

of person I want my sons to grow up to be.

On this very special day for him, 25 years ago coming home to America, being set free in Hanoi, I wanted to congratulate SAM and thank him not just for the service he provided during 29 years in the Air Force, not just for 7 years in a dungeon in North Vietnam, but I want to thank him for the service he is providing for America today. We appreciate that. I am very proud to have him as one of my Congressman representing me and my State. I am also proud to have him as a friend.

Mr. ALLARD. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. GRAMM. I am happy to yield.

Mr. ALLARD. My wife, Joan, and I are pleased to recognize that both Shirley and SAM are very close friends of ours. I had come to the floor to speak on another matter but I feel so fortunate to have been here at the time you are making these comments.

You are right on the mark. He is a tremendous individual. He suffered in a way that many of us cannot imagine. Both Joan and I are so enthralled with his positive attitude—both Shirley and SAM—that it makes him stand out as a remarkable individual, remarkable Americans.

I second your comments.

Mr. GRAMM. I thank my dear colleague from Colorado for adding to my comments.

#### THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, let me turn to my final subject today. As all Members of the Senate know, Senator BYRD and I have embarked on what for us is a crusade. It is a crusade to try to force the Federal Government to live up to the commitment that it makes to Americans when they go to the gas pump and fill up their car or truck and pay about a third of the cost of a gallon of gasoline in taxes, and they are told the taxes are being used to build roads, that this is a user fee tax where the money is dedicated to road construction.

As those of us who serve in Congress, as those who follow these matters very closely know, that commitment is not being fulfilled. Between 25 and 30 cents out of every dollar of gasoline tax that is paid by American motorists goes not for transportation needs, not to new roads, but instead is spent on everything but highway construction. This is a diversion of funds that violates the commitment that we have made to American taxpayers. At a time when many Americans this morning got up and drove to work and waited in what seemed to be endless lines of congestion, when people drove over potholes that were dangerous and, in some cases, caused damage to their car, and when people endured unsafe conditions. There are 31,000 miles of road in my State that are substandard. We have thousands of bridges that are structurally unsound. I think people are rightly outraged when they discover

that over 25 cents out of every dollar they paid in gasoline taxes, which they thought was going to highway construction, is in fact being spent on other things in Government.

Senator BYRD and I now have 54 cosponsors on our bill, with the objective of trying to force the Government to live up to the commitment it makes to the American people and require that when money is collected in gasoline taxes for the purpose of building roads, that that money actually be spent for that purpose.

Now, many of the things that we work on here have an effect, but after a long period of time, from the time that the actual work is done, and often especially when you are working on big issues that affect economic growth and inflation, it's hard to sort of pinpoint the positive impact on it. But if we can bring up the new highway bill and pass the Byrd-Grumm amendment, on May 2 States across America will get roughly a 25 percent increase in the amount of money that is available to fill up these potholes, to build new roads, to modernize the existing system, to reduce the delays and traffic jams and hazards that we all face on the road every day, and do it by taking the money away from all the programs that never should have gotten the highway money to begin with and spending the money for the purpose that it is being collected.

Senator BYRD and I, all week, have reminded our colleagues that we are running out of time. The highway bill expires on May 1. And all over America today, States are beginning to cancel contracts. Michigan canceled a major contract yesterday. We are having employees notified by highway builders that they are going to be laid off as of the 1st of May when this highway bill expires. Senator BYRD and I want to move on with this issue, bring it up. If people want to vote no, if they want to continue to take highway trust fund money collected in gasoline taxes, where we tell people the money is being spent for roads but where we spend it on something else, if people want to vote to continue that diversion, they have the right to vote for that. But 54 Members of the Senate have already said that they want to change it.

So I urge our leadership to bring up this bill and give us an opportunity to let the Senate work its will. It is very important that we not let the highway bill expire. It is very important that we get on with highway construction, which the country desperately needs. I also believe it is important, especially in this era of cynicism about Government that when we tell people that money is being collected in gasoline taxes, to go into a highway trust fund to be spent on roads, that that money be spent on roads, that it not be spent on other things. Fundamentally, that is what this issue is about.

So I am hopeful that in the week when we come back—we are going on

recess, perhaps tonight, and we will be back a week from this coming Monday—that we are going to be able to bring up the highway bill and let people decide where they stand on this issue.

And let me, as a final point, say that the Byrd-Grumm amendment does not bust the budget. The Byrd-Grumm amendment does not raise the spending caps. But what it does do is say that all these other programs that have been beneficiaries from the piracy that has occurred in the highway trust fund are going to have to give up that money so that it can be spent on roads.

Now, I know some of our colleagues have said: Great, if you spend this money on roads, we were planning to spend it otherwise. I have likened their attitude to a cattle rustler who steals your cattle and you come out and you arrest him and you catch him red-handed stealing your cattle, and his only response is, "OK, so you make me stop stealing your cattle, but where am I going to get my beef?" Well, that's not my problem. What we are talking about is doing what we tell people we are doing. So I'm not saying the programs that have pirated the trust fund aren't, in some cases, worthy. In some cases they are not worthy, but in other cases they are very worthy.

The point is that we collected the money to build roads, not to pay dues to the U.N.; we didn't collect money to pay for Legal Services Corporation; we didn't collect the money to use in welfare; we collected the money for the purpose of building roads. That's the purpose to which the money should be put and only that purpose.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ALLARD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, it is my understanding that I have 20 minutes of time set aside.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. ALLARD pertaining to the introduction of S. 1636 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I yield the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BYRD. 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. BYRD. Mr. President, at 12:30 p.m. today Senator MOYNIHAN and I wish to make some remarks on the floor. I ask unanimous consent that at 12:30 I be recognized.

