

The Chair recognizes the Senator from California.

DENY CERTIFICATION TO MEXICO

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to read into the RECORD a letter that I have just sent to the President of the United States, urging decertification of Mexico:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am writing to urge you to deny certification that Mexico has taken sufficient actions to combat international narcotics trafficking when you report to Congress on the anti-narcotics efforts of major drug producing and drug-transit countries. I believe a reasonable examination of the facts leads to no other decision.

Last year at this time, Senator D'Amato and I compiled a list of actions we considered it necessary for the Mexican government to take to beef up their anti-narcotics efforts. This list is attached. Regrettably, I have concluded that there has been insufficient progress, or no progress, on nearly all of the items on this list. Some of these failures are due to inability; others are due to a lack of political will. But all have set back the urgent effort to end the plague of drugs on our streets.

I want to bring to your attention a number of the most significant examples of Mexico's inability and unwillingness to deal with the drug trafficking problem effectively:

Cartels: There has been little or no effective action taken against the major drug cartels. The two most powerful—the Juarez Cartel run by Amado Carrillo Fuentes, and the Tijuana Cartel, run by the Arellano Felix brothers—have hardly been touched by Mexican law enforcement. Those who have been arrested, such as Hector Palma, are given light sentences and allowed to continue to conduct business from jail. As DEA Administrator Constantine says, "The Mexicans are now the single most powerful trafficking groups"—worse than the Colombian cartels.

Money Laundering: Last year, the Mexican parliament passed criminal money laundering laws for the first time, but the new laws are incomplete and have not yet been properly implemented. These laws do not require banks to report large and suspicious currency transactions, or threaten the banks with sanctions if they fail to comply. Promises to enact such regulations—which prosecutors need to identify money-launderers—have so far gone unfulfilled. Mexican officials said that such regulations would be developed by January, but they were not produced. To my knowledge, not a single Mexican bank or exchange house has been forced to change its operations.

Law Enforcement: While there have been increases in the amounts of heroin and marijuana seized by Mexican authorities, cocaine seizures remain low. Although slightly higher than last year's figures, the 23.6 metric tons seized in 1996 is barely half of what was seized in 1993. A modest increase in drug-related arrests brought the total to 11,245 in 1996—less than half of the 1992 figure.

Cooperation with U.S. Law Enforcement: Our own drug enforcement agents report that the situation on the border has never been worse. Last month, the Mexican government forbade U.S. agents to carry weapons on the Mexican side of the border, putting their lives in grave danger. Recent news reports indicate that death threats against U.S. narcotics agents on the border have quadrupled in the past three months. Some U.S. agents believe that all their cooperative efforts are undone almost instantly by the corrupt Mexican agents with whom they work.

Extraditions: Despite the fact that the United States has 52 outstanding extradition request on drug-related charges, not a single Mexican national has ever been extradited to the United States on such charges.

Corruption: Mexico's counternarcotics effort is plagued by corruption in the government and the national police. Among the evidence are the eight Mexican prosecutors and law enforcement officials who have been murdered in Tijuana in recent months. There has been considerable hope that the Mexican armed forces would be able to take a more active role in the counternarcotics effort without the taint of corruption. But the revelation that Gen. Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, Mexico's top counternarcotics official and a 42-year veteran of the armed forces, had accepted bribes from the Carillo Fuentes cartel, casts grave doubts upon that hope.

Recent news reports indicate that U.S. law enforcement officials suspect judges, prosecutors, Transportation Ministry officials, and Naval officers of corruption, and there is persuasive evidence that two Mexican Governors—Manlio Fabio Beltrones Rivera of Sonora and Jorge Carillo Olea—are actively facilitating the work of drug traffickers in their respective states. The National Autonomous University of Mexico estimates that the drug lords spend \$500 million each year to bribe Mexican officials at all levels, and many consider that figure to be a gross under-estimation.

