

have a fight. That is what democracy is about—debate. We will have a debate about the future of these programs, including Medicare. It is a debate I look forward to.

We must fix Medicare with respect to its financial solvency for the long term. That is not a fence that you cannot get over. It is, in my judgment, not a difficult thing to do. But we should not, in ways that some suggest, continually try to weaken a program that works so well.

No one, in my judgment, should lament the fact we are having this kind of debate about whether we spend money on the Medicare Program, whether we give a tax cut to Donald Trump, whether we build star wars—all of which are proposed. No one should lament that. The political system is constructed to have that kind of a debate in our country.

President Kennedy used to say, "Every mother kind of hopes that her child might grow up to be President, as long as they don't have to get involved in politics." The irony is that the political system is a system in which we debate these issues of the day for our country and its future.

I look forward to the coming weeks as we debate the future of Medicare. I hope that this full-page ad in *USA Today*, with a tombstone for Medicare, in which the Republicans pledge to save Medicare—a political party that opposed it with every bit of their breath and energy 30 years ago—I hope this represents a determination by the Republicans to join us and say Medicare should be available for the long term for America's elderly who need it, not with less coverage and higher costs, but instead with good coverage at modest cost, with a program that celebrates America's success.

I yield the floor. 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. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ON THE RETIREMENT OF MARIAM BECHTEL

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today to extend my heartfelt thank you to Mariam Bechtel who is retiring after 17 years of loyal service to the Congress.

Mariam has served my Senate office since February 1984. Additionally, she served in the office of Congressman Page Belcher from Oklahoma for 6 years before joining my staff.

Everyone who has come in contact with Mariam Bechtel, and I know that she has many friends throughout the Congress, knows of her warm and cheerful manner. When Members needed a room to host a reception or meet-

ing, they knew that Mariam was the one to call. When Kansans needed to touch base in Washington, they knew to call Mariam.

Mariam has always gone that extra mile—to help a fellow Senator, their constituents, and of course, Kansans.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Mariam and her husband Charlie all the best in their retirement. And thank you Mariam for your dedicated service to me and to the Senate.

PRASAD SHARMA

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today to say farewell and thank you to Prasad Sharma who has served my office as a legislative correspondent and staff assistant for the past year. Prasad was recently accepted by the Emory University School of Law, a high honor which he richly deserves.

A Kansan himself, Prasad has been a real asset. He has kept the people of Kansas informed about important events in Washington, served a vital role on my defense and national security team, and Prasad has always been someone to rely on when things needed to get done.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Prasad Sharma all the best at Emory and in his future endeavors. He is someone I know we will hear a lot more from in the years to come, because he is an outstanding young man.

ELDERCARE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, this week marks the 30th anniversary of Medicare—the Health Care Program that currently serves 4 million disabled Americans and about 33 million elderly Americans.

Anniversaries are normally a time for celebration. But, this 30th anniversary is a time of great concern.

As we all know, the Medicare trustees, three of whom are members of the President's Cabinet, have warned us that, at best, Medicare has only seven more anniversaries left before going bankrupt.

Mr. President, I believe one of the most important responsibilities of this Congress is to preserve, improve, and protect Medicare so that it does not go bankrupt and will continue to be there for Americans for the next 30 years, and the 30 years beyond that.

Before I look to the future, however, I want to take just a minute to look to the past.

When Medicare was debated in Congress in 1965, I voted against it.

And there are those at the Democrat National Committee who seem to believe that vote is either proof that I am out to gut Medicare, or that it disqualifies me from participating in this debate.

I only wish they would devote as much energy to the search for solutions to Medicare's current fiscal crisis, as they do to questioning the motives of others.

My vote against Medicare was not a decision I made lightly. I knew my vote would lead to a round of criticism. But in the end, I voted against the legislation for several reasons.

The first reason was because I had concerns that we would be establishing an entitlement for many Americans who truly were not in need of Government assistance. We all know that by their very nature, entitlements are designed to grow. And, as we have seen over the past 30 years, the Medicare entitlement has done precisely that.

