If we take out defense, we leave just 15 percent of the budget for all the discretionary spending on our domestic needs. That is 15 percent of the whole budget—15 percent, Mr. President, for education; job training; for the Women, Infants, and Children Program; just 15 percent of all these domestic needs. That is, if we just stay on our present course.

It does not get any better after the year 2003. In fact, it gets worse. By the year 2012, just 17 years from today, there will be nothing left in the budget for these social needs—zero. No money for our children, no money for our future—everything consumed. Every last red cent of the Federal budget will go to entitlements and interest payments.

Mr. President, Congress' fiscal insanity has had a terrible human cost. The year 2012, the year the money is scheduled to run out if we do not change our ways, is 1 year after my wife, Fran, and I expect our grandson, Albert, to graduate from high school, and 1 year after our daughter, Anna, should enter college.

Mr. President, if we do not succeed in writing a sensible budget, a budget that leads toward balance instead of further and further into bankruptcy, I shudder to think of the America we are going to leave these children.

Another way of looking at it, when my parents graduated from high school in the early 1940's, the debt attributable to each child graduating from high school that year was $360. By the time my wife, Fran, and I graduated, in the mid-1960's, that figure was up to $1,600 for each child. When our older children, Patrick, Jill, and Becky, graduated in the mid-to-late 1980's, that figure was up to $9,000. If we continue, Mr. President, to go the way we have been going, by the time our grandson, Albert, graduates from high school in the year 2012, that figure will be up to almost $25,000. That is $25,000 in debt, and no money at all to pay for urgent national needs.

Mr. President, this is much more than simply a budget question. It is much more than a question of accounting and bookkeeping. I believe, Mr. President, it is a fundamental moral question about the kind of people we are, the kind of Americans we are.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I contend that we do not have the right to leave our children a bankrupt America. They deserve a lot better. That is why we are here on the floor today.

It is our challenge over the coming weeks to create another picture of America, another picture of America in the year 2012, an America with a balanced budget, an America that is gradually paying off its debt and coming back to fiscal sanity, an America in which Albert, Anna, and other children of their generation are liberated from the crushing burden of debt and have, finally, the freedom to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. That is what, Mr. President, the coming debate is all about.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Under the previous order, the Senator from South Dakota or his designee is recognized to speak for up to 30 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr.. DORGAN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DORGAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 663 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEWINE). The Senator from North Dakota.

PUBLIC POLICY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I heard a discussion this morning about fiscal policy, about the future, about Federal deficits, about accountability, about jobs, about opportunity. All of those issues interest me and I think interest every Member of this Senate.

Our country is, I think, unique in that we have a democratic system in which we create some pretty aggressive battles between the parties and between the individuals in political parties, contesting ideas. Even as we contest those ideas, differences in approaches, and different ideas, we essentially have the same goals.

The Senator from Ohio, who is now the Presiding Officer, comes from a big State. I am from a small State. He is a Republican. I am a Democrat. I would guess, if we sat and discussed goals, he and I would have very few differences in the goals we have for our country. We want a country that expands and grows and provides opportunity. We want children to be well educated. We want our streets to be free of crime. We want our air to be air we breathe without getting sick. We want health care that is available to us at a decent price. The fact is, we would very quickly discover—as we do all across this country when we talk politics—that our goals are the same. But, our methods of achieving those goals take very different paths.

Since the first of this year, we have been undergoing some very interesting times. We have, I think, because the American people registered a significant protest in the last election. Since then, we have passed more legislation on more significant issues than Congress has passed during any similar time period in the past.

Now, how was that protest registered? What was the score in November 1994? The American people said by their vote: 20 percent of us who are eligible to vote, voted for the Republicans; 19 percent of us who are eligible to vote, voted for the Democrats; and 61 percent of us who are eligible to vote decided it does not matter. They said, ''I am not going to vote.''

So that is the score: 20 percent to 19 percent—but 61 percent said, ''Count me out, I am not going to participate in that process.''

As a result of the 20-to-19 victory, there is a great clamor about what in politics is called a mandate for the Republicans. Probably only in politics could you get a mandate from a 20-to-19 victory.

You see, they had printed something called a Contract With America. In fact, on the House side, Speaker GINGRICH—now Speaker GINGRICH, but then Congressman NEWT GINGRICH—lined all the Republicans up in front of the Capitol, had the television cameras there, and had them all sign this little contract called the Contract With America which proposed some very substantial changes.