Mr. President, I believe the evidence is overwhelming and can lead to no decision other than the decertification of Mexico. It would send a strong signal to Mexico and the world that the United States will not tolerate lack of cooperation in the fight against narcotics, even from our close friends and allies. Accordingly, I urge you to establish a clear set of benchmarks by which you will judge if and when to recertify Mexico for counternarcotics cooperation. These benchmarks must include, but not be limited to: effective action to dismantle the major drug cartels and arrest their leaders; full and ongoing implementation of effective money-laundering legislation; compliance with all outstanding extradition requests by the United States; increased interdiction of narcotics and other controlled substances flowing across the border by land and sea routes; improved cooperation with U.S. law enforcement officials, including allowing U.S. agents to resume carrying weapons on the Mexican side of the border; and a comprehensive program to identify, weed out, and prosecute corrupt officials at all levels of the Mexican government, police, and military.

You may feel that U.S. interests in Mexico, economic and otherwise, are too extensive to risk the fall-out that would result from decertification. That is why Congress included a vital national interest waiver provision in Section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act. But other vital interests are not a valid reason to certify when certification has not been earned. If you feel that our interests warrant it, I urge you to use this waiver. But an honest assessment of Mexico's cooperation on counternarcotics must fall on the side of decertification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from California has expired.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. If I might be allowed 30 seconds to conclude?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I can only say I believe a strong case can be made to the President to decertify Mexico, to provide a list of specific ac-

complishments that country should meet to waive decertification, and at any time during this next year that they meet that list of requirements, the President has the ability to certify them. I thank the President. I yield the floor.

Mr. ABRAHAM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Senate continued with the consideration of the joint resolution.

AMENDMENT NO. 8

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I want to comment briefly on the amendment before us. We are expecting two more speakers for the remainder of our time. What we may do is yield some time to Senator CHAFEE to speak on another topic until those speakers arrive.

I just want to make a final point with respect to the amendment before us, that I do believe, as I have said twice now in speaking on this amendment, that there are still many unanswered questions, ones which at least I would need to hear answers to before I could feel comfortable voting in support of it. I have raised some of these questions already.

How would we address the \$706 billion shortfall that this would produce in 2002 to 2007? This \$706 billion is more than the total amount of dollars that were involved in the 1993 tax hike and in the budget proposals passed last year by this Congress in terms of reducing the growth of Medicare and discretionary spending. \$706 billion is more than all of that put together. No one has come forward and explained where those dollars would come from to effectuate this amendment.

The second issue I have asked questions about is why is it just this trust fund? There are others in the Federal Government. We are told the trust fund should be taken off budget, yet the amendment only addresses one of them. If, in fact, we are debating the definition of a balanced budget, we can't have some trust funds qualifying and some trust funds not qualifying.

In addition, we haven't had any explanation of what happens if Social Security is cut loose in the process through this amendment, and if it were cut loose and runs out of money, what would be the consequences and how would we address such shortfall if it was not part of a unified budget?

There are all of these questions and others before us, Mr. President. As I say, I have listened this morning and have not heard answers to them. There are others I will be raising later in the day. In the absence of those answers, it is clear to me that trying to effectuate this amendment would be a very high-risk proposal, as I said from the outset, with no evidence in the amendment of protecting the benefits of Social Security any more than they are protected if they are part of the unified budget.

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

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, over the next few days, we have an opportunity that we want to take advantage of to correct the course of years of unrestrained Government spending. Just like a consumer who has too many credit cards, barely keeping his head above water, particularly because he is paying big interest on his balance, so, too, is the Federal Government sinking under an ocean of debt. This deplorable state of affairs will force the Federal Government to make an annual payment of \$248 billion this year alone.

