barbaric occupation of that nation; and to continue to threaten neighboring countries despite the open revulsion with which much of the world has reacted to his years of rule.

This is a regime that recognizes no restraint upon its conduct save that which is imposed by force of arms. As I have repeatedly stated here on the floor of the Senate, the actions for which Saddam Hussein must be held accountable represent nothing more than what is expected of any country that seeks to exist within a community of civilized nations. The Government of Iraq has imposed untold hardships on its people solely so that it can continue to develop and stockpile weapons of mass destruction—weapons that it has no moral compunction about using at the earliest opportunity and against any nation or segment of society.

Linkages are repeatedly made between the U.S. posture toward Iraq and our role in the Middle East peace process. Mr. President, that argument cries out for denunciation at the highest levels of every government. We may not like the way every policy of or tactic by the democratically elected government in Israel, but the physical pain and psychological trauma that afflicted Israel as a result of completely unprovoked missile attacks by an Iraqi regime seeking to tear asunder the multinational coalition arrayed against it and Tel Aviv's refusal to retaliate despite ample justification for doing so stands in strong contrast to the Government of Iraq. There is no basis for comparison, and U.S. policy toward Iraq should not legitimize the perception of linkage by deferring to it.

The United Nations must enforce its resolutions and do so with conviction. And this body must acknowledge that only the United States possesses the capability to conduct the kind of military operations most of us agree are warranted and essential. That means conveying to the President, to the American people, and to the world, the message that Congress stands firmly behind the Commander-in-Chief in carrying out his responsibility to ensure that the threat to regional stability posed by Iraq is not permitted to endure in perpetuity.

Mr. President, we should make clear to the American people and to the world that the Congress agrees with the proposition that evil should not be permitted to triumph. The United States must respond forcefully, far more so than it has in the past, to Iraq's unceasing provocations and it must adopt whatever measures will ensure the removal from power of the ruling regime in Baghdad.

We must prepare the groundwork for a process that may take years to bear fruit and that will certainly entail loss of life. Opposition forces friendly to and supported by the United States were badly decimated by Iraq's 1996 incursion into supposedly protected territory in northern Iraq. Survivors are understandably bitter and reluctant to cast their lot with us again. That is why the air and missile strikes we launch against Iraq must be decisive and not the kind of exceedingly limited response characterized by the 27 cruise missiles launched against targets unrelated to that violation of the northern exclusion zone.

We must support a long-term operation involving opposition forces trained and equipped to conduct a successful revolution. This is not an easy course that I and others are recommending. But it is the only viable approach to removing a threat to the most volatile region in the world—a threat that could include the brandishing of chemical, biological, and some day, nuclear weapons. That is not a situation any of us want to see develop. But develop it will, if we do not act to prevent it.

Mr. President, I am confident the Congress will soon have the opportunity to express formally its support for the use of force to respond to that threat. Were there another way, I would gladly accept it, but experience teaches that there is not. I would never want to see myself viewed as beating the drums of war, but I would rather live with that image than look into the mirror and see a Member of Congress who failed to do his duty of supporting our troops in harm's way and our Commander-in-Chief in taking the kind of measures I sincerely believe are necessary to resolve the Iraqi problem once and for all.

Mr. President, I again express my appreciation for the courtesy of the Senator from North Dakota in allowing me to make this statement.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to thank the distinguished floor leader of the Democratic caucus, the Senator from North Dakota, for allocating this time to talk about something that is very important.

I also want to commend as well the Senator from Arizona for his comments about Iraq. Certainly his experience and his leadership for these many years carries special weight with people on both sides of the aisle. I hope that we can continue to demonstrate the spirit that he has articulated today as we deal with this grave situation in that faraway place.

NEW SOLUTIONS FOR A NEW CENTURY: 1998 DEMOCRATIC AGENDA

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, 10 days ago, the President delivered to Congress the first balanced budget in 30 years.

Yesterday we learned that the Federal deficit actually will be gone by the end of this year, four years ahead of schedule.

That remarkable accomplishment was set in motion five years ago, when congressional Democrats joined the administration to return fiscal discipline to Washington.

Because we did the right thing five years ago, our economy is stronger today than it's been in a generation.

Our foundation is solid.

Now we need to build on that foundation.

