

But, more importantly, even before last year was out, we were finding out that Medicare was coming up short of expectations of what the income and outgo of it was, to a point of where it was going to be broke before the year 2002.

Senator PETE DOMENICI says that it is going to be May of the year 2001, just 6 years from now. Roland King, former chief actuary of the Health Care Financing Administration, says that it will run out in late 2000—that is 4 years from now—or early 2001, 5 years from now. There is a Richard S. Foster, who succeeded Mr. King as chief actuary, who said that the top officials at the Department of Health and Human Services would not give him permission to talk about this issue. What I am referring to here, Mr. President, is the New York Times article of today that is headlined "New Medicare Trust Fund Data Shows Unusually Large Shortfalls." The subheadline is: "Program is Solvent, But Gap Shows Weakening."

What has happened in the 12 months since the last report? Instead of Medicare starting to spend out more than the income in 1996, it actually started to happen in 1995, and it is happening at a much faster rate than we anticipated. So, Medicare will be broke not in 7 years, not in 6 years, but maybe in 5 years.

What is kind of special about this article is this. Normally this report would be out in April every year by the trustees. It is not out yet, I imagine because it is an election year. This is bad news for this administration, which was told 12 months ago that Medicare was going to be bankrupt in the year 2002, and they vetoed the only bill presented to extend the life of it. Not only that, but the situation is worse than the report said it was 12 months ago.

It says here that Chris Jennings, a special assistant to President Clinton for health policy, said today that the new numbers were not surprising: "They indicate the need to move forward to balance the budget and enact some changes in Medicare that will strengthen the trust fund. Republicans and Democrats should work together to address the problem."

Get that—"Republicans and Democrats should work together to address the problem." Immediately after Labor Day last year, constantly Senator DOLE and Speaker GINGRICH were inviting the White House to sit down and reach some sort of an agreement with us, a long time before we ever put this together and finally passed it. But, no, they did not want to sit down and talk about it. Yet, we are being admonished by the White House that "Republicans and Democrats should work together to address the problem."

A letter to Congress last week from Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin suggested that Congress and the administration resume discussions to reach an agreement on Medicare and

the budget. Well, we do not have that report. They say it might come out in June or July.

Do you know what they are blaming for the delay? The fact that we had snow in January. We have snow every January in the Midwest, and it does not slow down the deadlines that we have to get reports out. But the longer this report can languish in the bureaucracy downtown, as long as some faceless bureaucrat can keep it under control, then it is less out there for public consideration and for the shots that it is going to take because of that.

Mr. President, I hope that the administration will forget the fact that we had snow in January, because what is news about that? This report that is supposed to be issued in April, that was issued in April of last year, would be issued, and I will bet we will see the same Presidential appointees to the trustees tell us that Congress should do something about it. Well, if you ever wonder as part of the cynical public about Washington, DC whether Congress will ever balance the budget, it is right here in these 1,800 pages. We passed that last year. The President vetoed it. It saved Medicare from bankruptcy. We would not have to be dealing with this issue. Instead of Senator DOMENICI saying that we will run out of money in May of the year 2001, we would be saving that deadline for another decade down the road.

I hope, Mr. President, that the President of the United States will come forth with his report. The longer you wait to make public bad news, the worse it is for the people that are giving the bad news.

It would seem to me that the right thing to do is to simply state what the facts are, and the fact is that the situation with Medicare is much worse. It could be bankrupt in 5 more years—at the most, 6 years—and the situation is deteriorating considerably because this administration vetoed the bill that we passed last year to save Medicare.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FAIRCLOTH). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

OUR PRESIDENT AND EARTH DAY

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I thank the Chair very much for recognizing me, and I will not belabor this issue very long. I know the Senate is leaving early this afternoon, and I do not want to delay the departure of our staff members who have been so loyal in helping us this afternoon and today. It has been an interesting day in the U.S. Senate.

I just was listening to one of the monitors and watching one of the mon-

itors. I happened to note my very, very good friend from Iowa, the Honorable Senator CHARLES GRASSLEY, a wonderful long-time friend of mine, someone I have worked with very closely on the issues of oversight and overstepping of the Internal Revenue Service, of defense spending, which we thought at the time had gotten out of hand and was very unfair. We worked on several issues over these years together. I look forward to the remainder of my term in working with him further on various matters that affect our respective States and certainly our great country.

