

in the midst of the very contests themselves.

Over the next 8 weeks, candidates for Federal office will spend more money than at anytime in American history to attempt to persuade the American people in the casting of their votes. There is one simple, compelling reason for this spiraling increase in campaign expenditures, and that is the cost of televised political advertising, the cost of being on the national television networks.

This Congress has tangentially dealt with some of the campaign finance problems. It is obviously positive that Congress tightened regulations for the disclosure of contributions for section 527 organizations. It was a small victory.

We have, through the years, increased the number of votes in this institution, of which I am one, for comprehensive reform as envisioned by Mr. FEINGOLD and Mr. MCCAIN. But indeed, even if both of these provisions were enacted, the pressure for increased expenditures would not abate. With all of these reforms in place, the pressure to raise more money and spend more money would still dominate the system, which leads to the proposition that to deal with the costs of advertising on television, either this Congress must go beyond the current debate on campaign finance reform or others outside of the Congress must become part of the solution.

Ironically, the principal critique of the campaign finance system is coming from the very people who are driving its costs—the television networks. A 30-second prime time advertisement in the New York City market now costs \$50,000. In Chicago, the same advertisement can cost more than \$20,000. This is the heart of the problem.

The New York Times estimates the 2000 elections will cost \$3 billion. This is a 50-percent increase over the 1996 elections. And \$600 million, or 20 percent of those expenditures, will be on political advertisements on television. This represents a 40-percent increase in only 4 years.

During the Presidential primaries, both GORE and Bush spent 46 percent of all of their campaign expenditures just on television ads, twice as much as any other category of expenditures. The evidence is overwhelming. What is driving this increase in expenditures, hence requiring the raising of these exorbitant, even obscene, amounts of money, is the cost of television advertising. It could not be clearer.

Potentially the most expensive Senate race in American history is going to be the current Senate race in New Jersey. A study by the Alliance for Better Campaigns focused on last June's primary in my State. It came to the following conclusions:

Local television stations in New York and Philadelphia took in a record

\$21 million from New Jersey Senate candidates, but these same television affiliates of the networks devoted an average of only 13 seconds per night in the final 2 weeks of the Senate campaign to actual news.

This chart illustrates what was available to the people of my State in choosing a Senator. In New York, a CBS affiliate—this is in the final 2 weeks of the campaign, only the last 14 days—devoted 10 seconds to coverage of news on the campaign. In Philadelphia, one network gave an average of 1 second per night to actual news about the campaign.

It is, therefore, not unpredictable that this would lead to candidates unable to communicate with voters through the news spending exorbitant amounts of money in advertisements. Indeed, during the final 2 weeks of the New Jersey Senate primary, viewers in Philadelphia and New York markets were 10 times more likely to receive a communication from a candidate through a paid advertisement than they were through an actual news story. They were 10 times more likely, if they were watching the news, to see an ad rather than actually seeing a report from a reporter on the campaign.

Paid advertisements have come to dominate sources of information over actual news reports in American political campaigns.

During the last Presidential primary season, it was much the same. The typical local television station aired less than 1 minute of candidates discussing issues each night. During the month before the Super Tuesday primary on March 7, the national networks aired a nightly average of 36 seconds. The people of the United States were choosing their two nominees in the major national primary, and for the preceding month the television networks devoted 36 seconds to discussing issues. Of the 22 televised Presidential debates held during this year's primary season, 2 were aired on network television. ABC, CBS, and NBC reduced by two-thirds the amount of time that was then devoted to the national political conventions.

This is the source of some obvious changes in the American political culture. Not only is this collapse of news coverage leading candidates to raise more money and buy more advertisements, it is obviously changing how the American people make their judgments.

On average, since 1952, 22 percent of voters have said they decided how to vote based on their observation of political conventions. This is also in a state of collapse. People made judgments on hard news, they made judgments on political conventions, they watched for sources of news that were unbiased or professional, and that is being replaced by political advertisements, not by choice but because there is no choice.