For the last six months, congressional Democrats have worked with the administration to develop a unified agenda for the American people. We talked a lot about what the options were, and what our priorities should be. After a great deal of deliberation, we agreed on a series of proposals that merit—that really demand—our action this year.

This morning, House and Senate Democrats met with the President and the Vice President and senior White House officials to ratify those proposals and begin the process of translating them into action, to confront real problems facing the American people with real solutions.

We call our agenda ''New solutions for a New Century.'' These proposals address the most urgent concerns facing the American people today. We want to reach across the aisle and work with our Republican colleagues to adopt them this year.

We need to increase the take-home pay of America's families. By breaking the wage cycle that continues to pay working women 71 cents on every $1 that a man earns. By making child care safer and more affordable. And by raising the minimum wage by $1 an hour over the next 2 years.

We need to make America's public schools the best in the world. By hiring 100,000 new teachers so we can reduce the average class size to 18 students per classroom in the first three grades. By making sure that every school in America is connected to the Internet so that computer screens are as common in classrooms as blackboards. And, by helping communities repair or replace school buildings that are overcrowded or obsolete or downright dangerous.

We also need to protect our children this year from the deadly epidemic of smoking. We need to say that the days when tobacco companies can spend millions of dollars to get kids hooked on cigarettes are over. From now on, they will pay to keep kids away from cigarettes.

America's families need to know their health insurance will be there when they need it, that they can go to a hospital emergency room when and where they need to. They need to know they can see a medical specialist if they need one. And they need to know that the things they tell their doctor in confidence will be kept confidential. We can give them that peace of mind this year by passing our Patient's Bill of Rights.

America's families need to be able to plan for their retirement. They need stronger private pension plans that are portable and protected. They deserve assurances that Medicare and Social Security will be there when they need

them. And early retirees and older displaced workers who have no way to buy private health insurance on their own deserve the opportunity to purchase health insurance through Medicare.

Finally, we need to make our neighborhoods safer this year. And we will. By helping communities create after-school safe havens to keep kids out of trouble. And by creating special juvenile courts and toughening the Federal penalties for gang violence so that the kids we can't reach, the hard-core few who are violent repeat offenders, will be locked up for a long time.

A sound economy, stronger schools, a secure retirement, safe neighborhoods. That is the Democratic agenda for America's families. They are not sound bites; they are sound policies. They are new ideas for a new century.

Today, we pledge to do all that we can to enact these new ideas into law and make a real difference in people's lives.

We have little time left in this Congress, Mr. President, to deal with this and all of the leftover elements of the agenda from last year. But let us be clear, we need to finish our unfinished business—the highway bill, IRS reform, strengthening family farms, and reforming our campaign finance system. We need to finish that business and pass this agenda this year.

Our economy is strong. Our foundation is solid. Now, brick by brick, we need to keep building to take this prosperity to the next level and give people the tools and the opportunities to make their lives better in a new century.

Mr. President, I want to reiterate my gratitude to the Senator from North Dakota for assuring that we could allocate the time for this very important discussion.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. I thank the Democratic leader. He has provided extraordinary leadership to this caucus and this Congress. The document that we developed over time and announced today with the President, the Vice President, Senator DASCHLE, Congressman GEPHARDT, and the joint Democratic caucuses of the House and Senate is one that I am enormously proud of and one that, if enacted, would substantially improve this country.

We come here, almost all of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, because we have a passion for public policy and feel very strongly about a range of issues and how those issues might affect our country's future. While we might have substantial differences in how we go about achieving certain goals, I think all of us understand that we sit in this Chamber as American citizens in a democracy wanting the best for our country. The question is, how do we achieve that? How do we achieve the goals that we establish for our country's future?

Senator DASCHLE mentioned the things that we have accomplished, the things that we have yet to do, the fiscal policy. I can recall, going back 5 years to 1993, when we had a very, very significant debate on the floor of the Senate about fiscal policy, what kind of policies would put this country back on track, heading in the right direction; what kind of policies would continue us in the direction that we had been moving in with higher debt, higher deficits, higher unemployment, higher inflation. So we had a significant debate about it. Those of us who felt very strongly that there was a better way and a better direction won by one vote—one vote here and one vote in the other body. A margin of one vote determined the new fiscal policy for this country. It was a tougher fiscal policy. It wasn't words; it was action. So it was controversial. For some, it was difficult. Some of my colleagues who voted for it are not here any longer; they lost their seats in Congress because of it. But it was medicine to cure what was wrong in this country's fiscal policy and to put this country on the right course. And it worked.

