

him such an advocate for my election, but I like to think it was more his vision for the future which so inspired him.

While his résumé is impressive, it is the goodness of the man I will remember. His name was not in the headlines every day, but he touched the lives of everyone he met. He was a man who did much to leave this world a better place than he found it. The entertainment world will miss him, his family will miss him, and together with all of his other friends, I will miss him.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, on the memorable evening in 1972 when I was first elected to the Senate, I made a commitment to myself that I would never fail to see a young person, or a group of young people, who wanted to see me.

It has proved enormously beneficial to me because I have been inspired by the estimated 60,000 young people with whom I have visited during the nearly 23 years I have been in the Senate.

Most of them have been concerned about the enormity of the Federal debt that Congress has run up for the coming generations to pay.

The young people and I almost always discuss the fact that under the U.S. Constitution, no President can spend a dime of Federal money that has not been authorized and appropriated by both the House and Senate of the United States.

That is why I began making these daily reports to the Senate on February 22, 1992. I wanted to make a matter of daily record of the precise size of the Federal debt which as of yesterday, Tuesday, September 26, stood at \$4,953,250,764,121.84 or \$18,802.63 for every man, woman, and child in America on a per capita basis.

Mr. BURNS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

PROGRESSIVE POLICY INSTITUTE

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, this morning, myself, Senator BREAUX, Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator NUNN stood with an organization called the Progressive Policy Institute to embrace some recommendations, an outline of recommendations they made to reform both the Medicare Program—a \$170 billion program that is funded

with the combination of a 2.9-percent payroll tax and a health insurance premium paid for by 37 million beneficiaries over the age of 65 with \$46 or so a month, that funds about 30 percent of the part B, the doctor's payment, as well as \$80 billion program for Medicaid.

These are the most rapidly growing items in the budget. They are not the most, but in terms of total dollars, this \$250 billion collective program has gotten quite expensive. It has tormented a lot of Members who have been trying to figure out what to do to control the growth, in particular, of entitlements.

Last year, Senator Danforth, a former Senator from Missouri, and I made some recommendations about what should be done to reform entitlements. The purpose of our recommendation was to say to Americans that we should agree that no more than a certain percentage of our budget would go to entitlements, plus net interest.

Looking at the future, given the current trend lines particularly with the enormous demographic problem, mostly demographic not political problem, of 60 million baby boomers starting to retire in 2008, look at that problem and the cost of our entitlements not too long after the year 2008—all of our budget will be consumed by entitlement spending.

When I say all, there are not very many things in Washington, DC, that have stayed constant over the years. One that has stayed constant, except for two periods in this century, World War II and for a period during the Vietnam war, the percent that has been withdrawn from the economy to fund Federal programs, approximately 19 percent, about how much we withdraw from the economy, a fifth of the U.S. economy is used to fund Federal programs. That really has not changed except for two wartime situations.

It is likely that indicates that is about what Americans think we ought to be withdrawing from the U.S. economy for the Federal Government. There may be some that would argue we ought to do more, not very many; and maybe some would argue we should do dramatically less. Probably it means we will spend about 19 percent.

If that is the constant, Mr. President, it is very alarming to see the growth of entitlements in net interest because as it grows it decreases the amount of money available to defend our country, to keep our cities safe, educate our children, to build our roads, our sewers, our water system, space exploration—all those sorts of things.

This year's budget, 67 percent of our budget goes to entitlements and net interest, and in the year 2002 at the end of the 7-year budget resolution that we are operating under, it will be 75 percent—an 8 point increase in a span of 7 years. That is a lot of money, about \$135 billion or \$140 billion increase in entitlements, if you do it in a single year.

As I said, Mr. President, that trend really rapidly accelerates when the baby boomers retire some 6 years later. The entitlement commission tried to say to Americans, "Let's make changes in our programs sooner rather than later." The sooner we do them the bigger the future impact and the more time we can give beneficiaries or recipients, in the case of Medicaid, with time to plan.

They can begin to adjust their own thinking about planning. If you have to adjust the eligibility age, which we recommended over a period of time; or if you have to phase in some change in premium payments, or whatever. Give people time to plan. It is more likely they can adjust.

There are tough recommendations, Mr. President. Contained inside of the recommendations was another presumption which is that we are seeing the marketplace work. It is a relatively recent change in health care.

When we debated health care 4 years ago, the facts as presented to the American people would cause you to believe that actually the Government was doing a better job of controlling costs than the private sector. Private sector costs exceeded the public side.

Today not only is that reversed, but strikingly so. We are seeing in some parts of the country where a high percentage of managed care, even some declines in overall cost of health care, where the public sector continues to grow in double digits.

That sort of frames a little bit, in a preliminary fashion, why I was pleased with the Progressive Policy Institute's proposal. It does propose to address the problem of growing entitlements, and it does propose to take advantage of the changes that are occurring in the marketplace, to restructure Medicare and Medicaid to take advantage of the changes that are occurring.

Let me say, Mr. President, one of the things I do when I am at home and talking about the current debate about Medicare and Medicaid is to say I am pleased that Republicans are trying to preserve and protect the program. Many Republicans were not, as you know. Some Republicans were opposed to this over the years. Now what we have appears to be almost unanimous—Republicans saying not only do we think Medicare is a good idea, we want to preserve Medicare for our children and for our grandchildren.

Mr. President, let me point out that underneath the program is a presumption, an assumption that we have to believe before the program itself can stand, before we can reach the conclusion that we want to preserve and protect it. That assumption is this: No matter what we do with the marketplace, no matter what happens with our economy, there is apt to be some Americans that will not be able to afford to buy health insurance, for whatever the reason. They may be disabled. In this case with Medicare it is the elderly. Say they are over 65 and likely