It is extraordinary, given this state of affairs, that the principal force driving allegedly for campaign finance reform has been in the media.

The networks reduced the amount of news coverage, radically increased the cost of advertising, and then complained about campaign financing. It is an extraordinary state of affairs.

Indeed, at this point, the television networks have political advertising as the third most lucrative source of their revenues—only behind the automobile companies and retail advertisers.

Indeed, buying air time for political ads is now 10 percent of the revenues of the television networks. Hence, it will become clear why they may complain about the cost of political campaigns, appropriately—because we all want reform in this institution more than they—but one can see why they are leading by complaint, not by example, in doing anything about the costs. They are themselves living off of and profiting by the system. And it is accelerating.

In the last decade, the percentage of political ads as a portion of total revenue of the television networks has gone from 3 percent of all revenue in political ads in 1992 to 9.2 percent this year and rising.

During the last cycle, network broadcasters accepted \$531 million in political advertising. This is a 33-percent increase since 1996 and over a 110-percent increase since a decade ago. It isn't just that they are charging exorbitant money; it is rising in multiples every year. They are driving the cost of American political campaigns.

Candidates have been living, for the last 25 years, with the same \$1,000 limit in raising hard Federal dollars—\$1,000 per American per election. But the networks are up 110 percent in how much they are taking in, meaning that candidates are spending more and more time, going to more and more people, raising more and more money to communicate with the same voters.

I do not know how we get this Congress to enact campaign finance reform. I trust at some point it will happen. I do not know what else the Democratic Party can do. We have had 45 seats in the Senate for the last 2 years, and every single Democrat has voted for campaign finance reform.

But even if we were to have succeeded in those votes, it would not have solved this problem. We would limit how much would be raised, perhaps, but we would not deal with these expenditures. Ultimately, it is these expenditures that must be addressed.

As my friend, Senator MCCONNELL, stated many times on the floor of this Senate, the Nation does not suffer from too much political debate. It probably suffers from too little. If we lower the amount that can be raised, and the networks keep raising the amount that is required to be spent, all we are going

to accomplish is less discussion of issues. If the networks were devoting more time to the impartial discussion of issues, debates, news coverage, conventions, it would be a good substitute for political advertising. But the amount of news coverage is collapsing while the costs go up.

If we control the expenditures, the net result will simply be this: The American people, making vital decisions about the Nation's future, with less and less and less information.

The hypocrisy of this gets worse. It is not just that networks charge more money and have less news coverage. For those of us who believe there should be a requirement for free or reduced-rate air time over the public airwaves, to reduce the need to raise this money, guess who is working against us. The very people who employ Mr. Brokaw, Mr. Rather, and Mr. Jennings, who, every night, are complaining about the cost of political advertising. Their employers are lobbying to stop the reforms. The National Association of Broadcasters, the lobbying arm of the television networks, spent \$2.8 million lobbying Congress in 1998.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TORRICELLI. In the year 2000, they have already spent \$1.4 million.

As the Washington Post reported on May 2, when it comes to helping solve the political fundraising problem, the broadcasting industry "doesn't see beyond its own bottom line." Exactly.

They are for campaign finance reform, unless they have to make a contribution. They are the principal component of this problem. Every person in this institution is spending time raising money when they should be working on legislation—compromising public confidence in the Congress by raising exorbitant amounts of money to feed the television networks that do not meet their own responsibility in reporting the news, no less in reducing the costs.

This is everybody's problem. The principal burden of solving it is in this Senate. I do not excuse that. The principal burden is here. We should be requiring free or low-cost television. But it is not our problem alone. Everyone in America can make a contribution to this. And it begins with the networks. You have a public license. The airwaves of the United States belong to the American people. In no other democracy in the world does the cost approach what we require for political candidates to raise money to use the public airwaves to communicate with our own constituents—sold at a profit.