It substantially reduced the Federal budget deficit. It told all the American people that there was a new group of Members of Congress, a new President who said there is a better way and a different way, and we are going to tackle this fiscal policy and tackle the Federal budget deficit and change things. It's very interesting that, because this economy rides on a cushion of confidence, when we made that decision, the American people were confident about the future once again, and when they are confident, they make decisions like buying a home, buying a car, taking a vacation, buying a new refrigerator. When they are not confident about the future, they don't make those purchases and they don't make those decisions. When they feel like that, the economy contracts. When they feel confident about the future, the economy expands. Because the economy has expanded and because people have had more confidence, this budget deficit has shrunk. It is down, down, down, way down. We will balance the budget.

Crime is down, unemployment is down, inflation is down, welfare is down. All of the things that are important in our lives about how we are doing in this country show signs of substantial improvement and show signs that this country is moving in the right direction.

I want to make one other point about fiscal policy and some of the other problems we face. In our agenda, we talk about Social Security—''save Social Security first,'' the President proposes. And ''save Social Security first,'' we propose as a caucus. Some wring their hands every day of the week about Social Security. Some never liked it in the first place. Some think it doesn't work and they wring their hands and say, ''Woe, what are we to do with Social Security?''

I want them to understand, as many Americans do, that the Social Security problem that exists is born of enormous success. We would not have a problem financing Social Security for 150 years if we went back to the old mortality rates. In the 1930s, you were expected to live to age 63 in this country. Now you are expected to live, on average, to about 77 years in America. Why? Because we have done a lot of good things in this country. We have invested in health care, technology, and breathtaking medical research. Now people, when they reach a certain age and their knees wear out, they get new knees, or they get new hips, or have cataract surgery, or their heart muscle is unplugged on an operating table. Some people may be worth a million dollars after all that medical help. But the point is that people are living longer and better lives, and all of these problems are born of the success of greater longevity. Does that cause some pinching in Social Security and Medicare in the long term? Yes, but it is not catastrophic. Adjustments can be made that are not significant, which will provide solid, assured financing for Social Security and Medicare for the long term.

That is what this President says. As we tame the fiscal policy deficits, and as we begin to accumulate surpluses, let us use those surpluses to save Social Security first. Those who believe that is not a wise course, those who believe that is not appropriate fiscal policy, come to the floor of the Senate, because we are going to have a healthy and aggressive debate about that. Many of us feel very strongly that it is precisely what this country ought to do. We have tamed the Federal deficit. Now let's make the right investment. And the first commitment ought to be to save Social Security first.

Now, within the context of other spending we do in the budgets and other investments, there are other things we can do. I know we will have Members who don't want to do anything. They have never wanted to do anything. I mean, there are people who have said there is no role for Government. There are people who put seatbelts on when they drive through a car wash. They're so conservative they don't want to do anything ever. Much of what we have accomplished in this country has been because we have made the right kind of investments.

This proposal that we have developed jointly says that one of those investments that is very important is in the area of health care research down at the National Institutes of Health, where breathtaking, new medical research occurs. We are saying we can invest substantially more money and you can, as a result of that, save an enormous amount of money and save lives and improve the lives of the American people. I am very excited about that. What better investment is there in this country than to invest in the kind of medical and health care research at the

National Institutes of Health which has provided breakthroughs in medicine that have allowed people to live much longer and more productive lives?

Another investment that the President and we call for in our joint policy message is an investment in education. Education is our future. Our children are our future. Investment in our children represents our tomorrow. We talk about investing in schools, investing in good teachers, and deciding that we can do this country a significant amount of good by understanding that the priority is educating our children. Thomas Jefferson once said, ''Anyone who believes a country can be both ignorant and free believes in something that never was and never can be.'' He was right about that 200 years ago. The reason this country has done so well is because we have always established that education is a priority. It must remain a priority, and that is what our caucus and our policy choices are committed to doing.

A couple of other items—and I don't want to cover them all because some of my colleagues will cover some. Teen smoking is part of our agenda. We need to end that, to combat teen smoking. You have all heard the message that you don't find people deciding at age 25, as they sit around in a recliner thinking about life, or wondering what on Earth can I do to further enrich my life, or what is missing from my life, and they come up with the answer: Smoking; I would like to start smoking. Nobody does that at age 25 or 30. If you are not smoking by the time you are a kid, you are not going to be a future user of tobacco.

