

So, yesterday afternoon, a letter from the Speaker and myself was delivered to the White House, and I ask unanimous consent that the text of that letter be placed in the RECORD following my remarks.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. DOLE. In this letter, we once again extend our invitation to the President, asking him to join us in a bipartisan effort to preserve, improve, and protect Medicare. It was precisely this type of bipartisan effort which saved Social Security in 1983, and it is what is needed today.

And I know a little about the 1983 Social Security effort, because I was a member of that Commission, along with Democrats and members from the private sector, appointed by the then majority leader Howard Baker in the Senate, appointed by then Speaker O'Neill in the House, and President Reagan. And it worked. A lot of people felt at that time Social Security was in deep trouble, and it was in deep trouble. It was about to go broke. The trustees had warned us it was about to go broke. It warned us years ahead it was about to go broke. As often happens around this place, nobody really thought it was going to happen.

When it finally became critical, we moved and we acted, and thanks to the efforts of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, both sides of the Capitol and President Reagan's effort, we were able to put together a compromise which, since 1983, has secured the solvency of the Social Security trust funds. In fact, Social Security is going to be in good shape for a fairly long time. Some day we will have to address it, but right now the 1983 Social Security fix has worked.

It also appears to me that Treasury Secretary Rubin, Labor Secretary Reich, and Health and Human Services Secretary Shalala, all trustees, all of whom signed the report calling for action now have a great deal riding on the President's response.

The President's inaction to this date suggests one of two things: Either he believes his trustees are incompetent and have reached an erroneous conclusion, or he accepts their conclusion and just does not believe it is the duty of his administration to solve the problem, in which case his trustees are irrelevant. Relevancy has been a matter of some debate around this town.

If, however, he treats the recommendation of his trustees seriously, then he has only one choice: To stop searching for campaign issues and to join Congress in searching for solutions.

I hope that the President, in the same spirit we have been working with the President on welfare reform, on antiterrorism legislation, on NAFTA, GATT, and other examples I can point out where Republicans provided the majority of the votes, working with a Democratic President, I hope the Presi-

dent of the United States will take a look at the trustees' report.

I know there is a conference on aging, and I know the temptation frightens people, scares people and they may pick up a few seniors' votes for the President, but if we do not fix Medicare, as I have indicated, we are not going to be able to make the payments.

The year 2002 seems like a long way off. Why worry about it in 1995? Let me just suggest, by the time you get it put together and by the time you start to implement it, the time will roll by more quickly than we think.

I cannot speak for everyone on this side of the aisle, but I think most of my colleagues are ready and willing to make hard choices. We are not talking about cuts—the President says, "Oh, we can't cut services, we can't do this, we can't do this." We are suggesting every dollar saved in our efforts to protect, preserve and improve Medicare go back into Medicare; not to cut taxes for the rich—as we hear from time to time from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—or not for budget purposes, except so far as Medicare is part of the unified budget.

So I hope that the President has received our letter and that he will seriously consider it and that he will come to the Capitol, or we can go to the White House—it makes no difference—or we can meet halfway, whatever, and talk about what we may do in a bipartisan way to begin working on what is a serious problem with Medicare.

They are the President's trustees. They are people of integrity, as far as I know; people of competence, as far as I know; people of good judgment, as far as I know. I assume this trustees' report was based on the best information available and they said we should act now. Now means precisely what now means—now, 1995.

So we are prepared to work with the President and members of this administration, we are prepared to work with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, we are prepared to work with House Members, Democrats and Republicans, and my view is, if we are serious about this, we can do it in a very brief period of time.

So I hope that we can have some response from the President.

The other day I suggested we maybe have a bipartisan commission. That is how we made recommendations on Social Security in 1983. The President called that a gimmick. Well, it was not a gimmick. It was an idea that Speaker O'Neill had at the time and Majority Leader Baker and President Reagan had at the time, and it worked. It was not a gimmick. They made solid recommendations to Congress, and the Congress adopted the recommendations of the commission. I was proud to be a member of that commission, along with Claude Pepper, I might add, who was probably the seniors' greatest representative and voice in Congress, a Democrat from the State of Florida.

