

here. No middle-class tax cut that turned into a middle-class tax increase.

But elected officials, people in Washington, Congressmen, who actually lived up to what they said they would do. Amazing. Amazing.

And so here we are in the U.S. Senate, looking at the model over there, and saying, "Boy, wouldn't it be nice if we could come to the U.S. Senate floor, and we could stand up"—and we do not have to vote in lockstep with the House. I would not suggest it. It is a different body; different rules; different procedures; and different ideas.

But to stand here and play politics and delay on an issue that is—of all the issues that we are dealing with here in Washington, the one that is highest above all is getting our financial house in order. That is what the American public want us to do. They want us to get our house in order.

And so, we have our first chance, right here—the first spending cut bill since the balanced budget amendment. The first chance for the U.S. Senate where the vote of the balance budget amendment occurs, right here—all of us, all 100 of us were sitting in our chairs. We stood up one at a time.

It was a very impressive moment for a young—I know the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Michigan, was just as impressed in casting that vote. It was a very awe-inspiring moment.

But we lost. And we lost because of the argument that we did not need the amendment to force us to make tough decisions. OK. Fine. You say we do not need the amendment. We do not have the amendment.

Now we have the tough decisions. And where are we? We are nowhere. We are waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting. And they are delaying and delaying and delaying, just like they did—you know, the amazing thing is they just are not delaying on this bill. The Democrats have delayed on every bill—every single bill. Even bills they liked.

I have heard the leader stand up here many times and say, you know, we passed a bill here earlier in the year, the congressional accountability bill, that makes us live by the laws here in Congress that we impose on other people's lives around America. It was over a week of debate, of delay, of dilatory tactics. It passed 98 to 1—98 to 1. It took us better than a week. It took the House an hour—98 to 1.

The next bill was the unfunded mandates bill, another bill that passed 86 to 10, 2 weeks or more. Two weeks of endless debate, delay. Why? Did they disagree? Of course not, 86 to 10. Was the bill changed a lot? No.

So what was the point? What was the point there? Why did we do that? Why did we go through that? Why have we gone 2 weeks on this rescission bill?

Are there a lot of amendments substantive to the bill? Oh, a couple.

Have we had lots of interesting debate? Some.

Have there been agreements to move the bill along, to actually come to

votes on some of these things? No, no; we cannot do that. Well, tomorrow we have a vote on cloture on this bill. Cloture means to end the debate. Let us get this thing done. Let us end the debate tomorrow and let us stay here and finish the bill. We will see how many of these deficit hawks, these people who really are concerned about getting the deficit under control—and I will guarantee you, every one of the people delaying this bill will go back home to their States over the recess and talk about how they are for deficit reduction; how they are for changing Washington; how they want to make things different here; how this just happened to be a bad bill; how this just went a little too far.

Folks, this is \$15 billion in deficit reduction—excuse me, \$15 billion in spending cuts and deficit reduction. That is out of \$1.6 trillion, and this goes too far? Get serious. Nobody believes it goes too far. These are the decisions we have to make that we are no longer forced to make, that we are not going to be forced to make because the balanced budget amendment did not pass.

So the unwritten story, the story that may be written here—I hope not—but the story that may be written here in the next couple of days is going to be how 46 Senators conspired to stop the train, did everything they could, everything they could to make sure that elections do not matter. That is right, that elections do not matter; that what people on November 8 said is irrelevant, that it did not happen. Denial and hope that if they just keep muddying the waters, if they just keep deflecting away the real issues before us, that maybe they will just blame the whole lot of us and not them.

I had to come out here today and just say the buck stops there. You want to change Washington? You know where the change has to happen. It is very simple. Do not let all these cries about, oh, how this is going to be so terrible—offer your amendments. You want to put back money for WIC? I will offer an offset. I will pay for the increase, and I will vote with you. I will increase money for WIC—Women, Infants, and Children. I have no problem with that. That is a good program. We will put more money back in. You will get a lot of Republicans to vote for that. Just come up with the money to offset it. Just pay for it. Keep the deficit reduction at the same level so if you want to add in \$50 million for it, fine, we will take \$50 million out of, oh, let us pick the AmeriCorps Program and offset it.

Set your priorities. Is that not what you want us to do? Do you not want us to set priorities? Do you not want us to say this program is more important than this program? We, obviously, would love to give all the money to every program and everything we want to do. But as everybody in America, maybe outside of 46 people in this room, believes and knows, we do not have all the money to give for everything. So we have to set priorities.

Let us set them. Come on down to the floor. Offer those amendments. Put that money back in for WIC. I will be right there with you. Take the other programs you say are just outrageous cuts; come on, let us talk about them and let us set priorities. Let us offset that money. Let us do it. Let us show the American public we really do care, that the deficit is really important.