The tobacco companies have always known that, and that is why they have always targeted their future customers, who are the children. Does anybody know anybody who is 25 or 30 years of age who says, how can I enrich my life further? and then comes up with the answer that I would like to start smoking? Nobody does that. We also understand that we can save lives by combating teen smoking, and there are plenty of ways to do that. A thousand kids a day will die—3,000 kids a day will start smoking, and a thousand will die of that cause. We can save lives with a national campaign to combat teen smoking.

Drunk driving. This agenda of ours also deals with the question of drunk driving. That is not some mysterious illness or disease. We know what causes fatalities on the roads—drunk driving. Everyone in this Chamber and every family represented here knows that—friend, neighbor, relative, acquaintance. I am not even very logical about this question. The night that I got the call that my mother had been killed by a drunk driver, I'll never forget the moment, and I'll never forget how I have felt from that day forward. People who drink and drive turn automobiles into instruments of murder. The fact is, it's not just the .08 we are going to debate, the question of when are you drunk. There are six States in this country where you can get behind the wheel of a car and take a fifth of whiskey in one hand and the steering wheel in the other and drive off, and you are perfectly legal. That ought not happen anywhere in America. We can change that. There are some 20 States in which, if the driver can't drink, everybody else in the car can be drinking. Vehicles on roads in this country ought not to have open containers of alcohol in them, period. That is something we can address in this Congress.

Finally, campaign finance reform is also part of what our caucus is committed to doing. There are a lot of discussions about what pieces will work and what pieces will not work with respect to campaign finance reform. I want to describe one little piece that I think is important. The most significant kind of air pollution in America today is the 30-second political ad that does nothing but tear down someone's opponent. It is a 30-second slash and burn, cut and run ad that contributes nothing to our country. The first amendment gives everybody the right to do that. We won't change that. But there is a little thing we can change. We can, by Federal law, say that every television station is required to offer the lowest rates on the rate card during political advertising during a certain period. I propose that we change that law to say that low rate is only available to candidates who run advertisements that are at least 1 minute in length. Let's require people to say something significant in one in which the candidate himself or herself is in the advertisement 75 percent of that 1 minute.

Some people may not like that. I do. Can you think of any other business, other than American politics, where the competitor says—for example, can you conceive of a car company who does all of its advertising saying: By the way, if you buy a Chevrolet, you are going to kill yourself because they are not safe; or fly American, or United, or Northwest and, by the way, their mechanics are a bunch of drunks. Do we see that in any other part of our lives? No. That is not the way commercial enterprises compete against each other. But it is the way we compete in politics. Shame on us. We can change that. It ought to be a competition of ideas and about what we want for the future of this country. I hope one of these days we can have campaign finance reform that gets to that point. But at least a little proposal I am suggesting, on top of all of the other things that we are talking about in campaign finance reform as a caucus, might finally stop some of this air pollution or at least lessen the pollution that permeates every campaign in this country.

Then there is food safety, clean air, and clean water. Our caucus stands for things that are positive in the lives of the American people. Some say they want to debate politics with the same old stereotypes. Unfortunately, it won't work anymore. To those who say, ''There are the good guys, and there are the tax-and-spend people,'' I say that doesn't work. Our caucus, in this Congress, with this President, made a decision that we were going to do some awfully important things to put this country back on course, and we did it—at great cost and expense to our caucus. But the American people, 5 years later, see the results for this country of what we have done. We say that the job isn't finished. There is much to do to make this a better country. That is the purpose of the message and the purpose of the set of public policies that tell the American people: Here is why we are here and what we want to fight for to improve America's future.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. DODD. Thank you, Mr. President. Let me commend our colleague from North Dakota for a very eloquent statement and the Democratic leader, Senator DASCHLE of South Dakota, for laying out one of the primary objectives of a Democratic agenda for this session of the 105th Congress.

I think there are issues that ought to enjoy and attract strong bipartisan support—sustained growth in our economy, a balanced budget, a growing surplus, and investments in the educational and health needs of young people. I certainly hope that on managed care issues, in particular, we can find consensus—making sure that people across this country have the right to choose their own doctors and are not going to be forced out of the hospital prematurely. A bill of rights for patients is something that is long overdue. I know that the people of American are hoping that this Congress will address these issues before we adjourn.