So, Mr. President, I certainly hope the President will follow up.

SENATE SCHEDULE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, let me say with reference to the schedule, right now there are discussions going on so we can have a substitute offered by Senators ROCKEFELLER and GORTON, and then it would be my intent to file cloture so we can bring the debate on product liability to a close. We have been on this now last week and most of this week. I am not quite certain when they will have the product complete.

I do not believe there will be any further votes today because, frankly, we wanted to move to another matter but it was objected to by my colleagues on the other side. So we will just have to wait and see what agreement can be reached, and then the substitute will be filed and then the cloture motion will be filed.

It is my intent to have the first cloture vote on Monday and if cloture is not obtained, to have a second cloture vote on Tuesday. So I say to my colleagues, we are going to have a cloture vote on Monday. It is very important we be here. We have been on this bill for 2 weeks. I do not want to frighten anybody or discourage anybody, but I can see the August recess going out the window. As much time as we take on every piece of legislation in the Senate, it does not leave the leader any alternative than to say, well, August would have been a great month to be off; a lot of us would like to have done a lot of things.

But the first thing we must do is complete our work, and as slowly as we are proceeding, I do not see how it can be done. Maybe there can be some agreements in the next few weeks, but we are behind schedule now and, I must say, unless we can catch up, I do not believe the American people expect us to be off for 30 days when a lot of the work is not done.

So we will be right here catching up unless we can do so in the next—we have time if we work together, let me put it that way.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. I withhold that request.

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, what is the order of the Senate, morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business. Senators have up to 5 minutes each to speak.

A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND A SERIOUS SOLUTION

Mr. DOMENICI. Thank you, Mr. President. First, I just happened onto the floor while our leader was speaking. I compliment him for the subject matter and for what he said. It is obvious we have a very serious American problem, and that is Medicare, and a

very serious solution recommended by trustees, four of whom were the President's, two of whom are private citizens. I think our Republican leader has outlined an approach which might resolve this issue.

On the other hand, I came for another purpose. Obviously, most of my time and attention these days is devoted to how we get a balanced budget by the year 2002. But I do not choose to speak about that today.

UNITED STATES ENRICHMENT
CORPORATION PRIVATIZATION
ACT

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to speak about a bill I introduced yesterday and I did not get a chance to speak on it. It has been introduced and has been referred. It is now known as S. 755. It has a very uninteresting caption and name: United States Enrichment Corporation Privatization Act.

Actually, while that does not sound like much, we hear a lot these days about Russia, Iran, and Russian scientists having to find some way to earn a living. We hear a lot about the fact that Russia has a very significant amount of enriched uranium and that we have agreed, in a sense, to buy it.

Now we find ourselves kind of in a quagmire. Our own trade laws do not let us buy and resell the material because that is dumping. So we have a \$4 billion commercial transaction going and the Russians are saying, "Fine, we made a deal, let's do it." And so we have an entity here, the U.S. Enrichment Corporation, currently in existence. It is Government owned, and thus it is corporate only in the sense that we call it a corporation. The U.S. Enrichment Corporation, when we sell it—and what we propose here has been cleared by and looked at by a lot of marketplace people—we believe it will generate \$1.5 billion for the Treasury of the United States, when we take the existing Government corporation and put it on the market, make it a corporation.

One of the most difficult issues facing this enrichment corporation and the uranium industry as a whole is how uranium from the Soviet Union is allowed to enter the United States market. Currently, the Department of Commerce enforces a suspension agreement that limits the amount of uranium we can import from the Soviet Union. The suspension agreement enforces U.S. trade laws. Obviously, a straight purchase and resale into the U.S. market would result in dumping. So it will not work.

In 1993, Russia and the United States signed an agreement under which the United States would purchase up to \$4 billion worth of natural uranium derived from highly enriched uranium from Soviet nuclear weapons. However, as I indicated, the U.S. trade law prevents that natural uranium from being sold in the United States. The enrichment corporation is responsible, none-

theless, for implementing the Russian agreement. As a result, the \$4 billion obligation falls squarely on the enrichment corporation, the one we now have, the Government corporation, because the enrichment corporation is prevented from selling the natural uranium into the U.S. market, which would be illegal since the material is below market price. As a result, the United States Enrichment Corporation cannot pay the Russians. In turn, the Russians argue that they are being shortchanged \$4 billion. I do not think one can blame them for that. We have an agreement. But our enrichment corporation cannot buy it, because if they buy it, they cannot use it.

