

policy that says let's have a \$1.7 trillion tax cut over 10 years, anticipating everything is going to be really strong and positive for our economy.

What happened is 5 months later we discovered we were in a recession. We discovered that terrorists hit New York City and the Pentagon, hijacking four airplanes. We discovered we are at war against terrorism. We discovered the most outrageous set of corporate scandals in this country's history. All these things converged at the same intersection, at the same time, all undermining the confidence of the American people in the future of this economy.

You can say what you want about this economy. It is not an economy where there are dials and gauges and levers in the engine room of this ship of state, where all we have to do is walk down there and adjust them to make the ship move right along without a problem. That is not the way the economy works.

I know there are people in the Fed, in monetary policy, and people in fiscal policy, who really have an inflated sense of self-importance about their role in the economy. This economy is only about and all about people's confidence. People are either confident about the future or they are not. If they are confident about the future, our economy expands because they do the things that manifest that confidence: They buy cars, houses, take trips, they do the things that expand the economy. If they lack confidence, they do exactly the opposite and that causes contraction.

The American people are very concerned about this economy. It would serve this country well, in my judgment, if the President would join us, all of us, and sit down and talk seriously about what we need to do to put this economy back on track, make this economy strong again, make this economy grow again and produce jobs and expand once again, and turn these budget deficits into budget surpluses and invest in the things that provide better lives for the American people: Health care, education—the things we know work to improve life for the American people. That is what we ask of this President.

Let me conclude by saying there is not a Republican or Democratic way to fix all of this. There is only the opportunity for people to sit down and reason together and compromise and find the best of a series of good ideas. But you cannot do that when there is a one-lyric song or one-chorus song here in this Chamber that says to everything, every proposal, every suggestion: I object, I object, I object. That does not serve this country's interest at this point in time.

This October 17, this country faces real challenges. It is time for all of us to take a deep breath, to ask the President to take a little time off the campaign trail to join us, and to work together to see if there is not a better

way to deal with national security, improving the economy, and addressing the concerns of people across the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I compliment the Senator from North Dakota for his brilliant statement. I also say not only should the President stop his campaign travels—or, if he wants to do them, they should be paid for by political parties and not by taxpayers. That is the concern I have with these travels.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Florida be recognized for up to 20 minutes. I know Senator GRAMM wishes to speak. His staff would now have an idea, as to when the Senator from Florida will be finished.

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

The Senator from Florida.

NASA

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I am going to speak about the management of one of the most exciting little agencies in the Federal Government, NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The Senator from North Dakota has just put his finger on a number of problems with regard to our national economy, a subject that I addressed yesterday. I compliment him for his comments, his insight into the multiplicity of problems that are facing our country at this time. There is much to be done.

I would like to focus today on a particular part of the Federal Government, of which I have some credentials to offer some suggestions. If we don't pay attention to the direction the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is headed, we are going to get off on a wrong track and there are going to be some mistakes made. They can be mistakes everyone in this country would regret.

I shared with the administrator of NASA my hope for his success. He came through our Commerce Committee. We had both private and public meetings. We had a lengthy hearing for his confirmation. We will continue to have hearings.

I have suggested to the administrator that it appears the White House and the Office of Management and Budget are going to be unwilling to offer to NASA a budget that would increase its buying power. Its basically \$15 billion budget in current-year spending is basically the same as it was 10 years ago. This is a little agency that has achieved so much and its achievements are the embodiment of the hopes and dreams of Americans as we fulfill our role as adventurers and explorers—a characteristic of the American people that we never want to give up. If we do, we will be a second-rate nation.

This country was founded by explorers. This country was expanded by ex-

plorers and adventurers. Then the frontier was westward. Now the frontier is upward. And here on Earth the frontier is inward.

We never want to give up that adventure because we will not fulfill the destiny that is resident in the hearts of all Americans, that we want to be adventurers and explorers.

But, in this Senator's opinion, NASA is not going to be able to fulfill that role and achieve that destiny if we keep starving NASA. NASA cannot do that in the year 2003 on a budget that was the same budget in fiscal year 1991—12 years ago. So if the White House and the Office of Management and Budget continue to starve NASA of its funds, there has to be some kind of relief.

I have suggested to the administrator a \$5 billion item in the national budget over the next 5 years that is for the development of technologies of a follow-on to the space shuttle.

The space shuttle originally was going to be extending its lifetime to about the year 2007. Then it was extended to 2012. Now the word out of NASA is that the present fleet of four orbiters is going to continue so that we will have assured access to space for humankind through the year 2020.

