

issue? Or how about an impact statement on the damage done to our farmers and ranchers from the mergers and monopolies that are being formed in the industries that farmers rely on such as the railroads, grain trade, packing plants and more.

By now you probably regret asking for my advice. Simply put, my advice is don't you dare spend nearly a quarter of a million dollars to move that picnic ground. Move the prairie dogs.

And then spend some time with me and others in Congress to help create a friendly environment for people to make a decent living on our farms and ranches in rural America.

Sincerely,

BYRON L. DORGAN,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. DORGAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 (Mr. CHAFEE) ordered.

THIS GREAT DEMOCRACY

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, this has been a tumultuous week in the Senate. We have had significant legislative accomplishments. I think it is an interesting process to watch the changes that are taking place. It always makes me value our Constitution and the peaceful transitions of power our Constitution has provided.

I was watching C-SPAN this morning. The topic was "The Greatest Generation." People were talking about what they consider to be our greatest generation. The debate was about whether the greatest generation was the wonderful heroes who went to battle in World War I and especially World War II, because we are talking to them, and in Tom Brokaw's book "The Greatest Generation" being the silent heroes, the people who answered the call of their country and fought bravely and came home and never talked about it, never whined, never complained. They are, indeed, our great heroes.

Then people started talking about the greatest generation being our Founding Fathers and their families, and the sacrifices they made when they declared independence and when they crafted our Constitution that set in place the document that has kept us vibrant and alive today.

Through all of the things that I, personally, have lived, even in my mere 7 years in the Senate, I have seen our Constitution tested and prevail, tested and come through, tested and show the wisdom of the balance our Founding Fathers put in place so we could have changes in power and have them peacefully.

While talking about the greatest generation, it also has come home to me

when I have visited foreign countries, foreign countries that have seen the despotism of military rule, of dictatorships, of communism. They are coming out of those totalitarian governments. They are coming into democracy. I thank the Lord, I thank my lucky stars, and I feel so grateful we had Founding Fathers, and families who supported our Founding Fathers, who created a document that is living today, that has given the balance so we have never had a totalitarian government since the democracy we formed in 1776.

I feel very proud, and it came home to me today as I started thinking about the greatest generation. I think our Founding Fathers and their families certainly created generations behind them who also were great in that they answered the call of the time. That is what has happened throughout the 17 or so generations since the founding of our country. Sometimes we have not had to answer a crisis. Sometimes the United States has had a period of peace and prosperity. When we have been tested throughout the 17 or 18 generations, we have met the test. We have met the test because we have learned from our Founding Fathers and their families and we have built on their strengths and the Constitution they created. We have been able to answer every test with success.

I feel very grateful to live in a society where we can debate which were the greatest generations. I don't think we have had a generation that has ever sunk to the lows we have seen in other countries and other societies where our Government has broken apart or our institutions have broken apart. I think we have perhaps expanded beyond the boundaries, but we have always come back because we have the structure that we do.

I appreciate very much the opportunity to serve in the Senate in this great democracy and hope we will always be able to meet the test of the strength of our Founding Fathers and always be grateful for the Constitution that has been so vibrant throughout the generations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 970 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I yield the floor and, seeing no one seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAX RELIEF FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, while I was presiding, something occurred to me. I felt compelled to share it.

Right now, something very significant is taking place. There is a conference committee that is looking at the bill that we passed and the bill that was passed in the House of Representatives. They are going to come out with a product and decide just how to change it because the bills are not exactly the same.

It is a piece of legislation that will do something very significant. It is going to provide tax relief for the American people. It occurred to me—I will use the words "liberal" and "conservative" in a very friendly way, but all too often, people do not know what you are talking about when you call someone a liberal or a moderate or a conservative.

A liberal believes that Government should have a greater involvement in his or her life and really believes that there are more things in which the Government should be involved. I suggest to you that the more things Government gets involved in, the more individual freedoms we lose.

I happen to be a conservative. I agree that Government is involved in too many things. I think that other than national defense, which we need to be more involved in right now, there are many activities taking place in this country that our Founding Fathers really did not think were the role of the Federal Government.

We are in a very strange time right now. We are in a time when we have surpluses. We are all very gratified for that. But the whole idea of tax relief is offensive to people who fall into the definition I just referred to of a liberal. They want to use that money. They want to start new programs.

Now we have this time of surplus. I want to applaud the President of the United States, George W. Bush, because what he said he wanted to do was, first of all, take everything that could be used to spend down the deficit for the next 10 years and use it.

I have a lot of town meetings in my State of Oklahoma with very wise people, but they are too busy going out to make a living and paying for all this fun we are having in Washington, that they do not really understand that when you have such surpluses that once you use those surpluses to start new Government programs, then the Government programs might work, and the problems that they are addressing might go away but the Government program goes on.

I can remember that one of the greatest speeches made during my career