

And who disagrees with the proposition, therefore, that we should not include \$12 billion in Social Security cuts that were included as an offset for on-budget spending in the Finance Committee amendment?

That is what we are being asked to vote on: To honor, to not include and, therefore, to not violate our trust.

This is a motion that ought to be adopted unanimously by voice vote. I cannot believe that Members of the Senate are going to vote against a motion that effectively says we will dishonor our commitment to maintain the integrity of the Social Security trust fund, that we will include language that is contrary to the spirit and intent and very language that we committed ourselves to in 1990 and, therefore, that we should consummate that disavowal by raiding the Social Security trust fund of \$12 billion to support spending unrelated to Social Security obligations.

Those are the questions: To honor, to violate, to include, to maintain our sense of honor and responsibility to the Social Security trust fund.

I urge, Mr. President, my colleagues' adoption of this motion to instruct our conferees and that our conferees follow our admonition as they proceed in the conference committee on the reconciliation legislation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

EXHIBIT 1

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I am directing my attention to section 7482 of the legislation, which begins on page 45 and states:

"Cost-of-Living Adjustments During Fiscal Year 1996.

"Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of any program within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Finance of the United States Senate which is adjusted for any increase in the consumer price index for all urban wage earners and clerical workers (CPI-W) for the United States city average of all items, any such adjustment which takes effect during fiscal year 1996 shall be equal to 2.6 percent."

It is to that section, Mr. President, that I direct the point of order. I raise the point of order under section 310(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 against the pending amendment because it counts \$12 billion in cuts to Social Security which is off budget to offset spending in the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from New Mexico wish to be heard on this point of order?

Mr. DOMENICI. I want to say the dollar numbers being referred to are actual. That is all I want to say.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Michigan has 34 seconds remaining.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, one more motion to instruct the conferees is in order.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, notwithstanding the previous order, I ask unanimous consent that Senator KENNEDY be recognized at 4:30 p.m. today to make a motion to instruct conferees with respect to the reconciliation bill, and that the House message on H.R. 2491 be laid aside until that time.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business until 3 p.m. today, during which Senators may speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the impression will not go away: The \$4.9 trillion Federal debt stands today as a sort of grotesque parallel to television's energizer bunny that appears and appears and appears in precisely the same way that the Federal debt keeps going up and up and up.

Politicians like to talk a good game—and talk is the operative word—about reducing the Federal deficit and bringing the Federal debt under control. But watch how they vote. Control, Mr. President. As of the close of business, Thursday, November 9, the total Federal debt stood at exactly \$4,983,863,012,854.62 or \$18,918.83 per man, woman, child on a per capita basis. *Res ipsa loquitur*.

Some control.

POSITION ON VOTES

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, had I been present for votes on Thursday, November 9, 1995, I would have voted the following way:

Senate vote 564 on House Joint Resolution 115, the continuing resolution, I would have voted "no."

Senate vote 565 on House Joint Resolution 115, the continuing resolution, I would have voted "no."

Senate vote 566 on House Joint Resolution 115, the continuing resolution, I would have voted "no."

Senate vote 567 on House Joint Resolution 115, the continuing resolution, final passage, I would have voted "no."

Senate vote 568 on H.R. 2586, the temporary debt limit increase, I would have voted "no."

Senate vote 569 on H.R. 2586, the temporary debt limit increase, final passage, I would have voted "no."

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

BUDGET STANDOFF

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, over the weekend, both in reading various newspaper accounts and watching the television accounts of the so-called standoff between the Congress and the President over the question of the continuing resolution, funds to keep the Government moving forward, the debt limit, and the budget battle that is currently underway in this Congress, I was particularly taken by an article in Saturday's Washington Post written by Ann Devroy titled, "For Clinton, the Battle Is To Stand Firm."

What was interesting is that apparently the President's advisers and pollsters have determined that, as Ann Devroy says, "President Clinton's reputation for vacillation has made his political need to display strength of character now a silent partner in the nonnegotiation drama" that is currently taking place here in Washington.

It goes on to say that the President's closest adviser is exulting that polling has shown that the President is beginning to make progress on what he stands for.

The article goes on to say that various sources that Ann Devroy has talked to say—and she quotes—"We were told that what people in their focus groups cite as what they disliked most about Clinton is he is weak, vacillating, opportunist, flip-flops constantly."

