

quality at the same time. Mr. President, we have had extensive hearings in this body, chaired by our friend and colleague Senator HARKIN, that has reviewed in very careful detail the billions of dollars that can be saved under Medicare by dealing more effectively with fraud and abuse. We can save tens of billions of dollars from unnecessary hospitalization—20 to 30 percent of hospitalizations are unnecessary—by trying to provide preventive services to keep the seniors at home or in a setting so they can be treated with good quality care in less costly settings.

We are talking about tens of billions of dollars that can be saved from avoiding adverse drug reaction. When our seniors are taking prescription drugs which are in conflict with each other and cause new illness and sickness, there are ways of dealing with this issue that can save the seniors enormous distress and pain and sickness

and illness and plus save our system billions of dollars. But we have not even attempted to consider any of these items in this program.

The harsh cuts in Medicare contained in the Republican budget are a repudiation of our historic commitment to Social Security, because the distinction between Medicare and Social Security is a false one.

Medicare is part of the same compact between the Government and the people as Social Security. The compact says, "Contribute during your working years, and we will guarantee basic income and health security in your retirement years."

No budget plan that purports to be part of a Contract With America should break America's contract with the elderly. It is bad enough to propose these deep cuts in Medicare at all. It is even worse to make these cuts in order

to pay for an undeserved, unneeded tax break for the wealthiest Americans.

We do not have to destroy Medicare in order to save it. Congress will never allow the Medicare trust fund to become bankrupt. I know that. The American people know it. It is time for Republicans to stop raiding Medicare, and join in sensible steps to improve and strengthen it for the future.

Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to address the Senate. I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand adjourned until tomorrow at 10 o'clock.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 5:30 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 13, 1996, at 10 a.m.