It is a reliable vehicle. We have the best space team in the world. We have the finest launch team in the world at the Kennedy Space Center. But we can't continue to operate safely with the continued starving of NASA funds by the administration.

I have suggested to the Administrator that one aspect he should look at as a program is development of new technologies for a new kind of vehicle, a reusable vehicle, that would be scheduled to go after the year 2020.

That is also an item that is of considerable interest to the Department of Defense. The DOD, being flush with money, could fund that, with NASA having the management of that research, which it does so well and, therefore, give some relief in the NASA budget so that what was left over could be applied to what was necessary; that is, safety upgrades on the space shuttle.

So there is no question that we are doing everything possible to have that space transportation system be as safe as possible even though we know it is risky business. When you defy the laws of gravity, when you go at mach 25, when you circle the globe in 90 minutes, when you come through 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit of searing heat on re-entry, it is risky business. So we cannot afford to do anything less than upgrade all of the things that we have in the pipeline for the shuttle safety upgrades.

At the same time, our Nation is in the midst of building the largest engineering accomplishment of all time. We are building a space station. It is a multinational effort. By the time it is completed, it will weigh 1 million pounds, it will have an acre of solar

panels, it will measure the length of a football field, it will have a pressurized volume equal to two jumbo jets, and it will orbit at 220 nautical miles above the Earth.

We already have an international space station in orbit. What is up there already is an extraordinary accomplishment. It is the largest cooperative scientific program in history. It is drawing on the resources and the scientific expertise of our own Nation along with the expertise of 15 other countries.

This project is an exciting gateway to the new frontiers in human space exploration—meeting the deep-seated need of humans throughout history to explore the unknown, to understand their world and their universe, and to apply that knowledge to the benefit of all here on Earth. The International Space Station will sustain U.S. leadership in exploration in and the use of outer space which has inspired a generation of Americans and people throughout the world.

I suddenly had a flashback. I was a lieutenant in the Army. I was on leave at the time we were launching to go to the Moon. I was in Eastern Europe approaching Belgrade, Yugoslavia. I went to the U.S. Embassy right at the time of launch, and I asked them if they had for this Army lieutenant the opportunity to watch it on television. They did not. I said: What would you recommend? They said: It will be carried live by the BBC on radio. Go outside of Belgrade to that series of hills and stick up the antenna of your shortwave radio and tune into the BBC.

My fellow companions—those two young Americans with me, my best friends today—and I went out there. And the BBC cut into NASA Control at the time of launch of Apollo 11. There were three Americans in Yugoslavia out there cheering as that rocket rose into the heavens.

That is the kind of excitement that has been generated across the Earth by the stunning accomplishments of America's space program. Now we are on the cusp of having another stunning accomplishment of breakthroughs in scientific exploration on the International Space Station. That station will provide a stunning opportunity to enhance U.S. economic competitiveness by creating new commercial enterprises while serving as a virtual classroom in space to advance scientific education for teachers and students alike.

Most importantly, the station will be a unique world-class laboratory by providing an international platform for advances in science and technology. In this laboratory of the heavens, we will conduct research in tissue growth, looking at the causes of cancers and potential medical treatments. Our Nation's biochemists will investigate new drugs and develop a whole new understanding of the building blocks of life.

Using the microgravity environment of space—that is near zero G—our in-

dustries will be able to develop new advanced materials that may lead to stronger, lighter metals and more powerful computer chips.

The station will also house experiments in combustion science that could lead to reduced emissions from powerplants and automobiles, saving consumers billions of dollars. But that is only if we complete the space station.

Last year, we found that the international program had real cost overruns and management problems. There is no question that we absolutely have to complete the project because it is an investment in our future and the legacy we will leave to our children's children. Why else are we building it, other than to make a difference in their lives?

Yet this administration chose to fund some of the station's cost overruns without adding more money to NASA's budget, and requiring cuts to many other critical programs, including the delay of the safety upgrades on the space shuttle which gives us the access to and from the International Space Station.

Instead of funding the space station sufficiently to fulfill its potential, this administration proposed curtailing the space station program to a skeletal configuration called "Core Complete." Instead of maintaining a full-time crew of six or seven astronauts to be on board the station at all times, Core Complete, the skeletal completion would provide for only three crew members.

You cannot do science on the space station with just three crew members because it takes more than two crew members to tend to the care and the feeding of the station, and that leaves less than one person to conduct the research on board.