"Pollsters of both parties have"—again, quoting from the article—"Pollsters of both parties have throughout the Clinton presidency identified as a significant problem for the president the perception that he has no core beliefs."

So what we have seen here now in the past couple of weeks, particularly over this past weekend, and, undoubtedly, we will see this week, is an attempt by the President, on the advice of his counselors, on the advice of his pollsters, and on the advice of those conducting his focus groups, to shore up his character, to define something of what the President believes in and, therefore, "Stand firm, do not negotiate with the Congress to find a break to the impasse that currently exists between the executive branch and the congressional branch."

That is what is guiding the decision-making process in the White House and the President's statements.

So, all the President's protestations about the Congress trying to shut down the Government, denying opportunities

for Americans to work, holding America hostage, apparently are all part of a grand political design, grand political scheme to shore up, as the article quotes, shore up the fact that the President is perceived by most people in the focus groups as weak, vacillating, opportunist, and flip-flopping.

We wonder why the American public is so cynical about the political process. We wonder why so few people today show up at the polls to vote. We wonder why the elections across the country—just this past Tuesday, in many cases, less than one-quarter of those eligible to vote even bothered to show up to vote, when they see this kind of political cynicism operating in Washington, DC.

At the same time, I could not help but notice in Sunday's paper a statement that the House minority leader, Mr. GEPHARDT, said in a recent speech that the "GOP budget goes to the very fringes of radicalism." And, of course, we have heard the Vice President and others in the President's Cabinet repeat that mantra now, that it is extremism that is driving the GOP agenda.

So we have had the whole spin all weekend, the focus groups, the Cabinet members, the Vice President this morning on the news shows, and other Cabinet members on the news shows, all pushing the latest White House line. Unfortunately, what they push and the rhetoric that comes across is totally separate from the facts.

This so-called radical, extremist Republican budget over the next 7 years increases spending \$2.6 trillion, increases in revenues to the Government of \$3.3 trillion. Spending will grow between now and the year 2002 under the Republican radical, extremist budget, spending will grow from \$1.514 trillion in this current year to \$1.844 trillion in 2002, a 22-percent increase. Medicare spending—which I am sure everyone has heard from the President and his spokespeople that is going to produce dramatic cuts, throw people on the street, throw the elderly out of their nursing homes, and so forth—Medicare spending will increase in that 7-year period 61 percent, from \$178 billion in 1995 to \$286 billion in 2002. Medicaid spending will grow at a 41-percent increase. Total welfare spending will increase 38 percent. Food stamp spending will increase 45 percent; supplemental Social Security income 69 percent; earned income tax credit spending 22 percent; foster care spending 86 percent. This is the radical, extremist Republican budget.

If we look a little more specifically at Medicare, I think we can begin to understand the length to which the President and members of his party will go to radically alter the news that is being presented to the American people, to put their political spin on something that is totally opposed by the facts of the situation.

Republicans are addressing the Medicare spending issue because the Presi-

dent's own trustees' report in April 1995 stated the following:

The Medicare program is clearly unsustainable in its present form. . . . We strongly recommend that the crisis presented by the financial condition of the Medicare trust funds be urgently addressed on a comprehensive basis, including a review of the program's financing methods, benefit provisions, and delivery mechanisms.

That is the Medicare trustees' report of April 1995.

Incidentally, three of those trustees are members of the President's own Cabinet. Our party has stepped forward in a responsible way to address this alarming report. It has done so by recognizing that unless we slow the growth of Medicare from its current three-plus times the rate of inflation, to around two times the rate of inflation, we will not successfully even begin to address the concern raised by the trustees' report.

We are not the only ones who think that something needs to be done. On October 5, 1993, the following statement was issued:

Today Medicaid and Medicare are going up at three times the rate of inflation. We propose to let it go up at two times the rate of inflation. That is not a Medicare or a Medicaid cut. So when you hear all this business about cuts, let me caution you that that is not what is going on.

What Republican said that? because that is exactly what Republicans have attempted to do. So when you hear all this business about cuts, this person said, "Let me caution you that is not what is happening. What is happening is that we are reducing the rate of growth from three times the rate of inflation to two times the rate of inflation." That statement was made by the President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, in October 1993. You would never know that today, because what is coming out of the White House is the exact opposite of that statement.

