

My view is that the staff can do some work in the next few days. I am hopeful that we can reach some kind of accord on that. But I do believe it is fairest to categorize the status of the discussions as anxiously awaiting a new offer from the President.

Perhaps as my last chart, I would put a composite in the RECORD that I choose to call how far we have moved.

I ask unanimous consent that the chart be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HOW FAR HAVE WE MOVED?

(In billions of dollars)

	Balanced budget act: vetoed	Latest GOP offer	Movement
Discretionary	409	349	-60
Medicare	226	154-168	-72
Medicaid	133	85	-48
Welfare	64	60	-4
Revenues	222	177	-45
Total deficit reduction	750	651	-99

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, in the first chart I have the Balanced Budget Act that was vetoed. In the second column, Mr. President, I have the latest Republican bipartisan offer. And in the last column I have the difference. How far have we come?

In discretionary, we have agreed over 7 years to go from \$409 billion to \$349 billion; \$60 billion additional discretionary.

Let me say right now that there is no longer any reason for the President of the United States to say we need a budget that meets the values of the American people. That does not. That takes care of education and takes care of environmental needs. It is obvious to everyone that that \$60 billion that we have agreed to add more than covers those two and any other priority discretionary programs the President has been alluding to. Point No. 1. We went \$60 billion their way.

Medicare—we went \$72 billion their way from \$226 billion to a range of \$154 to \$168 billion. Take the lower of the higher of them, and it is \$72 billion their way.

Medicaid—from \$133 billion in expected reform savings to \$85 billion; \$48 billion their way.

Welfare—from \$64 billion to \$60 billion; \$4 billion their way. And the reason that is not a bigger number and need not be is because the U.S. Senate passed a bill with 87 votes. We are basing this principally upon that welfare reform measure. That one may require a couple of billion dollars additional perhaps for child care, or more workfare aid.

Last, on revenues from \$122 billion to \$177 billion, a \$45 billion movement in their direction.

Frankly, I think anyone who will look at the two charts—How far have we moved?—and the comparison that I have alluded to of latest offers dated January 6, 1996, should have a pretty

good picture of Republican negotiators led by Speaker NEWT GINGRICH, Congressman DICK ARMEY, and majority leader BOB DOLE on our side. We have made significant movement yet holding to the basic principles which I believe are about fourfold.

First, a significant tax break for working income-producing Americans who have children.

A capital gains tax to stimulate the economy, No. 1.

A reform of welfare as we know it turning it to workfare with a time limit of 5 years imposed on those who use it rather than a lifetime welfare program.

Third, a serious and dedicated effort to make Medicare work without it having to grow at 10½ percent a year. Most medical costs are going down. Our programs of Medicare and Medicaid—because we run them as a country, as a Government—continue upward.

So our third principle is returning that program with some flexibility to the States and saving money, yet building in some kind of guarantee which we think the bipartisan Governors can accomplish.

Our last point is that we believe Medicare ought to be made solvent as to the hospital portion—not for 7 or 8 years but hopefully for longer than that. And in that we must have reforms which permit the seniors of America to stay where they are in the current program, or choose other programs which will save money and provide them a different kind of coverage, whether it is HMO's, managed care, new professional service organization delivery systems, or whether it is major medical coverage with savings accounts. We need to reform the system so that it complies with the needs and delivery systems of today.

Why should we shortchange seniors and keep them tied to one kind of policy of coverage when all Americans have many other choices?

That is our fourth.

And in doing that we believe we will have reshaped Government significantly. But ultimately, so there is no mistake about it, we believe we will have made a significant positive decision regarding interest rates in the future; jobs of the future, they will be better.

Instead of being locked in stagnation, there is a real chance that a balanced budget will turn loose the energy of the marketplace so jobs can increase, so that we are not the generation that says for the first time that the next generation lives more poorly than we did. We want them to have more opportunity. The balanced budget has a chance to do that.

Interest is on everything imaginable, from college tuition to your 1st home or your 2d home, your 1st car or your 10th car. The interest rate is a burden. If it comes down dramatically, everybody gains, businesses flourish because it does not cost them as much to do business.