Some of that Contract With America made eminent good sense. In fact, some of it embraced the very things we tried to pass in the previous session of Congress here in the U.S. Senate, that the Republicans filibustered and opposed. They prevented us from getting it passed.

That is fine. Times change and so do opinions, and so the contract embraced some of the very things that we supported and tried to get done.

Since that election and since this contract the Senate has passed some of those things that make good sense. I supported them, as did most of my colleagues on both sides of the political aisle.

Unfunded mandates: Let us decide to stop telling everybody else what they have to do while saying to them you pay for it. Mandates are easy. Unfunded mandates are even easier. But it is irresponsible, and we passed legislation that says let us be more responsible when we talk about mandates. Let us find out what it is going to cost somebody and maybe let us decide, if we are going to stick them with a mandate, we have a responsibility to pay the bill. We passed an unfunded mandates bill that made good sense.

Congressional accountability: In effect saying if you pass a bill in Congress you have a responsibility to live under that same law you passed. It made good sense. I supported that this year and I supported it in the previous Congress as well.

Regulatory 45-day veto? That made good sense. I supported that. It is saying let us stop these unintended consequences. When we pass a law that we think is going to be a good law and somebody puts out a half-goofy regulation, let us have the opportunity to veto the regulation if it does not work, if that is not what we meant. I voted for that as did almost all of my colleagues. It made good sense.

Line-item veto: That was more controversial, but I voted for it because Governors have it—almost all Governors have a line-item veto. I have thought for 10 years that a President ought to have a line-item veto.

That is a menu of things we have done that make good sense.

There are other things that have been done since the first of the year that make no sense at all. I want to talk about some of them as well. Because there is, it seems to me at least in some margins in this public policy debate, a mean-spiritedness, one in which people say, ''Well, I won, and what I intend to do now is help my friends and I do not care about the rest.''

Unfortunately, some of those who won have very wealthy and very powerful friends, and those friends are getting some very big help.

We also have in this country some very vulnerable people. We have homeless, we have poor, we have people who are down and out, people who are suffering, and we have a lot of children who count on us and look to us. The fact is too many of these constituencies have been given the cold shoulder in the last several months.

Let me start with a central question of deficits because the Senator from Ohio talked about that. I agree with him. I think the Federal budget deficit cripples this country's ability to grow, and we must deal with it. We had a proposal on the floor of the Senate to amend the Constitution to require a balanced budget. In fact, we had two votes on an amendment to the Constitution, one of which I voted for, one of which I voted against. I did not vote for the one that would loot the Social Security trust fund to provide the money to balance the budget because I do not believe that is honest budgeting.

But it is interesting. I noticed yesterday in a publication called The Congress Daily that a Member of the Senate, one of leaders in the Senate, said that there is a feeling among some Senate Republicans that we should not move toward a balanced budget in our budget resolution—which they are required to bring to the floor—because if we did, we would lose steam to move toward a balanced budget amendment in the Constitution.

In other words, if the Senate shows it can achieve a balanced budget without changing the Constitution, that would be a problem. I read this last evening, and I could not believe anybody could really say that. But that's what was said: ''We should not try to balance the budget because, if we did, that would take the steam out of the initiative to change the Constitution.''

Now, I ask you. What is the most important thing that we have facing us? Balancing the Federal budget or changing the Constitution? Balancing the Federal budget. We can do that without changing the Constitution.

The fact is, if we changed the Constitution 2 minutes from now, 3 minutes from now, we would not have made one penny's worth of difference in the deficit. We ought to, with every single budget resolution that comes to the floor of this Senate, grit our teeth and roll up our sleeves and start doing the heavy lifting that is required to balance the budget.

But this sort of nonsense, saying as some say, that maybe we should not move toward a balanced budget with our budget resolution because that will take the steam out of this effort to change the Constitution is just ridiculous. What on Earth can they be thinking of? How absurd a position.

Well, nothing surprises me much anymore.

But the cynicism expressed by those who would argue that we should not balance the budget because that will take the steam out of our effort to change the basic framework of our government, the Constitution, is both amazing and appalling to me. It really ranks very high up there on the scale of cynicism.

Our job is to do the work here, not to take the pose.