We are also talking about the level of premium at 31.5 percent. That is what it is currently today. You see this country offers an extraordinarily generous benefit program for those 65 and older called Medicare. Part A of Medicare hospitalization is 100 percent covered. And part B, which provides for doctors' fees and other nonhospital costs, is paid for to the extent of 69.5 percent by the taxpayer. We are asking the elderly for that part B coverage only to cover 31.5 percent. That is the current rate that we are asking them to pay, their part, their share of the program. And the GOP budget plan requires that that stay at that level, does not increase it but asks that it stay at that level. But what the President would like to do is revert it back to a level of 25 percent. We are saying, given this trustees' report, this is not responsible. Can we just ask those currently under Medicare to maintain their same level of support? That is the so-called cut that the White House and the President, or those who speak for

him, are talking about. And it is not a cut.

Ironically, in the year 2002, under the Republican plan, Medicare recipients will pay a \$90-a-month premium, if current increases in Medicare costs are as projected. Under the President's plan, they will pay \$82-a-month premium, an \$8 difference. This is what is labeled as throwing people out of nursing homes, on the street, without medical care. These are the cuts, the so-called cuts, in Medicare.

When we debated the balanced budget amendment earlier this year, we were told by member after member of the Democratic Party, on the other side of the aisle, that balancing the budget was an absolute imperative, and I want to quote some of them. I will not give their names:

"The budget is not going to be balanced in 2002 unless the responsible people, that is those of us in the Congress, in 1995 start to focus on their share of the work."

"Words on a piece of paper cannot balance the budget, only legislators like you and I can," said another Senator.

A third said: "Let's go on the record, Democrats and Republicans alike, that we are serious about deficit reduction, we are serious about balancing the budget, because I think that we all are."

Another said: "I believe a balanced budget is the correct policy decision for this country."

Another said: "Let Senators get to work and show Americans we have the courage this amendment presumes that we lack."

Republicans had the courage. They came forward with a balanced budget plan enacted over a 7-year period of time, because a \$4.9 trillion debt is irresponsible legislating. The rate of growth of our debt is staggering. It imposes a burden on the American economy and on the future and future generations that is immoral. We have come forward with a plan. Our friends and colleagues from across the aisle did not bring forward a plan, and what little attempt they made out of the White House was discounted by the very scoring agency that the President asked us to use.

So now here we are with a plan, a plan to deal with one of the most serious financial crises this country has ever faced. It is not a radical plan. It is not an extremist plan. It is a responsible plan. And for the first time in decades, in response to the call of the American people in November 1994, we are beginning to rein in the out-of-control growth of Government. For the first time in decades, we will actually limit the rate of growth of Government.

Finally, the Congress, under the leadership of the Republicans, has proven that they can deliver on the promises made to the American people to balance the budget.

Several weeks ago, Mr. President, I stood on this floor discussing and debating the reconciliation bill which we were about to pass, that bill that combines a number of efforts to reach our goals for putting in place the process of responsible spending and balancing the budget, and I said:

The reconciliation bill we are debating not only makes sense, it makes history. For many of us, a balanced Federal budget is a distant memory. For decades it has been an empty political promise. All that remains is one final act of courage and vision.

I went on to say:

That courage will be tested in the Congress by some difficult choices, and that vision will be measured in the President as he becomes either a partner or a partisan. If either he or we are unequal to the task, the patience of the public will be exhausted, and we will have squandered a unique opportunity, and we will feed a dangerous disillusionment with American politics.

That moment is here. That time for courage is here. The courage has been met by the Republican budget plan. Republicans stand today and say: Mr. President, we have a plan. We have responded to the call—your call, our colleagues' call—to be responsible and balance this budget.

But the vision called for and necessary on the part of the President has not been met. There is no vision beyond November 1996. The vision is to reelect the President at whatever cost. The vision is to make sure that the President's campaign succeeds, regardless of what he has said in the past, regardless of his rhetoric.

Just a few short weeks ago, it appeared we were on a path to negotiating a sensible plan to balance this budget with the President's support. If you looked at what the President said and what he called for, it was very close to what the Republicans enacted. But then someone determined that the President needed to have his weak, vacillating character firmed up. And so the whole plan was thrown out the window.

Now we are in an exercise of what I think is the utmost in political cynicism: Of making sure that the President's political posture is the kind of posture that will be necessary to inch him up in the polls so that he can be reelected in November of 1996.