We have already tried to instill fiscal discipline through a lot of other measures that we passed in the last 10 years, including spending caps and deficit control mechanisms. They simply are not working efficiently enough to sustain the level of economic growth that we are now experiencing. If we had the deficit under control and interest rates down, we would be creating many, many more jobs than what have been created by this economy. Without the discipline of a constitutional amendment, we will see our interest payments further drag down the economy. By 2007, interest payments on the national debt will increase to \$340 billion.

Just imagine, if we were not paying the interest right now, we would have no budget deficit whatsoever. In fact, we would be running a surplus until the year 2004.

When talking about the balanced budget amendment, one of the first things to do is set the record straight on the issue we have been talking about since last night: the issue of Social Security.

Some of my colleagues, well-meaning but wrong, have signaled that they would be willing to support the balanced budget amendment if Social Security was exempt from the amendment. I say wrong. Why? Because exempting Social Security would create more problems for the program. They argue that a balanced budget amendment threatens the viability of Social Security and would harm vulnerable seniors in the process. If that were true, I would not be supporting this resolution. But that is not true, and unless we get the deficit of the Federal Government under control, this Government and our economy will never be strong enough to ever meet the needs of the baby boomers when they go into retirement just 13 years from now.

Proponents of the Reid amendment apparently still believe that by passing Senate Joint Resolution 1, there would be some sudden groundswell of support for cutting Social Security benefits to reduce outlays. They are wrong. Given the popularity and the need of Social Security for our seniors, because it is part of the social fabric of American society, this Congress would not let that happen. Even if this Congress were inclined to let that happen, the American people would not let that happen. That just isn't going to happen.

I am committed to the idea that balancing the budget is not about cutting Social Security. I voted for a resolution last year which promoted that view, but opponents of the amendment are not satisfied by words—I suppose everybody is cynical about words from Members of Congress—but past experience dictates otherwise. Even though we have submitted budget resolutions which achieve balance in the year 2002 without harming Social Security, the opponents of the balanced budget amendment continue to try to derail this amendment by claiming that those of us who have always fought to protect Social Security will turn around and try to harm Social Security. How could that ever happen, when the experience of the last 60 years to protect Social Security has been just the opposite, the experience of this Congress, the track record of this Congress, has been just the opposite?

Our budget proposal does take into account the Social Security surplus, projected to be about \$465 billion cumulative by the year 2002. Requiring a consolidated or unified budget in this constitutional amendment is the right thing to do. First, we must set our policy in accordance with the long-term health of this Nation's economy and the people of this country.

By chance, there is a Social Security surplus today. If we had tried to pass a balanced budget amendment like this in the early 1980's, we would not have to worry about this argument because Social Security had no surplus.

If we waited until the year 2029 to balance the budget, we would not be hearing this argument because there would be no surplus in Social Security at that time. It would be bankrupt. Social Security will be running a very real deficit by the year 2029. Whether Social Security is off or on budget, the decisions made about borrowing will have to take this deficit into account, even though it will look as if we are in full compliance with the Constitution. How can we expect the people to have confidence in Government if this kind of ghost accounting continues to go on?

But this message does not seem to be getting through. Listen to comments of the Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan. His comments seem to be ignored on the issue of the unified budget. At a hearing of the Senate Budget Committee held 3 weeks ago, Chairman Greenspan testified that “for

the purposes of fiscal evaluation of the budget of the United States, the unified budget is the appropriate one * * *

Chairman Greenspan is right—financial markets take into account all Government activity. It is not segmented out into various trust funds as the sponsors of this amendment on Social Security would want us to believe. If we exempt Social Security we will make our job harder. That could have serious ramifications for the economy, and for other programs in the budget. If we are forced to make up the \$295 billion lost from the Social Security surplus, we will have to find places to make further, unnecessary reductions.

I see no compelling reason to exempt Social Security. It is beyond dispute that should Congress scrap the unified budget and exempt Social Security, truly draconian cuts in important social programs would be absolutely necessary to balance the budget.