But I was a little taken aback when my friend from Iowa got up and started talking about our President, Earth Day, and what happened yesterday nearby, just a few miles away, I think, on the upper reaches of the Potomac River. My friend from Iowa sort of took our President to task and the Vice President to task I guess for even appearing at an Earth Day event. I do not know what his concern was. But if in fact the President did mention that the other political party's proposals on some of our environmental concerns were in fact lacking, then, Mr. President, I am going to have to disagree with my friend from Iowa, and I am going to have to, yes, agree with our President. For example, legislation recently circulated to rewrite the Clean Air Act by our good friends on the other side of the aisle would repeal the toxic air pollution standards and would absolutely cripple the enforcement of the Clean Air Act.

I do not think that is a piece of legislation we can go to future generations with and say we were very proud of ourselves when we attempted to cripple the enforcement of the Clean Air Act.

I think our President was right when he said that there is a difference between the two political parties and the way that they look at the environment and legislation that would perhaps undo all of the progress that has been made in cleaning up the air we breathe under the Clean Air Act over the last 25 years.

Some 25 years ago, when I first came to the House of Representatives as a young Member, as a new Member of that great body, I remember during that time I had three small sons, and from time to time on a Sunday afternoon or Saturday afternoon, perhaps, we would get a fishing pole or swimming suit and we would go down to the banks of the Potomac River, and I will never forget—and this was not long ago—there were signs up and down the banks of the Potomac River: no swimming allowed; do not eat any fish, the fish will be contaminated if caught in this river.

Mr. President, in this quarter of a century what we have done as a body, Republicans and Democrats alike, has not only helped to clean up that river, but we are helping today to clean up our air, and we cannot make a retreat, especially in a political year when it might have a short-term appeal to

some local interests, maybe some local business interests that want to compromise and that want to sacrifice the environment we have to pass on to future generations.

I think the President was right when he implied yesterday that some of the legislation as proposed—we call them riders—to the VA appropriations bill would delay the issuance of toxic standards, air standards, that is, and would allow for the exemption of industries, exempt industries—just say we are sorry; we are going to apply this to some industries, but the rest of you are going to get off; you do not have to comply with the law; you do not have to obey the law; there is no law that impacts you.

As we speak today, Fort Smith and Van Buren, AR, Sebastian and Crawford Counties in Arkansas, 48 hours ago were hit with massive tornadoes, two dead, hundreds of homes damaged. At this very moment, as we stand in the Senate Chamber and talk about clean air and clean water, because of necessity we are dumping raw sewage into the Arkansas River. We have no other option. Senator BUMPERS and I will be calling in the morning Carol Browner of the EPA to say that we have an emergency; we have to do something.

We have emergencies all over this country not caused by a recent natural disaster but emergencies that are existing today where we are polluting our streams and our air and where we have to do something about it. This generation cannot back away. Our President yesterday was talking sincerely and earnestly about what we can do together as political parties.

The Republicans, by the way, at that Earth Day event yesterday, several Republican Representatives from Congress were agreeing with our President. I hope that we can make this a non-political issue and talk about the facts, those facts being we do have a difference of opinion, but we do need to join together and do what is right for the environment.

Budget cuts—and I know the Presiding Officer realizes this—and the Government shutdowns, what have they done? What have they accomplished? Have they saved any money? Probably not much. What have they really done? They have delayed the EPA's issuance of new standards for toxic industrial air pollutants—new standards for toxic industrial air pollutants. Those standards are now on hold. Why? Because of Government shutdowns and budget cuts.

The delay in the issuance of air toxic standards has resulted in the continued release of harmful chemicals—mercury, chromium, formaldehyde, and lead—into our air. More than 45 million people, Mr. President—the distinguished occupant of the chair realizes this—in our country still live in areas with unhealthy levels of ground level ozone or smog. I did not know this until just lately, but the EPA reports

that the United States refineries alone, and I quote, "emit more than 78,000 tons per year of established hazardous air pollutants, or 9 tons of toxics emitted into the air every hour nationwide."

How can we repeal some of these rules? How can we say that some companies and some industries are exempt and do not need to comply with making progress in eliminating this unclean air and unclean water.

My good friend from Iowa also talked about another issue. I am going to come back to this issue of the environment in a moment. I was hoping that my friend from Iowa was going to be here because he made reference to not only the President of the United States, but he made reference to another gentleman, a gentleman who is very close to my heart. His name is Chris Jennings. He says, who is this man, Chris Jennings? He said that this Chris Jennings, whoever he is, said, and then he quoted something that Chris Jennings had said.

First, Chris Jennings for many years worked for the Senate Special Committee on Aging, probably one of the finest staff people who ever worked for that particular committee or has ever worked in the Senate, and I would daresay that most of the Members on this side of the aisle at one time or the other have worked closely with this so-called man named Chris Jennings. I would say that Members on the other side of the aisle have worked closely with Chris Jennings. If I could only jog the memory of my friend from Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY, who has been for years a loyal member of the Special Committee on Aging, I am sure that Mr. Jennings has not only worked for Senator GRASSLEY in many capacities, has served him in many capacities, but also I am sure that should Mr. GRASSLEY see Mr. Jennings and reacquaint himself with him, he would know him and would respect him, as all of us do in the Senate.

