

that allows us to protect Social Security, provide a prescription drug benefit, fund education, ensure a strong and stable military, and continue to pay down the debt.

Today, over a million and a half Americans dedicate every minute of their lives to the defense of this Nation. The U.S. military force is unmatched in the history of the world in terms of power, training, and ability, and this Nation is recognized as the world's only superpower, a status which is largely due to the sacrifices our veterans made during this last century. So rather than honoring their commitment and bravery by fulfilling our obligations, the Federal Government has chosen instead to perpetuate a 110-year-old injustice. Quite simply, this is wrong. It borders on being disgraceful.

I hope everyone within the sound of my voice will join in honoring these veterans who deserve what they have earned. They are not asking for a hand-out. They are asking for what they deserve. They have disabilities. They have fulfilled their commitment in the military and are subject to that retirement.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Kansas, how long does he wish to speak?

Mr. BROWNBACK. Five minutes or less because I preside at that point in time.

Mr. REID. Senator BOXER has made a request through me and I ask this of the Chair. I ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to speak at 4:20 p.m. for 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to Senator BOXER speaking for 25 minutes?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. BROWNBACK pertaining to the introduction of S. 315 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

SUPPORT FOR THE DEFENDERS OF OUR NATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, on July 27, 1920, in a speech before the Republican national convention in Chicago accepting his party's nomination for Vice President, Massachusetts Governor Calvin Coolidge exclaimed, "The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten." With these strik-

ing words, Coolidge chastened the convention delegates to never take lightly the sacrifice of American soldiers, who during World War I, left freedom's shores to defend democracy abroad. Back then, Coolidge recognized that a great country must honor its guardians, lest it be forgotten.

This week, President George W. Bush has come forward under the same banner as Coolidge did in 1920, to declare that America must not forget its defenders. In a speech before the brave men and women of the United States Army's 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart Georgia, President Bush proposed \$5.7 billion in new spending for the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Armed Forces. Specifically, the President has proposed dedicating \$400 million for across-the-board pay raises, \$1 billion for re-enlistment bonuses, \$3.9 billion for improving military health benefits, and \$400 million to improve military housing. I applaud the President on this brave and honorable proposal.

I find it appalling that before the President announced this proposal many were criticizing his decision to temporarily freeze program spending at last year's appropriated levels. When the President ordered the Secretary of Defense to conduct a thorough review of Pentagon weapons programs before proceeding with any requests for supplemental funds, he was attacked in the press for breaking his campaign promise to "bolster our national defense." I find such assertions to be not only mean-spirited, but also misguided.

Make no mistake, newer and better weapons systems are crucial toward maintaining our national defense. We live in a world where we face real and present hostilities. Rogue nations are becoming increasingly capable of striking America's shores, and I look forward to the debate we will have in the Senate this year about building ballistic missile defense systems, and other "next generation" weapons to counter these terrors. However, I fully realize that without qualified men and women trained in the use and support of these systems, we are merely left with empty threats to counter these real hostilities.

Human beings are the driving force behind our national security. Tanks, ships, and fighter jets do not win wars. Soldiers, sailors, and airmen do. Arlington does not honor the memory of our greatest weapons. Those hallowed grounds are sacred to the memory of the men and women who have laid down their lives using and supporting those weapons. Concern for the individuals who proudly serve our Nation as soldiers should always be our first priority when we debate our national defense policies. By proceeding first to the need of the soldiers ahead of the need for new weapons, President Bush has demonstrated he has his priorities

straight and I pledge my support for his proposal in the U.S. Senate.

The bond between a soldier and his nation must be reciprocal. The United States must rely on soldiers to defend against her enemies, and, for over 225 years, these soldiers have never failed. However, we do not always recognize the fact that the favor often goes unreturned. Far too often throughout our history the United States has relied on the defense of the soldier, while failing, in turn, to defend the soldier against their own enemies.