So, in the spirit of truth in budgeting, I challenge the supporters of scrapping the unified budget to identify what programs will be cut and how large those cuts will be. Prior to the 104th Congress, those who supported the balanced budget were repeatedly asked to provide details of how a balanced budget would be achieved. I believe the same standard should apply to those who propose exempting Social Security. Where is the beef in their proposal?

One final reason I do not support exempting Social Security from the resolution is the possibility that the exemption will turn into a magnet for new spending that is not offset with cuts—all with a simple majority vote. This does not seem too far-fetched, Mr. President, at a time when President Clinton is proposing to shift home health care spending from one Medicare trust fund to a second trust fund which is largely funded by the general Treasury.

I believe it is clear that the best way to protect Social Security now as well as in the future is to reject ill-advised efforts to exempt Social Security from the balanced budget amendment. In fact, the respected Robert Myers, a former chief actuary of the Social Security Administration who continues to be a strong supporter of the program of Social Security, is a strong supporter, as well, of this balanced budget amendment as it is written.

Mr. Myers recognizes that continued fiscal irresponsibility on the part of the Federal Government is the greatest threat to Social Security, a program that is part of the social fabric of America, protecting America's seniors in retirement. If we continue to run up the deficit, interest payments will continue to rise. When the time comes for Social Security to start cashing in its bonds, possibly as soon as the year 2012, the Federal Government may find it very difficult to find a creditor when the debt we carry exceeds \$8 trillion.

We have another opportunity to rid ourselves of this unsustainable spending. I hope that we can, once and for all, keep our promise to balance the budget without hanging the Social Security noose around the necks of those of us supporting the balanced budget amendment. Contrary to the hue and cry that we hear from the other side, the balanced budget amendment is the best way to continue ensuring a good quality of life for seniors while preserving the American dream for all Americans.

Also Mr. President, I want to correct an incorrect characterization of a memorandum by Congress Daily.

The Congress Daily refers to a CRS analysis which supposedly says that the balanced budget amendment will hurt the Government's ability to pay Social Security benefits.

Let me read from the report: "Now, of course, this does not mean that Social Security benefits could not be paid." I don't know how much clearer you can be on this subject. The balanced budget amendment will not prevent Congress from honoring its commitments to seniors.

Better yet, the same CRS researcher who produced the report which some have mischaracterized has produced yet another clarifying memo. Let me quote from that newest report: "We are not concluding that the trust fund surpluses could not be drawn down to pay beneficiaries." That seems perfectly clear to me. Social Security will not be harmed by the balanced budget amendment.

I think that it's unfortunate that those who oppose the balanced budget amendment are using such deceptive arguments and tactics. We are making important decisions for the future of this great Nation. I wish we could have an honest debate about the balanced budget and not resort to trickery.

The Congress Daily article also quotes several of my Democratic colleagues referring to a report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. As everyone knows, this group is a liberal interest group that opposes the balanced budget amendment. That's what they testified to earlier this year before the Judiciary Committee.

So, in conclusion, this page and a half CRS analysis actually reaffirms what the supporters of the balanced budget amendment have always been saying: the balanced budget amendment will not harm Social Security.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent at the hour of 12:30 Senators JOHN CHAFEE be allowed 12 minutes to speak as in morning business and Senator JOHN KERRY be allowed 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, let me thank my colleague from Iowa for the tremendously important statement he has made. I am amazed at what I think many of us would call gimmickry when it comes to the legitimate and respon-

sible debate over the balanced budget amendment to our Constitution. There is not a Senator on this floor who is not committed to upholding the fiscal integrity and the solvency of the Social Security system of our country. Many of us have voted to do that time and time again, and those votes have produced, in fact, a strong, stable, and secure system to ensure supplemental income for the senior community of our country. But that does not deny us the responsibility of being fiscally responsible.