I want to commend those who are responsible for putting this agenda together and to address a few aspects of it more fully.

Shortly we will be hearing from our colleague from North Dakota, Senator CONRAD, who has led a task force over the past several months to fashion a bill to deal with the difficult issue of tobacco use by young people—a bill which I was pleased to cosponsor. As Senator DORGAN just discussed, the facts on youth smoking are not in controversy—3,000 young people start smoking every day, and 1,000 of those will die prematurely.

This is an issue that ought to unite Americans regardless of political persuasion or ideology. We all pay when children become addicted to tobacco. It is not just the children who pay with abbreviated lives that might have produced far more for themselves, for their families, and for their Nation. But all of us in a sense suffer when we, by our silence, by our inaction promote or at least don't try to retard the

growth of a problem that so negatively affects young people. So, I am hopeful in these few legislative days we have remaining, we will do something meaningful to reduce the harmful impact of tobacco on the children in this country.

We all know that a tax increase, which makes tobacco less affordable, is one of the ways to do that. I'd like to cite some facts from a recent survey done in my State—in Fairfield County, CT. This county is a one of great affluence—it contains the towns of Greenwich and Westport some of the more affluent communities in the Nation. It is also a county that is the home of Bridgeport, CT, one of the poorest cities in the Nation. In a relatively small area of geography, you have great diversity in income.

This survey looked at young people's smoking habits. Interestingly, about 30 to 35 percent of the young people in the more affluent suburbs in the communities of Fairfield have already begun to smoke or abuse alcohol. In Bridgeport, however, the percentage of teenagers was much lower—10 to 13 percent. Why? There are many factors, but, clearly economics play a major role. The people who conducted this survey concluded that money does make a difference—that the ability of a teenager to buy a pack of cigarettes actually does affect the likelihood that he or she will smoke.

Senator CONRAD has included in his bill a tobacco tax of $1.50—the amount that public health experts tell us is necessary to effect a decrease in youth smoking. Senator CONRAD has also laid out a plan for making use of the revenue raised by this increased tax on tobacco. I suspect that I was somewhat of a pest over the last 72 hours as he was getting ready to introduce this bill—in making repeated suggestions about how he could best make use of those funds. I am very pleased that Senator CONRAD will be directing $14 billion of the revenues—of the $80 billion that will be generated in the next 5 years or so—toward improving the affordability, availability and quality of child care.

My colleagues know, going back during the years of my tenure in the Senate, that I have spent a lot of time advocating for children's issues, particularly child care. So, I am deeply, deeply grateful to my colleague from North Dakota for agreeing to allocate such a substantial part of these dollars to the needs of children. I know my colleague from Rhode Island, JACK REED, who was one of the first cosponsors on our comprehensive child care bill introduced last week and an active member of the Democratic Strike Force—Right Start 2000 that we formed in the Senate here to focus on children's issues, joins me in expressing our appreciation.

While we are on the topic of child care, Mr. President, I'd like to share with my colleagues some new findings in the child care debate that relate to the issues of the cost and quality of child care.

Mr. President, after we passed the welfare reform package in 1996 I asked the General Accounting Office if they would do a survey of States and give us some idea of how this law would affect the child care needs of families in this country. The GAO, just in the last few days, completed its survey and issued a report to the Subcommittee on Children and Families, of which I serve as ranking member.

Let me just briefly share some of the conclusions of this GAO study about how welfare reform is affecting not only welfare recipients, but also working families. I think these findings highlight why the allocation that the Senator from North Dakota has directed to children's needs in his tobacco bill is so critically important.

This report's findings are based on a survey of several States—California, Louisiana, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Connecticut. First, let me offer the good news. According to the GAO States have done a very good job in meeting the needs of welfare recipients. Most families who need child care assistance in order to begin to enter the workplace are receiving it. Now, for some of the bad news. In order to help all of the welfare recipients, States had to severely limit the access of working families to child care subsidies. People who are right on that margin—not on welfare, but just over the line—are not getting the assistance they need.

The survey indicates that access of working families to subsidies has been severely curtailed. Even if States draw down all of the Federal funds available, more than half—52 percent of working families in this country who need affordable child care—will be denied it.