In 1965, when Medicare was enacted, the House Ways and Means Committee predicted that the part A portion would cost \$9 billion in 1990. Needless to say, they were wrong. By 1974, we were spending \$9 billion—just 8 years after Medicare's passage. This year, Medicare part A will cost \$158 billion—58 times the amount it cost in its first year.

Second, I was concerned that this growing entitlement would be financed either through higher taxes or deficit spending, and that both of these options would compromise the futures of generations to come. Again, by 1974, the tax rate to finance the program was already twice the initial projection.

And the third factor behind my vote was that I shared many of the concerns articulated by the then President of the American Medical Association, Dr. Leonard Larson, who said:

The administration's medical care proposal, if enacted, would certainly represent the first major, irreversible step toward the complete socialization of medical care. The bill does not provide insurance or prepayment of any type, but compels one segment of our population to underwrite a socialized program of health care for another, regardless of need.

Mr. President, the AMA at that time put forward an alternative proposal, called Eldercare, which I supported.

I must say as I look back on that day in 1965 and on the weeks before the debate, and I have gone back to check the *CONGRESSIONAL RECORD* and some of the statements made by my colleagues, Elder Care had many more benefits than Medicare. We covered prescription drugs in Elder Care, which are still not covered today under Medicare. In addition, that plan would have cost less because it took into account the beneficiaries' ability to pay.

Would Medicare be in better shape today had my concerns been addressed at its creation? I believe it would. And I also believe that if nothing is done and Medicare goes bankrupt, the American public will not look back at 1965 to decide where to fix blame—they will look back to 1995.

So, where do we go from here?

Mr. President, we cannot turn back the clock. But, we can learn from the past. And, that means doing what is necessary to improve Medicare so that it can move successfully into the 21st century.

Despite the rhetoric coming out of the White House and the Democratic

committee, Republicans, including myself, do not support cutting Medicare. We recognize the need for Medicare's growth, and our historic budget resolution allows for an annual growth rate of 6.4 percent. Under this agreement, Medicare spending will top \$1.6 trillion over the next 7 years. In addition, the trust fund's solvency will be ensured through the year 2005.

Mr. President, Republicans are also interested in creating more choices for Medicare beneficiaries. Fee-for-service health care may be great for some, and they should be able to keep that if they choose. But, there are other options out there now that may offer more benefits but are unavailable to Medicare beneficiaries. I would like to see these choices extended to all Americans.

Mr. President, the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate are currently working reconciliation legislation, that will include proposals to preserve, improve, and protect Medicare. As required by the budget resolution passed by Congress, this plan must be reported out of committee by September 22.

Some on the other side of the aisle, however, have requested the details of this legislation be made available before the August recess.

While we like to accommodate our colleagues as much as we can around here, the fact of the matter is that this is an extraordinarily important piece of legislation that cannot be slapped together a month ahead of schedule. The chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction have assured me that their staffs will work throughout August to give this bill the careful attention it deserves.

Mr. President, we have solicited ideas from the White House since April, when we first received the Trustee's report. Unfortunately, we have had no response, which was made our job that much more challenging.

But, as I said before, that does not alter our determination—I think it also includes many of my colleagues on the other side, I would hope—to preserve, improve, and protect the Medicare Program so that it will continue to be there for those who rely on it today and for those who will do so for many years in the future.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARINE CORPS IN THE KOREAN WAR: ED PETSCHKE AT THE CHOSIN RESERVOIR

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I wanted to rise today to make some short remarks here on the floor about a special person in Toledo, OH. It is Edwin F. Petsche, who was in my office just a couple of days ago. I remarked about him on the floor of the Senate yesterday. It had been my great honor to award him a Purple Heart that was long overdue. Ed Petsche took part in the withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir in Korea, back about 45 years ago, and had never received that Pur-

ple Heart. I mentioned it in passing yesterday in connection with our remarks about the dedication of the Korean War Memorial. I will say more about Ed Petsche in just a moment. But let me just briefly set the stage.