So, the first requirement and first job for us is to address this budget deficit honestly, because to do that then opens up opportunity in the future and economic growth. Failure to do that means that we consign this country to slow anemic economic growth, an economic future none of us want for our children.

Even as we do that, I want to say that the job requires spending cuts. Yes. It requires significant spending cuts.

I am always interested in seeing how people characterize spending cuts because there is some notion around here that one political party wants a lot of spending cuts and the other political party essentially does not want any spending cuts.

It is alleged that one side, the majority side, the Republican side, are tigers when it comes to cutting spending. The other side? Gee, they just want to spend more.

Nothing could be further from the truth. There is not a plugged nickel's worth of difference between Republicans and Democrats in terms of how much money they want to spend.

All you have to do is look at the record, and you can look at the record for 15 years. Oh, there is a substantial difference in what they want to spend money for, but there is not a plugged nickel's worth of difference in how much money they want to spend.

During the last 15 years, we have had mostly Republican Presidents. Congress has spent less than Presidents have requested in their budgets. Translated—Republican Presidents have requested more spending than Democratic Congresses up until this Congress have actually spent.

I see the ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee is on the floor. I have heard him refer to this as well. The question is, ''Who has the appetite to spend how much money?''

There is some notion that the Republicans always want to cut spending, that they are for less spending and the Democrats are for more spending. The record does not show that to be true.

Yes, there is a difference in how we want to spend money. The Republicans always want to pack more money into the defense pipeline. They say, ''You cannot spend enough in defense for us.''

In fact, at a time when we have this massive deficit, at a time when the Soviet Union has evaporated and gone, the Republicans are saying what we really need to do now is we need to start building star wars once again. If we can just resurrect star wars, somehow we will all sleep better. America will have a better future.

The fact is they will resurrect star wars and cut school lunches and say Democrats want to restore school lunches so they are big spenders. It does not wash. It does not work. The evidence does not demonstrate that what is being alleged on the floor of the Senate is true.

Both sides of the political aisle in the U.S. Senate by and large propose about the same measure of public spending. We simply disagree on what the money ought to be spent for. That is a legitimate disagreement. It is a legitimate disagreement, it seems to me, for one side to say we want to cut our revenue base in a way that provides the bulk of the benefits to those families who make over $100,000 a year; to say, ''We want to increase spending for star wars because we think it is necessary for our Nation's defense.'' That is a legitimate thing to say and do. I do not happen to agree with it. But certainly it is an idea, a bad idea but an idea.

On the other hand, they would say to us, as we intend to cut taxes, the bulk of the benefit of which will go to wealthiest Americans, and as we intend to start building a new gold-plated weapons system—which, in my judgment, we do not need—they would say, let us now, in order to pay for all of this, cut funding for foster care—as they have done—let us decide that nutrition programs should go to the States in the form of block grants, and we will cut the block grants. Then we will let the States use 20 percent of the money we have now cut to do anything they want to do with, including creating pork projects or building roads, having nothing to do with nutrition.

Then they say, Well, let us cut adult literacy grants for the homeless. Let us decide to eliminate funding for summer youth programs. Let us decide to end the entitlement or the requirement that poor kids ought to get a hot lunch at school. Let us decide, they say, to cut 1995 funding for financial aid for needy students to attend college. Let us decide, they say, to cut legal services to the poor back to zero. Let us decide, they propose, to cut 1995 funding for the Healthy Start infant mortality initiative.

This is a country, incidentally, that ranks way down, when you rank from best to worst in countries on infant mortality.

They say, we do not have money here to fund that. Let us cut that because we want to go off and build star wars. We want to provide tax cuts, much of which will go to the wealthy. And of

course, my favorite, Let us propose—while we are cutting all of these things that would try to give a decent opportunity to those who are down and out, to those who are disadvantaged, to those who suffer, to those who are unfortunate enough to be young, the children in this country,—they say—We don't have enough money to respond to that, but maybe we should give them all a laptop computer.

''Let us give laptop computers to the poor. That will just sort of unleash a whole series of opportunities.'' They actually said that.

The second prize, it seems to me, goes to the folks who say we should get additional revenue for the Federal Government by charging an admission fee to tour the U.S. Capitol. I only come from a town of 300, but I suspect if you proposed in a town of 300 that you should charge somebody to tour a house they own they would laugh you out of town, saying you were not thinking straight.

