

desk No. 39, Mr. President, and it lists all of the Senators who have occupied this particular desk.

I just want to name a few of these. Some of these names may stand out. John Bankhead from Alabama occupied this particular desk. John Bankhead lived over on 19th Street, right off of Dupont Circle. John Bankhead was the father of Tallulah Bankhead. Tallulah Bankhead was one of the grand actresses during that period of time, and they lived on 19th Street, where I used to live.

Now, also, Patrick McCarran of Nevada occupied this particular desk, No. 39. He was the author, I assume, of the McCarran-Ferguson Act, which many people will recognize.

Theodore Francis Green, of Rhode Island, occupied desk No. 39. Theodore Francis Green may have been—I do not know, that record may have been broken—but at one time he was the oldest Member to ever serve in the Senate. That may have been surpassed. I need to check and correct it. But he was the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee immediately preceding the chairmanship of Senator J. William Fulbright of the State of Arkansas.

Another very illustrious individual who has occupied desk 39 is Estes Kefauver, from Tennessee, known for his coonskin cap and all his grand campaigning as he ran for President and as he ran for Vice President. He really was a major force in the 1950's in the Democratic Party and in American politics.

Another great Senator who has occupied desk No. 39 is Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, of course from Washington State, who passed away just a few years ago. He truly was one of the giants of the Senate. He occupied desk 39.

Frank J. Lausche, from the State of Ohio, occupied this desk, desk No. 39. For some of you who may not know, Frank J. Lausche, to the best of my recollection, served more terms as Governor than any other Governor elected in the history of America. I think he was Governor of his State for—it seems like well over a decade and perhaps even close to 2 decades, in the State of Ohio.

Mr. President, some of this may not seem too important to a lot of people, but there may be some students around who someday would want to know more about the Senate Chamber and about the desks in the Chamber.

As Senator ROCKEFELLER and Senator COATS and myself take our constituents through the Capitol and sometimes sit with them in the galleries, sometimes people ask us about the aisle, where do the Republicans sit and where do the Democrats sit? And so we thought it might be a good time to put a little statement in the RECORD giving a little, brief history about this Chamber and some of the desks that make up this wonderful U.S. Senate Chamber.

Mr. President, I see no other Senator seeking recognition.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MEDICARE INSOLVENCY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I was not in the Chamber an hour ago when the distinguished Senator from Utah, my colleague, Senator BENNETT, commented on remarks that I made earlier this morning. He is a person for whom I have immense respect and who I believe is a great student of many of the issues we address on the floor. But he and I have a very fundamental difference of opinion with regard to Medicare, and I wish to respond briefly to comments that he made today on that issue. I invite his reaction if he is within the sound of my voice.

He said in his remarks the Medicare trustees' report predicting insolvency only became available in April 1995; that it was not available 2 years ago when the President's deficit reduction package was debated.

The fact is that the Medicare trustees' report is available every year for all Members of Congress to see, and every year the report has been predicting insolvency of the Medicare trust fund, sometime between 1999 and the year 2003. So there should be no surprise with regard to the predictions of this year's trustees' report. I think the question is, how we will generate Medicare savings over the course of the next year, and how will we use those savings.

There are some who have advocated providing a significant tax cut for the wealthy. I think it is fair to say that when you cut Medicare to the extent that some have proposed it be cut, and then you propose a similar decrease in taxes for the very wealthiest among us, one would have to conclude that the cuts in Medicare will be used to pay for the tax cut for the wealthy. That was the main point I was making.

Regardless of whether people are willing to make that association, as valid as I believe it is, I think it is very clear everyone recognizes that, indeed, the Medicare trust fund is in serious trouble. In fact, the President's 1993 deficit reduction package addressed this issue through proposals designed to delay insolvency for several more years. Before the President's deficit reduction package was enacted, the trustees' report indicated the trust fund would be insolvent by 1999. As a result of the enactment of the 1993 reconciliation package, which all Democrats supported and every Republican opposed, we have been able to extend the viability of the trust fund for 3 more years, from the year 1999 to the year 2002. So we have made progress.

