

They come in, they fight fires. They watch fires after they have been put out, because one of the real dangers we have with fires is they appear to be out, but some of the worst forest fires we have had have been initiated after the fire has been put out, when people thought the fires died down.

Over 3,000 fires in the Great Basin alone burned almost 2 million acres this summer, and communities across the State of Nevada were witness to the dramas that played out in the hills and mountains above their homes.

Driving just 2 miles out of Reno on Highway 80 going to the west, you see the results of one fire they had there this summer. There in the Belli Ranch area, 7,000 acres were consumed by a fire that is suspected to have been caused by an arsonist. This cost the taxpayers at least \$2 million.

As you go past the Belli Ranch area and drive into the community, you are confronted by really a breathtaking scene.

You can see the black sweep of the fires that rolled up and down hill after hill. Then, almost magically, the black gives way to the beautiful green of the sage and other brush and grasses. This green is the buttress of only about 10 or 20 feet from the homes. The fire got within 10 to 20 feet of the homes. Saved and intact, the homes in the community are alive with the daily hustle and bustle of life, having come so close to having been consumed, as other homes in Nevada and the West were consumed this summer.

So people in Nevada and other parts of the West are grateful to the men and women who put their lives on the line to stop the fires before communities were swallowed up, just like the homes that were saved in the Belli Ranch fire.

This fire season is drawing to a close, Mr. President, and we in the West breathe a sigh of relief that we have been able to endure again the wrath of mother nature, or sometimes an act of malice, or carelessness by man.

We say thanks to the 22,000 firefighters that have been employed by the Federal Government during this fire season. To the pilots who fly into the face of these fires, the crews that jump out of these airplanes, out of these helicopters, the ground crews that struggle against the infernos that threaten communities, to the people of the National Interagency Fire Center who coordinate so well so much of the battle, I say thank you. And to my fellow Americans, Mr. President, I say, that is how Government works for you. I yield the floor.

Mr. INHOFE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to extend my 5 minutes to not to exceed 10 minutes.

Mr. GRAHAM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. I would like to add to that unanimous-consent request that

at the conclusion of the Senator's remarks, I be allowed to speak for 15 minutes for purposes of introduction of legislation.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. President. I will be very happy to accommodate the distinguished Senator from Florida with his request.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I happened to be presiding this morning when the very distinguished senior Senator from Massachusetts, Senator KENNEDY, made a number of comments. I know that he would not intentionally say anything that is not totally accurate in reflecting upon the positions and past performances of Senator Bob Dole, but I think inadvertently he misrepresented his stand on a number of issues. I would like to just briefly go over a couple of these.

First of all, it seems as if it has been over a year now since the demagoging of Medicare has taken place on this floor. I was very pleased a year ago today, I believe it was, to read an editorial in the Washington Post. And, Mr. President, I do not think anyone has ever accused the Washington Post of being a Republican publication.

So, finally, I feel that they looked at this and thought this is such a serious thing, that the Republicans had a program to save Medicare, and that by the admission of the board of trustees that was appointed by President Clinton, if we did not do something, Medicare would have gone broke by the year 2002, then that was updated a year later and they said it really would be 2001, and the Republicans had a program to control growth, not cut—there has never been any intention to cut benefits of Medicare to the American people—but have controlled growth, do away with waste and fraud and abuse and install some other things that would make it a viable program.

So, finally, the editorial boards around the country, that are normally not sensitive to Republican causes, rallied and said, we are going to have to do something about it.

I would like to read the last two sentences of an editorial found in the Washington Post a year ago, just about now. I believe it was a year ago today. It was called "Medagogues, Cont'd." This is the second one. A week before that they had one where they demonstrated very clearly and very persuasively that what the Republicans were trying to do was to save Medicare. The last two sentences are:

The Democrats have fabricated the Medicare-tax cut connection because it is useful politically. It allows them to attack and to duck responsibility, both at the same time. We think it's wrong.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks, the editorial entitled "Medagogues, Cont'd" from the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.
(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, the second attack on Senator Bob Dole by the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts had to do with the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, implying that Bob Dole was opposed and had been opposed to the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. I would suggest to you, Mr. President, that one thing that Bob Dole was opposed to was a single payer Government-run system which the President had advocated earlier in his administration. In other words, socializing medicine, taking about 12 percent of the economy of this country and putting it in the hands of Government because they can do it so much better than the private sector can do it.

