

President who vetoed the Balanced Budget Act of 1995.

I wanted to hold that up because maybe people do not really believe we passed a comprehensive piece of legislation to balance the budget, and maybe the farmers do not know that we passed provisions in here for the Freedom-To-Farm Act so that we would be able to transition farm programs from the Government regulated and dominated environment of the last 50 years to the free trade environment and the export environment that we are going to have under GATT into the next century.

My good friend from North Dakota spoke eloquently about his point of view on the farm bill, and he and I can speak in a friendly fashion about agriculture. We do that all the time. It may not appear on the floor of the Senate that we do that, but we can sit down and discuss farm legislation.

I do not take the floor in opposition to what he said but just to point out to some people, to the public at large, not just to the farmers of America, what sometimes drives legislation in the Congress.

I wish to read from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a letter that the Senate minority leader, Mr. DASCHLE, put in during his debate last week. This letter that he inserted lists a lot of organizations that were against the compromise that was worked out.

By the way, we had a compromise worked out last week with what we thought were enough Democrats so we would get enough votes to have cloture and move forward. It happens that we did not get enough Democrat votes to do that. But anyway, quoting from a paragraph which is part of Senator DASCHLE's speech, he says:

I am very pleased by a letter that we received just this morning from a large number of very reputable organizations including the National Audubon Society, the Environmental Working Group, Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, National Resource Defense Council, the National Rural Housing Coalition, who are saying that even with the Leahy improvements—

Those were the amendments that we had accepted last week.

they are strongly in opposition to passing the so-called freedom to farm.

I would like to read a list of organizations in a letter I did not read last week who are in support of what we are doing, because I think there is an extreme contrast here. A lot of the organizations that the Senator from South Dakota listed are all very reputable organizations. There is nothing I wish to say that detracts from the good work they do in Washington, DC, for the interests they have. But the question I wish to raise as I read a list of organizations supporting what we are trying to do today and what we were trying to do last week, is the extent to which the groups driving the debate on the other side are not solely interested just in agriculture but are having more domi-

nance in the debate than farm organizations like this that support what we are trying to do: the American Farm Bureau, the Cotton Council, the American Cotton Shippers, National Feed and Grain Association, National Grain Sorghum Association, United Egg Producers, the National Barley Growers, National Cattlemen's, National Corn Growers, the Fertilizer Institute, the National Potato Council, the National Pork Producers, National Turkey Federation, the National Broilers Council, the North American Export Grain Association, and the United Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Association. I could name their affiliates in the State of Iowa that are supporting this legislation, and I would imagine most of the State affiliates are supporting it.

So it is probably unfair to say that what groups want in this town drive what individual Members want. But I think there is a stark contrast between the organizations that were listed by Senator DASCHLE and those I just listed. Those listed by Senator DASCHLE mostly lean toward the environmental point of view on agriculture. Although it is legitimate to have environmental groups with an interest in what agricultural legislation is going to be, we ought to ask whether or not these groups ought to have primary consideration in opposition to the changes in the farm program. These changes will direct agricultural policy toward the next century as opposed to keeping the agriculture policy of this century and the last 50 years, which in the new environment we are currently in, is obviously outdated. We ought to be looking to these organizations I just read that support what we are trying to do because they are forward looking, to make sure we are producing for the future and the global trade environment of the future.

I hope that we do spend our time in consideration of what we ought to have for a farm program that is free of Government regulation to the greatest extent possible, even having a safety net, but have that safety net be a cooperative effort between the private sector and the public sector that can guarantee income as well as production and have income support for agriculture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent to have 5 more minutes.

