. I inquire of the Senator from South Dakota how much time he would like to have.

Mr. JOHNSON. I ask the Senator from Illinois for 10 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from South Dakota.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, on the floor of the other body today and coming to the floor of the Senate this coming week is going to be legislation having to do with taxation, having to do with tax cuts. Just when we think we have seen just about everything in terms of irresponsibility and foolishness, we see something literally taking

the cake. We are seeing some pandering irresponsibility of record proportions that would be so serious and so injurious to this Nation's economic future and to the priorities of this country that we simply have to begin to speak about this issue today.

What does this issue revolve around? It revolves around the Congressional Budget Office's projections that we will have about a \$964 billion budget surplus over the coming 10 years, over and above what is needed for Social Security. Those are projections 10 years out, incredibly tenuous given the fact that in the past we haven't been able to make projections for a year out that have been accurate, much less for 10 years. But nonetheless, that is the baseline for this debate.

Given the economic prosperity this administration has brought us, particularly the 1993 Budget Act, passed without a single Republican vote in either body, we do have a unique opportunity now to do some extraordinary things for ourselves and for the coming generation of Americans in terms of eliminating the accumulated Federal debt, make some key investments and, yes, assisting with some targeted tax relief to those families who need it most.

But what do we see coming to us from the other body? What do we see coming on this floor this coming week? We see a tax plan from our Republican majority friends suggesting that with this \$964 billion, if you even believe it is going to happen, first of all, nothing be set aside for the preservation and the strengthening of Medicare, nothing.

Second, in order to give essentially this entire amount of money back as tax relief—primarily to the most wealthy people who are making the political contributions in this body; the typical American family gets about a buck a week tax relief—we will have to then reduce over the coming 10 years defense spending buying power by about 17 percent, at a time when we are having a hard time trying to figure out how to maintain our security responsibilities around the world as it is. This tax package would assume, then, that we will have a 23-percent reduction in domestic spending buying power over the coming 10 years.

If you buy into this tax package, that means you close veterans hospitals. That means you have significant reductions in Head Start programs, education programs. That means you give up on the idea we will have some sort of partnership for rebuilding our schools and bringing new technology into our schools. It means gutting education and agricultural programs. It means severe cuts in parks, law enforcement, in medical research, all the things most Americans think are crucial to our Federal, State and local, public and private partnerships that make this the great country it is.

On top of that, if you think that is not bad enough, there is zero set aside for the reduction of the accumulated Federal national debt we have accumulated over the 200-year history of this country but which primarily came about during the 1980s, during the Reagan and Bush years and now stands at \$5.6 trillion. It does nothing to buy down that existing debt.

And if the decision is made down the road we are not going to knock defense spending down by 17 percent, then the consequence of that, under this plan, would be that we would have to reduce domestic spending—Head Start, education, parks, law enforcement, medical research, VA hospitals, agriculture, all that range of initiatives, by 38 percent.

This is a radical, extremist agenda for the Nation. The American people deserve better than this.

Just when you think that is as bad as things can get, you look at the way this tax package is constructed, with the tax reductions, especially back loaded for the very wealthy, and then what do you find on the next page? Not only have you given up your entire domestic agenda, not only have you done nothing to reduce the accumulated Federal deficit, not only have you done nothing for Medicare, but the cost of this recipe explodes to double the cost in the next 10 years. What a radical agenda. It would be foolish, were it not so serious and so injurious to our Nation.

Then one last thought: The Federal Reserve has recently raised interest rates by about a quarter percent. Some are attempting in this tax package to put one foot on the gas while the other foot is on the brake. If we were to do this, the obvious next consequence would be a significant increase in interest rates by the Federal Reserve. There is already a rise in interest rates now, without any tax cut whatever. That is a silent tax on every American.

On every parent who wants to send a child to college or a vocational school, and on everyone who wants to buy a house, or buy a car, or a farmer who wants to finance his operation, or a businessperson who wants to expand his business and create new jobs, that is a killing tax. It is a higher interest rate as a consequence of this incredible irresponsibility that we see going on in the House today and coming to the Senate this coming week.

Thank goodness for the future of America President Clinton has indicated he will veto this nonsense. But wouldn't it be better if we could work together in a bipartisan fashion on a constructive, positive agenda that, yes, would provide some tax relief to working class people, working families, the families who struggle to make a car payment, a house payment, and to keep jeans and tennis shoes on the kids, the people who make the econ-

omy go. Let's provide tax relief there, but let's pay down some of the national debt, which is probably the single-best thing we can do in any kind of budget plan. We should make sure we make key investments in education, in Head Start, in medical research, and keep the VA hospitals open. We can do all of these things with thoughtful balance and moderation. But moderation seems to be the last thing in the world our Republican friends want to bring to either the other body or this floor in terms of tax and budget agendas.