So I have been quite afraid that these cuts would endanger the future of the International Space Station. Apparently, there are other people who feel that way, too, because there is a report just released and it concludes this is exactly what has happened: The future of the station itself is now in jeopardy. That is according to that report. In March, the administration charged an independent task force, made up of Nobel laureates and world-class scientists and engineers, to review, assess, and help define NASA's biological and physical research priorities.

Just over a month ago, this group, known as the Research Maximization and Prioritization Task Force, or ReMaP, completed their review of the space station's science programs. The results were not good.

This distinguished group concluded that the Core Complete configuration and the shuttle flight rate mandated by this administration would severely restrict the station's research productivity—a finding confirmed by NASA's own analyses.

A year and a half has now passed since this administration destroyed the

space station's research budget, by cutting the crew size on the International Space Station from seven to three, and eliminating the U.S. crew rescue vehicle and the crew's living space known as the "habitation module."

In addition, the study, the ReMaP study, concluded that if enhancements beyond the Core Complete are not anticipated, then NASA should "cease to characterize the Space Station as a science-driven program." Listen to this conclusion: We should "cease to characterize the Space Station as a science-driven program."

What happened to the world-class laboratory? Where is our international science and technology platform? What about tissue growth research, and curing cancer, and all the other innovative medical treatments?

What about the new drugs and the building blocks of life? How are we going to develop advanced materials and more powerful computer chips? What happened to environmental research in combustion science and reducing our emissions and energy use?

With only a skeletal space station, gone are these and many other potential discoveries that we have been awaiting.

NASA has a proven track record in supporting scientific research that makes a difference here on Earth. Let me give you a couple examples.

I want to give some other examples of where NASA has such a proven track record in supporting scientific research.

For example: a laminar air flow technique. It is used in NASA clean rooms for contamination-free assembly of space equipment. It is now being used—get this—at tollbooths on bridges and turnpikes to decrease the toll collector's inhalation of exhaust fumes. Straight out of NASA.

I will give you another example: an advanced ultrasound skin damage assessment instrument. Using NASA ultrasound technology, it enables immediate assessment of burn damage depth, improving patient treatment, and it may save many lives in serious burn cases.

I will give you another example: a remotely operated, emergency response robot. It was first developed by NASA. It reduces human injury levels by performing hazardous tasks that would otherwise be handled by humans.

Another example: a custom-made suit, derived from space suits. It circulates coolant through tubes to lower a patient's body temperature, producing dramatic improvement of symptoms of multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and other conditions.

Here is another: a self-righting life raft, originally developed for the Apollo program, which was to the moon, where we landed the astronauts back in the water. It fully inflates in 12 seconds, and it protects lives during extremely adverse weather conditions with self-righting and gravity compensation features.

How about this one? A new digital imaging breast biopsy system images breast tissue more clearly and more efficiently. This nonsurgical system—using technology originally developed by NASA for the Hubble Space Telescope—is less traumatic and greatly reduces the pain, scarring, radiation exposure, time, and money associated with surgical biopsies.

And finally, a flywheel energy storage system. It is derived from two NASA-sponsored energy storage studies. It is a chemical-free, mechanical battery that harnesses the energy of a rapidly spinning wheel, and it stores it as electricity with 50 times the capacity of a lead-acid battery. This system is especially useful in electric vehicles, something that we are trying to perfect to help us ween ourselves from our dependence on foreign oil.

And these are just a few examples.

But I say again about this administration's plan for the space station: The Core Complete or the skeletal structure—not fleshed out—simply taunts the research community, telling them that an orbiting laboratory is there but fails to provide them with real and significant opportunity to use it.

The tag line NASA uses for the International Space Station program says: "It's about life on Earth." That is the tag line. But is there going to be life in space?

This Core Complete concept of the NASA administration falls so short of expectations that our Nation's leading scientists refuse to call it a science program.

And under the administration's plan, our ever-shrinking space station will waste both time and money over the long run while failing to realize the unique potential of this international research facility.

This administration—I am talking about OMB; I am talking about the White House, and I am talking about the administration in NASA—needs to stop pretending that Core Complete is a viable or a desirable goal for our country or our space-faring international partners.

It is neither. Core Complete is the minimum configuration needed for the U.S. to say it has completed a space station, but that is just it—it is the minimum. We can fix this by returning to the original plan. Let's go back to building a fully capable research laboratory. Let's go back to a crew size capable of maintaining the station and conducting a robust research agenda. Let's realize the full potential of this laboratory of the heavens. We must realize the station's full potential. Let's expand the crew size and broaden our research capabilities on board.