You have the chairman of the Budget Committee here, the Senator from New Mexico. I know he cares about the budget. I know his family has not seen much of him because that is all he is doing probably is working on how to get to that balanced budget, and he is making a lot of tough decisions. Folks, we are ready to make the decisions. You told us in the balanced budget debate you were ready to make the decisions. Why are you not here? What is the problem? Is it just politics? Is it just partisanship? Do you not want to come here and solve problems? We deserve better. This institution deserves better.

Eleven freshmen Republicans did not come here to let the status quo continue. You want to fight; you do not want to come here and make things happen. We are ready. We are ready. We will stand here as long as it takes. We are ready to do battle.

We are ready to let the American public decide what direction they want this country to take: More spending, more Government, more power, more control in the hands of the people in Washington; or more money, more power, more control, more freedom in your hands on Main Street, America? That is the issue. We are ready. We are waiting. And we will wait, and we will wait, and we will wait.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to commend my friend from Pennsylvania, the new Senator, for his remarks, and I hope that I have a few minutes. I inquire what the parliamentary situation is, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business has been closed, but if the Senator seeks consent, he can speak as in morning business.

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to talk today to everyone in this body and every American who will listen and, in particular, senior citizens across this land, because something is happening that we are not paying attention to and we ought to be doing

something about. I want to share it with you.

Again, I repeat, I hope the senior citizens, who themselves are concerned about the future, will pay heed to what occurred the day before yesterday when the trustees of the Medicare program issued their release with reference to the status of this fund. The trustees of Medicare released their 1995 annual report, Mr. President, on the hospital insurance trust fund. This looks like yet another boring Government report. But the information contained within it is singularly alarming. The information contained in this report affects the lives of all Americans, and has an immediate effect on the lives of senior citizens.

I want to read from the cover letter that was sent with this report:

The Medicare hospital insurance trust fund is expected to be exhausted in the year 2002. While the status of the HI trust fund has thus improved slightly since last year, it still does not meet the board's test of short-range financial adequacy.

Translated, this means Medicare is going bankrupt 7 years from now. It will not have the money in the fund to pay the hospital bills of seniors then in the hospitals of America expecting their bills to be paid under the current Medicare program. If we do nothing, Medicare part A, that portion that pays for hospital benefits, will run out of money in the next 7 years.

I rise today to tell my colleagues and the American people that we must work together to save Medicare from bankruptcy.

This is not one part of America's problem. It is not a Republican problem, a Democrat problem, an independent problem. It is everyone's problem.

We will look at why Medicare is going bankrupt. As we can see on this chart, the bottom line is flat. This line represents the money coming into the trust fund from payroll taxes on current workers in the United States.

The amount of money we are projected to pay out for Medicare is going to continue growing. The top line represents money we are going to spend on Medicare benefits. The Congressional Budget Office, our official scorekeeper, tells Members that Medicare outlays are projected to grow more than 10 percent each year. That means if we leave programs like they are, if we leave the delivery system like it is, that program will go up 10 percent a year in cost.

This is unsustainable. The trend is obvious. The black line is the trend of 10 percent a year. I do not think we can afford to let Medicare spending continue to grow more than 10 percent every year. If we do, the consequence is absolutely and unequivocally and simply that Medicare will go under.

I, for one, will strive diligently not to let that happen. I hope many Senators from both sides of the aisle and many House Members from both sides of the aisle will help Members keep that from happening.

My hope that the President would help do that is dwindling rapidly. I will

share with the U.S. Senators why I believe that is a fair conclusion.

I cannot sit by and let it happen because I have promised the people of my State I would protect Medicare. To do nothing and leave the program alone is not to protect it. If I do nothing as a Senator, and if we do nothing, it will go bankrupt. Therefore, my commitment and promise requires that we act to save this system. I am not about to let it go bankrupt in 7 years.

There are some other interesting facts in the trustees' report that I believe should be spread out here in the Senate, and for those who are interested, through the networks that tell the people what we are saying, this report says, if we do not change our projected Medicare spending and if we want Medicare in long-term balance, if we want to put it in that position, we would have to raise payroll taxes by 3½ percentage points. The report says that.

I note my distinguished friend from New York is present and I hope I do not misinterpret anything in the report.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. No, sir, you do not.

Mr. DOMENICI. In other words, if we do not change the slope of this top line, which represents 10 percent per year growth, we are going to have to raise the bottom line. That means raising the current HI payroll tax from 2.9 percent to 6.4 percent. That is 120 percent increase. Those are not my numbers, their numbers. Those charts were telling the status of this.