I think where you put your money says a great deal about the character of any government because rhetoric is cheap. Everybody is for everything around here, until it is time to put some money where your mouth is and do the balancing that needs to be done. That is what we see not happening on the other side. What we are seeing is pandering and irresponsibility and radical agendas that may make a statement for the coming elections. Who knows? It seems to me it makes a very negative statement.

But we deserve better than that. This Nation deserves better, and this Nation needs better than that. We need to come up with a budget and tax reduction package that is moderate, thoughtful, and deals with some of the tax relief that is needed but makes investments that are needed and pays down the accumulated Federal debt. That will keep the cost of money down and make it easier to send a kid to college or vocational school, buy a house, buy a car, or keep a farming or ranching operation going, all of those things, if we make the right decisions.

But this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Many of us thought, in the years we have had the opportunity to serve in Congress, several things would never happen in our lifetime: The fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the possibility that we would ever be on the floor arguing about what to do about budget surpluses. We have that opportunity. Let's not waste that opportunity.

Let's take a thoughtful, constructive, positive approach to how to use those dollars as we embark on this next millennium and revisit this tax package so we emerge from this debate with a package that, in fact, does address the priorities that I think the American people want us to address, and that does it, hopefully, in a bipartisan fashion and in a way that will leave our economy stronger and leave our families stronger going into the coming century than we are now and, certainly, far stronger than what would happen if we tragically actually passed and enacted the tax agenda that we see occurring on the House floor today and is coming to this body next week.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on the Democratic side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 11 minutes 30 seconds.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and I thank the Senator from South Dakota.

Yogi Berra, one of the greatest "political philosophers" of all time, may have said, "This is *deja vu* all over again." If he didn't say it, he should have because this debate that you are hearing on the floor of the Senate is almost a carbon copy of the debate of 1981. Think about that for a moment. We were in the first year of the Reagan Presidency. We had accumulated, in the entire history of the United States of America, \$1 trillion in debt, and the Republican Party came to the floor and said now is the time for a massive tax cut. Their supporters cheered, they enacted their massive tax cut, and what happened? Two significant things:

First, we saw a dramatic increase in the national debt. A \$1 trillion accumulated debt in the entire history of the United States grew into more than \$4 trillion over the span of the Reagan and Bush Presidencies because of that 1981 decision.

Second, it was such a bad decision that the American economy struggled from recession to recession. That is what happened the last time the Republican Party brought their vision of America to the floor of the Congress.

In 1992, the American voters said: Enough; this isn't working. We want a change. And they elected the Clinton-Gore administration, which, in 1993, came to Congress and said: Let us try to get back on the right track; let us try to reduce the deficits on an annual basis, and let us try to get the economy moving again.

You should have heard the Republican Senators who came to the floor—the same ones who begged for a tax cut when the Clinton plan was debated.

Remember, not a single Republican Senator or House Member voted for that plan. Some of the things they said are absolutely classic. The Senator from Texas, PHIL GRAMM, who is very outspoken in favor of this tax cut, said of the Clinton plan:

I want to predict tonight that if we adopt this bill, the American economy is going to get weaker and not stronger, the deficit 4 years from today will be higher than it is today.

That was PHIL GRAMM of Texas, August 5, 1993. Completely wrong. Completely wrong.

The Clinton plan passed, and two things happened. Annual deficits started to come down, and, in addition to that, the economy started moving forward. Just look at the news. You don't have to believe a politician. Unemployment is down. Housing starts are up.

Business starts are up. Inflation is under control. America is moving forward, and we can feel it. Consumer confidence and business confidence is at an all-time high.

Two years ago, if you would have come to this Senate Chamber, the Republican Members were so despondent over the deficits that they wanted to amend the Constitution. That isn't done very often in America, but they said: We need to pass a balanced budget amendment. Why? So the Federal courts can force Congress not to overspend. A constitutional amendment to give a Federal judge the power to stop Congress from spending because deficits were out of control. That was only 2 years ago.

Now what debate do we hear on the floor? It isn't about deficits and constitutional amendments; it is about the surplus and tax cuts. And I have to tell you, quite honestly, the Republican agenda is out of control. What they are suggesting now is a \$1 trillion tax cut that, frankly, will not only imperil the state of our economy but also could drive us right back into deficits again. How will we pay for that?