Let's develop a crew rescue vehicle so that we don't have to rely on the Soviet vehicle that can only take three, so that we can get seven astronauts on board to do the research, so in the case of a catastrophic failure that we have a rescue vehicle, a lifeboat that can

evacuate the seven crew members. And let's recommit to furthering humankind's understanding of the building blocks of life, recommit to developing advanced materials, reducing fuel emissions, and finding a cure for cancer.

To this administration, I respectfully say, but I very strongly say, we best recommit this Nation to building a fully capable International Space Station. We have delayed long enough. The Nation awaits. There is not an American, there is not a school child whose eyes do not light up when told of the adventures and the successes of America's space program. We need to continue with a great vision.

Right now, we can continue by building out the space station so it can fulfill its scientific research mission.

I see my colleague from Montana. I had the privilege of going in the summer to Montana, and lo and behold, Tribal Industries in his State of Montana, built and conducted by the tribes on tribal lands, were doing great things that are direct spinoffs from America's space program. They had some interest in having me out there to talk to them about some of the successes of the space program. It is just another example of how all of these space accomplishments have spun off into businesses, this Senator, who has had such a great privilege of being a part of the space program, found when I went to the northern part of Montana, near Flat Iron Lake, near Big Fork.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. EDWARDS)

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Florida. The tribe he is referring to is the Salish Kootenai Tribe in northwestern Montana. That tribe, along with a couple others in Montana, is proudly doing great work with defense contracts and NASA contracts. The Senator is exactly right. This is a program that is almost all-encompassing for almost the entire country. There are so many different States. We are particularly proud in Montana because of the Native Americans who work at it. It is good work. It is top quality work. I appreciate the Senator coming to Montana, visiting the Salish Kootenai, seeing their good work. I am sure it adds more meaning and context to the Senator's experience in the space program and even new meaning to the Senator's experience of the space program. We are happy to be able to help in that regard.

DROUGHT

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise to address a natural disaster that is occurring in America. That is the unrelenting drought.

For my State of Montana and many States this year, particularly in Colorado and other Western States, it has brought economic hardship to our agricultural producers and to our rural communities.

In 1996, before the drought began, Montana wheat producers made \$847 million from their wheat sales, close to \$1 billion. In 2001, 4 years into the drought, Montana producers made just \$317 million from wheat sales. That is a 62-percent decline.

Let me add a new context to that figure. Agriculture is more than 50 percent of my State's economy. It is truly the backbone of our State. I ask those who oppose natural disaster assistance one question: How is a State like Montana supposed to survive a loss of that magnitude, 62 percent, without assistance, when half the economy is agriculture? The most efficient, the most effective, the most successful businesses in the world could not absorb that kind of a loss.

That 62-percent decline in sales for Montana wheat farmers—and I might add, the same devastating effect is felt by livestock producers because of lack of pasture and feed—is through absolutely no fault of those producers. These farmers haven't been cooking the books. They haven't been taking exorbitant bonuses at the expense of shareholders. No, our Nation's farmers and ranchers are hard working, dedicated, good, honest people, trying to make a living, trying to make ends meet. They need our help.

The drought is no longer touching only the pockets of our country. The drought has become an epidemic. It has affected a majority of our Nation. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 1,470 counties in 45 States have been designated drought disaster regions in 2002.

As you can tell from this map, dated October 1 of this year, there isn't one State west of the Mississippi that has been receiving the rain they need. Just look west of the Mississippi, and clearly, by the dark brown and the reds, you can see the center of America is experiencing deep drought.

Drought is affecting States up and down the east coast as well, as we can see from this map. That is just part of it. That is just this year. In most regions of the country, certainly in the West, we are now in our fourth or fifth year. It is cumulative. It adds up. This map alone doesn't tell the whole story.

On October 3 of this year, President Bush provided FEMA Federal disaster funds and resources for people victimized by Hurricane Lili. Those people, those small businesses, those rural communities have been devastated by an unpredictable and uncontrollable natural phenomenon—a hurricane. They deserve our assistance, and we, very generously and proudly, support that assistance the President provided for those parts of the country devastated by hurricanes.

But where is the assistance for people suffering from drought?

In reality, the only real difference between a hurricane and a drought is that a majority of people don't understand the impact of 4 consecutive years of drought the same way they understand the impact of a hurricane.