

about truth in sentencing, if state convicts you of murder in this country on average you are going to be in prison 10 years. You are going to get sentenced for 21 years but you are going to be serving about 10 years in prison for murder. Rape? You can expect to serve about 5 years in prison. They will sentence you to 10 on average, but you are only going to be there about 5. For robbery you are going to be sentenced to a littel over 8 years, perhaps, and you will serve 4 years.

What is the answer to all this? Why are these folks let out early? Why would we decide in this country that a murderer should only serve half of his or her sentence? The prison authorities and others who construct these laws tell us the reason they have to dangle good-time benefits in front of these prisoners, including violent offenders, is because it allows the authorities to better manage them while in prison. In other words, if they behave while in prison they can get out early. That is a terrific incentive, they say, for prison inmate management.

I wonder, I ask the question about the management of Elmer Spencer, Jr. I wonder if I could get names of the people who decided the best way to manage Elmer Spencer, Jr.'s time in prison was to dangle in front of him the opportunity to be released 7 years early, so he could be on the streets in late November of this year and murder a 9-year-old boy? I guess the word is "allegedly murdered him" because he is now charged with the crime, but am told there is little question about the guilt in this case.

I wonder if we could have the names of those who have decided it is appropriate for James "Buck" Murray to be on the streets, or Leo Gonzales Wright to be on the streets after being convicted of murder, only to murder again; violent criminals to be back on the streets so Bettina and young Jonathan and all the others are victims.

What is the answer? The answer is simple. This is not rocket science. It is simple. It is to decide as a policy—as I have advocated for some while, regrettably unsuccessfully—that in this country we distinguish between those who commit violent crimes and those who commit nonviolent crimes. In my judgment, we ought to have a judicial system in America that says: If you commit a violent act, understand this. All over America, understand this and listen well: If you commit a violent act, there will be no good time, there will be no parole, there will be no time off for good behavior. You will go to prison and the sentence administered by the judge in your trial will be the sentence that you serve in prison. No time off for good behavior—period.

We need to do that in this country. I have tried and tried and tried again in this Senate to advance that public policy, unsuccessfully. But I am not going

to quit. This 106th Congress is ending without great distinction. We didn't even discuss the issue of violent crime. We should. I hope we will in the 107th Congress. I hope perhaps there are Republicans and Democrats who understand that there is nothing partisan about this issue. But there is a crying need in this country to decide that violent offenders must be put away and kept away for their entire term of incarceration.

In 1991, the Bureau of Justice Statistics found there were 156,000 people in State prisons for offenses that they committed while they were on parole from a previous conviction.

Let me say that again because it is important: 156,000 people were incarcerated for criminal offenses that they committed while they were out on parole from a previous prison sentence.

That is exactly the case in the description of the murder I started with today. It is exactly the case with Elmer Spencer, Jr., out early and a 9-year-old is dead. This is not an unusual story. I could speak for 2 hours and more, and not just about Maryland or Virginia or the District of Columbia. There is a courageous young woman from North Dakota named Julie Schultz. Julie Schultz is a friend of mine, a mother of three from Burlington, ND. She was going to a League of Cities meeting in Williston, ND, on a quiet North Dakota highway on an afternoon with very little traffic and stopped at a rest stop. At this rest stop Julie Schultz, mother of three, encountered a man named Gary Wayne Puckett, who should have been in prison but was released early in the State of Washington. This issue knows no State boundaries. He assaulted Julie Schultz and then slit her throat and left her for dead.

I won't describe the events that allowed her to survive, but they were quite miraculous. But Gary Wayne Puckett should never have been near a rest stop on a highway in North Dakota on that day. He was released early.

Again, we know better than that. State governments should know better than that. Public policy should know better than that. We can do better than that.

It is my intention to reintroduce in the coming Congress, in January in the coming Congress, legislation that I have introduced previously. That is legislation that would provide financial penalties in the truth-in-sentencing grants that are given from the Federal Government to the State government, for those States that fail to enact laws that eliminate good-time credits, eliminate the dangling of time off for good behavior. My legislation will use these funds to provide financial incentives for states that say, instead, by statute: If you are convicted of a violent crime, understand your ad-

dress will be your jail cell until the end of your term.

When and if we do that in this country, finally, innocent people walking up and down the streets of America will not be threatened by a violent murderer, a kidnaper, a killer, a rapist, someone who is let out early, and poses a severe threat to innocent citizens like Christopher Lee Ausherman.

Mr. President, my understanding is the Senate is now in morning business but there will be additional debate on bankruptcy; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At the conclusion of the Senator's remarks, Senator GRASSLEY will be recognized to speak on the bankruptcy bill.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as soon as Senator GRASSLEY comes to the floor, I will be happy to relinquish the floor. I want to speak for 2 minutes on another subject. As soon as he comes, I will suspend.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I worry very much that we are facing a slowdown in our economy that could be very significant. I hope Mr. Greenspan and the Federal Reserve Board in December will decide they should begin to cut interest rates. Six increases in interest rates since June 1999 have clearly slowed growth in this country in a way, in some respects, that put us in a perilous position, with the liquidity crisis and a range of other issues that could very well derail the longest and strongest period of economic growth in American history.

I will speak more about this later because I see Senator GRASSLEY is about ready to speak on bankruptcy. I do want to say this. I have come to the floor previously when the Federal Reserve Board was searching for evidence of inflation—searching in closets, under beds, in virtually every crevice, trying to find some evidence of inflation, and used that fear to increase interest rates six times. We have had the highest real interest rates for many years in this country, and they threaten, in my judgment, to derail this economic growth.

I hope the Fed in December will think seriously about beginning to reduce interest rates to preserve an opportunity for continued growth.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

MAJORITY COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, pursuant to S. Res. 354, on behalf of the leader, I submit the following two Republican Senators to be members of standing committees of the Senate. The appointments that will be made are Senator NICKLES to be a member of the Banking Committee and Senator VOINOVICH to be a member of the Agriculture Committee.