

To address the concerns that some have about the LIHEAP utility bill subsidy, however, this amendment is narrowly crafted to just address the issue of one-time LIHEAP payments. I believe that for safety reasons this amendment is also justified. As my colleagues know, old furnaces are extremely dangerous, as are the alternatives, such as space heaters. In crisis situations, my State LIHEAP program informs me, individuals resort to a whole host of heating techniques, including using charcoal grills indoors and relying on an electric or gas stove as a primary heat source. Despite the fact that this is 1995, Mr. President, 4 percent of Wisconsin LIHEAP program homes, or 5,720 households, are still wood heated, and 10 percent are trailer housing dependent upon propane tanks for their heat, another 14,300 households. Additionally, there is the concern of in-home carbon monoxide poisoning which, according to an article in the New York Times on May 14, 1995, sends 5,000 people each year to the emergency room with nonfatal illnesses and claims the lives of 250 people annually.

I think, Mr. President, that just as some in this body believe it would be a failed reform of the welfare system to continue to encourage people on the margins to engage in certain behaviors to increase their benefits, it would also be a failed reform if we were to encourage unsafe behavior by individuals for fear of losing benefits. This amendment avoids the classic heat or eat dilemma by clarifying that the Senate does not intend for one-time energy improvement payments to count as income, and I am pleased that it will be added to the underlying measure.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I think we have made a lot of progress in the last hour, hour and a half. We have taken a lot of amendments, and I think right now I understand some of our colleagues are negotiating certain aspects of the bill. It is my understanding the Democratic leader would like to have us at this point have a quorum call so we would not be engaged in any—unless somebody wished to speak. We do not want any rollcall votes.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. MOYNIHAN. I ask unanimous consent that the two amendments that were laid aside yesterday, the Faircloth amendment No. 2608 and the Daschle amendment No. 2672, be considered in order postcloture under the same restraints as previously agreed to.

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

Mr. MOYNIHAN. I thank the Chair. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. President, may I say we do not anticipate votes between now and 2 o'clock.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. 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. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized for 5 minutes.

MEDICARE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the minority leader, Senator DASCHLE, and myself and some others held a press conference this morning to talk about Medicare and the plan that is to be unveiled by Speaker GINGRICH, Senator DOLE, and others to cut spending on Medicare. It was interesting, at the press conference the first question that was asked after a presentation was by a reporter, who said to Congressman GEPHARDT: "Speaker GINGRICH just indicated today in his remarks that you lied; he, on three occasions, said you, Congressman GEPHARDT, lied about a portion of the Medicare debate."

I thought to myself when the reporter asked that question, it is an interesting technique, again, to see if maybe the story for the next day will be about someone calling someone else a liar in their response, as opposed to the issue of what is going to happen with respect to Medicare. That is what most of us are concerned about. These debates should never be about the question of lying; the debate ought to be about truth. And the issue of truth and the question of Medicare is a very simple proposition.

I am going to offer on the next bill that comes to the floor of the Senate, which will be the appropriations bill on Commerce, State, Justice, a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. It is going to be very simple. I do not happen to think, by the way, we ought to have a tax cut proposal on the floor of the Senate at this point because I think until we get the budget balanced in this country, we ought not to be talking about tax cuts. But it is going to say if the majority party brings a tax cut to the floor of the Senate, that they limit that tax cut to those earning \$100,000 or less, and use the savings from that—as opposed to the current proposal, which will give the bulk of the benefits to the most affluent in America—use the savings from that to reduce the proposed cuts in Medicare.

I want to ask people to vote on that because I think the question is, is it not a fact, no matter how much you try to tiptoe, dance, dodge, or weave, that the \$270 billion proposed cuts in Medicare are designed in order to try

to accommodate and accomplish a \$245 billion tax cut, the bulk of which will go to the wealthiest Americans? The answer to that is clearly yes.

We were told earlier this year by the majority party, who advanced the \$270 billion proposal to reduce Medicare funding, that they would provide details later. Today was the day to provide the details, and we have discovered that there really are not details that they want to disclose because those details will be enormously troublesome.

I indicated this morning that it is very hard for elephants to walk on their tiptoes. It is very hard to tiptoe around the details of a Medicare reduction of \$270 billion and what it means to senior citizens, many of whom live on very, very modest incomes and who will, as a result of this, receive less health care and pay more for it. Why? So that some of the wealthiest Americans can enjoy a tax cut.

I think we ought to start over. I do not think we ought to have leadership calling anybody else liars. We ought to start over and talk about truth. The truth is this country is deep in debt. We ought to balance the budget before anybody talks about big tax cuts. It may well be very popular to be for tax cuts. But it seems to me that it is the right thing to be for balancing the budget. We had a debate about whether we should put that in the Constitution. We do not have to put that in the Constitution. All you have to do is balance the budget by changing revenue and expenditure approaches to provide a balance.

So I hope we will start over and decide no tax cut until the budget is balanced. When we deal with Medicare, as we must in order to make the adjustments necessary to keep it solvent for the long term, let us do that outside of the issue of whether the savings from Medicare should finance tax cuts. The answer to that is obvious. Of course, it should not finance a tax cut. Whatever we do to Medicare ought to be done to make it financially solvent for the long term.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me attend to one other item as long as the Senate is waiting on the welfare reform bill.

I would like to comment on the issue of the farm bill. We had some comments yesterday by the chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee in which the chairman indicated that it was very difficult, if not impossible, to get a majority on the Senate Agriculture Committee to vote for some kind of a farm bill.

What is happening is that it is becoming evident to everyone that some have painted themselves into a corner on this question of agriculture. The proposed \$14 billion cut in agriculture is way beyond what agriculture should bear in cuts. I have supported budget