The amendment of my colleague from Nevada, while I believe he is sincere, is frustrating to me and at times angry, that it appears at this moment, by press conferences recently held, that there is an effort to game this issue, much like the administration attempted to game Medicare in the last election, when this Congress was legitimately and responsibly involved in trying to save and secure our Medicare system, a system that provides a critical need for the senior community of our country.

There is absolutely nothing, in my opinion, in the years I have studied the balanced budget amendment to our Constitution, and I find myself reasonably knowledgeable as it relates to the budget itself, that you should separate any portion of the budget from its responsibility of being balanced under a unified budget.

The week before last, prior to the recess, we saw many of our colleagues on the other side of this issue rush to the floor, claiming that the Congressional Research Service memo confirmed their argument and confirmed their logic that somehow Social Security had to be removed from this amendment, or this proposed amendment. The Congressional Research Service came back with these words: "We have been and are being misrepresented in what we believe to be our findings of the facts and our interpretation."

If this is so, then there is reason to be frustrated and there is reason to be a little angry that some would game the system, actually attempting, in my opinion, to distort what is, in fact, the representation of the Congressional Research Service. While I at times have taken legitimate criticism directed toward the Congressional Research Service, I have not tried to say what they said is not what they said that somebody else said. That, of course, is part of the argument that some are using now with the issue of Social Security.

Oh, it is a way out and it is a way to hide. It is a way to hide from the legitimate vote, up or down, on a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. Why should you be frightened of it? If you are not for a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution, vote no. If you really do not believe in it, vote no.

If you believe in deficit spending, vote no. But don't try the gimmickry that we have seen. I will repeat the use of that word. We have seen a multitude

of amendments come to the floor, and if each one of them had been attached to the constitutional amendment, three-quarters of the Federal budget would be off-budget again, outside of a balanced budget amendment, and able to run free and in deficit for any length of time the Congress so chose. I don't believe that is the intent of the Congress itself.

I do believe we are listening to the American people at this moment. And, again, the President eloquently, and I believe 12 or 13 times, in his State of the Union Address, said he was sending up a balanced budget. We all, quietly, appropriately, and respectfully, waited for his budget to come to the Hill. We got it, but I must say that it is not in balance. It is a \$120 billion deficit across the board. Yet, he calls that balanced.

Mr. President, get a new set of glasses. I know you are getting to be middle-aged. You better get bifocals because the fine print says that isn't what you are saying. Of course, after he leaves office, then the tough cuts are made to argue his point of a balanced budget, or the tax relief he has proposed would simply be taken away.

Social Security deserves to be a legitimate and responsible part of the total budget. This job I hold, to which I have sworn an oath of office, also makes me a member of the board of directors of the Social Security system, in essence. The Senator from Nevada and I are dedicated to the long-term stability of the Social Security system. Taking it off budget, allowing it to run deficits, disallowing its responsible and reasonable management through the budget process, does not make a lot of sense. I don't argue separate accounting, I don't argue the legitimate approach that shows or demonstrates to the Social Security recipients what is legitimately his or hers. That is all right and responsible, and we can agree on that. But I suggest that the amendment before us is subterfuge, that it does not resolve the problem.

Social Security officials have continually said, "How do you save Social Security?" You balance the budget. A bankrupt Government is not going to write a check to anybody in any way. It is a Government who is fiscally responsible, a Government whose budgets are balanced, that can write Social Security checks. It is not independent of any portion of the Federal Government, and it must be taken in the whole of the context of that Government.

I am disappointed to have to address what are blatant scare tactics that some groups are using on the balanced budget amendment and Social Security.

Recently, we were hit with a press item that claimed the Congressional Research Service had issued a memo confirming a so-called study by an outside advocacy group—the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities—concerning Social Security and the balanced budget amendment.

This group has always opposed the balanced budget amendment and consistently opposed reducing the deficit with meaningful domestic spending restraint.

I say I am disappointed, but I am also angry. I hate to say it, but what CRS actually said has been misrepresented. I have not read everyone's press releases, so I simply assume it was that outside group that was overreaching.