That is what Senator Dole was opposed to. He was not opposed to some of the reforms that were found in the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. There were a couple of reforms that he wanted that ended up being in the bill. In fact, the President said that if the MSA's, medical savings accounts, were added to the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, at one point he said he would veto it. Many of those on the other side of the aisle said that if the MSA's are in, it would be vetoed.

Why were people concerned about the MSA's? They were concerned about them because those people who would want to have a socialized approach to health care delivery in this country know that once we have MSA's, we will never go back to that system.

What do MSA's do? They merely allow the choice of individuals so that if an individual wants to shop around for his health delivery services, and he can save money doing so, then he can benefit and have the rewards of what he has saved. I think that our health delivery in America is the only product or service known that actually has a built-in disincentive to save. And I am guilty like everyone else. You know, if I have my deductible and I go ahead and pay that, then I am inclined to go and get any kind of medical or health service that is out there because it no longer costs me any more money. That is human nature.

We finally got a modified medical savings account system put into the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill. I say "modified." It is only on a trial basis. It is going to prove itself. I heard estimates that we could actually reduce the total cost of health care in this country by as much as 50 percent just by having MSA's.

Mr. President, there is another thing we need to do that is not in this bill, and that is to have some kind of medical malpractice so we do not have such a high defensive cost. But anyway, the fact that MSA's are in there now—the President had said he would veto it if they were in there. He did not veto it. I am glad he did not veto it. But certainly it was never Bob Dole's intention to oppose the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill with the reforms in it that he felt

were in the best interests of the American people.

The third thing that Senator KENNEDY said about Senator Dole that I think was misleading, and it was a misrepresentation of his position, was in reference to tax cuts. It is true that Senator Dole, if elected President, wants to come to Congress, which I believe will still be controlled by the Republicans, and come with tax cuts.

He outlined five major tax cuts. I am very supportive of all five of those tax cuts. People ask, how are you going to pay for them? I think people forget about the fact that three decades in the last 100 years Presidents have decided to have tax cuts, and in all three decades it has dramatically increased the revenues.

It is ironic that Senator KENNEDY would be talking about tax cuts and all the damage that is being done when it was John Kennedy in 1962, when he was President of the United States, who said, and I quote:

In short, it is a paradoxical truth that tax rates are too high today and tax revenues are too low. And the soundest way to raise the revenues in the long run is to cut rates now. The purpose of cutting taxes now is not to incur a budget deficit, but to achieve the more prosperous, expanding economy which can bring a budget surplus.

That was what President Kennedy said in 1962. And that is exactly what happened during the 1960's with the massive tax reductions, and we were able to have revenue increases—revenue increases.

Look what happened. The marginal rates of our tax system in 1980 produced \$244 billion. In 1990, it almost doubled to \$466 billion, and that was during a 10-year period when we had the most massive cuts in our tax revenues.

So I think that it would be good to go back and look at history and see that this country, when it has been overtaxed in the past, that they reduced taxes and had the result of increasing revenues. Certainly, we are in an overtaxed posture right now.

I have often said there are three things that make this country non-productive, on a global basis, and non-competitive: One is our high tax rates; one is overregulation; the other is our tort laws. There is not time in this brief time to cover that.

I conclude, Mr. President, by saying when Senator KENNEDY assailed Senator Dole for talking about tax cuts, that he start realizing those individuals—those of us who want to have tax reductions—are the same ones that were trying to stop the 1993 tax increase. In 1993, when President Clinton had control of both the House and the Senate, he passed a tax increase that was characterized not by Republicans but by the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which was Senator MOYNIHAN, who said it was the largest single tax increase in the history of public finance in America or any place in the world.

I think, essentially, what we—what Senator Dole, and what the Republicans and the conservatives in this body and in the other body—want to do is merely undo the damage that was done by that massive tax increase and actually repeal the taxes that were increased in 1993. Essentially, that is what Senator Dole wants to do. I believe that is an accurate characterization of his program.