Chris Jennings is a remarkable individual, a splendid and dedicated servant. But, somehow or another, I did not quite appreciate the tone of my friend from Iowa. I know he did not mean in any way to be disparaging of our friend, Mr. Jennings, I am sure, today. I hope our friend, Senator GRASSLEY, will realize the dedication of this fine former member of our Senate Special Committee on Aging staff. I am sure he knows his great qualifications and his great commitment.

Our friend from Iowa was talking, of course, about the Medicare funding. We think it is very important to point this out. Absolutely. We know what the dollars and cents are. I do not think we are arguing with those figures. But I think we also need to point out there remains today over \$120 billion in the trust fund for Medicare. There is no imminent danger that claims are not going to be paid—absolutely none. There is no imminent danger that these claims are not going to be paid.

The updated information should not be used to scare the 37 million elderly citizens in this country or people with disabilities. They should not be used for partisan political purposes. The trust fund will pay out the claims. I repeat, the trust fund will pay out the claims, at least through the turn of this century, no matter what, and much longer if the Congress would only enact the President's balanced budget proposal.

We think it is very, very important to lay on the table the facts, as I have stated. We think there is equal importance not to intentionally scare the seniors of this country and to lead them to believe, or to imply, that their checks may not be paid and their claims will go unnoticed.

We think, too, the information validates the President's position on Medicare that he has maintained during his Presidency. The latest information simply provides additional validation for the President's position that we should move forward and balance the budget to strengthen the trust fund. In fact, I have not talked to the President about this matter in a long time, but I would imagine, when the President read the Post or the New York Times or wherever this appeared this morning, about the trust fund, I imagine that the President said, "Those are not very pretty figures, but we think that those figures will put people to thinking and start people to believing that we have to do something about our budget."

The President has offered a proposal that achieves \$124 billion in Medicare savings that would extend the life of the trust fund by at least 10 years from now. This proposal builds on the President's successes in strengthening the Medicare trust fund.

Let me say this, and I hope I will not be accused of being too partisan. In 1993, let me remind my good friend from Iowa and the distinguished Members on the other side of the aisle that in 1993, without one Republican vote, not one, the President signed into law Medicare savings and other financing charges that extended the life of the trust fund from 2 to 3 years. That was a major accomplishment.

So, as we enter now the real meat, I guess you would say, approaching a Presidential election, I think we should inform the citizenry of this wonderful country of ours that from time to time there will be skirmishes in this body because of necessity, because of beliefs, because of different ideologies. We will see those debates.

I never thought this particular Chamber should become a political convention hall. I hope it does not. But I do think it can become the proper forum for us to discharge our obligations and certainly to debate the issues of our time and our generation.

I would like to say I am sorry my friend from Iowa was not here. I do not mean in any way to be disparaging of him or question his sincerity. I just

wanted to sort of set the record straight, after I heard my good friend's remarks.

I hope in the coming days, again, we will have ample opportunity to lay these issues out on the table, out in the public, let the sunshine shine among them, and let us, at that time, bring to the people what we consider important questions of today.

Mr. President, I see no Senator seeking recognition. Therefore, I yield the floor, Mr. President, and 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. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

BOSNIA, SERBIA, AND THE WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL IN THE HAGUE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to comment briefly on a trip which I made recently, earlier this month to The Hague, Serbia, and Bosnia for the purpose of taking a look at the situation with our military forces in Bosnia and taking a look at what is happening at The Hague with the War Crimes Tribunal. I would like to highlight a few of my observations because there are a few moments available on the Senate floor this afternoon.

In visiting Tuzla on April 4, which followed the visit to Serbia on April 3 and the visit to The Hague on April 2, before returning to Paris en route back to the United States, in Tuzla, I saw the presence of the U.S. Army of which people of the United States can be very, very proud.

The United States moved in as part of the NATO force, the IFOR force, short for the Implementation Force, with an overwhelming strength to stop the fighting and preserve the peace. It is a truly remarkable scene to see an army moved halfway around the world with the power and force of the United States, really the one remaining superpower in the world.

As I have had the opportunity to travel abroad, to see the great respect and admiration in which the United States is held, it is something that we ought to focus on in this country. A mark of our power is our military force. When we spend as much as we do on the defense budget, some \$243 billion this year, we see it in operations; we have gone in there with overwhelming force. All of the participants to the conflict have stopped fighting and are observing the rules and regulations set up by IFOR, the NATO forces and U.S. forces.