My point this morning is if we are going to celebrate the first 100 days, we ought to be look at what is really going on.

When I started these remarks today, I said that I think there is merit in some of the proposals that have been passed by the Congress on a bipartisan basis during these first several months. I supported some of them because I thought they made a lot of sense.

Now, some of those proposals, the current majority party filibustered against in the last session of Congress and would not allow to be passed. But then came this Congress, and they said, ''We want to pass them,'' and we joined them and said, ''This makes sense. We supported this before and support it now.'' And we passed unfunded mandates, congressional accountability, regulatory veto. All of those make sense, and I supported them.

But there is much more to the story than just that.

The first 100 days, when it is celebrated this week, will be accompanied by a chart that shows the first 100 ways as well. The first 100 days and the first 100 ways in which the majority party in this Congress decided to use their power to help their friends, the wealthy and the big, powerful, economic interests in the country at the expense of a lot of vulnerable Americans.

Those are exactly the priorities they have exhibited.

Anybody who thinks that the priorities in this country should be to give a big tax break to very, very wealthy Americans so that we can justify taking a school lunch entitlement away from a poor kid, or to take opportunity away from America's children in dozens of ways—in nutrition programs, in education programs, and dozens of other ways—does not understand there is still a lot of fight left in a lot of us who care about what is right for this country.

This country, and this country's future rests on our ability and our willingness to invest in our children. It is that simple. A country that turns its back on its children and decides selfishly to provide more comfort to the already comfortable is a country that is not thinking ahead.

We have before us in the Senate now a amendment offered by Senator DASCHLE on the rescission package. This is a proposal that is the first of a series of proposals that we will offer in this Congress that represents our commitment to kids.

If this country cannot afford to decide to invest in its kids, to take care of its children, to care about its children; if we cannot do that in a whole range of areas, from school financial aid, to giving kids the opportunity to go to college if they do not have any money, to school hot lunches to allow poor kids the only hot meal they are going to eat during that entire day, to money that protects children against family abuse and violence; if we do not have the capability as a country to decide that these are our priorities, then this country, in my judgment, does not have its heart in the right place.

I think this country understands what the priority is. The priority is our children, because our children are our future. The amendment that has been offered by Senator DASCHLE in this Chamber to the underlying legislation talks about these programs: Women, Infants, and Children—the WIC program. Anyone who has seen anything or knows anything about the WIC program understands it is a program that works.

I almost hesitate to describe it again because almost everyone should know it. But here's how it works. A low-income mother who does not have resources and does not have money but is pregnant, is going to have a baby. She needs help feeding it, both before it is born and after.

WIC provides that help.

We understood a long time ago that if you provide the correct nutrients and provide nutritious help to that young mother, she is going to have a child that will not have to spend an extra 4, 5, or 10 days in the hospital because the baby was a low-birthweight baby because she was unable to provide needed nutrition to that fetus while she was carrying it in her.

We have discovered that for just a few dollars a month—for only a few months—we will save an enormous amount of money and provide an opportunity for that poor woman to have a healthy child.

That is a wonderful program. There is no waste. It is not money. It is certificates to buy juice and eggs and specific kinds of nutrients. It is one of the best programs the Federal Government has ever offered and it saves enormous amounts of money and is very helpful to children.

The Head Start Program. Gee, I do not think anybody who has toured a Head Start center can adequately debate any longer whether that program is helpful to children who come from families that are disadvantaged, low-income families. You see these young boys and girls at Head Start centers getting a head start in circumstances where they would otherwise be left behind. You see their mothers and their fathers there, some of them, getting an education, also at this Head Start center. They are learning about nutrition programs, about hygiene, about how to raise children. It is a wonderful program that produces enormous rewards.

We ought to understand by now what works and then invest in it, not cut it. We ought not cut the WIC Program—Women, Infants, and Children feeding program—or cut Head Start in order to fund a tax cut for some of the wealthiest Americans. We ought not to cut Head Start in order to fund the Star Wars Program. That does not make any sense to me.

I could go on, and there are about 10 or 15 similar initiatives that we have that I think represent the best in this country, an impulse and a determination to make life better for our children, to decide that you cannot move ahead as a society by leaving some else behind.

You just cannot do that. You have to care about people, especially the most vulnerable people.

I started by talking about how we in this Chamber share largely similar goals. I think that is true. I think most of us would agree that there is a requirement and an incentive in this country that must be exhibited to say to people,''You have a responsibility for yourselves as well.''