What many of us are saying now is, if we are going to continue to make progress, then clearly we have to go beyond what the reconciliation package did with respect to strengthening Medicare.

What we said last year is that we have to pass meaningful health care reform if we are to reduce further the rate of Medicare growth, without hurting beneficiaries and shifting costs onto families and businesses.

That is what we attempted to do last year. The Senator from Utah indicated that the President last year argued we needed \$118 billion in additional Medicare cuts. Well, the President proposed these reductions in the rate of growth of Medicare in the context of a health reform proposal that assured costs would not be shifted onto the private sector. Clearly we get cost shifting to the private sector when we cut Medicare without addressing private sector health care cost problems. That is why so many of us argued for so long—and, unfortunately, with so little success—last year that if we are ever going to solve Medicare's problems, we have to address our entire health care system's problems. Unfortunately, Republicans opposed that effort last year.

So, Mr. President, my point in addressing this issue is to clarify again what I believe to be the real issue. The real issue is that we have to make meaningful reforms to Medicare without adversely affecting the beneficiaries and without passing whatever savings we generate on to the wealthiest among us in the form of another tax cut. Real reform is not cutting benefits to the elderly or simply shifting more costs onto them. Real reform must ensure more efficient functioning and administration of the program.

The last issue that I wish to raise with regard to Medicare has to do with the chart the distinguished Senator from Utah used. My chart is not nearly as fancy because we didn't have time to make such an elegant chart, but I think it illustrates my point.

The Senator from Utah indicated that Medicare costs were going up faster than costs in the private sector.

Well, this is only true if you look at overall costs. But if you look at a more meaningful statistic, per capita health care costs, as this chart indicates—on a per enrollee basis, from 1976 to 1984, Medicare costs rose only slightly faster than private sector costs, 14.2 percent, versus 14 percent for the private sector.

But look what has happened from the years 1984 to 1993. In that timeframe, 1984 to 1993, about 10 years, the actual increase in private sector per enrollee costs was 9.8 percent. The increase in Medicare per enrollee costs was 7.7 percent.

These are numbers given to us from HCFA, and I think they make the point I was trying to make again this morning. On a per enrollee basis, there is no

doubt that Medicare costs over the last 10 years have not grown as quickly as they have in the private sector. But that, in part, is because we are continuing to do what I just said we do not want to do any more. We do not want to pass Medicare costs on to the private sector. We do not want to say, in the name of reform, all we are going to do is let the private sector take on greater responsibility for health costs.

We have to solve the problem of skyrocketing costs in the private sector, as well as those costs in Government. And that is exactly what I said this morning and what I hope we can continue to focus on as we consider the Medicare debate.

DAVID PRYOR: A TRUE PUBLIC SERVANT

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I could not help but listen to the distinguished Senator from Arkansas just a moment ago. All of us will greatly regret his absence beginning in the next Congress.

As we all know, last week, the distinguished Senator from Arkansas, Senator PRYOR, announced his plans to retire.

As the Senate Democratic leader, I feel like pleading with him not to go; to change his mind.

What we heard just this afternoon was another illustration of the value that he is to all of us, the unique individual that he truly is.

While he has been known around town as one of the President's closest friends on Capitol Hill, he is one of my most indispensable allies in the Senate and one of the closest friends that most of us have here in the Senate.

I have constantly drawn on his experience and wisdom for advice and guidance. And I have constantly found his calming influence amidst many a Senate tempest to be essential for my own personal well being as well as that of the U.S. Senate.

But while I recognize that he is a kind, southern gentleman of the first order, I also warn, do not let that calm demeanor fool you. In the Senate, there is not a more tenacious or aggressive fighter for the causes in which he believes than DAVID PRYOR.

Shortly after his election to the House of Representatives, Congressman PRYOR went undercover as an orderly to investigate conditions in nursing homes. When the House refused to conduct hearings on the plight of America's elderly, he rounded up volunteers from local colleges, rented a trailer, and conducted his own hearings in an abandoned gas station a few blocks away from the House Office Building. When the Speaker of the House refused to establish a Committee on Aging, then-Congressman PRYOR turned his trailer into the ad hoc House Trailer Committee on the Aging and continued its investigation.