I would like to yield to the Senator from California because she made an observation that I think should be part of the record of this debate. I yield to her for a question.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague very much for his very fine summation of where we are.

It is amazing to me to see how far we have come in this economy, from the worst of all days when people were despondent. I remember when President George Bush went to Japan and he became ill, and it became kind of a symbol of what was wrong with this country. We went to Japan to find out how they were doing it and what was wrong with our country. Why could we not get our economy under control? Now we finally have it under control. It is in the best place it has been for generations, as my friend has shown us, in terms of employment, in terms of job creation, in terms of no more deficit, in terms of being able to finally pay down the debt, in terms of housing starts and business starts—you name it—inflation. It is all going right.

What do our friends say? Whoops. Let's change course. We finally have it right, but let's turn around and go back to the bad old days.

It is amazing to me. I want to ask my friend a question about the so-called surplus. I was rather stunned to see my chairman, Senator DOMENICI, of the Budget Committee, for whom I have great respect, hold a press conference yesterday and tell the press that there is a \$3 trillion surplus. I sort of thought maybe I misheard it. He repeated it four times, at least. He said there is a \$3 trillion surplus. Therefore, all we are giving is a \$1 trillion tax cut. It is a very small part of the overall surplus.

Don't the American people deserve a refund?

I want to ask my friend a couple of questions. Is it not true that \$2 trillion of that \$3 trillion so-called surplus is Social Security? It isn't anyone else's; it belongs to Social Security. Is my friend in agreement with me on that point?

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from California is right because we are not dealing with a real surplus. We are dealing with a surplus in the Social Security trust fund which the Republican Party now wants to give away as a tax cut. Does that make sense? Does it make sense to any of us paying into Social Security, or those who hope to derive some benefit from it, at this point in time to decide to spend Social Security funds to give a tax cut?

I might say to the Senator from California: Look at the tax cut. There they go again. The Republicans cannot leave well enough alone. The economy is moving forward. Annual deficits are coming down. They want to put a tax cut package in place.

And look carefully at the winners under the Republican tax cut plan. For Mr. Bill Gates, good news. If you are in the top 1 percent, for the Republican tax, a cut of \$22,000 a year—not bad. Will he notice?

But, look, if you are in the lowest 20 percent of average wage earners in America, under the Republican tax cut plan, listen to this, \$22 a year—not bad—\$22 a year for the average working family in America, and \$22,000 for Mr. Trump and Mr. Gates.

There they go again.

Mrs. BOXER. Will my friend yield? I want him to know something. That \$22,000 a year, back to the top 1 percent, is an average, I say to my friend. I can assure you that Mr. Trump and Mr. Gates will get far more than that in a refund.

As we discussed yesterday on this floor, when you think of people who work at the minimum wage and get dirt under their nails, and work hard and sometimes have two jobs, that average refund to the top 1 percent is twice as much as they earn in 1 year. There they go again. It is right on target.

I want to ask another question of my friend. We don't have a \$3 trillion surplus because we already agreed that \$2 trillion belongs to Social Security. That leaves \$1 trillion. We know Medicare is in trouble. We know Social Security and Medicare are the twin pillars of the safety net. What good does it do someone on Social Security if they know they get that but their Medicare premium is going to go up so high that they can't afford to buy their food or pay their rent? So we need to take care of Medicare. How much is in the Republican plan to save Medicare?

Mr. DURBIN. The answer is clear. Zero. Medicare is a word about which

the Republicans don't want to talk. They don't want to use it. Yet we all know that, unless we do something significant for the Medicare program, by the year 2015 this program will be bankrupt and 40 million Americans, elderly and disabled, who rely on Medicare for their health insurance have a time of reckoning that is just over the horizon.

We on the Democratic side believe that if there is going to be any surplus, as the President has suggested, we should dedicate it, first, to any surplus we realize to Social Security; second, to Medicare; and, third, to reducing the national debt.

I ask you: Which is the party of fiscal conservatism?

Listen to this debate: \$1 trillion taken out of funds such as the Social Security trust fund to give away to the wealthiest of Americans, which is the Republican plan, or the Democratic plan, which says to take care of priorities—reducing our debt, reducing our need to appropriate money each year for interest on the debt, and making sure that Medicare and Social Security are strong enough to survive.

I think our position is not only fiscally conservative but I think it is fiscally sane. Others will characterize an alternative.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. DURBIN. Yes.

