

gone about half the way. Now we would call upon the President to join with us to go all the way to address the issue on generic drugs, and to work with us to pass the bill that has been introduced by my colleagues Senator MCCAIN and Senator SCHUMER, again a bipartisan bill, that would in fact put more competition into the system and lower prices—not only lower prices for our seniors under Medicare but lower prices for those covered in the private sector, thus bringing down the costs to businesses large and small.

I am disappointed we do not have in this proposal an effort to support our States, our Governors—Democrats and Republicans—who indicated last week that health care costs and Medicaid costs are a top priority for them. It is a large part of their budgets as they are struggling under a weakened economy. Many States, including my own Michigan, have been innovative, want to come together with other States to do bulk purchasing of prescription drugs in order to get discounts, bigger discounts than you can get through a discount card, to lower prices. We have seen States such as Maine and Vermont that have come forward with innovative plans to lower prices, each time being challenged by the brand name industry. In every situation the industry is suing or lobbying or doing something to stop competition in innovation in lower prices.

We had a plan as well. Part of our bill, S. 812, which we passed last summer, was a bill to address more generic drugs, at the same time opening the border with Canada, and also supporting the States that have been innovative in coming forward to try to lower prices for their citizens. There is no mention of that in this plan as well.

So we do not see anything addressing any of those issues. We see nothing in here addressing the concerns that there is more advertising money now spent by companies than research money—2½ times more being spent on advertising of the brand name drugs than on researching of new cures. We are seeing that drive up the costs as well, the explosion in sales and marketing and advertising.

Also, there is no mention of the fact that we are paying for a system where the majority of patents now are not for new breakthrough drugs but for what are called “me too” drugs. Basically 65 percent of patents in recent years are patents for drugs that have very little change in health value but just extend the patent so generics cannot go on the market and there is less competition.

There are so many ways we can be working together to lower prices—for employers to create a situation where employees are not being asked to take pay freezes so their employer can pay for the costs of health care; lower the prices for the uninsured, who pay the top price; and particularly our seniors. Right now in our country if you are an American senior and you walk into the local pharmacy and you do not have in-

surance, Medicare does not cover it. You pay top dollar of anybody in the world for your medicine. That is not an exaggeration. Americans pay top dollar of anybody in the world, and if you are uninsured, you pay the top.

We are back again talking about these issues of how to provide real Medicare coverage and at the same time lower prices for everyone. There were comments about what was going to be proposed by the President. Then there were indications from the administration that, no, in fact they were going to be putting forward something that would help everyone and not force people into private sector HMOs. Unfortunately, again we see one thing being said and another thing being done.

I hope my colleagues in the Senate will come together and we can fashion what really needs to happen. Again, our seniors are not asking for more choices about complicated insurance policies. They are not asking to wade through more options in terms of private sector HMOs. When they had the chance to pick between staying with traditional Medicare or going to an HMO through Medicare+Choice, the vast majority of older Americans and the disabled said no. They said no, we will stay with traditional Medicare.

Now that they have said no voluntarily, the White House has decided to come back and create a situation where, if they need help, they will be forced to go into a plan they said no to when it was voluntary.

I think the people of this country are going to see what this is. I think the seniors are going to understand what this is, and overwhelmingly reject this kind of an effort.

I hope we in the Senate will reject this kind of a proposal and that we will come together and be willing to roll up our sleeves and do the business of simply designing a plan under Medicare where 40 million seniors and disabled have the ability to come together under one plan and have the clout to lower prices and get that group discount for seniors; so they have something that is stable, where everyone knows what the premium is; so everyone knows what is covered; so it is reliable; so it doesn't matter if you live in the upper peninsula of Michigan or Benton Harbor, Saint Joe, or the city of Detroit, you would know and you would have it available to you. You could count on it. That has been the strength of Medicare. It has been there for everyone, and our older Americans can count on it. They are asking for us to simply do the same thing and design prescription drug coverage. Unfortunately, what we are hearing about the White House proposal is woefully inadequate.

I urge my colleagues to immediately reject the proposal and give us an opportunity to work together on something that we know we can do that is best.

Thank you, Mr. President. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE SO-CALLED MOSCOW TREATY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I understand that perhaps today or tomorrow we will have a so-called Moscow Treaty brought to the floor of the Senate for debate. It is a treaty that has its origin in some discussions between our Presidents and the leader of Russia about the issue of nuclear arms and the reduction of nuclear arms.

I want to say I will vote for this treaty, although I must say it is not much of an agreement and not much of a treaty at all. I don't see any reason someone would vote against it. But I make the point that this is an agreement between two countries—both of which have large stocks of nuclear weapons—to reduce their number of nuclear weapons by taking some and putting them in warehouses and storage facilities and at the end of the process both countries can keep the same number of nuclear weapons they had when they started.

No nuclear weapons under this agreement will be destroyed, dismantled, or defused.

And This treaty deals with only strategic nuclear weapons, not theater nuclear weapons. There are thousands and thousands of theater nuclear weapons, such as the nuclear weapons that go on the tips of artillery shells. That is not part of this agreement. It has nothing to do with this agreement.

Strategic nuclear weapons are the very large warheads that one would put on the tip of an ICBM, for example, or to have in the belly of a bomber, or perhaps on the tip of a missile that is in a submarine. Those are the strategic nuclear weapons.

Between our country and Russia, there are perhaps 10,000, maybe 11,000, strategic nuclear weapons. So you have thousands on each side. Should we be reducing them? Of course. Absolutely.