In the annals of Marine Corps history there are some things that stand out: Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, raising of the flag on Mt. Suribachi, and a number of events, and notable times of combat in various wars. You cannot compare one with another, for they all required great sacrifice. But I wanted to pay attention to this particular moment and set the stage for what happened out there. The dedication this week of the Korean War Memorial is a time for all Americans to reflect upon the sacrifices of our many veterans of that conflict—Ed Petsche and many others.

Many younger Americans are hearing this week for the first time the names of Korean cities and campaigns that were household words in America almost a half-century ago. The name of one geographical area in Korea will remain forever enshrined in the pantheon of Marine Corps history and that is the Chosin Reservoir.

In late October 1950, the Joint Chiefs of Staff authorized operations north of the 38th parallel in Korea.

Maj. Gen. O.P. Smith's spirited 1st Marine Division began to drive north toward the Yalu River in an effort to destroy completely the North Korean People's Army.

On November 2, 1950, the 7th, 5th, and 1st Marines moved out, in that order, from Hamhung, following a treacherous mountain route toward the Chosin Reservoir, the site of a large hydroelectric facility in northern Korea. By midnight the marines were in heavy contact with the Chinese 124th Division, as the People's Liberation Army had just entered the war to assist the struggling North Koreans.

The 7th and 5th Marines continued their advance through both light and heavy enemy opposition, and were concentrated at Yudam-Ni by 27 November, while the legendary "Chesty" Puller's 1st Marines took positions along the route. The full weight of the veteran 100,000 to 120,000 man Chinese 9th Army Group then fell upon the marines. The Chinese attacked during the night in temperatures approaching 20 degrees below zero, cutting the main supply routes, and isolating the marines into four close perimeters. Although the vastly outnumbered marines held their ground, the situation was very, very grave.

On December 1, General Smith ordered a breakout from the reservoir, which he termed an "attack in a different direction."

They went into retreat. They were surrounded. In any direction they went they contacted the enemy. So it truly was an attack in a different direction.

They were supported by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing that flew and flew and flew nearly 4,000 sorties during the entire operation—4,000 sorties. The 1st

Marine Division blasted its way through seven Chinese divisions and finally reached safety at Hungnam by December 12.

At the Chosin Reservoir, there was somewhere around 15,000 Americans involved. And out of that I think there were 13,000 casualties listed—in 10 days there were 13,000 casualties either dead or wounded during that advance back to Hungnam.

The Chosin Reservoir campaign cost the marines over 4,400 battle casualties, including killed and wounded, and uncounted cases of frostbite and pneumonia. The Communist Chinese forces had suffered a catastrophe, however. The best count ever made was that there were some 25,000 Chinese communist dead—25,000 dead as they came out.

Well, I read that to set the stage for Ed Petsche, and to show that this was tough close combat. He was bayoneted. That is hand-to-hand combat. This is not shooting at people remotely with rockets and with missiles, or things like that. He was bayoneted, and left for dead; tossed on a pile of soldiers and left there for dead. And it may have been lucky that the temperature was so cold because it was said that the temperature froze the wounds on parts of his body and maybe protected them a little bit from having become infected any more than they were. But he was still alive and was groaning. Someone heard his groans, rescued him and got him out. And they finally got him some attention and got him out of there.

That is the preface to saying that when he was in the hospital in Japan, Ed, for some reason, never had the record set straight that would have gotten him his Purple Heart.

I wanted to give that little background because some 45 years later, Ed Petsche and his children and grandchildren were in my office a couple of days ago.

And I was honored on behalf of the Commandant to present to him his belated Purple Heart. And it was indeed an honor.

We lost a lot of people in Korea. And I know that we have made a huge effort with regard to Vietnam to make sure that the POW/MIA count, the bodies and the missing people there—that their records are brought to light and that their remains are brought back, even now 20-some years after the end of the Vietnam war.

In Korea there are some 8,000 that are still missing that we do not have records on, and do not have their remains. I know the President indicated a couple of days ago that he thought that we should be pushing to get a better accounting of what happened to those people in Korea.

I would also note in passing that we still have some 78,000 missing MIA's out of World War II.

Ed Petsche came so close to being one of those who died in Korea. But he survived, luckily, and has received his