So the big principles I have enumerated and the big effect is a better life for our children, getting rid of the legacy that we leave them now, which is, "you pay our bills," to a legacy of "we pay our bills. You save your money for what you need. You don't pay your hard-earned money for what you didn't choose to pay for by way of programs we give to the American people that we cannot afford."

Mr. President, I thank the Senate for this time. I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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.

SPECTRUM: A NATIONAL RESOURCE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, balancing the budget is all about sacrifice. To paraphrase Webster's Dictionary, that means surrendering things we prize for a higher purpose. Sacrifice is also about fairness. We call this share, and share alike.

It makes no sense to me then that Congress would create a giant corporate welfare program when we are reforming welfare for those trapped in a failed system. But, that is exactly what would happen if we pass telecommunications reform in its current form.

No doubt about it, balancing the budget the passing telecommunications reform will ensure America's place as the world's undisputed economic leader. They are both bills that look to the future, not to the past.

TELECOM GIVE-AWAY

With that said, however, I question whether telecommunications reform is worth the television broadcaster's asking price. The telecommunications conference report gives spectrum, or air waves, to television broadcasters that the Congressional Budget Office has valued at \$12.5 billion. Many say that figure is low, including the Federal Communications Commission which believes it is worth almost \$40 billion. That is \$40 billion with a "B." Other estimates run even higher, up to \$70 billion and beyond.

The bottom line is that spectrum is just as much a national resource as our Nation's forests. That means it belongs to every American equally. No more, no less.

If someone wants to use our resources, then we should be fairly compensated.

The broadcasters say they need this extra spectrum to preserve so-called free, over-the-air broadcast and are just borrowing the spectrum and will eventually give it back. The problem is the telecom conference report is vague and there is no guarantee that America

will ever get this valuable resource back.

Even if a guarantee can be secured, the report language still would not fairly compensate taxpayers for lending this resource to the broadcasters. From a technical standpoint, when the broadcasters transition from an analog to the more efficient digital signal, they can pump out several new TV stations. In short, broadcasters will trade their existing one station for as many as five stations. I am told the FCC believes the number can reach as high as 12 stations.

Interestingly enough, the broadcasters secured language in the telecom bill that would exempt them from paying fees for any of these new broadcast stations so long as they are supported by advertising dollars. Let me get this straight. America lends the broadcasters a national resource so they can increase their profit margins, but they do not think it's fair to pay rent.

Mr. President, at a time when we are asking all Americans to sacrifice and we are all trying to balance the budget—I just heard the chairman of the Budget Committee speak Senator DOMENICI; the American people want us to balance the budget—it does not make any sense to give away billions of dollars to corporate interests and succumb to their intense media lobbying effort.

COST TO CONSUMERS

This policy will also cost consumers billions of their own dollars. Federally mandating a transition to digital broadcast will ultimately render all television sets in the country obsolete. Consumers will be forced to either buy new television sets or convertor boxes to receive free, over-the-air broadcasts.

The impact will be dramatic. There are 222 million television sets in the country. The average digital television set's estimated cost is \$850, while the less expensive convertor box will cost about \$100. Replacing every television set with a digital one would cost \$189 billion. Using the less expensive convertor box would cost \$22 billion. No doubt about it, consumers won't be happy that Congress made this choice for them.

CONCLUSION

Mr. President, in closing, I wish to inform the Senate that while I want to work with those who put together, I think, a good telecommunications bill in many respects, I know there are some Members in the House who have some reservations about parts of it and there are some Members in the Senate who have reservations about parts of it. I do think we should resolve this spectrum issue before the bill is considered.

It is going to be very difficult, when we are looking at Medicaid, looking at Medicare, looking at farm programs, looking at welfare, all trying to save money here and money there, that we would at the same time say, oh, that is OK because these are big media inter-

ests, we will give it away, whether there is \$12.5 or \$40 billion, whatever it may be.

The telecommunications conference committee is still open, so we still have the opportunity to appropriately address this spectrum issue. I hope that we will. I would like to see it resolved before we bring this bill up. I know the chairman, Senator PRESSLER, has done an outstanding job. It is a very difficult task. The Presiding Officer is a member of that committee. It is a very important bill, probably the most important bill we will consider this year in 1996. But let us, for the sake of the taxpayers and for the sake of the American consumers, fix this one corporate welfare provision before we ask Members to vote on it.