Our other option, obviously, is to slow the growth of Medicare spending by changing the system or changing something within the system.

What else do these trustees say? They say:

The HI program is severely out of financial balance and the trustees believe that Congress must take timely action to establish long-term fiscal stability for this program. The trustees believe that prompt, effective, decisive action is necessary.

They did not say wait until after the next election. They did not say wait 3 years. They did not say it is too tough, so do not do it. We asked them to tell Members what to do, and they are saying, "Congress, change it, fix it, and fix it now."

These trustees are urging Congress to act. They are telling Members to save Medicare. They are telling Members that Medicare part A is going to go bankrupt in 7 years.

I have said that five times. Before I am finished, I hope to say it three more times. Perhaps we should say it 10 times a day until some people in this Congress, besides a few, decide that we must fix this now.

I want to read from another report. Last year I served on the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlements and Tax Reform, cochaired by current Senator BOB KERREY and retired Senator JACK DANFORTH. Thirty of the 32 members of the bipartisan commission signed the interim report to the President. He asked for it. We sent it to him. I want to read finding No. 6 from that report.

To respond to the Medicare trustees' call to action and ensure Medicare's long-term viability, spending and revenues available for the program must be brought into long-term balance.

Not the black line and the green line and the monstrous wedge, or differential, but so that the lines on the chart are one.

Let Members make no mistake about it. If we pass the President's budget, the highly touted budget of the President, Medicare will go bankrupt in 7 years. The President's budget did nothing on Medicare. The President's budget proposed three tiny changes to the program. These changes have no effect on those lines.

Secretary Shalala testified before the Budget Committee—I believe the distinguished occupant of the chair was present—2 months ago. I asked her what the administration intended to do about Medicare. She said they would wait until the new trustees' report came out before they made a recommendation. So the Secretary, representing the President, 2 months ago said, "Let's wait until the report."

Now, of course, there is something slightly funny about all of this. I have not told Members who the trustees are. The trustees are Shalala—Secretary Shalala. She is one of these trustees. Treasury Secretary Rubin is another of these trustees. Labor Secretary Reich is a third member. Out of the six Medicare trustees, three are Cabinet Secretaries to this administration. The fourth also works for the administration.

So, would we not think that the administration Cabinet Secretaries would recommend some specific action, Mr. President? Ultimately, they do not. Instead, they recommend that we create an advisory counsel that will provide information to help lead to the effective solutions to the problems of the program.

The Cabinet Secretaries are apparently recommending that we continue to study the problem, that we engage in a study program instead of changing the program.

Now, however, I want to tell Members the difference between citizens who do not represent this administration or any Members of Congress who are on this board who are trustees, I want to tell Members what they have to say, Mr. President. Citizens understand reality.

I want to turn to trustees Nos. 5 and 6. These are public trustees, two citizens who do not work for the Government but have given their time over the past 5 years to this Nation. I understand by party affiliation one is a Democrat, one is a Republican. In any event, I thank them profusely. Their names are Stanford Ross and David Walker. Mr. Ross and Mr. Walker have been trustees for Medicare and the Social Security for the past 5 years. They

have been trustees during both the Bush and Clinton administrations. They are nonpolitical, private citizens charged with working in the best interests of senior citizens and our country. Most important, they do not answer to the White House.

In the past, Mr. Ross and Mr. Walker have issued their own statements. Believe it or not, the trustees issued a report and the citizen members issue their own report in the back of the book because they do not agree with the public members.

So, what do they have to say? I want to read some of these two public trustees' statements into the RECORD.

The Medicare program is clearly unsustainable in its present form.

Further quote:

With the results of last Congress, it is now clear that Medicare reform needs to be addressed urgently as a distinct legislative initiative.

Continuing the quote:

The idea that reductions in Medicare expenditures should be available for other purposes, including even other health care purposes, is mistaken.

Why do I quote that? I will tell you a little more about that in a moment. Continuing on:

The focus should be on making Medicare itself sustainable, making it compatible with Social Security, and making both [of them] financially sound in the long term.

That is the end the quotes. Now, my own conclusions from that.

That is what public, nonpolitical trustees say we should do about Medicare and that is exactly what I hope we are going to do. I would be quick to add, as Senator CHAFEE has pointed out, when Congress increased taxes on Social Security benefits in 1993, it devoted the increased revenues to this HI trust fund. Therefore there should be no doubt, if we now repeal that increase we would be lowering the amount of money going into this HI fund, causing the system to go bankrupt even sooner.