I believe this Senate should require the FCC to have the networks offer a

reasonable amount of free or reduced-rate advertising to candidates for Federal office as a matter of law. But until we do, the networks, as a matter of public responsibility, need to evaluate how much time they are devoting to political news so the American people are informed, recognizing that is the only way for democracy to reach sound judgments, and to unilaterally meet their responsibility and reduce these costs unless or until this Congress takes action. I believe this is the heart of the campaign finance problem.

Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota, once again, for allowing me the time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

TO AUTHORIZE EXTENSION OF
NONDISCRIMINATORY TREAT-
MENT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUB-
LIC OF CHINA—MOTION TO PRO-
CEED—Continued

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, am I recognized for 30 minutes by previous consent in postcloture debate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has up to 1 hour.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, some long while ago I was at a meeting in North Dakota, and I was talking about senior citizen issues and health care, and a range of things, and I used a statistic. I told the senior citizens who were at the meeting that there are two men for every woman over the age of 80 in the United States. And an older fellow rose from his chair and leaned forward on his cane and said to me: Young man, that is one of the most useless statistics I have ever heard.

I thought about that for a while. There are a lot of useless statistics used in all kinds of different venues. In this discussion about trade, there will certainly be plenty of statistics used. Perhaps plenty of them will be useless. But I do want to talk about some trade statistics today because we are now debating the motion to proceed to the bill that would make normal trade relations with China permanent.

I think there are a lot of wonderful things going on in this country. All of us should count our blessings that we live in a country that is doing so well. The economy is growing, growing rapidly; we have unprecedented economic growth and opportunity. It is a great time. Unemployment is down, way down. Inflation is down, way down. Crime is down. Home ownership is up.

You could look at all of the data. Productivity is up, up, way up. All of the data shows that this country is doing very well. All of us need to be thankful for that.

But there are some storm clouds on the horizon in one area, and that is in the area of international trade. And we should not ignore them.

This is not about Republicans and Democrats. It is about a public policy area this country must address. If we don't address it in a thoughtful way, we will not continue this kind of economic opportunity and growth.

Here is a chart that describes what is happening in trade. This is the merchandise trade deficit for this country; that is, the trade in goods. I have not included the trade in services, only the trade in merchandise goods. This is essentially manufacturing. We eliminated the red ink in the budget. The budget deficits are gone. But the trade deficits are going up, way up. This year especially. In June, the monthly merchandise trade deficit increased to \$36.8 billion. The deficit for the first half of this year was \$216 billion. That means that at the end of this year we will probably have a \$430 billion merchandise trade deficit. We are buying from abroad \$1.2 billion a day in goods more than we are selling abroad, and that can't continue forever.

With whom are these deficits? Well, for the first half of the year 2000, the merchandise deficit that we have with Mexico is nearly \$12 billion; with Canada, \$22.6 billion and increasing dramatically. With the European Union, it is a dramatic increase from \$16 billion for the first half of last year to \$26 billion this year. With China, it has increased from \$29 billion to \$36 billion.

These are not yearly figures. These are 6-month figures, January through June. So this is equal to a \$72 billion annual trade deficit with the country of China. With Japan, this is almost unforgivable, year after year, forever, we have had these huge budget deficits with Japan. Now they are totaling nearly \$80 billion a year.

What is happening is wrong. I am not a classic "protectionist," as the press would describe some of those involved in this debate. I believe we need to expand international trade. I believe we ought to be open for competition and be required to compete. But I also believe the trade ought to be fair; the rules of trade ought to be fair. Globalization attends to it some requirement that we have global rules, not only global markets.

What is happening here, with Japan and China and, yes, others, is they are selling into our marketplace at a record pace in a whole range of areas, yet we are not able to access opportunities in their marketplace. I wonder how many Americans know what the tariff would be on a pound of U.S. beef that is shipped to Japan today? Do you want to ship a T-bone steak that comes from a ranch in North Dakota to Tokyo? What do you think the tariff would be on a T-bone steak going to Tokyo? I will tell you what it is. It is over 40 percent, a tariff of over 40 percent on American beef going into Japan. That is after we have negotiated an agreement with Japan. That