The enemies of our soldiers are low pay, substandard housing, and second class health benefits. No one would deny that all of our citizens are in perpetual need of a good wage, a good home, and good health care, and yet, we often act as if our soldiers are in need of less. Addressing the New York State Legislature in 1775, General George Washington reminded the legislators, "When we assumed the Soldier, we did not lay aside the Citizen." Our citizens, on becoming soldiers, have not left want and need behind. It is our duty to afford them with means to not only survive, but to also thrive. We can afford no less. Freedom is never free.

Mr. President, again, I commend President Bush for coming forward and declaring the need to support the defenders of the Nation. Again, this week, President George Bush came forward under the same banner as Calvin Coolidge did in 1920, to declare that America must not forget its defenders. In a speech given to the Army's 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA, President Bush proposed \$5.7 billion in new spending for the soldiers, sailors, and airmen in the armed services. Specifically, the President has proposed dedicating \$400 million for across-the-board pay raises, \$1 billion for reenlistment bonuses, and other benefits to the men and women in uniform.

I end my comments by saying that this is long overdue. We have several military installations in Kansas. We, unfortunately, have people in our armed forces who are not well paid and not paid near enough for the job they are doing. It is past time for us to step forward and pay our men and women in uniform sufficiently for the work they do.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wonder if you would be so kind as to tell me when I am down to 5 minutes remaining in my 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will do so.

TAX CUTS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, we are faced with a tremendous choice in America, and that is whether we want to continue with policies that led to an 8-year recovery of our economy which was flat on its back and go with those policies of fiscal responsibility and fairness and investment or go back to the days of what was called trickle-down economics, where the very wealthy got the most, the rest of us got very little, the deficits soared, the debt soared, our country was in trouble.

I represent, along with Senator FEINSTEIN, the largest State in the Nation. We have 34 million people. We had a recession that was second to none. It was the worst recession since the Great Depression. It took us a long time to come out of that. We had double-digit unemployment. We had a terrible situation. But because we followed, in this Government, finally, a policy of fiscal restraint, we got back on our feet and people have done very well. That is why this discussion about the proposed tax cut by our new President, versus the tax cut that will be supported by the Democrats, is such an important conversation.

Last week, President Bush submitted a tax cut plan to the Congress. It was not detailed, but it was a plan. It was like a brochure in which he laid out his vision of a tax cut. He outlined in it a \$1.6 trillion tax cut plan. I have to say, and I hope people will listen, this tax cut is not compassionate and it is not conservative.

We remember when President Bush ran he ran as a compassionate conservative. So we get his very first proposal—actually it wasn't his first. His first one was to interfere with family planning throughout the world and put a gag rule on international family planning groups that help poor women get birth control. But for this purpose, it is certainly his first fiscal policy. It is neither compassionate nor is it conservative. What do I mean by that?

First, it is not compassionate because it benefits the very wealthy instead of the 99 percent, everyone else; that is, those in the middle class, either lower or upper. It helps the very wealthy.

His plan is not conservative because it does not do the smart, conservative thing of being cautious with the projected surplus. I said "projected surplus." As Democratic leader DASCHLE has said, these projections are like the weather forecasts: Don't count on them because they change. They are not dependable. So the conservative thing to do is to have a rainy day fund, if you will.

Let me go into detail on why I say this plan is not compassionate. I have

told you it benefits the wealthy. Mr. President, 31 percent of all families with children would receive nothing. If you are among the bottom 20 percent of Americans in terms of income, you get an average cut of \$42. This is the way the tax cut of President Bush breaks down, and you tell me if it is compassionate. If you are in the lowest 20 percent of earners; that is, earning less than \$13,600, you will get an average tax cut of \$42. Let me make that even worse. The income range averages at \$8,600, so at \$8,600 a year, you get back \$42 in your pocket on average.

The next quintile is \$13,600 to \$24,400. That is an average of \$18,800 a year. They get an average tax cut of \$187.