CRS did not endorse any study or paper by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. CRS did not reach the same conclusion that the balanced budget amendment would in any way impair drawing down the Social Security trust fund surpluses to pay promised benefits when the time came.

We've all heard the term "G-I-G-O—garbage in, garbage out." CRS apparently was handed a narrowly written request. They responded, appropriately, with a technically precise memo on February 5. Others released that memo to the press on February 12.

Part of what CFR said was misrepresented and part was left out.

The CRS memo was about accounting. It was about what would and would not be included in the calculations of a budget deficit, surplus, or balance under Senate Joint Resolution 1, the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

But the spin from opponents of the balanced budget amendment was that the amendment might cause some Social Security checks to be held up.

The two things have absolutely nothing to do with each other. But the original CRS memo was written in technical language. That made it easy for someone to fabricate a scare story about what it meant.

On February 12, CRS issued a clarifying memo, also technically precise. They told my staff that, clearly, there was what they charitably called "a misunderstanding."

First of all, let's be clear: The first CRS memo talks about the year 2019 and after. Curiously, I have not seen much about that date, 22 years from now, in press reports. We might be tempted to think the intent was to scare today's senior citizens about their Social Security.

Now, what happens in the year 2019? Social Security outlays are projected to start exceeding receipts. Under the balanced budget amendment, the rest of the Government would have to run a surplus to make sure the overall budget is balanced.

That is good—it means that, in the long run, assuming for the moment no other reforms are made in the meantime, the balanced budget amendment would make sure we do not abandon our commitment to Social Security beneficiaries.

The real balanced budget amendment, Senate Joint Resolution 1, requires us to make sure that a non-Social Security surplus covers any Social Security deficit in the future. That is good for seniors, good for Social Security, and good for the economy.

So, it all sounds like scare tactics to me. When you are losing on substance, terrorize the senior citizens.

Let us look at what CRS really said: In its original February 5 memo, CRS said, "(T)his does not mean that Social Security benefits could not be paid, if the rest of receipts into the Treasury for a particular year exceed outlays, this amount could be used to offset the Social Security deficit."

Well, this is exactly what our balanced budget amendment requires—that those other, non-Social Security accounts run a surplus. That would protect seniors.

The February 5, CRS memo continues, "And of course, tax or expenditure provisions, or both, could be altered to create a new balance." Well, that's exactly what the President's Advisory Council, and the minority leader, and others have talked about.

Those are the parts of the original CRS memo that get left out when balanced budget amendment opponents quote that memo.

Now, let us look at the February 12, CRS memo:

We are not (CRS emphasizes "not") concluding that the Trust Funds surpluses could not be drawn down to pay beneficiaries. The BBA would not require that result. . . .

Only if no other receipts in any particular year could be found would the possibility of a limitation on drawing down the Trust Funds arise.

In other words, if the Federal Government was otherwise totally broke would this possibility arise.

And of course, we know the way to prevent the Government from going totally broke: Pass the balanced budget amendment.

It has been said here on the floor that CRS did not change its original position. That is right. Its original position has been misunderstood and misrepresented.

I see my colleague from Texas has arrived, and I believe he has the time until 12:30 under a unanimous-consent request. My guess is if his comments extend beyond that, he can find the cooperation of some of our colleagues here on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. GRAMM. How much time do I have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 6 minutes, 10 seconds.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I want to make a very, very simple point, and I think I can do it in 6 minutes. If not, I will come back this afternoon. First of all, everybody knows what is happening to the national debt. It is exploding under both Democrats and Republicans. Nobody tries to argue otherwise. They suggest that we wait until another day to deal with it. But nobody can refute the fact that debt is going up.

