

women who are 27, single, with a couple of kids will see their prescription drug bill go through the roof. We will have to develop a market-oriented approach along the lines of what Members of Congress receive through the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan. That way we can give senior citizens the kind of bargaining power that folks have in a health maintenance organization or in a private plan. We could do it without price controls that produce a lot of cost shifting.

This is an important date in the discussion about prescription drugs. Our older people don't get prescription drug coverage under the Medicare program. That has been the case since it began in 1965. When they walk into a pharmacy and don't have coverage, in effect, they are subsidizing the big buyers—the health maintenance organizations and the private plans.

I hope we can come together in the Senate to find common ground. Senator DASCHLE is trying to bring Members of the Senate together. I know there are colleagues on the other side of the aisle who feel exactly the same. Let's not let this issue go off as campaign fodder for the 2000 election. Let's not adjourn this session without coming together and enacting this important benefit for the elderly.

I don't believe America can afford not to cover prescription medicine. A lot of these drugs today might cost up to \$1,000, such as an anticoagulant drug that is so important for the elderly. That is certainly a pricey sum. If a senior citizen can get anticoagulant medicine to prevent a stroke that would cost upwards of \$100,000 or \$150,000, it is pretty clear that prescription drug coverage is a sensible and cost-effective approach for the Senate to take.

I intend to return to the floor in the future, as I have done on more than 20 occasions, in an effort to bring the Senate together. I am especially appreciative of Senator DASCHLE's patience in our effort to try to find common ground. I know there are colleagues on the other side of the aisle who feel the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I have a slight difficulty with my balance due to a temporary defect in my feet. I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to deliver my remarks seated.

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

NEGOTIATIONS WITH RUSSIA ON A REVISED U.S.-SOVIET ABM TREATY

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the news media is buzzing with speculation that President Clinton will attempt, in his final month in office, to strike a major arms control deal with Russia—including a major ABM Treaty that would limit the ability of the United States to defend itself against ballistic missile attack.

White House officials have openly stated their concern that Mr. Clinton faces the prospect of leaving office without a major arms control agreement to his credit—the first President in memory to do so. And from this President—a man uniquely absorbed with his legacy—that perhaps would be, to him, a personal tragedy.

Mr. Clinton wants an agreement, a signing ceremony, a final photo-op. He wants a picture shaking hands with the Russian President, broad smiles on their faces, large, ornately bound treaties under their arms, as the cameras click for perhaps the last time—a final curtain call.

I must observe that if the price of that final curtain call is a resurrection of the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty that would prevent the United States from protecting the American people against missile attack, then that price is just too high.

With all due respect, I do not intend to allow this President to establish his legacy by binding the next generation of Americans to a future without a viable national missile defense.

For nearly 8 years, while North Korea and Iran raced forward with their nuclear programs, and while China stole the most advanced nuclear secrets of the United States, and while Iraq escaped international inspections, President Clinton did everything in his power to stand in the way of deploying a national missile defense. Do you want some facts, Mr. President? Let's state some for the record.

In 1993, just months after taking office, Mr. Clinton ordered that all proposals for missile defense interceptor projects be returned unopened to the contractors that had submitted them.

In December of that same year, 1993, he withdrew the Bush administration's proposal for fundamentally altering the ABM Treaty to permit deployment of national missile defenses at a time when Russia was inclined to strike a deal.

By 1996, 3 years after taking office, Mr. Clinton had completely gutted the National Missile Defense Readiness Program. He slashed the national missile defense budget by more than 80 percent.

In 1997, he signed two agreements to revive and expand the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty, including one that would expand ABM restrictions to prevent not only national missile defense for the American people but to constrain theater missile defenses to protect our troops in the field.

Then for the next 3 years, the President, heeding some of his advisers, no doubt, refused to submit those agreements to the Senate, despite making a legally binding commitment to submit them. He made that commitment to me in writing. He did not submit them because he was afraid the Senate would reject them, while in doing so would clear the way for rapid deployment of missile defenses. To this day, he still has not fulfilled his legal requirement

to submit those treaties for the Senate's advice and consent.