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

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the Chair, and 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. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, no Senator from the State of Illinois could rise on February 12 without noting the birth date of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln never served in the Senate, although he did serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. One of his most famous political experiences was in 1858 when he ran against Stephen Douglas for the Senate seat which I am honored to occupy. Lincoln lost that election. Of course, following the course of the lengthy debates with Douglas, which became part of the legend of American politics and an important part of our history, by 1860 Lincoln was elected President. And we all know his leadership was so critical in one of our Nation's greatest hours.

We in Illinois dote on Abraham Lincoln. We have his name on license plates. In my hometown, we are consumed with the Lincoln legend and with all that he has given to the State and to the Nation. I hope that those who are witnessing the events in this Chamber today will reflect for a moment on this great man and the great legacy he left to the United States. Lincoln was known very well for his leadership at the time the Nation was in great peril with the Civil War. He did so many things with vision, and I think it is a perfect lead in to my reason for standing before the Senate today. I hope those of us who are in successor generations to Abraham Lincoln can rise to the challenges and can show the same type of vision and leadership on the challenges now facing Americans across the country.

#### QUALITY CHILD CARE IN AMERICA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I just left a meeting, partisan meeting, Democrats, Senators and Congressmen, with the President and Vice President where we discussed our agenda for this year. At the end of the meeting, President Clinton said that he hoped we could reach across the aisle to the Republican side and find common ground, concede honest differences of opinion but move forward on an agenda which is critically important to all of America's population and families.

I know it is ambitious to think that in a year with an abbreviated schedule we will achieve even a majority of the ideas that were propounded at this meeting or that the Democrats stand for—for that matter, that the Repub-

licans stand for—but we would be remiss if we didn't try. I think we were all sent here to use our best efforts to find common ground and to resolve those difficulties that ordinary Americans face.

One of them I have taken a special interest in and over the last month or so have really focused on in the State of Illinois is the issue of child care. I have visited 16 or 18 child care centers in my State from far south in Cairo, as we pronounce it, to Chicago and across the length and breadth of a very diverse State, my home State of Illinois.

What I find in child care for working families in Illinois is extraordinary diversity. Just about every community in which you stop has a little different approach. It seems that some are blessed with the support of larger institutions. Maybe the most modern, up-to-date and impressive facility was at a U.S. Air Force base, Scott Air Force Base near Belleville, IL. But, of course, the Federal Government has made a rather substantial investment so that the children of the men and women who are working on that base have the very best in child care. I then went as well to the Belleville Community College and saw where the community college made the same type of commitment. It makes a difference. You can just feel it in terms of what is being offered.

That is not to diminish the efforts being made in a lot of different settings. When I would go down to Marion, IL, into the back of a church and find a very small and crowded room with the happiest kids I have ever run into, being supervised by a lady who is probably close to 60 years of age but who truly is devoted to these children, it tells you that what is part of the success of child care in America has to do more with the people involved in it than any Government program or any structure or building or any bricks or mortar.

But having said that, I came away from this tour sensitized to the fact that this is a real issue. So many people in America look at the Senate and the House of Representatives and wonder what newspapers we are reading, what people we are talking to, as we are consumed with issues that seem totally irrelevant.

Now, some of those issues are truly important, but for the average working family their concerns are much more down to earth. I have yet to meet a working mother or a working family with small children where I don't find a genuine concern about day care. My wife and I raised three kids, and we were fortunate; my wife was able to stay home until the kids were all off to kindergarten at least. And I think that was the very best that we could give to them. I look back on it as something that really made a positive impression, a positive difference in their life, and yet we know today that so many parents cannot make that choice, that both parents have to work or if it is a

single parent that there is just no alternative but to turn the children over to a care giver during the day. And we also know that care giving in day care is occurring at a critical moment in that child's development. Seventy-five percent of the human brain is developed in the first 18 months on Earth. Most of the day care centers I visited would not accept a child until they had reached the age of 2 or until they were out of diapers. And so for the first 2 years of critical brain development in these children it was a gamble. Was there someone nearby that could be counted on, a neighbor or relative, perhaps some other setting where the child would get honest, good, safe care?

What the President has proposed in his State of the Union Address and I hope that Democrats and Republicans can debate is what we can do to help working families provide for quality child care. I honestly believe that the investment in early childhood development is the best investment this Nation can make. You often wonder how a child born in ordinary or even poor circumstances has much of a chance. They usually have a chance if they have loving parents with the skills and the time and the resources to make their living meaningful. I came from a family of modest means but, thank goodness, had a mother and father who cared, and I think that is why I am standing here today.

But for a lot of kids that option is strained because a lot of parents do not have resources, and as a consequence they look around in the system and find precious few alternatives. First, most child care is expensive. It is expensive for families that are trying to get by and trying to pay the bills.

What the President has suggested is that we, through money raised in the tobacco bill, send those revenues back to States to make available to working families. So that those families that are out struggling, trying to get by will have a helping hand from the Government to pay for child care. I think that is money well spent, and there is no two ways about it.

Secondly, we have to ask who will work in these child care centers. It is a fact of life that most of the people working there receive precious more than the minimum wage, and they look for alternatives. The turnover rate nationally is 40 percent and in some communities even higher each year as child care workers move on to another job.

In Illinois, we demand of these workers 2 years of college education and then give them a minimum wage. High school dropouts are paid a minimum wage. These students who stayed in school and worked hard to pass the courses are basically being asked to work for the same. Then, of course, we know that businesses that invest in child care really do bond with their employees. Employees value this as one of the most important benefits of work.

So the President has said not only money to help families pay for child