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

SAVING MEDICARE FROM BANKRUPTCY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, every once in a while, when we take defeat after defeat because of a Presidential veto—and I think the President has vetoed half of the appropriations bills that we have passed this year. Oddly enough, most Presidents veto appropriations bills because the Congress is wasting money. This is the first President I know who is vetoing appro-

priations bills because we are not spending enough money. And yet he is talking to the Governors' association this morning about how he is going to balance the budget, and he vetoes the appropriations bills that are balancing the budget. But anyway, once in a while we get an opportunity to say we were right. In this particular case, this Balanced Budget Act of 1995 was right because one of the major provisions of this Balanced Budget Act of 1995, which we would have had to do unrelated to balancing the budget or even unrelated to tax decreases, was to save Medicare from bankruptcy. This document not only saved Medicare from bankruptcy, it strengthened Medicare, and it also gave for the first time the elderly people of America, the senior citizens of America, the retired people of America, those who rely upon Medicare as their primary health insurance group, an opportunity to have something different than just a Government-run program.

They could have had medical savings accounts. They could have had continued a union or association plan where they last worked. They could have bought into managed care, and they would be able to go from traditional Medicare to a medical savings account and back next year if they wanted to. They could go from traditional Medicare to a managed care plan and try that for a year and go back and not cost them anything, but have that option through a voucher of having Medicare pay for whatever their option is.

It is the same thing that we have in the Congress. Every December we have what is called—I do not remember the terminology—but we have a season that we can change from one program to another. We are giving them the same thing Congress has, the same thing Federal civil servants have.

Once again, the President vetoed this in early December 1995. So our efforts to save, our efforts to strengthen and our efforts to give seniors choice for the first time went down the drain.

We did it because the trustees in April said Medicare was going to be busted, bankrupt in the year 2002, 7 years from now. That is why we did what we did in this. I do not know why the President vetoed it. Does he want it to go bankrupt, or does he want a political issue? I do not know why, but he did.

Yesterday, we had in the New York Times something that should have probably been released to the public back in October. Why it was not until now I do not know. I hope there was no coverup on the part of the administration to keep it from being published.

We have a report from HCFA's chief actuary that Medicare lost money in 1995 for the first time in 23 years. It is a 29-year-old program. So early on, it had another period of 1 year when it spent more than it took in.

But now for the first time in 24 years, Medicare is spending out more than it is bringing in in taxes, which emphasizes what the trustees said in April of

last year. They pleaded with Congress. They pleaded with the Republican Congress: "Take action right now because it is going to be easier to do it now than it will be in the year 2001 or 2002 when it is just about ready to go under." This had not been anticipated to occur until 1997.

What we learn now through the newspapers, the chief actuary giving this report last year, is the Medicare hospital trust fund lost \$35.7 million. In other words, it took in that much less than we had anticipated.

He was not sure when part A would be depleted, but he did say that it could be earlier than 2002.

In any case, according to the actuary, this recent finding does not help the trust fund. It gives more insecurity to the people on Social Security and it, of course, emphasizes what we were trying to say when we passed this Balanced Budget Act of 1995 which saved Medicare.

So I hope that the President comes around to a point of view of cooperating with the Congress to a greater extent than he has on the saving of Medicare, because this is one time the Republican Congress is way ahead of the White House.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Oregon.

FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, the Senate was compelled to pass H.R. 2880, the Balanced Budget and Downpayment Act, to avert another Governmental shutdown. As I observed on the day of consideration, we did so under great duress, being forced to set aside our right and duty to amend the legislation.

Of particular concern to me remains the harsh treatment given to the Agency for International Development's family planning program. Though it was known at the time that the formulation of this account was nearly calamitous, closer examination of the provision has revealed that the situation is far worse than had been imagined at that time.

The provisions that passed the Senate and the House halts family planning assistance programs until July 1 of this year. Following July 1, funding may be provided at 65 percent of the fiscal year 1995 level, apportioned on a monthly basis for 15 months.

What this means is that only 14 percent of what was available for obligation in fiscal year 1995 for family planning will be available for obligation this entire fiscal year—14 percent.

None of us would normally tolerate a cut of this magnitude, made without the benefit of any debate, particularly on a program which enjoys such strong bipartisan support. And yet we did it.