In December 1995, Mr. Clinton vetoed legislation that would have required the deployment of a national missile defense with an initial operational capability by the year 2001.

Three years later, in 1998, he again killed missile defense legislation—the American Missile Protection Act—which called for the deployment of national missile defense, as soon as its technology was ready, by threatening a veto and rallying Democratic Senators to filibuster the legislation.

Only in 1999 did he at long last sign missile defense legislation into law, but only after it passed both Houses of Congress by a veto-proof majority and only after the independent Rumsfeld Commission had issued a stinging bipartisan report declaring that the Clinton administration had dramatically underestimated the ballistic missile threat to the United States.

But while Mr. Clinton was doing all this, costing America almost 8 years in a race against time to deploy missile defenses, our adversaries were forging ahead with their missile systems.

While Mr. Clinton was dragging his feet, for example, foreign ballistic missile threats to the United States grew in terms of both range and sophistication. Today, several Third World nations possess, or are developing, ballistic missiles capable of delivering chemical, biological, or nuclear warheads against cities in the United States.

According to the Rumsfeld Commission, both North Korea and Iran are within 5 years of possessing viable ICBMs capable of striking the continental United States, and North Korea may already today have the capacity to strike Alaska and Hawaii. Last month, Communist China explicitly threatened to use nuclear weapons against United States cities should the United States take any action to defend democratic Taiwan in the event Beijing launched an invasion of Taiwan.

So Mr. Clinton is in search of a legacy? La-di-da. He already has one. The Clinton legacy is America's continued inexcusable vulnerability to ballistic missile attack. The Clinton legacy is 8 years of negligence. The Clinton legacy is 8 years of lost time.

But in the twilight of his Presidency, Mr. Clinton now wants to strike an ill-considered deal with Russia to purchase Russian consent to an inadequate U.S. missile defense—one single site in Alaska to be deployed but not until 2005—in exchange for a new, revitalized ABM Treaty that would permanently bar any truly national missile defense system.

The President is attempting to lock this Nation, the United States of America, into a system that cannot defend the American people, and the President is trying to resurrect the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty which would

make it impossible for future enhancements to U.S. national missile defense in general.

The agreement Mr. Clinton proposes would not permit space-based sensors; it would not permit sufficient numbers of ground-based radars; and it would not permit additional defenses based on alternate missile interceptor systems, such as naval or sea-based interceptors. All of these, and more, are absolutely necessary to achieve a fully effective defense against the full range of possible threats to the American people.

Mr. Clinton's proposal is not a plan to defend the United States; it is a plan to leave the United States defenseless. It is, in fact, a plan to salvage the antiquated and invalid U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty. That is what it is. No more. No less. It is a plan that is going nowhere fast in protecting the American people.

After dragging his feet on missile defense for nearly 8 years, Mr. Clinton now fervently hopes he will be permitted in his final 8 months in office to tie the hands of the next President of the United States. He believes he will be allowed to constrain the next administration from pursuing a real national missile defense. Is that what he believes or even hopes?

Well, I, for one, have a message for President Clinton: Not on my watch, Mr. President. Not on my watch. It is not going to happen.

Let's be clear, to avoid any misunderstandings down the line: Any modified ABM Treaty negotiated by this administration will be DOA—dead on arrival—at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which, as the Chair knows, I happen to be the chairman.

This administration's failed security policies have burdened America and the American people long enough. In a few months, the American people will go to the polls to elect a new President, a President who must have a clean break from the failed policies of this administration. He must have the freedom and the flexibility to establish his own security policies.

To the length of my cable-tow, it is my intent to do everything in my power to ensure that nothing is done in the next few months by this administration to tie the hands of the next administration in pursuing a new national security policy, based not on scraps of parchment but, rather, on concrete defenses, a policy designed to protect the American people from ballistic missile attack, a policy designed to ensure that no hostile regime—from Tehran to Pyongyang to Beijing—is capable of threatening the United States of America and the American people with nuclear blackmail.