The courage of the Republicans in providing a plan which, yes, includes tough choices but, yes, responds to a desperate need, a need to get control of a government that for years and years and years has been simply out of control, that plan is before us, but that plan is before us without the vision of the executive branch and particularly of the President.

So while the Democrats continue their efforts to tear this bill apart piece by piece, we have to remember that the centerpiece of what we are attempting to do is to balance this budget. In the future, this will be recalled as our contribution to history. If we ignore this budget crisis, this country and future generations will pay dearly.

I think the argument for a balanced budget comes down to something simple. It is one of our highest moral traditions that parents sacrifice for the sake of their children, and it is the depth of selfishness to call on children to sacrifice for the sake of their parents.

If we continue on our current path, we will violate a trust between generations, and we will earn the contempt of the future. This is our moment. This is our time. It will take courage and it will take vision. Let us trust that both the Congress and the President will have an ample amount of each in order to accomplish what I think we all know needs to be accomplished.

Mr. President, I thank you, and I yield the floor.

Mrs. HUTCHISON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CONFUSION ABOUT WHY WE CANNOT ACT TOGETHER

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I appreciate having the opportunity to listen to the Senator from Indiana talk about what we are facing in the next 7 hours for this country. It is a very important time.

I was in my home State, as well as several other States, over the last weekend, and I talked to people. People are really confused. People see Congress and they see the President, and they are confused about why we cannot act together.

I think it is very important that we clarify to the greatest extent that we can some of these issues. Let us talk about the continuing resolution that has been passed by the House, will be finally passed again in the Senate today, we hope, that in another month, a few weeks maybe, until December 1, anyway, call on the President to sit down with us and work out a budget reconciliation bill that we would hopefully come to terms with by December 1, so that we can, in fact, take the first-year step of the 7-year march to a balanced budget. That is what the Senator from Indiana was talking about—whether we are going to take that first-year step of the balanced budget. We must have the spending levels that we are asking for in the continuing resolution in order to make the 7-year balanced budget.

If we do what the President wants, which is to continue spending at this year's levels, we will not meet the 7-year deadline.

This Congress has spoken. We have passed a budget resolution that sets the cap on spending that is allowed if we are going to balance the budget. We would love to sit down with the President and talk about priorities, but we cannot negotiate the cap. The cap has been passed. We have a budget resolution on the table.

Has the President yet submitted to this Congress a balanced budget? No.

The President has yet to submit to Congress a budget that actually balances. The best he could do was a budget that had \$200 billion in deficits. That was the very best. Never have we seen a balanced budget.

Congress has given the President a balanced budget. Perhaps the President does not like the priorities that we have. That is legitimate. Let us sit down and talk about what we spend within the cap. But what the President is saying in the continuing resolution, which he says he will veto, is that we must continue spending at last year's levels, which means to the American people and to Congress that the President is not going to let us have the balanced budget that we must have this year.

If we do not meet this year's test, we cannot do it in 7 years. The President first said he wanted 10 years, then 9, and then 8. At one point, he said he would go along with 7 years. But he never submitted a budget that would do it in 7 years—so Congress did. Now we are trying to pass a continuing resolution that will end on December 1, when we believe that two responsible branches of Government ought to be able to sit down and work out a budget reconciliation package for the American people that would meet the budget test.

There are two things the President says he does not like in the continuing resolution. The first is he does not like the lower spending levels that I have just talked about that are necessary for us to have the 7-year balanced budget.

The second thing he does not like is the monthly Medicare part B premiums, which will rise in January \$7 a month in order to meet exactly where we are now, and that is that the Federal Government will put in 69 percent, and the recipient will put in 31.5 percent. That is where we are. Anyone who was here when we passed Medicare—I was not—knows the Medicare part B premiums, which are the doctors' visits, were supposed to be shared 50-50 between the recipient and the Government. They are now at 69.5, Government, and 31.5, recipient. That is where we are now, and that is where the Congress is saying we must stay if we are going to keep Medicare from going bankrupt. We have to raise the premiums that go with the rise in costs to keep the level at 31.5 percent.

It would be irresponsible for the President not to sign a continuing resolution that allows us to put the paperwork in place to make that happen. The President's own Cabinet has said Medicare will start going into a deficit next year. The President's own Cabinet says that Medicare can only last with the trust fund that is built up until the year 2002. So we are trying to save the Medicare system by keeping the 31.5 percent level of the recipient in the part B premiums and to slow the rate of growth over the next 7 years from 10 percent increase per year, which is