''Yes, we are going to help. We will extend a helping hand when you are down and out, but you have a responsibility to pull yourself up and step up and stand up and create opportunity for yourself.''

That is true. I understand all that.

But it is hard to say that to an 8-year-old kid. It is hard to look in the eye of a kid, as I did one day, a 9-year-old kid from New York City named David, who said to us that it hurts to be hungry. He said, ''No kid like me should have to lay their head down on their desk at school because it hurts to be hungry.'' You cannot look a child like that in the eye and say it does not matter.

These programs do matter. The choices being made here during the first 100 days have real consequences in the lives of young children. And that is what this debate is about. It is about what are our responsibilities and how do we meet those responsibilities.

I start with the understanding that there is good will on all sides. I am not claiming one side is all wrong and one side is all right. In fact, I think a lot of new ideas that have been generated and developed will advance the interests of this country.

But there are also some timeless truths that we ought to understand.

New ideas will never replace the timeless truth that we have a responsibility for our children in this country.

Time and time again this year, some of us will come to this floor to talk about our commitment to children, our commitment to our kids, because that is a commitment to America's future. But it needs to be more than talk.

If we decide that we do not have adequate resources to invest in our children's lives, in our children's opportunities, in our children's potential, then this country will never achieve its full potential.

That is what the debate will be about on the Daschle amendment. It will be a debate that will recur and recur and recur throughout this year as those of us who believe kids are a priority come to the floor to fight for kids and for their future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

REGARDING IRAN

Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise to briefly discuss Iran. While this administration contemplates its next move regarding Iran, the brutal terrorist regime in Iran is plotting its next move. Will it reinforce its troops on disputed islands in the Persian Gulf, or will it add to its weapons stocks in the region? Only the regime in Teheran knows.

What we do know, is that this band of terrorists is planning an offensive military buildup. It is planning for the projection of its aggressive actions even further in the region. This administration should take this to heart and not appease these terrorists like it did with the dictators in Pyongyang. What the administration should do is support my legislation banning all trade with Iran and place sanctions on those foreign corporations that continue to trade with Iran.

To this end, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, following the text of my remarks, the February 1995 edition of the Focus on Iran. This publication details current events in Iran, with this particular issue centering on Iran's ongoing efforts to obtain nuclear weapons.

This is a vitally important issue and this important brief will shed further insight into a dangerous regime bent on violence and aggression.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

IRAN: NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND IRRESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

[From Focus on Iran, February 1995]

Within the past year, much attention was given to Iran's continuous military rebuilding effort since its disastrous and costly war with Iraq. In particular, there has been great emphasis on Iran as a potential regional military power, and more ominously, as a potential nuclear power. The realisation of Iran as both a regional and nuclear power would certainly cause concern to its neighbors. The international community—particularly the United States—is concerned with two developments. First is the growing conventional and nuclear capability of Iran, and second, the increasing authoritarianism of the Rafsanjani regime and its support for domestic and international terrorism.

It is a truism based on historical experience that the greater the absoluteness/authoritarianism of a regime, the less its confidence in dealing with the international community, and the more likely it would resort to force to solve problems. In this context, the current regime in Tehran could hardly be considered a responsible and reliable participant for ensuring regional peace, stability and security.

It is clearly recognized that all nations have fundamental rights to provide for their own national security interests and those of others through mutual security treaties such as NATO, the former Warsaw Treaty Organization and other regional security pacts. Moreover, Iran itself, prior to the revolution of 1979, was a member of the former Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) together with the United States, United Kingdom, Turkey and Pakistan. Subsequently, the former regime undertook mutual security agreements with the United States. All the preceding agreements, treaties, pacts, etc., alluded to above, were undertaken by governments on the basis of perceived defensive security needs, with no outward declaration of aggressive intent. This in contrast to the bellicose rhetoric and state-sponsored terrorist and subversive activities of Iran's present regime. It is no wonder that a more powerful and nuclear-armed Iran, controlled by the clerics, poses a great concern for future regional peace and security.