Stated differently, and more important, what we did is bar access to family planning services to approximately 17 million couples, most of them living in unimaginable poverty. We opened the door to the probability of at least 14 million unintended pregnancies every year, tens of thousands of deaths among women and nearly a million deaths among infants and young children annually. Indeed, we embrace the probability of at least 4 million more abortions that could have been averted if access to voluntary family planning services had been maintained. This is what we did.

These numbers, which are calculated through statistics from organizations like UNICEF and the World Health Organization are as disturbing as they are astounding, particularly to those of us who are faithfully and assertively pro-life. To doubt these numbers may bring temporary relief to people of conscience, but doubters should consider the experience of families in the former Soviet Union where family planning services have been unavailable for decades.

The abortion rate in Russia spans from a conservative estimate of 4 abortions per woman to a shocking high of 12 abortions for some women over their reproductive years. Since there have been virtually no, and I suggest that you underscore when you are listening as well as when I speak, no planning services available in Russia, abortion has become the chief method of birth control.

The framers of the family planning language in H.R. 2880 ensured, perhaps unintentionally, that the gruesome experience of Russian women and families will be replicated throughout the world starting now.

In each of the last two foreign operations appropriations bills, I have made sure that adequate money has been devoted to starting family planning programs in Russia. Similar programs in Hungary have shown a 60-percent reduction in the abortion rate there, 8 years after the introduction of family planning. We had hoped for such success in Russia, but now the future is uncertain.

The family planning language in H.R. 2880 is not prolife, it is not prowoman, it is not prochild, it is not prohealth, and it is not profamily planning. It inflicts the harm of a profound misconception on very poor families overseas who only ask for help in spacing their children through contraception, not abortion.

Some of our colleagues appear unaware that the prohibition on funding abortions with U.S. foreign aid money has been in place since 1973. AID's excellent family planning program, widely recognized as the most efficiently run in the world, has taken a strict and

conservative interpretation of this prohibition, and seeks instead to prevent abortions by offering alternatives. Demand has always exceeded supply, and unmet needs continue to grow.

We urgently need to correct the mistake we made in H.R. 2880. We need to restore, with rhetoric and with resources, support to AID's family planning program. For those of us who take a prolife position, this is the most effective way to reiterate our profound opposition to the practice of abortion. All the antiabortion speech this Chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of unintended pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning.

I intend to do what I can to rectify this situation as soon as possible, and urge my colleagues to join in this effort.

AGRICULTURAL MARKET TRANSITION ACT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as the Nation's farmers look ahead to the new planting season, I rise today in support of moving forward on much-needed farm bill legislation.

Over the past year, I have met with farmers, businesses, bankers, and community leaders across Minnesota. They have told me of the urgent need to develop a farm bill which will show them the direction farm policy will move over the next couple of years.

Clearly, our farmers and agribusinesses deserve a reasonable and responsible roadmap of the Nation's long-term agricultural policy. If Washington continues to delay action, decisions about planting, equipment purchases, fertilizer and seed sales, and credit hang in the balance. And as a result, our agricultural economy will suffer.

This current predicament is a perfect example of how Government interference in the area of agriculture has taken its toll on the productivity of our farmers, agribusinesses, and the other sectors of our economy which depend on them.

By expanding the role of Government so deeply into the business of farming, Washington has taken much of the decisionmaking authority away from the real experts—those who have planted, plowed, and harvested for generations—and handed it over to bureaucrats, some of whom are thousands of miles away from America's heartland.

I have always said with pride that Minnesota's farmers are among the most productive in the world. Historically, Minnesota agriculture has ranked first in sugarbeet production, third in spring wheat and sunflower production, fourth in barley and oat production, sixth in corn production, third in swine products, and second in turkey processing. Of course, Minnesota has always been among the Nation's leaders in milk and cheese production. It is also quickly becoming a leading exporter of raw and value-added products.