We had the opportunity to talk to many in the military there on a tour provided by General Cherrie. We visited a military installation on Mount Viz, 450 meters through solid mud, virtually straight up, traveling on a

tracked military vehicle in order to climb an incline 60 degrees on terrain which did not seem possible to move up. But the mechanism of the military force carried us to the top where we had a briefing on the military operation where we were briefed by military personnel and where I visited with quite a number of military personnel from Pennsylvania, my State, as well as from other States. They had very high morale and were glad to see a visitor from the United States. We had an excellent lunch prepared in the field.

I talked to a young lieutenant colonel who was in command of the operation. The lieutenant colonel told us about taking over the mount from a Serbian major who talked about the killing, the military casualty of his brother-in-law in the fighting which had occurred prior to the time the United States and NATO forces took over. As a matter of fact, in a professional way, with no animus, at least by all surface indications, the Bosnian Serb major said to the U.S. colonel, "Take care of my mountain. I intend to take it back." It was sort of foreboding as to what may occur after the United States and the NATO forces depart the premises.

But as of the moment, there is peace there. I had heard, and was glad to have repeated, that we have had only two casualties. Of course, two is too many, but the casualties occurred, one from a motor vehicle accident and the other when someone was dismantling a landmine contrary to regulations.

When we arrived in Tuzla, we heard about the visit just the day before of Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown. General Cherrie, who met us on our arrival there, midmorning of April 4, told us that Secretary Brown had been there the day before, arriving at about 6:20 in the morning and departing shortly before 2 p.m. when the tragic accident occurred.

We had seen Secretary Brown the night before in Paris at a reception at the residence of Ambassador Pamela Harriman. We renewed our longstanding friendship, talked about possibly meeting in either Sarajevo or in Zagreb. Of course, that was not to be.

When I flew out of Paris on the morning of April 3 and went to Belgrade, we had planned to fly to Sarajevo. Because of the weather conditions, the very high winds, our plane was grounded. We did not undertake the flight. I think those may have been the same weather conditions which caused or related to the fatality involving Secretary BROWN, whose presence will be sorely missed, as will the presence of all those 34 people who were on board with him on that ill-fated flight.

We had an opportunity to talk to the people in Bosnia about the efforts to gather evidence, which is very important for the War Crimes Tribunal. They have drawn a fine line. That is, IFOR will protect the personnel of the War Crimes Tribunal, but they will not pro-

tect the evidence itself. But the War Crimes Tribunal personnel are engaged there and are taking a look at a lot of the grave sites, gathering evidence for prosecutions. So long as the personnel from the war crimes prosecution team are there gathering evidence, then military personnel will protect the prosecution team.

We discussed with the military personnel, General Cherrie, the issue about the potential of taking into custody the Bosnian Serb President Karadzic and General Mladic. The word was that individuals, such as those two people, under indictment would be taken into custody if the NATO and U.S. forces came upon them, but they would not be sought out or hunted.

While we were there at the headquarters at Tuzla, we saw posters, candidly not very good identifying pictures, but, as to the major people under indictment including Bosnian Serb President Karadzic and General Mladic.

We heard about an incident where IFOR forces had come upon General Mladic, but he was surrounded by many of his own military personnel, and to attempt on that occasion to take him into custody would have precipitated a battle. Since the IFOR forces were outnumbered, they did not seek to take him into custody at that time.

But I think it is very important that, ultimately, President Karadzic and General Mladic be taken into custody so they can be prosecuted at the War Crimes Tribunal. I believe prosecutions at the War Crimes Tribunal are a very, very important aspect of what the United States and NATO are doing there. That may be the event of the decade or perhaps the event of the century if international legal precedence can be established that genocide and the atrocities will not be tolerated and they will in fact be prosecuted by an international tribunal.

The establishment of the rule of law as an outgrowth of what has happened in Bosnia would be an enormous step forward in international law, and is something which has to be pursued.

I had traveled to the Hague on January 4th this year and talked to the prosecution team at that time. I found that there were a number of very serious problems and I undertook to write to the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Director of the FBI, the Director of the CIA, and the Secretary of Defense. Their letter replies are attached and I ask that they be printed at the conclusion of my remarks along with the full text of my statement.

A great deal has been done. The prosecution team was much more encouraged when I met with them on April 2; I was impressed with their approach back on January 4. I am pleased to say that CIA Director John Deutch has been very cooperative in working hard to make information available which is necessary to obtain the convictions of those under indictment at the War Crimes Tribunal.