In Texas, one of the seven States surveyed, this means that over 37,000 working families remain on waiting lists for child care assistance. In California, even more dramatically, 200,000 working families are on waiting lists for child care assistance—some for over 2 years. Tragically, in my State of Connecticut, we just stopped pretending. We don't even keep waiting lists for new families.

In this survey, the States also told the GAO about severe problems with the availability of child care. As we have known for years, certain types of care are not available at any cost—infant care, care for children with disabilities and care during nonstandard work hours.

The GAO found that States are particularly concerned that the work participation requirements of welfare could exacerbate the shortage of infant care. Under welfare reform, mothers with children over the age of 1 are told they must work. Some States have chosen even tougher standards. In Wisconsin and Oregon, mothers with children older than 3 months must work. I find it somehow ironic that we now have Republican legislation pending that would offer incentives for parents to stay home with children under the age of 3 years—a wonderful idea—but yet we have in place a work requirement for welfare recipients with children over 3 months in some States.

In many communities, child care for very young children is so limited that parents must sign up while they are still pregnant to have any chance of finding that care at all.

Welfare reform is also exacerbating, according to GAO, the lack of child care during nonstandard work hours. Many welfare parents are finding jobs in service industries where shift work is required. Yet in most communities child care on weekends or after 6 p.m. is nonexistent.

When it comes to improving the quality, it is clear that States are making an effort. States are trying to improve provider training, to incresae provider compensation and to help facilities meet licensing standards, but they are still concerned that they are falling short. They are concerned, and rightly so, that as work participation requirements rise, quality may be compromised.

This report is not about blaming the States. They are doing the best they can with a very big job. This is not about pitting welfare recipients against working families in the battle for limited child care dollars. It should be about making sure that the Federal Government provides sufficient resources so that parents who need safe and affordable child care in order to work can find it in this country.

Senator CONRAD's bill and the $14 billion in funding that it will provide will go a long way towards meeting those needs. I am pleased that the Senator from North Dakota has included in his tobacco legislation language directing these funds to the programs outlined in the Child Care A.C.C.E.S.S. bill which I introduced last week. I think it will go a long way toward ensuring that working families are going to get the kind of child care assistance and support they need.

Again, I want to say to my colleague from North Dakota that I commend him immensely for the tremendous job he did, and I apologize to him publicly for being the source of some annoyance to him as I tried to get more money out of him for child care over the last several days. He very generously doubled the investment in child care from $7 billion to $14 billion. I thank him for that. Hope springs eternal. There may even be some additional resources made available for child care as we go through this debate. I am grateful to him and members of the tobacco task force for their attention to the needs of children and child care in their legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague from Connecticut for his gracious assistance, as we move to introduce the tobacco legislation. I also want to thank him for his

forceful advocacy. That is what this place is all about. And there is no more forceful advocate for children in this Chamber than the Senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD. He cares deeply about this subject. He fights for what he thinks is an appropriate allocation of resources to make the changes that are desirable.

So it is not a matter of irritation. It was a matter of tough negotiation, and he is a darned good negotiator. Anybody who is able to increase an allocation they care about by 100 percent—there is only one person in that category: The Senator from Connecticut. But it was for a good cause, and we very much appreciate his support for the legislation.

(The remarks of Mr. CONRAD, Mr. REED, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. BAUCUS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1638 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield to my very, very good friend, the distinguished senior Senator from West Virginia who is the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee and has held more titles around here than I can think of. It is an honor to yield to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Senator. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining under my reservation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia has 35 minutes remaining of his reservation.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. I may or may not use all of that today. Whatever I use at this point, I ask that it be taken off my time that has been reserved.

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

Mr. BYRD. I thank my friend, and I will be about 5 minutes.

SENATOR SPECTER'S 68TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, it is an unfortunate fact of life in today's Senate that, as Members go about the business of fulfilling their duties, it is increasingly difficult to find time in our hectic schedules to acknowledge the personal milestones of our colleagues. I intend to rectify this situation in part today by taking just a few minutes to congratulate my friend from Pennsylvania, Senator ARLEN SPECTER, on the occasion of his 68th birthday.

Oh, Mr. President, only to be 68 again. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, ''Oh, just to be 70 again.'' Well, I feel very much in that same mode.

Born in the prairie town of Wichita, Kansas, at the start of the Great Depression, ARLEN SPECTER, through the diligent application of his intellect and his tenacity, has become the 1,750th individual to serve this great nation as a United States Senator.