A person earning \$31,000 gets \$453 back. If you earn an average of \$50,000, you get back an average of \$876. Between \$64,000 and \$130,000, you get back \$1,400. Then, if you earn an average of \$163,000, you get \$2,200, approximately. But hold on to your chairs. Hold on to your chairs. If you earn \$319,000 or more—the average income is \$915,000—you get back \$46,000 every year.

So how can anyone say that is compassionate? A person earning \$50,000 gets \$876 back. A person earning \$319,000, average \$915,000, gets back \$46,000. I don't know how anybody could say that is compassionate.

We are going to show you another way to look at what people get back because I think it is a startling thing to see. If you are in that wealthiest bracket, here is a beautiful new kitchen. It really is quite nice. You can get this kitchen for \$50,000. That is about what you would get back if you earned that \$900,000. It is beautiful. It has a granite top, wood; it is quite lovely—a new kitchen. But what happens if you don't earn that? You could afford a pan. It is a nice pan. What do we figure this costs? This is a \$200 pan. It is a very nice pan. But this person can get a kitchen; you can get a pan. This is not compassion, and it is not fair and it is not right.

Let's show some other examples. We had the Lexus and the muffler, and I thought that was good, but I thought we needed some more. Here is a beautiful swimming pool. We are told a swimming pool such as this costs about \$46,000.

With the Bush tax cut, when it phases in, if you are in that million-dollar range, you could put one of these babies in your house every year, by the way. But if you are at that bottom level, the bottom 60 percent, average that out and that is under \$39,000, you could get an inflatable bath tub.

How is that compassionate? How is that fair?

We have some more to show you. This looks pretty good. This is a yacht. According to our figures, \$45,000 gets you this yacht. It looks very good.

If you get \$1 million a year, you are going to get that kind of tax cut. But

if you are in the bottom 60 percent, you can get this little rowboat. I don't even know if you get the oars with it. This costs \$195.

Do we have any more of those? I think you get the idea. But we are going to show it to you in a different way.

If you are in that top bracket of 1 percent, which is the one that gets 43 percent of the benefits of Bush's tax cut, you get 43 percent of the benefit. Every single day when this tax cut is phased in, you get \$126. That is pretty good. If you are in the bottom percent with an average of \$30,000, you get 62 cents every day. This is another way to show how compassionate this tax cut is.

I figure we will make it even a little more stark for you. If you get back \$126 a day in a tax cut, you and your significant other can go to a beautiful restaurant, have a little candlelight, order the best in the house and a good bottle of California wine, I hope. It is pretty neat. If you are in that bottom 60 percent, it is tomato soup. There is nothing wrong with tomato soup. But it is not fair. This is not fair.

You say: Well, wait a minute. Didn't the President say the people at the very top pay most of the taxes? Yes. They are getting back 43 percent in the tax cut of George Bush. But don't they pay most of the taxes? Wrong. It is 21 percent of the taxes. The wealthy top 1 percent pay 21 percent of taxes. They are getting 43 percent of the benefit of the Bush tax plan.

I just cannot imagine how someone who runs as a compassionate person can come up with a situation where you can get a can of tomato soup if you earn \$30,000, and take your significant other to the restaurant every single night and eat out, not to mention the kitchen versus the pan, and all of the rest. No. This is not compassionate, nor is it conservative.

We see that this is done for a reason. The stated reason is we are going to stimulate this economy.

As I understand it, there was a hearing today on that. There is a lot of dispute about whether or not a tax break to the wealthiest people actually stimulates the economy. It was tried back in the eighties. Do you know what it stimulated? Deficits as far as the eye could see.

The next time I come out on the floor I will have some charts that show what happened to the deficit when trickle-down economics was the centerpiece in the 1980s. It was a failure, an abject failure. Do you know what trickled down? Misery, recession, and we had terrible unemployment. We were paying so much interest on the debt that we didn't have any money to invest in our people.

Yet we have a plan from someone who says he is compassionate and conservative that just will, in fact, set us