EXHIBIT 1

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 5, 1996]

MEDAGOGUES

We print today a letter from House minority leader Richard Gephardt, taking exception to an editorial that accused the Democrats of demagoguing on Medicare. The letter itself seems to us to be more of the same. It tells you just about everything the Democrats think about Medicare except how to cut the cost. That aspect of the subject it puts largely out of bounds, on grounds that Medicare is "an insurance program, not a welfare program," and "to slash the program to balance the budget" or presumably for any purpose other than to shore up the trust fund is "not just a threat to . . . seniors, families, hospitals" etc. but "a violation of a sacred trust."

That's bullfeathers, and Mr. Gephardt knows it. Congress has been sticking the budget knife to Medicare on a regular basis for years. Billions of dollars have been cut from the program; both parties have voted for the cutting. Most years the cuts have had nothing to do with the trust funds, which, despite all the rhetoric, both parties understand to be little more than accounting devices and possible warning lights as to program costs. Rather, the goal has been to reduce the deficit. It made sense to turn to Medicare because Medicare is a major part of the problem. It and Medicaid together are now a sixth of the budget and a fourth of all spending for other than interest and defense. If nothing is done those shares are going to rise, particularly as the baby-boomers begin to retire early in the next century.

There are only four choices, none of them pleasant. Congress can let the health care programs continue to drive up the deficit, or it can let them continue to crowd out other programs or it can pay for them with higher taxes. Or it can cut them back.

The Republicans want to cut Medicare. It is a gutsy step. This is not just a middle-class entitlement; the entire society looks to the program, and earlier in the year a lot of the smart money said the Republicans would never take it on. They have. Mr. Gephardt is right that a lot of their plan is still gauzy. It is not year clear how tough it will finally be; on alternate days you hear it criticized on grounds that it seeks to cut too much from the program and on grounds that it won't cut all it seeks. Maybe both will turn out to be true; we have no doubt the plan will turn out to have other flaws as well.

They have nonetheless—in our judgement—stepped up to the issue. They have taken a huge political risk just in calling for the cuts they have. What the Democrats have done in turn is confirm the risk. The Republicans are going to take away your Medicare. That's their only message. They have no plan. Mr. Gephardt says they can't offer one because the Republicans would simply pocket the money to finance their tax cut. It's the perfect defense; the Democrats can't do the right thing because the Republicans would then do the wrong one. It's absolutely the case that there ought not be a tax cut, and certainly not the indiscriminate cut the Republicans propose. But that has nothing to

do with Medicare. The Democrats have fabricated the Medicare-tax cut connection because it is useful politically. It allows them to attack and to duck responsibility, both at the same time. We think it's wrong.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ASHCROFT). The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

Mr. FEINGOLD. I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business, and following my remarks, that Senator GRAHAM of Florida be recognized for up to 15 minutes.

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

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD INDONESIA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. President. I rise today to make a few brief remarks about United States policy in Indonesia.

I am deeply concerned about some of the views being expressed by some members of the Clinton administration, and am particularly concerned because the administration has been quite culpable in the past with regard to aspects of our Indonesia policy. Despite a violent crackdown in Jakarta on July 27—not quite 2 months ago—this administration says it still intends to go forward with the sale of nine F-16 fighter jets to Indonesia.

Mr. President, the administration had fully intended to send up notification of this sale earlier this month. Fortunately, objections from myself and many of my colleagues convinced the administration that now was not the right time to announce officially the intention to sell fighter jets to Indonesia.

I am pleased that—for the time being—this sale cannot move forward, at least until Congress reconvenes in January.

But what concerns me today, Mr. President, are recent statements that suggest that the administration necessarily will attempt to notify Congress again in January—apparently without conditioning this move on any actions by the Indonesian authorities either in the past or in the coming months.

Given the history of human right abuses in Indonesia, as well as the events of July 27, I find this attitude difficult to accept.

Last week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on United States policy toward Indonesia. We heard from two very capable administration witnesses and four distinguished private panelists, including a political science professor from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

As one of the witnesses commented, this may have been the first hearing in many years to look at the full scope of American ties to Indonesia.

Mr. President, I recognize that Indonesia is an important country and a valuable ally. It is the largest country in Southeast Asia, and its population