Mr. President, Senators serve with Presidents. I hope Senators will remember that. Senators don't serve under Presidents. Senators serve with Presidents. President is another office, a high office, indeed, in the executive branch. But Senator SPECTER is the 1,750th individual to serve this great Nation as United States Senator, and he has served with Presidents in both parties.

Woodrow Wilson reportedly said, ''The profession I chose was politics; the profession I entered was law. I entered the one because I thought it would lead to the other.'' Mr. President, I do not know if, in Senator SPECTER's case, he came to the same conclusion or if politics was for him a natural calling, but whatever the case, the melding of politics and law in the person of this thoughtful, soft-spoken Pennsylvanian has resulted in an inspired result for the people of the Keystone State.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Yale University Law School, ARLEN SPECTER began his remarkable public career as an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia, where he won the first conviction in the Nation of labor racketeers, fought consumer fraud, and relentlessly prosecuted corrupt public officials. That willingness to take on the tough fights, no matter where they might lead, has become the hallmark of the senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. SPECTER.

But dogged pursuit of righting criminal wrongs is only one facet of ARLEN SPECTER's many-faceted character. As a Member of the Appropriations Committee in the Senate, Senator ARLEN SPECTER has worked long hours, and with great determination, in an effort to see that Federal dollars are wisely usedto combat breast cancer, prostate cancer, heart disease, and Alzheimer's disease. Indeed, I believe it is fair to say that my friend from Pennsylvania takes a second seat to no one when it comes to his commitment to doing all that he can to provide a better, healthier life not only for those whom he represents in Pennsylvania, but also for all Americans.

Mr. President, it is this fortuitous combination of legal acumen, tenacity, and compassion for the difficulties of others that has made ARLEN SPECTER a highly-respected Member of this body, one whose counsel is so valuable to all who know him and work with him. As Henri Frederic Amiel noted in his Journal on April 7, 1851, ''man becomes man only by the intelligence, but he is man only by the heart.'' Senator SPECTER is a superior example of what Henri Frederic Amiel meant by that pronouncement. So I offer my friend and colleague my heartfelt congratulations, and also my thanks to him for his wisdom, his character, and his decency on this day which marks the beginning of his 68th—almost the beginning—I suppose it is the beginning of his 68th year. Oh, but to be 68 again.

So I say to my friend from Pennsylvania:

The hours are like a string of pearls,
The days like diamonds rare,
The moments are the threads of gold,
That bind them for our wear.
So may the years that come to you
Such wealth and good contain
That every moment, hour and day
Be like a golden chain.

Mr. President, I thank my friend from Montana for his kindness in yielding to me. I yield the floor.

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. I join my colleague in congratulating our friend, Senator SPECTER from Pennsylvania, on his 68th birthday. I have watched Senator SPECTER over the years, and I can say I do not think there is a Senator with a finer legal mind than the Senator from Pennsylvania, particularly from a criminal law perspective, constitutional law perspective, and a prosecutorial perspective as a former prosecutor in Pennsylvania.

He brings to this body tremendous experience and tremendous judgment. And I join my colleague in wishing our colleague from Pennsylvania the very best returns on his 68th birthday.

THE NEED FOR ISTEA

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my colleagues, to urge the Senate to begin the debate on the ISTEA reauthorization bill.

That is important for a number of reasons, that I will get to in a moment. But first let me comment on why we find ourselves in this position.

As my colleagues know, the current ISTEA legislation expired on September 30th of last year.

The Environment and Public Works Committee, under the leadership of our chairman Senator CHAFEE and our subcommittee chairman Senator WARNER, reported the 6-year reauthorization bill on October 1.

About that same time, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee reported a stop gap 6-month extension. Unfortunately, as we all recall, the Senate bill got caught up in an unrelated debate over campaign finance reform.

So, regrettably, last session ended with the Congress—both House and Senate—unable to complete action on a long-term bill to reauthorize this important legislation. The best we could do was to extend the funding until May 1 of this year.

Now, there is plenty of blame to go around for this unfortunate situation. Whether it was the failure to invoke cloture, or the filling of the amendment tree, which prevented Senators from offering amendments, there were lots of reasons for our failure last year.

But that was then, and this is now. And the plain fact is that pointing fingers at one another about what did, or did not, happen last year will not help us move a reauthorization bill this year.