Mr. DORGAN. I wanted to ask the Senator from Illinois if it is not the case that the proposal by the Republicans for very significant tax cuts, much of which will go to the upper income folks, would mean that they have nothing for debt reduction? Isn't it the case that in tough economic times—for example, when we passed the Deficit Reduction Act in 1993, with no help from the other side and not one vote even—in tough economic times your debt increases? During good economic times, you ought to reduce the debt. Isn't it the case that this fiscal policy plan of theirs provides nothing for debt reduction during good economic times? Is that fiscal conservatism?

Mr. DURBIN. It is fiscal insanity. I would say to the Senator from North Dakota that we hope this economy will continue to progress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the distinguished Senator has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent for 30 additional seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to the Senator from North Dakota that if we are going to prepare ourselves for the future, we have to prepare for the possibility of a reduction. I don't think that is wild-eyed thinking.

The Republican plan makes no contingency plan that suggests we might

have a downturn in the economy. We should be reducing the debt and pledging our surplus, whatever it may be, to reducing that debt and making certain Social Security and Medicare are there for years to come.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Maine is recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The distinguished Senator is recognized.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

I further ask unanimous consent that the time reserved for the Senator from Ohio, Mr. VOINOVICH, be given to the Senator from Ohio, Mr. DEWINE.

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

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Mr. DEWINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 1412 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceed to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1217, which the clerk will report.

The legislative assistant read as follows:

A bill (S. 1217) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Gregg amendment No. 1272, to extend the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund through fiscal year 2005.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is amendment No. 1272, on which there will be 1 hour of debate equally divided.

The distinguished Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, under the unanimous consent agreement from last night, we were going to reserve 30 minutes of the time for two Democratic Members of the Senate, Senator

LEAHY and Senator BIDEN. Senator BIDEN and Senator LEAHY had 30 minutes of this time. I now ask unanimous consent that the final 10 minutes of the time be reserved for myself, and prior to that, the 10 minutes prior to that, be reserved for the Senator from South Carolina.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask the time be allocated to the underlying amendment and charged equally against both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, on behalf of the Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, I ask that Andrew Kline be granted the privilege of the floor during consideration of this measure.

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

Mr. HOLLINGS. I suggest the absence of a quorum under the same arrangement, the time charged to both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for 7 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. First of all, I take this time because I want to talk a little bit about the plight of American agriculture and our Nation's farmers and to talk about a bill that I will be introducing shortly.

U.S. CAPITOL POLICE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, like so many of my fellow Senators, I just came from the memorial service that took place in Statuary Hall for the two police officers, Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut, who gave their lives 1 year ago defending the Capitol and those of us who work in these hallowed Halls.

I just got to thinking, when I was there watching all of the uniformed po-

lice officers standing so gallantly up on the platform, what a tough job these policemen have, what a terribly tough job they have.

On the one hand, because of the very nature of our jobs, we have to be accessible; we have to expose ourselves to the public on a daily basis, whether it is out in the front of the Capitol or over in the grass or walking between offices. We have to be available and accessible to the public. The police officers have to let us be accessible. We cannot put a shield around us.

On the other hand, it is the police officers' sworn duty to protect us and to keep us safe from harm.

All police officers have a tough job in this country. I think, above all, the police officers who work in and around the Capitol have the toughest job of all because they have these two conflicting responsibilities—to make us accessible, to not put shields around us, to keep this an open, public place, to be the shrine of freedom, and, on the other hand, to protect us and defend us from harm.

I just must say, I am as guilty as anyone; I never take the time to thank the police officers who protect us. We pass by them every day. We go in and out of the doors. We see them on the subway. We exchange pleasantries.

I am going to make an extra special effort from now on just to say thank you to these police officers, the men and women who protect us daily in the Capitol and who, as Officers Chestnut and Gibson showed a year ago, are willing to lay down their lives for us. We should thank them every day. I do so now and will make a special effort to do so in the future.

(The remarks of Mr. HARKIN pertaining to the introduction of legislation is located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

TRIBUTE TO JOHN F. KENNEDY, JR., CAROLYN BESSETTE KENNEDY, AND LAUREN BESSETTE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise with great sadness today to pay tribute to the lives of John F. Kennedy, Jr., his wife Carolyn, and her sister, Lauren Bessette. My thoughts and prayers are with these families, for at this very moment, as we know, they are at sea to bring these wonderful, outstanding young Americans to a final rest.

We in the Senate, of course, feel very close to this tragedy because of our affection for our own colleague, Senator TED KENNEDY. We in Maryland feel very close to this family because we are the home to Eunice and Sarge Shriver, to Mark Shriver, who has taken his place in the House of Delegates, and our own Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who lost a brother just a few months ago. As the eldest of the Kennedy cousins, she has endured