We must enact comprehensive Medicare reform to make Medicare financially sound now. And we must do that so it will be manageable and sound over the long term. We must make it sustainable and do that now. We must act to preserve the system, to ensure that our senior citizens receive Medicare today and will continue to receive it in 7 years from now. There is nothing magical about it. We have to do something. If we do not do anything it will be bankrupt. Current seniors for the next 5 or 6 years will get their hospital bill paid as per the law, but thereafter they will not.

What kind of public servants and leaders are we, if we do nothing again? So I am committing today that the U.S. Senate Budget Committee is going to mark up a budget resolution. After we return from this recess that will get done. At least from my standpoint, as chairman, I commit to a blueprint that not only achieves balance in terms of our fiscal house, but also addresses this

critical problem. In order to make Medicare financially sound and a financially sound program once again, Congress will have to follow.

I made a comment that I did not follow up on, where I said the nonpolitical trustees, the two who are not Members of the President's Cabinet, said that Medicare savings should be used—Senator GORTON—to make the program solvent. Not to pay for something else.

One might say, "Who intends to spend them for something else? What are you talking about?" I suggest the President ought to let us know what he has in mind. He proposed a \$130 billion in Medicare savings 2 years ago. He did not help with this, not one bit. Because he spent the money. He spent it to cover other people with health care coverage problems. I submit that one of the reasons the President of the United States did not put Medicare reform in his budget is because he intends to use Medicare reform savings to pay for health care reform, not to put it on the deficit. I submit we ought to have that debate.

We ought to ask the American people: Do you want to make this program solvent as it should be, or do you want to take savings that you can get from reform and decide we are so rich we can just spend it on another program? That is simple and that is oversimplification, but it is the real question. Some will say, Senator DOMENICI, it is not that simple. We need to cover all the other people who are not covered and it will ultimately help this program. But to tell you the truth, that is very, very difficult to understand. It is very difficult to figure we are really going to do that someday.

So I submit in the next 6 months this body, the U.S. Senate, has a real chance to vote on whether they are going to make this program for future senior citizens and those who have been paying into this fund for a long time, this 2.9 percent—for those, are we going to make it solvent or not? I believe there is a way to do it without a huge amount of pain. I might just suggest it is amazing that the two programs, big programs in health care that are still on a hell-bent-for-bankruptcy growth line are the two programs the U.S. Federal Government still runs.

There are no other programs that are growing at 10 percent a year. Go ask businesses, are they paying 10 percent more, year after year, for insurance coverage for their employees? They will tell you no. It was 14 percent or 15 percent 3 years ago, but it is down to 4 and 5 in some cases. In fact, we got a report the other day, some of them that were growing at 12 or 13 percent are now down at no growth, getting the same coverage. Why? Because they are trying new delivery systems. They are trying managed care. They are trying health maintenance organizations. They are trying those kinds of delivery systems which everybody knows are inevitable.

But we hang onto Medicare and we lead our senior citizens to believe that they are only going to get good health care if we keep the system that the rest of the public is beginning to say does not work, it is too expensive. So that is why we can fix this and we can fix it without denying our senior citizens good, solid health care. And the programs must continue to grow because we know health care for seniors cannot be a zero sum game.

So I thought we ought to tie in, today, sort of the first presentation of the issue with reference to fiscal policy. If you do not want to fix this you probably do not want a balanced budget and, more important than anything else, you probably do not want to do anything very difficult to get to a balanced budget.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I may proceed as in mornings business.

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

TURKEY MUST WITHDRAW

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, on March 23, together with Senators KERRY, FEINGOLD, and SNOWE, I submitted Senate Resolution 91 condemning the Turkish invasion of Northern Iraq. Since then, Senators BIDEN, D'AMATO, SARBANES, and SIMON have become cosponsors. With such strong bipartisan support, I hoped to move this resolution to Senate passage. Until today, I had intended to offer it as an amendment to the pending legislation. Given the fluidity of the floor situation—particularly the difficulties involving the Jordan debt amendment, and the need to send that matter to the President as soon as possible—I think it best not to offer a foreign policy amendment to this bill.

I remain deeply concerned, however, about Turkey's continued military operations in northern Iraq, and I wish to address that subject now. In the past several days, I have had occasion to pursue this issue at the highest levels of both the United States and Turkish Governments. I have had an exchange of letters with both the President and the Secretary of State, and just this morning, I and other members of the Foreign Relations Committee met with the Turkish Foreign Minister.

Specifically, I am disturbed by Turkey's continued military presence in Iraqi Kurdistan, and by the Government's unwillingness to set a date certain for withdrawal. Turkey should withdraw now.

While I appreciate Turkey's legitimate desire to combat the terrorist threat posed by the PKK, I believe the military action in Northern Iraq goes beyond mere self-defense, and furthermore offers virtually no prospect of eradicating PKK terror. The vast majority of terrorist attacks in Turkey