Traditionally, Iran's security defense policy has been dictated by its geostrategic situation: From World War II to 1979, for defense against threats from the north, Iran relied heavily on the US deterrence. After the clerics took over in 1979, and especially after the aborted rescue mission of the US hostages, Iran, although its foreign policy was nominally ''neither East nor West'', tacitly relied on the Soviet deterrence against possible US attack.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and consequently, the defeat of Saddam Hussein, Iran decided to put its energy and resources to develop weapons of mass destruction, not for defensive purposes, but to give Iran leverage to lead the Muslim World. In November 1991, Mr. Mohajerani, Vice-President of Iran, referred to Iran's activity to develop nuclear weapons. He said Moslem nations including Iran must acquire nuclear capability that would make them strong. This idea was probably reinforced after the Iraqi defeat in the Persian Gulf War, by the Indian Defense Chief, who reportedly said in an interview that one of the results of the Gulf War was ''* * * never challenge the US unless you have nuclear weapons''.

THE POST WAR ARMS BUILD-UP

Since the end of the war with Iraq (in 1988), Iran has undertaken an extensive rebuilding and upgrading of its greatly depleted armed forces, as might be expected, especially since the threat from its recent adversary, Iraq, is real, even though seemingly lessened at present. It is noteworthy that much of Iran's arms purchases are best described as offensive in nature and not necessarily designed to counter what one might imagine to be its real concern, Iraq. For example, since 1988, the arms purchases include: 10 fast attack missile boats, 75 SCUD–C surface-to-surface missiles, an unknown number of Su–24 fighter/bombers, 12 Tu–22 (Backfire) bombers, 72 AS–16 (Kickback) air-to-ground missiles, and three Kilo-class ocean-going submarines (two already delivered and one to be delivered soon). In addition, there are on order other weapons systems with both offensive and defensive capabilities.

Of particular interest in the above listing is the SCUD–C procurement from North Korea, because of the potential offensive threat it poses to Iran's neighbors to the South. It must be noted that this missile system is capable of being fitted with both conventional as well as nuclear warheads. Furthermore, there is every likelihood that the clerical regime in Iran will purchase the NO–DONG–1 medium–range ballistic missile or its follow-on, within the next five years, also from North Korea. With a range of about 600–800 miles and improved accuracy, the NO–DONG missile would be a direct threat to Israel, more so than the SCUD–B system deployed by Iraq in the Persian Gulf War of 1991.

The acquisition of several ocean-going submarines and fast attack missile boats presents a realistic threat to Persian Gulf oil flow, in as much as these naval craft could easily block the Straits of Hormuz by a missile or underwater attack. In the hands of an unstable and irrational regime, they also pose a direct danger to the U.S. and Allied naval vessels needing to access the Persian Gulf in periods of crises.

The acquisition of the long range Tu–22 (Backfire) bomber has no other use than extending Iran's offensive ''punch'' far into the Indian Ocean (against the U.S. and Allied Navies) or to the entire Middle East and beyond; a capability far beyond the accepted defensive needs of the clerical regime.

THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS ISSUE

The ''conventional'' arms threat is multiplied many times over when nuclear weapons are added to the equation. Much has been written recently concerning the activities of the clerical regime in regards to its involvement in the development of nuclear weaponry. The question does not seem to be one of the probability of such a development, but one of timing. In a recent article in The New York Times (January 4, 1995), Chris Hedges wrote a detailed and well-crafted article indicating that in five years, Iran may be able to fabricate a nuclear weapon, with the fissionable materials supplied by its nuclear facilities at Bushehr. If we examine the ''conventional'' weapons already purchased or on order, it is apparent that most of these systems can be readily adapted and modified to carry and deliver nuclear weapons.

In order to place the potential ''nuclear threat'' in proper perspective, it must be recognized that we are dealing with a contingency that is at least two to five years in the future. It will depend on the clerical regime's ability to receive or develop the requisite technological capability, and produce sufficient nuclear fuel, at which time the threat does became apparent and a focal point of international concern.

Apropos the issue of Iran gaining technological competence in nuclear weapons fabrication, much has been written in various intelligence sources. It has been reported that Iran has acquired at least two nuclear weapons (one missile and one 152mm artillery round) from Kazakhstan. Some sources allege that Iran may also be receiving technological assistance from North Korea. In any event, it makes little difference whether Iran currently has nuclear warheads; in time, it will develop the capability either by virtue of its native talents and/or with the help of ''scientists of fortune'' from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF NUCLEAR ACQUISITION

The more compelling question is not whether ''Iran has the bomb'', but rather,