

In sum, the future of Social Security (and Medicare) is not glum if the economy continues to grow at a reasonable rate. The way to go, then, is to take steps to expand the economy.

But the remedies proposed to "fix" the Social Security system that is not broken will break both the security system and the economy. Let us, briefly, consider each of these proposals.

1. Raise the payroll tax. Such a tax would reduce the "disposable income" of employees. They and their families will have less with which to buy. In our "market economy," any such shrinkage of the "market" has to shrink the economy—less buying, less production, fewer jobs. Right now, retailers and manufacturers are stuck with a pile up of 14 months of consecutive inventory accumulations they cannot sell. To cut buying power of employees would mean more unsold wares.

2. Reduce the benefits. That would have the same effect as raising the tax on employees. Reduced benefits mean reduced buying power. And reduced buying power means reduced production, etc. ad nauseam.

3. Do not increase the benefits to keep up with the rise in the cost of living. This, too, would be a subtle, but effective way to do what 1) and 2) above do more directly. If prices rise and the ability to buy does not rise simultaneously, people buy less. By now, we all know the rest.

4. Tax the Social Security benefits of the "affluent." Such a tax is, in effect, a reduction in benefits. Uncle Sam gives with one hand—the security check—and takes with the other hand, the tax. That would work just like the other bad medicines.

In addition, who are the "affluent"? Are we talking about a retiree with an income of \$25,000 or a retiree with an income of \$250,000? To tax the latter would probably not seriously change his or her spending habits; to tax the former will.

What is not generally appreciated about the Social Security system is that it is one of the greatest and most reliable sources of nourishment for the entire American economy. In 1995, some 43 million people will have received about \$340 billion with which to buy things and purchase services. Let's assume that in a mean moment of madness, all those payments were discontinued. How long would the American economy be able to sustain itself?

The Social Security system, however, does more than provide the fuel for consumption, it also provides capital for production. Every year, for many years, the security fund has generated multi-billion dollar surpluses. At the end of this year, it will have a reserve of more than half a trillion.

Where does that money go? It goes, just about all of it, to purchase government securities. That frees up other capital for investment in the private sector of the economy.

In this way, the Social Security system strengthens America in two ways: a) it generates buying power; b) it generates savings.

And, if we, as a nation, pursue policies to expand, rather than stunt, growth, the entire economy and U.S. Treasury, whose income is drawn from that economy, will be in better shape and our senior citizens need not worry about either their or their children's future.

TRIBUTE TO REV. KWASI
ANTHONY THORNELL

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday November 29, 1995

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to thank the Reverend Kwasi An-

thony Thornell for his wonderful ministry to the citizens of the Washington, DC metropolitan area. On January 1, 1996, the Reverend Thornell will begin another chapter in his ministry as the new Rector of St. Philips Episcopal Church in Columbus, OH. As he prepares to begin a new ministry, I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide this retrospective of his many years of faithful and steadfast ministry in our Nation's Capital.

Father Kwasi—as he is affectionately known by the many whose lives he has touched—has indeed inspired many through his ministry. For over a decade, he has served the National Capital Area faithfully, spreading his message and affection to the young and the old, as well as to the healthy and the infirm. Although he is moving on to continue his ministry in another location, his contributions to the Washington metropolitan community warrant special praise.

Born in Tuskegee, AL, the Reverend Thornell was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John T. Walker in 1973. He is a candidate for the degree of doctor of ministry at Wesley Seminary and holds a master of divinity degree from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA. He received his undergraduate degree from Alma College in Alma, MI. He is the father of three children.

For over two decades Father Kwasi has been bringing spiritual awareness and hope to communities in Detroit, MI; St. Louis, MO; and our Nation's Capital. In particular, he has been deeply involved in efforts to eradicate violence among our youth. As a matter of course, Father Thornell has an abiding commitment to eradicating the obstacles that perpetuate poverty, illiteracy, and violence. Indeed, in the Washington community, he successfully led and improved the cathedral's tutorial program, and established a similar program at Calvary Episcopal Church. His efforts to stamp out youth violence are well known throughout the Washington metropolitan community, where he currently serves as a project coordinator for the Violence Prevention Initiative for the Foundation for the National Capitol Region.

As the assistant rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, Father Kwasi was very active with youth organizations and worked to extend the church's outreach to the surrounding urban community.

Prior to joining Calvary, the Reverend Thornell spent nearly a decade at the Washington National Cathedral. As canon missionary, he was responsible for pastoral and liturgical duties, and represented the cathedral in areas of urban social justice and outreach ministries. In this regard, Father Thornell was especially effective in bringing a heightened awareness to the problems of youth violence in the community. He participated in numerous forums and outreach efforts established to eliminate the conditions that lead our youth away from the church and into the arms of violence.