Mr. President, the Democratic leader will be here in a moment or two. I will just go ahead and do these unanimous-consent requests.

PUBLIC HOUSING REFORM AND EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1995

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of calendar 295, S. 1260.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1260) to reform and consolidate the public and assisted housing programs of the United States, and to redirect primary responsibility for these programs from the Federal Government to States and localities, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "Public Housing Reform and Empowerment Act of 1995".

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. Effective date.
- Sec. 5. Proposed regulations; technical recommendations.
- Sec. 6. Elimination of obsolete documents.
- Sec. 7. Annual reports.

TITLE I—PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

- Sec. 101. Declaration of policy.
- Sec. 102. Membership on board of directors.
- Sec. 103. Authority of public housing agencies.
- Sec. 104. Definitions.
- Sec. 105. Contributions for lower income housing projects.
- Sec. 106. Public housing agency plan.
- Sec. 107. Contract provisions and requirements.
- Sec. 108. Expansion of powers.
- Sec. 109. Public housing designated for the elderly and the disabled.
- Sec. 110. Public housing capital and operating funds.

- Sec. 111. Labor standards.
- Sec. 112. Repeal of energy conservation; consortia and joint ventures.
- Sec. 113. Repeal of modernization fund.
- Sec. 114. Eligibility for public and assisted housing.
- Sec. 115. Demolition and disposition of public housing.
- Sec. 116. Repeal of family investment centers; voucher system for public housing.
- Sec. 117. Repeal of family self-sufficiency; homeownership opportunities.
- Sec. 118. Revitalizing severely distressed public housing.
- Sec. 119. Mixed-income and mixed-ownership projects.
- Sec. 120. Conversion of distressed public housing to tenant-based assistance.
- Sec. 121. Public housing mortgages and security interests.
- Sec. 122. Linking services to public housing residents.
- Sec. 123. Applicability to Indian housing.
- TITLE II—SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE
- Sec. 201. Merger of the certificate and voucher programs.
- Sec. 202. Repeal of Federal preferences.
- Sec. 203. Portability.
- Sec. 204. Leasing to voucher holders.
- Sec. 205. Homeownership option.
- Sec. 206. Technical and conforming amendments.
- Sec. 207. Implementation.
- Sec. 208. Effective date.

TITLE III—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 301. Public housing flexibility in the CHAS.

- Sec. 302. Repeal of certain provisions.
- Sec. 303. Determination of income limits.
- Sec. 304. Demolition of public housing.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

- (a) *FINDINGS.*—The Congress finds that—
 - (1) there exists throughout the Nation a need for decent, safe, and affordable housing;
 - (2) the inventory of public housing units owned and operated by public housing agencies, an asset in which the Federal Government has invested approximately \$90,000,000,000, has traditionally provided rental housing that is affordable to low-income persons;
 - (3) despite serving this critical function, the public housing system is plagued by a series of problems, including the concentration of very poor people in very poor neighborhoods and disincentives for economic self-sufficiency;
 - (4) the Federal method of overseeing every aspect of public housing by detailed and complex statutes and regulations aggravates the problem and places excessive administrative burdens on public housing agencies;
 - (5) the interests of low-income persons, and the public interest, will best be served by a reformed public housing program that—
 - (A) consolidates many public housing programs into programs for the operation and capital needs of public housing;
 - (B) streamlines program requirements;
 - (C) vests in public housing agencies that perform well the maximum feasible authority, discretion, and control with appropriate accountability to both public housing tenants and localities; and
 - (D) rewards employment and economic self-sufficiency of public housing tenants;
 - (6) voucher and certificate programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 are successful for approximately 80 percent of applicants, and a consolidation of the voucher and certificate programs into a single, market-driven program will assist in making section 8 tenant-based assistance more successful in assisting low-income families in obtaining affordable housing and will increase housing choice for low-income families; and
 - (7) the needs of Indian families residing on Indian reservations and other Indian areas will