Any decision on missile defense will be for the next President of the United States to make, not this one. It is clear that the United States is no longer legally bound by the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty. Isn't it self-evident that the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty expired when the Soviet Union, our treaty partner,

ceased to exist? Legally speaking, I see no impediment whatsoever to the United States proceeding with any national missile defense system we—the American people and this Congress—choose to deploy.

That said, for political and diplomatic reasons, the next President—the next President—may decide that it is in the U.S. interest to sit down with the Russians and offer them a chance to negotiate an agreement on this matter.

Personally, I do not believe a new ABM Treaty can be negotiated with Russia that would permit the kind of defenses America needs. As Henry Kissinger said last year in testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee:

Is it possible to negotiate a modification of the ABM Treaty? Since the basic concept of the ABM Treaty is so contrary to the concept of an effective missile defense, I find it very difficult to imagine this. But I would be open to argument—

And let me emphasize these words as Henry Kissinger emphasized them when he said—

provided that we do not use the treaty as a constraint on pushing forward on the most effective development of a national and theater missile defense.

Now then, like Dr. Kissinger, I am open to the remote possibility that a new administration—unencumbered by the current President of the United States in his desperate desire for a legacy and this administration's infatuation with the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty—could enter into successful negotiations with the Russians.

The Republican nominee for President, Mr. Bush of Texas, has declared that on taking office he will give the Russians an opportunity to negotiate a revised—a revised—ABM Treaty, one that will permit the defenses America needs. But Mr. Bush made it clear that if the Russians refuse, he will go forward nonetheless and deploy a national missile defense. And good for him. Mr. Bush believes in the need for missile defense, and he will negotiate from a position of strength.

By contrast, President Clinton clearly has no interest whatsoever in missile defense. His agenda is not to defend America from ballistic missile attack but to race against the clock to get an arms control agreement—any agreement; he means any agreement—that will prevent his going down in history as the first President in memory not to do so.

So it is obvious, I think, that any negotiations Mr. Clinton enters into in his final months will be from a position of desperation and weakness.

For this administration—after opposing missile defense for almost 8 years—to attempt at the 11th hour to try to negotiate a revised ABM Treaty is too little, too late. This administration has long had its chance to adopt a new security approach to meet the new threats and challenges of the post-cold-war era. This administration, the Clinton administration, chose not to do so.

So this administration's time for grand treaty initiatives is clearly at an end. For the remainder of this year, the Foreign Relations Committee will continue its routine work. We will consider tax treaties, extradition treaties, and other already-negotiated treaties. But we will not consider any new last-minute arms control measures that this administration may negotiate and cook up in its final, closing months in office.

As the chairman of this committee, I make it clear that the Foreign Relations Committee will not consider the next administration bound by any treaties this administration may try to negotiate in the coming 8 months.

The Russian Government should not be under any illusion whatsoever that any commitments made by this lame-duck administration will be binding on the next administration. America has waited 8 years for a commitment to build and deploy a national missile defense. We can wait a few more months for a new President committed to doing it—and doing it right—to protect the American people.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 15 minutes and also ask unanimous consent for Senator GORTON to proceed then immediately following me for 10 minutes.

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

IMPROVING AMERICA'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, we have a great opportunity ahead of us. Next week, the Senate will begin floor debate on the Education Opportunities Act—a bill that will help America's children by improving the quality of their education.

While education policy is primarily a local and State responsibility, the Federal Government does have a role to play. I am looking forward to discussing just what the Federal Government can do to improve the quality of the education our children receive. Few things are more important to our children's future than the quality of their education.

Every child in this country, regardless of race, economic status, or where that child lives, deserves the opportunity for a quality education. Yet far too many children, especially in our inner cities and Appalachia, simply are not getting the quality education they deserve.

We need more good teachers. We need safer schools. We need college access for all students who want to go to college.

We must, as a nation, attract the smartest and the most dedicated of our students to the profession of teaching. Yes, we certainly have to invest in