So this legislation solves that problem by enabling the creation of a futures market for natural uranium derived from the Russian agreement. The material could only enter the U.S. market in a controlled manner starting in 2002. Thus, it is not inconsistent with our trade laws.

So this proposal preserves the United States trade commitment, protects the United States uranium industry from unfair dumping, and encourages Russia's important work of dismantling nuclear weapons to continue. This proposal enables the Russians to be able to pay the people that are doing the dismantlement work that with some of the fruits of the disarmament, namely the revenue from the natural uranium. The money would provide the cash flow necessary to keep the Russian minatom employees working to dismantle the Russian nuclear capability and, in turn, the Russians might not be so adamant about selling reactors to Iran for a billion dollars.

So in a very real way, the notion of privatization, which is given sort of a rebirth because of the last election, finds itself settling in on this situation. I happen to have the privilege of chairing the Subcommittee on Energy Research and Development that has this as one of its responsibilities. So the idea of privatizing it fell on our subcommittee, and with the work of some experts and some really exciting ideas encapsulated in this bill, we may indeed retain the enrichment corporation, that is privately owned, privately run, that can indeed make money, and we will successfully implement the Russian agreement using the futures approach. I do not think we have seen a nicer fit and match than this. In the meantime, we pick up \$1.5 billion for the U.S. Treasury.

Now, obviously, there will be a lot of questions about this, and we are understanding of that. We hope that within a month, as soon as we get the budget behind us a little bit here, we can have some hearings on this and get it to the floor this year. We think it is an exciting idea of privatization which accomplishes so many good things at one time that we want to move full speed ahead and see if we cannot get it done. I have good cosponsors. I invite other Senators to take a look. Mr. FORD is a

cosponsor. He is ranking member of the subcommittee. We have Senators JOHNSTON, CAMPBELL, THOMAS, and SIMPSON.

I am sure we will have others as soon as they understand it. I look for some of those who work in foreign relations and are worried about Iran and the growing relationships of a monetary nature between Iran and Russia, I look to them to analyze this, and perhaps they can see fit to join us.

I yield the floor.

Mr. KERRY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I come to the floor—and I listened with great interest earlier to the majority leader, the distinguished Senator from Kansas, talking about a letter that he and the Speaker of the House have written to the President asking for some bipartisan cooperation having to do with Medicare.

Mr. President, for 12 years when we had a Republican President, any time anyone would say, gee, how come Ronald Reagan does not submit a balanced budget, or George Bush does not, the standard response that would come is—mostly, I must say, from Republicans in defense of their Republican President—they would say, "Gee, the President does not spend any money, Congress spends the money." I must say, the Republican defense is accurate. Congress does spend the money. For us to say, gee, the President has the responsibility for spending the money is inaccurate. It is the Congress of the United States of America that passes laws that determine how much money we are going to collect and in what manner we are going to collect it from the American people and how we are going to allocate that money across a whole range of programs.

In fact, the Budget Enforcement Act requires the Congress to produce a budget resolution by the 15th of April, which is several weeks past.

Mr. President, if the majority leader wants to get a bipartisan movement to do something about deficit reduction, there are a number of us on this side of the aisle who are all too willing to do exactly that. It seems to me that is what we need. If we are going to get movement, it ought to be movement inside of the U.S. Congress. There is a ferocious debate. There are ideological differences. The biggest task that faces us is that deficit reduction is tough. The problem with Medicare is not caused by mean and nasty Republicans or mean and liberal Democrats; it is caused by demographics and technology.

The good news is that we are living longer. The bad news is that it is getting more and more expensive for us to pay for the health care for those where we have made a commitment. If you think it is bad over the next 4, 5 years, you ought to see what the entitlement commission says this looks like when my generation begins to retire. This thing goes clear off the charts after the