Now, the second thing that we have seen throughout this whole debate is that we have had an effort by our Democratic colleagues to exempt the

budget from the balanced budget requirement. In fact, if you add up every amendment that has been offered by our Democratic colleagues to the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, they have now proposed, in terms of amendments offered and submitted on the floor and dealt with in committee, to exempt Social Security, college education, veterans, education, nutrition, health, housing, justice, capital projects, and emergencies, which is 77 percent of the domestic budget, if we are going to require a balanced budget.

I want to talk about the exemption that is before the Senate now. That is exempting Social Security. Now, it is interesting that our colleagues say that if you want to protect Social Security, don't balance the budget. Well, let me first note that it is interesting because in committee, the Democrats propose that we count the Social Security surplus for the next 5 years and, then, thereafter, we exempt Social Security from the budget.

Now, I have a chart here that shows what is happening to Social Security. What it shows, very briefly, is that for the next 20 years, it has a modest surplus, and then when baby boomers turn 65 and retire, it falls off the end of the Earth.

Now, it is interesting to note that our Democratic colleagues say, while you have this surplus, let's count that for 5 years to try to balance the budget, but don't count any of this deficit. I ask you, how can you balance the budget and not count the largest program of the Federal budget, which is Social Security? How can it be anything but a fraud to talk about balancing the budget and exempt the largest program in the budget? But there is a more important point I want to make, and that point has to do with the ability to fund Social Security.

If you get to the heart of this amendment, what our Democratic colleagues are saying is, if you don't balance the budget, you are in a stronger position to fund Social Security. Let me look at this very briefly. We last balanced the budget in 1969—28 years ago. The last day we had a balanced budget, the Federal debt was \$366 billion. Today, the debt is \$5.2 trillion, which is the gross level of Federal debt. We cheat a little sometimes by talking about debt held externally as if we don't have a debt to the Social Security trust fund.

What has happened since the last day we had a balanced budget is the Federal debt has risen by \$4.8 trillion. Since the last day we had a balanced budget, we have indebted every child in America to a debt, at birth, of \$20,000. Every baby born in America, every day since 1969, is \$20,000 more in debt than they were the last day we balanced the Federal budget. The interest on the debt that we have incurred since 1969 is \$320 billion a year, to date. The interest we are paying on the debt we have incurred since the last day we balanced the Federal budget is \$320 billion a year.

The Social Security benefits to the elderly are only \$304 billion a year. So, by the deficits we have run every day since 1969, we have piled up an interest payment, per year, that is bigger than what we are spending on Social Security benefits for the retired every year.

Now, does anybody believe that, by incurring \$4.8 trillion of debt since the last day we balanced the budget, Social Security is more secure today than it was in 1969? Does anybody believe that, because we are paying \$320 billion of interest on the debt that we have incurred since the last day we balanced the budget, Social Security is more secure because we are piling up this debt? A baby born in America, if spending continues at the current rate, will, in their working lifetime, if they are born today, pay \$187,000 of income taxes in their working lifetime just to pay interest on the public debt. Are they going to be in a better position to provide Social Security benefits for their parents by paying \$187,000 in their lifetime on interest? Would they be in a stronger position to provide Social Security if they weren't paying that interest? I think the answer is, clearly, yes.

To end with a simple analogy with what our Democratic colleagues are saying, which could be converted into advice to a family, say that you have a family and they have one child 3 years old. They have one 2 years old. They have one which is 1 year old. They have three children. Our Democratic colleagues are giving them advice about funding the college education of their children. Our Democratic colleagues say, "Look. Don't balance your budget. If you balance your budget, you may not be able to send your children to college." Does anybody believe, if for the next 17 years they run up big debts, that they are going to be in a better position to send those children to college than they would be if they were saving the money now to do it? If you care about your momma, if you care about Social Security, and if you want to balance the Federal budget to stop this debt and this interest from eating up every penny you earn, only then can Social Security be saved. That is why this amendment, if adopted, would be a nail in the coffin of Social Security. If you want to save Social Security, stop the growth in the debt. Stop the growth in interest payments.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all amendments in order to the pending balanced budget constitutional amendment be limited to the following, and that they be first-degree amendments:

Senator BUMPERS amendment with regard to statutory alternative;

Senator BOXERS amendment with regard to disaster exemption;

Two relevant amendments for Senator BYRD;

Senator CONRAD, a substitute;

Senator DASCHLE, relevant;

Senator DORGAN substitute, and sense of the Senate;

Senator DURBIN, tax cuts and shutdowns; two different amendments;

Senator FEINGOLD, one amendment on ratification time period, one with regard to surplus, one with regard to enforcement, and one relevant;

Senator FEINSTEIN, substitute;

Senator GRAHAM, public debt;

Senator HOLLINGS, one on campaign finance and one relevant;

Senator KENNEDY, one on judicial review and one on impoundment;

Senator KOHL, capital budget;

Senator LAUTENBERG, implementation language, and one relevant;

Senator LEAHY, debt limit, and one identified as relevant;

Senator LEVIN, implementing legislation;

Senator MOYNIHAN, debt limit;

Senator REID, Social Security;

Senator ROCKEFELLER, Medicare;

Senator TORRICELLI, capital budget;

Senator WELLSTONE, proportionality, children, and sense of the Senate, all identified as one amendment;

Senator LOTT, two relevant amendments;

Senator HATCH, two relevant amendments; and

Senator KEMPTHORNE, Social Security, sense of the Senate.

I further ask that all amendments must be offered no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26, and that any amendment not offered by 5 p.m. no longer be in order to the balanced budget constitutional amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me say first of all that I appreciate the cooperation of all Senators. This does not mean necessarily that every one of these amendments are going to be offered. In fact, I hope to the contrary that they will not.

I would also like to add, if I could, a clause that no motion to recommit be in order to the unanimous-consent request, if that would be in keeping with the majority leader's intent.

Mr. LOTT. That would not be my intent. I did intend to reserve the right to have that motion to recommit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, 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. 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.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, based upon the conversations I have had with the majority leader, I have no objection to the unanimous-consent request.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I thank the Democratic leader for that coopera-

tion. We will continue to have discussions and deal honestly and fairly with each other. This is a long list. But as he suggests, I hope they will not all be offered and that we can begin then to identify a time for those amendments to be considered in a regular order and move toward completing action on this debate on this amendment by next Tuesday.

In that regard, Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, having had several discussions with the Democratic leader as to how to bring to a close this important constitutional amendment, it appears that it is the first step toward reaching final passage time by having this list offered now, which I hope would be in the late afternoon of Tuesday, March 4.

All Senators who intend to offer amendments to this constitutional amendment must be included in the list just submitted. Also, the Senator on the list must then offer his or her amendment for consideration prior to 5 p.m. on Wednesday. Following the 5 p.m. deadline on Wednesday, the managers will then be able to determine how much work remains leading up to the final passage vote.

We will be able to identify the amount of time and get some time agreements on the amendments that will be offered. And, of course, we will have adequate closing time for leaders. We should be able to come up with some time late Tuesday afternoon. But we will work through that, and we will keep the Senators informed as to how that will work through.

At this point, until we see these amendments that are offered, we still can't say exactly what will be the situation on Friday or on Monday. It is anticipated that we will, as we have been doing, have a vote or votes on Monday afternoon. But we will work through that very carefully and will keep the Senators informed once we get the list and get some time agreements entered into.

So I thank all of my colleagues for their cooperation. I think we are making some progress by obtaining this list.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized for 12 minutes.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

APPROVING THE PRESIDENTIAL FINDING REGARDING THE POPULATION PLANNING PROGRAM

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased to speak in favor of the resolution which will be before the Senate which would provide for early release of critical international population funds.

Mr. President, I am deeply distressed by the erosion in the U.S. commitment to international family planning programs. Despite the fact that the United States played a lead role in the U.N.