

THE SENATE AGENDA

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, Democrats have introduced some of our legislation. George W. Bush is now President Bush. His administration is coming in. We will have votes on nominees.

I think the important word here is civility. I also point out—not that I am opposed to civility—I think when people in the country—in Minnesota, Nebraska, and around the Nation—say they want us to be bipartisan, what they are not saying is, we don't want any debate. People expect debate on issues and they expect us to have differences that make a difference, especially in their lives.

But I think what people are saying is two things: No. 1, we want to have civility, we want to see civility; and the second thing that people are saying is we want you to govern at the center. But, colleagues, they are not talking about the center that I think pundits in D.C. talk about, or too many of us talk about. I think what people are talking about is not the usual labels but, rather, we want you, Democrats and Republicans, to govern at the center of our lives. That is what people are talking about, the center of their lives.

So if, in fact, we have legislation on the floor and have amendments and debate about amendments that deal with making sure people are able to have a standard of living where they can support their families and give their children the care they need and deserve, we are governing at the center of their lives. If we are talking about legislation that provides more resources to enable States and school districts to do a better job of providing the best education for all the children in this country, we are governing at the center of people's lives.

If we are going to speak, as the President did with considerable eloquence, about leaving no child behind, let us make sure this is not symbolic politics. This cannot be done on a tin cup budget. If we want to leave no child behind, the best thing we can do is make a real investment in early childhood development so these children, when they come to kindergarten, are ready to learn. They are not already way behind.

If we are going to talk about governing at the center of people's lives then we are going to have to talk about the health insecurity that so many Americans experience. I am not talking just about elderly people who cannot pay prescription drug bills. I am also talking about people toward the end of their lives who are worried they are going to go to a nursing home and then lose everything before they get any help.

What about how people can stay at home and live in dignity as long as possible? I am talking about, not just the 42, 43, 44 million people who have no

health insurance at all, but the people who are underinsured. I am talking about people who are paying more in copays and deductibles than they can afford to pay. I am also speaking about the people who right now have plans but plans that do not provide anywhere near as good coverage as we have.

It would seem to me that what is good enough for Senators and Representatives should be good enough for the people we represent. If we are going to talk about jobs and decent wages, economic development and economic growth—which is critically important, whatever ways we can contribute to that—and education and affordable child care and affordable health care, then we are governing at the center of people's lives and I think there can be real bipartisanship.

But I also want to point out I don't see how we do it with a \$1.3 trillion tax cut over the next 10 years. I don't see how we do it if that tax cut is all the way at the level of \$1.3 trillion. I certainly do not see how we do it if it is too targeted to people at the top of the income ladder. I ask my colleagues this question: How can we give all the speeches and talk about the children and talk about education and talk about health care and talk about veterans and talk about our commitment to all these issues and all these people and at the same time have no revenue? You cannot do both.

Let's have some balance here. Let's have some tax cuts that are targeted at middle-income working families and let's also not rob ourselves of the capacity to make the investments in the very areas we say we care so much about.

I also say to colleagues that I think Speaker Gingrich found this out: Don't assume there can be an assault on basic environmental protections and protections at the workplace, health and safety protections, and that will go without a fight. There will be a real fight on those issues. I hope we can find middle ground, but I do not believe it is an agenda that speaks to the center of people's lives because the vast majority of people in our country believe we are all strangers and guests on this land and we should make the environment better; we should leave it better.

I also believe we will have a healthy debate—again with civility—over the question of whether or not there is such a thing as a workable star wars, a workable missile defense which ultimately could cost hundreds of billions of dollars. This was, at first glance, a good idea, starting in the late 1950s. But every time we look at it and realize the ways offensive weaponry overwhelms defensive weaponry, and we consider the danger of chemical and biological warfare being brought in by suitcases, there is no evidence this is technologically feasible, much less the

way this puts the arms control regime in jeopardy.

So I say to my colleagues on the first day: I look forward to the debate. I look forward to passionate politics. I look forward to politics focused on people's lives. I look forward to civil debate, civil politics. I think we can have that. But I believe so much has changed in the country, so much is at stake, the Senate is 50-50—we can agree on some important legislation that will help people. Let's move forward. Then when we do not agree, there will be major, major debate on the floor of the Senate.

For my part, I look forward to working with my Republican colleagues whenever we can and wherever we can and to be honest. With a twinkle in my eye, I just as much look forward to the debate and disagreement. As a Senator from Minnesota, I am in profound disagreement with the direction on some things I think the President is going to go forward with. But that is what the Senate is all about, to have debate, to do your best for people, and I look forward to the Senate functioning at its very best. I hope we can make amendments on the floor to legislation that should not be closed off again. We can start early in the morning, work late at night, we can do the work and then I think the Senate will be at its best as an institution and give all of us a chance to be good Senators.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. I thank the Chair. (The remarks of Mrs. HUTCHISON relating to the introduction of S. 11 and S. 40 are found in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Florida). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I would like to call my colleagues' attention to the brave and persistent efforts of the Association of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared on behalf of human rights in Colombia.

One of the most pressing human rights emergencies in our hemisphere has been taking place in Colombia, where the government, paramilitary groups, and guerrillas remain locked in fierce struggles. Thousands of innocent