While at the cathedral, he also served as interim precentor, responsible for planning and directing religious services, creating liturgies, writing prayers and preparing the Rota. During his tenure, Father Thornell was also actively involved in the church's mission to highlight the evils of apartheid in South Africa. He traveled to that country as a participant in church-sponsored delegations.

Father Kwasi's early years in the ministry were spent as minister and founder of the Al-

xander Crummell Center for Worship and Learning in Detroit, MI. In St. Louis, he served as the vicar of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and as the deputy for urban mission for the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri.

Throughout his distinguished and devoted ministry, Father Kwasi has tirelessly worked to improve the socioeconomic condition for the disenfranchised and poor members of the community. He has been a savior for those children seeking a brighter tomorrow, and provided comfort and advice to persons suffering pain, despair, and/or other forms of adversity.

He has used his ministry and the pulpit to deliver powerful, inspiring and relevant sermons, translating God's message into community action. He has done more than just preach the Gospel. He has walked the Gospel, endeavoring to make life just a little better for the children and the downtrodden in our community. He has worked with patients afflicted with HIV-Aids, and those persons suffering from the disease of alcoholism. He is an HIV-Aids education trainer, as well as a trained counselor in alcohol abuse. His has been a ministry filled with hopefulness and a belief that humankind can have a brighter tomorrow if we care for one another.

A man of seemingly boundless energy, The Reverend Thornell has also devoted his time to serve on numerous boards, including RAP, Incorporated; the Church Association for Community Services; Episcopal Caring Response to Aids, Children's Defense Fund, and the National African American Clergy HIV/AIDS Task Force.

In addition to serving as president of the District of Columbia Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians [UBE], Father Kwasi also is a member of the NAACP, the urban League, the Council of Greater Washington, and the Episcopal Urban Caucus.

Last year, Father Thornell realized a lifelong dream when he starred as a cast member of the production of Fraternity at Washington's historic and renowned Lincoln Theater.

Mr. Speaker, as the Reverend Kwasi Anthony Thornell prepares to carry his profound, wonderful, and inspirational ministry to St. Philips and the greater Columbus community, I am pleased to have this opportunity to salute the many outstanding contributions he has made to the citizens of the Washington metropolitan area. I ask that my colleagues join me in saying thank you and in extending our heartfelt best wishes for continued success as he prepares to begin a new, exciting, and challenging chapter in his selfless ministry as an exceptional servant of our Lord.

ERV WITUCKI: SPUD
EXTRAORDINARE

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 29, 1995

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, many of our communities have special matters that define their heritage and economic well-being. And many of these communities have developed such a heritage through the efforts of devoted individuals. Munger, MI, is known for its annual Potato Festival that has been held each year since 1954. One man who deserves unqualified recognition for his efforts over the

years is Erv Witucki, who has been a member of the sponsoring organization, the Munger Volunteer Firemen Corps, for the entire 41 years.

Not only has Erv been a member of the sponsoring organization since the festival's inception, he has also served as the festival's chairman for 20 years, from 1960 to 1981, and its co-chairman or honorary chairman for the remaining 21 years. He nurtured the festival's growth from a small, two day local event, to one which attracted over 30,000 people each year as a major regional 4 day event.

I can personally remember going to this event as a small child, and thinking how grand it was. As I grew, so did this festival, so that the image I had of this wonderful event as a child only grew with me. This is because of the hard work of Erv Witucki during those formative years. The impact this festival has had on other young people has been phenomenal because it isn't just for a 4-day celebration of the importance of the production of a key commodity, potatoes, to this town, but an opportunity to raise funds that have an impact on youth throughout the year. Recreation projects such as softball programs, tennis courts, playground equipment and picnic areas, a pavilion and volleyball courts, and an annual Halloween party for children are all the direct result of this festival.

Erv has given to his community. He and his wife Marie have been blessed with 4 children and now 11 grandchildren. He has served as Merritt Township treasurer for 28 years, and has been extremely active with St. Norbert Church in Munger.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Munger are very grateful to Erv Witucki and the others who have volunteered their time and effort to make their community a better place. I urge you and all of our colleagues in joining me in offering thanks to Erv Witucki.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 29, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington report for Wednesday, November 22, 1995, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

THE BUDGET BATTLE

As the federal government shut down on November 14, many Hoosiers found themselves angry about the dispute that precipitated the shutdown, unsure about how long it would last, and concerned about how it might affect them.

The shutdown occurred because Congress has not completed action on all of the measures to provide funding for the government during the current fiscal year, which began on October 1. A short-term funding measure, called a continuing resolution (CR), was passed in September and gave Congress until November 14 to enact spending bills. But by that date only three of the thirteen appropriations bills had been signed into law.

