

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I am tempted to go on with this debate, but I think it has probably been exhausted sufficiently on both sides. I will use the time granted to me under the UC agreement to discuss another issue.

NOMINATION OF ALICE RIVLIN

Mr. President, when Alice Rivlin came by my office for a courtesy call prior to her confirmation hearing in the Banking Committee, I told her I would support her confirmation. When she appeared before the Banking Committee, I voted in favor of her confirmation.

I am in the habit of keeping my commitments. It is with great personal sadness, then, that I take the floor to announce that I will, in the coming vote, cast a vote against Alice Rivlin's confirmation. I want to take this time to explain why I have changed positions.

It is, in no way, an attack on Alice Rivlin personally, and, frankly, it is not even an attack on the response that she gave to Senator BOND in his role as subcommittee chairman on the Appropriations Committee. I know he was outraged by the response he received. I have served in the executive branch, and I know that Alice Rivlin was not a free agent in terms of the kind of response she gave. She was under orders from the White House, and she had no choice but to follow those orders or resign. She chose to follow the orders.

She sent a letter that was completely unacceptable to Chairman BOND and, frankly, completely unacceptable to me. I am a member of Senator BOND's subcommittee, and I was there when he asked the questions of the Administrator of the Veterans Administration: "How are you going to administer your program when, according to the President's budget, in the outyears there is not going to be any money?" He received the answer: "I have been assured by the White House that the money will be there, the budget to the contrary notwithstanding." Senator BOND repeated the same question to the Administrator of NASA: "How are you going to manage the program when you get to the outyears and there is not any money?" He got the same answer: "I have been assured by the White House that the money will be there." Senator BOND asked the question of the Administrator of the EPA: "How are you going to fund your program when you get to the outyears and there is no money?" She said: "I have been assured by the White House that the money will be there."

It is very clear that this White House is playing the oldest of Washington's shell game, which is to give you a long-term balanced budget statement and load all of the savings in the years that will come to pass after you are safely out of office, with the full knowledge that Congress will never, ever act in the way that you are projecting they

will act. But you can get safely re-elected and point back and say, "Congress did not do what we told them."

But it is even more blatant to put that kind of a budget before the Congress and then, at the same time, explicitly tell the managers of the programs: "Manage your programs as if those cuts will never happen, because we know they will never happen."

That is outrageous, Mr. President. It deserves some kind of public protest. It is sufficiently outrageous that I will register that protest in a way I have never registered a protest before. I will publicly break my word, publicly go back on a commitment. I committed to Alice Rivlin that I would vote for her when she called on me. I voted for her within the committee. It pains me deeply to now break that commitment and say that I intend to vote against her, and I will vote against her with the firm understanding that this has little to do with Alice Rivlin and a great deal to do with the Clinton White House. It has little to do with what she did when she was following orders to extend that kind of a response to Chairman BOND, and it has everything to do with the administration that gave her those orders and said: Pretend, dissemble, camouflage, confuse, but do not tell the Congress that which is blatantly obvious to everybody else, which is that this administration does not intend to keep its word on the President's budget.

So, Mr. President, perhaps it is a bit of rationalization on my part, but if the President will not keep his word on his budget and has sent the word directly to his administrators that they shall not keep their word, I think I am justified in breaking my word to Mrs. Rivlin and casting this protest vote, which I will do this afternoon.

I yield the remainder of my time.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

Mr. GRAMM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, it is my understanding that we will be going back to the Defense authorization bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Defense authorization bill. The clerk will report S. 1745.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1745) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1997 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Services, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Kyl-Reid amendment No. 4049, to authorize underground nuclear testing under limited conditions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending amendment is the Kyl amendment.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to temporarily set aside the Kyl amendment.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 4083

(Purpose: To require plans for demonstration programs to determine the advisability of permitting medicare-eligible military retirees to enroll in the Tricare program and the Department of Defense to be reimbursed from the medicare program for the costs of care provided to retirees who enroll)

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Texas [Mr. GRAMM], for himself, Mr. ROTH, Mr. INOUE, Mr. LOTT, Mr. CRAIG, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. REID, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ROBB, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. WARNER, proposes an amendment numbered 4083.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:
SEC. 708. PLANS FOR MEDICARE SUBVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.

(a) PROGRAM FOR ENROLLMENT IN TRICARE MANAGED CARE OPTION.—(1) Not later than September 6, 1996, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall jointly submit to Congress and the President a report that sets forth a specific plan and the Secretaries' recommendations regarding the establishment of a demonstration program under which—

(A) military retirees who are eligible for medicare are permitted to enroll in the managed care option of the Tricare program; and

(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services reimburses the Secretary of Defense from the medicare program on a capitated basis for the costs of providing health care services to military retirees who enroll.

(2) The report shall include the following:

(A) The number of military retirees projected to participate in the demonstration program and the minimum number of such participants necessary to conduct the demonstration program effectively.

(B) A plan for notifying military retirees of their eligibility for enrollment in the demonstration program and for any other matters connected with enrollment.

(C) A recommendation for the duration of the demonstration program.

(D) A recommendation for the geographic regions in which the demonstration program should be conducted.

(E) The appropriate level of capitated reimbursement, and a schedule for such reimbursement, from the medicare program to the Department of Defense for health care services provided enrollees in the demonstration program.

(F) An estimate of the amounts to be allocated by the Department for the provision of