The House finally established—to no surprise of anyone who watched all of this—a Select Committee on Aging.

When OPM claimed to have cleaned up its act and made Government jobs accessible to all applicants, Senator PRYOR sent his office interns down to that agency to apply for jobs.

He then called them to testify before his Subcommittee on Federal Services, where they informed the Senate about the continuing abuses in that most important Federal job recruiting agency. The list does not end.

He has taken on the IRS and authored and steered to passage the taxpayers' bill of rights to make our tax system fair and equitable to every citizen and every business.

He has taken on the Beltway Bandits, as he has conducted hearings and demanded more than 40 GAO reports on Government use of what he calls America's shadow government—private consultants.

He has taken on the pharmaceutical companies for the high prices they charge for prescription drugs.

He has stopped production of unsafe and unworkable chemical weapons, even though it meant jobs in his State of Arkansas.

He has conducted a longstanding crusade against what he considers time-consuming and time-wasting Senate procedures like filibusters, dilatory floor tactics, quorum calls, and extended rollcall votes.

But throughout his fights, Senator PRYOR has remained the gentleman that he is. His fights have always been constructive, not destructive, to the national interest. We need more, not less, positive-minded, cooperative, dedicated Senators like DAVID PRYOR.

While I am tempted to ask him to stay, as his friend, I fully understand and support his reason for leaving.

He has given a lifetime of public service. As a teenager, he worked in Washington, first as a page for Representative Oren Harris, and then in the post office in the House of Representatives.

He had successful careers as an editor-publisher and as an attorney, but he always came back to public service. In 1960, he was elected to the first of three terms in the Arkansas State Legislature.

In 1966, he was elected to the first of four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He served two terms as Governor of Arkansas.

Since 1979, he has served in the U.S. Senate. His work in this Chamber has consumed so much of his time and attention. In addition to his most important work as chairman of the Special Committee on Aging, he has been active on the Finance Committee, the Committee on Agriculture, the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, the Governmental Affairs Committee. And, yes, even the Ethics Committee.

In addition to all that, he has also served as Democratic Conference secretary.

Senator PRYOR now wants to enjoy life after politics—and there is much to

say for that kind of life. Senator Mitchell told me so just the other day.

Senator PRYOR's love for the Senate is exceeded only by his love for his family and his love for the beautiful State of Arkansas—both of which he will now be able to enjoy even more. I wish Senator PRYOR, Barbara, and his family the best in the years ahead and can only say that their gain is our loss.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is H.R. 956, and the Gorton amendment is the pending amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators allowed to speak for not to exceed 5 minutes each.

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

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, last month, the Medicare Board of Trustees issued its annual report. Four members of this committee are appointees of President Clinton—three of them currently serve in his Cabinet.

The trustees concluded that Medicare will begin to go broke next year, and will be completely bankrupt by the year 2002.

If this were to occur, no payments, by law, can be made by Medicare to pay for hospital care or for any other services paid for by the trust fund.

Thirty-three million seniors and four million disabled individuals depend on the Medicare Program every year.

It is for them, and for those who will follow, that we must commit to preserving, improving, and protecting the Medicare Program.

Tuesday, the Speaker of the House and I extended a verbal invitation to President Clinton to sit down with us and to begin working on a bipartisan plan to preserve, improve, and protect Medicare.

Judging from the President's actions in the past weeks, and from remarks he delivered earlier yesterday at the White House Conference on Aging, it appears that the President has once again chosen partisanship over leadership.

Instead of heeding the advice from his trustees, the President heeded the advice of his political pollsters, using yesterday's speech as an opportunity to engage in scare tactics and to mislead America's seniors.

Nevertheless, Speaker GINGRICH and I are willing to give the President the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he did not watch the news Tuesday evening or read the paper yesterday morning. Perhaps no one at the White House told him of our invitation.