Congress and the President have not been able to agree to extend the CR. The congressional leadership attached a number of provisions to the second continuing resolution, including an increase in Medicare premiums. President Clinton objected to these provisions, and vetoed the measure. With my sup-

port, Congress then passed a continuing resolution that would keep the government open until December 5 and called for balancing the budget in seven years. However, President Clinton also vetoed this measure.

On November 14, some 800,000 of the federal government's two million civilian employees were furloughed. Many federal government offices were closed, including national parks and museums. New applications for federal benefits, such as Social Security, could not be processed, though payment of Social Security and Medicare benefits continued. The Agriculture and Energy Departments remained open because their funding and been approved. In addition, employees vital to the safety and health of the public, such as air traffic controllers and guards in federal prisons, were kept on duty, as were those on active duty in the military.

A short-term shutdown of the federal government produces plenty of frustration, inconvenience and confusion, but probably little enduring harm. Congress has typically ensured that federal workers receive pay for the time they spend on furlough. However, a longer shutdown could create major problems for many people. Companies with federal contracts, individuals receiving veterans' benefits, and federal employees could see their payments delayed.

In addition, shutting down the government is expensive. Pay for furloughed federal employees is estimated to cost about \$150 million per day. The shutdown process itself—preparing plans, notifying employees, securing property and so forth—also carries a price.

But perhaps the greatest cost of the shutdown is that it simply reinforces the cynicism and bitterness so many Americans feel about the federal government, particularly elected officials. They see the shutdown as the result of the partisan bickering and political posturing, and they place blame on leaders of both parties for gridlock.

Complicating the situation further is disagreement on raising the federal debt limit. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin has taken a number of steps to ensure that the federal government remains below the debt limit, since at that point the government could no longer borrow money to meet its obligations. A default by the federal government could have serious, long-term implications for the American economy, though no one really knows how the markets would react. The big unknown is that much of the debt is held in places abroad where the understanding of American politics is meager. In any event, my view is that we should do everything we can to avoid default. There is no good reason to push the nation to the edge of financial catastrophe.

I agree with those who find the current standoff unnecessary and counterproductive. Both sides are engaging in political theater at the expense of substance. Congress has had several months to complete work on the appropriations bills. Voters expect us to work together to get the government's business done, and we should do so.

The current standoff is essentially not about short-term funding, but about competing views on how to balance the budget. The congressional leadership is trying to use the spending and debt limit legislation, where they have a lot of leverage, to force the President to sign the reconciliation bill—the bigger fight where they have little leverage. This is the most difficult struggle over budget priorities I have seen since I have been in Congress. It is a high-stakes dispute over what the role and the priorities of the federal government should be over the next several years.

The short-term solution to the shutdown of the government may appear manageable, but

it is extremely difficult to see the solution to the long-term division between the President and the congressional leadership. The real fight comes when Congress passes the reconciliation bill and the President vetoes it. What is at stake there is the future of Medicare, Medicaid, the welfare system, rules governing the environment, and federal efforts in education, employment training and technology.

We must take several steps to get beyond the current impasse. I believe that sensible compromises are within reach. First, in my view, Congress should enact a "clean" continuing resolution and debt limit increase, without extraneous policy provisions. Second, we ought to continue negotiations in an effort to enact the rest of the appropriations bills for the current fiscal year. Third, we must to the extent possible seek agreement on policy issues contained in the reconciliation bill.

I suspect in the end we will not be able to resolve all of these major policy differences in 1995. The way out will be to keep the government operating largely under present policies on these unresolved matters and then have a public debate on the budget between now and the 1996 elections. Both sides would then have an opportunity to clarify exactly what they are for. I think this approach would make the voters much more comfortable.

The question with respect to the shutdown is: do we want a battle or a bill? I believe that Hoosiers want the government to get the people's business done. They are tired of this game of political chicken and are not going to view either party in this debate favorably. Both the President and Congress must seek reasonable solutions, not political points.

DEPENDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FEDERAL LIFE INSURANCE PROTECTION ACT

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 29, 1995

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Dependents With Disabilities Federal Life Insurance Protection Act of 1995. The bill would permit a Federal retiree over the age of 65 to continue additional optional life insurance coverage when the beneficiary is a person with a disability. In this case, the disability would have to be one which could be expected to last permanently and would prevent an individual from fully providing for himself/herself. The retiree would also be responsible for the total premium, limiting the cost to the Government.

Currently, Federal workers can continue the additional optional life insurance coverage, irrespective of age. However, when these individuals reach age 65 and are retired, the insurance is reduced and then subsequently stopped. There have been cases in which Federal workers have continued working beyond the normal retirement age in an effort to continue this coverage for their dependents with severe disabilities.

Without a provision for a dependent with a disability, upon the retiree's death, the dependent would become a public responsibility, with potential budgetary implications at the national, State, and local levels. This provision would be consistent with the thrust of the 1990 Americans With Disabilities Act [ADA]. The act