

seniors from the very first day I took office as a U.S. Congressman. And I will continue to fight for them as a member of the Senate Finance Committee. My resolve is stronger than ever. Our first priority for seniors is simple: to preserve and protect Medicare. I have just come from a meeting working on a comprehensive plan to save Medicare. I would hope that instead of running Medi-“scare” ads, these liberal special interest groups would offer real solutions to what President Clinton and every Member of Congress believes is a very severe problem. I would like to see their ideas, their plans specifically.

All of us will have to stand on the Senate floor soon and vote up or down on these issues within the next few weeks. At that time, our views and our votes will be known. Before that occurs, I hope all those behind the current ad campaigns will step forward and join in a constructive effort to save Medicare. This issue is too important for our seniors, and they deserve a constructive dialogue and debate.

Mr. President, I yield back the balance of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, would the Senator from South Dakota withhold that motion?

Mr. PRESSLER. Yes, I will.

Mr. FORD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. FORD. I ask unanimous consent that I might proceed as in morning business for 2 minutes.

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

#### HEALTH CARE

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I understand where my friend from South Dakota comes from. But there is part A and part B under Medicare. Part A, we talk about the trustees and their reports. They gave us two reports. One is a \$136 billion surplus today in part A; but in 7 years it will be down to minus \$6 billion. Under part B, there is \$17 billion in surplus today; and 7 years from now it will be \$25 billion in surplus.

The President has put out that he would want \$89 billion in part A to make Medicare solvent for 10 years, and he has asked for a little bit more to make Medicare solvent. We agree with the problems of solvency. The President has three members on the board of trustees, or the commission, that reports to all of us annually. And so we have given a proposal. We do not want to take \$270 billion out over 7 years. We do not want to cut another \$240 billion out of Medicaid.

So when you look at that, the reduction in the budget comes out of health care—comes out of health care. And something, in my opinion, has to be wrong when we are looking at children to be hurt, we are looking at the elderly to be hurt. And yet the headline in the Nashville Tennessean is, “The GOP

Plan Has Coddled the Rich and Socked It to the Poor.” That is big 2-inch headlines across the banner of that newspaper.

So when you say we have not given a program, it is out there. It is out there. And we are not scaring our old folks. We are trying to protect them. So, a little bit—a little bit is a whole lot better than trying to reach a tax cut. \$240 billion is a figure we all want to remember—\$245 billion. That is a tax cut. When you cut the expenditure of Government to balance the budget, that is one thing. And we are all for that. I am for it. But then you say you want to give a tax cut, that means you have got to cut more.

So the problem now is not balancing the budget; the problem now is \$245 billion that will be a tax cut. If we can get around to not using that or not giving it to the ultrarich, I think the balanced budget and the programs would go through very smoothly.

There is no big argument about making Medicare solvent, no argument at all, but it is giving a \$245 billion tax cut to the most wealthy in this country while you take a big hunk out of Medicaid.

And I see the Alzheimer’s patients under Medicaid, I see the Alzheimer’s patients under Medicare. There are a lot of people in this Chamber that probably can use Medicare. I am of that age, others of that age. But the problem results in a \$245 billion tax cut. If we did not have that, we would not have the problem. The ads would not be running. We would already have the appropriations bills out. We would be waiting for the conference to come back. We probably could meet our deadline of October 1 for the budget.

I understand my time is probably up, and I thank the Chair for his friendly greetings.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to thank the managers of the bill for the increase that they have given to the WIC Program. I think the WIC Program is an outstanding program, and I think it is worthwhile. Its value has been evidenced by the fact that the distinguished managers of the bill have given it a very nice increase for the upcoming year.

So I want to thank the senior Senator from Mississippi and the senior Senator from Arkansas for the additions to the WIC Program which they provided in this legislation.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, will the distinguished Senator please withhold?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, let me just thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his generous comments and his support for the provisions of the bill which he described. It is very difficult in this time of diminishing access to funds under our allocation and budget resolution to keep this caseload up to the existing level. It has been done with the full cooperation of the other members of the subcommittee.

We recognize that it is an important program. It is a program that saves money, I think, in terms of health care costs and learning deficiencies that would occur were it not for the proper nutrition at these ages.

So I appreciate very much the Senator noticing the hard work that was put in on this subject.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, what the WIC Program is, for those who do not know, it is a nutrition program, as the distinguished senior Senator from Mississippi said, a nutrition program for women, infants, and children.

Furthermore, invariably, at least in my State, it takes place in a setting where you might say it is one-stop shopping, where a mother can come and her infant child will be cared for and, in addition, can get some nutrition advice from experts.

As the distinguished Senator from Mississippi said, this is really proven out to be a money saver in the long run. If we can keep these infants healthy and get them off to a good start, savings to the Nation in the form of medical care are very, very significant in the long run.

So I am happy this was able to be worked out the way it was.

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

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

#### UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, we were successful in getting Senators to cooperate in identifying the amendments that remain to be offered to this bill. We are prepared now to seek unanimous consent to limit the amendments on the bill to those which we will read. These have been cleared on both sides of the aisle.

I now ask unanimous consent that the following amendments be the only