But we have a circumstance now where there is a treaty, or an agreement, with Moscow in which, between now and the year 2012, we all the US and Russia have to do is take nuclear weapons and put them in storage. So each side, in the year 2012, can keep if it wants exactly the same number of nuclear weapons. Not one nuclear weapon that exists today needs to be destroyed in the next 9 years—none.

I do not understand that. I guess it is fine to have agreements just for the sake of having agreements, but of what value?

We have had examples of effective reductions of nuclear weapons and also delivery vehicles. I have mentioned them in the Chamber on many occasions. Let me do so again.

There is a program called the Nunn-Lugar Program, which is named after former Senator Sam Nunn and our current distinguished colleague, Senator LUGAR. It is a program that I very strongly support. It makes a great deal of sense. That program actually destroys nuclear warheads and delivery systems that are made excess through the various arms control treaties.

For example, in my desk I have a piece of metal which I would like to show by unanimous consent.

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

Mr. DORGAN. This piece of metal belonged to a Soviet bomber. This was part of a wing strut on a Soviet bomber. Presumably, this bomber, belonging to the Soviet Union, carried nuclear weapons that could have been dropped on a target here in the United States of America.

How is it that a Senator on the floor of the Senate has a metal piece from a Soviet bomber? Well, simple. This bomber had its wings sawed off and its fuselage destroyed. How? The U.S. paid for it. We did not shoot the bomber down. This was not the result of hostilities. This was the result of an agreement between our country and the old Soviet Union, now Russia, to actually reduce delivery vehicles, bombers, missiles, submarines, and to actually reduce the number of nuclear weapons.

So that is how I come to hold in my hand a piece of metal that belonged to a Soviet bomber, and then Russian bomber, that would carry nuclear weapons that would have threatened this country.

Mr. President, I show you this little tube of ground copper. This used to be in a submarine that carried nuclear weapons on behalf of the old Soviet Union and then Russia. Those nuclear weapons were all aimed at this country, thousands of them. Well, this submarine does not carry nuclear weapons anymore. It was dismantled and destroyed. And I have here, on the floor of the Senate, a piece of ground up copper from the wiring of an old Soviet submarine.

That makes a lot of sense to me. We are actually reducing the threat by reducing the number of delivery vehicles, bombers, submarines, missiles, and dismantling the number of warheads.

We have been engaged in that for the last 10 years or so. And I would like to especially say my colleagues, Senator LUGAR and Senator Nunn, proposed a program by which we did not have to sink a Soviet submarine and we did not have to shoot down a Soviet bomber in order to destroy weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. We paid for their destruction with large circular saws and with devices in shipyards that destroyed their submarine by agreement.

By contrast, the agreement that comes to the floor of the Senate this week is kind of a marshmallow. It does not do anything. It is full of air. It says: Oh, let's have each side put more

of their nuclear weapons in storage and then pretend we have reduced the number of nuclear weapons. Well, I thought pretend was all about children's books; it is not about the serious business of nuclear arms control.

There was a rumor, some long while ago, that a terrorist organization had stolen a nuclear weapon and was set to detonate it in a U.S. city. The interesting thing about that rumor was that the intelligence community did not view it as incredible that a nuclear weapon could have been stolen. After all, there were thousands and thousands and thousands in the world, most possessed by two countries—ours and also now Russia.

So our intelligence community did not believe it was an incredible threat. They believed it was entirely possible someone could have stolen a weapon, particularly from the Russian arsenal that does not have great command and control, I have heard and I have been told. And secondly, it was not something beyond the bounds of reality that, having stolen a nuclear weapon, a terrorist organization would know how to detonate it or could detonate it.

If ever there needed to be a sober moment, that was it.

For us to think that the potential stealing of one nuclear weapon, and put in the wrong hands—the hands of terrorists—would threaten this country, or any city in this country, ought to lead us to understand that if we are worried about one nuclear weapon, we ought to be worried about thousands and thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons.

With both strategic and theater nuclear weapons, there are perhaps as many as 25,000 to 30,000 nuclear weapons in this world. And what are we going to do this week? We are going to come and talk about how we shuffle the inventory of nuclear weapons from one place to another, destroying none of them, and then saying: We have an agreement. What a great agreement. By the year 2012, we will have moved nuclear weapons into storage facilities. And the world is safer.

Oh, really? How?

At the same time all of this is occurring, there is a fundamental shift occurring, in addition, with respect to the discussion about nuclear weapons. This administration says: We do not want to continue the antiballistic missile treaty—which has been the center pole of the tent of arms control.

Instead, this administration says: We want to talk about and consider the possibility of developing new designer nuclear weapons; for example, bunker buster nuclear weapons.

This administration, and many in this Congress—too many in this Senate—said: We do not support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty—despite the fact that we have not tested a nuclear weapon for well over a decade.

There is a fundamental shift going on. This administration has said: We

have not ruled out the use of nuclear weapons in certain circumstances. I will not go into them, but they have been in the newspapers.

I think our responsibility—of all countries in the world—is to be a leader in trying to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in this world, and to try to convince everyone and anyone that no one shall ever again explode a nuclear weapon in anger.

Pakistan and India both have nuclear weapons. They do not like each other. They have been exchanging weapons fire across the border with respect to Kashmir. Both have nuclear weapons. Do we want, in any way, to signal that the use of nuclear weapons, in any circumstance, is appropriate? Do we want to signal that we actually have a desire to begin producing new types of nuclear weapons, such as bunker buster nuclear weapons?

I think this country has chosen the wrong path with respect to these policies. We ought to be debating on the floor of the Senate something that has grip to it, something that says: Look, as a world leader, it is our determination to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, and to stop the spread now. And we are going to do that.

We ought to be saying: It is our judgment that we want to reduce the stockpile of nuclear weapons in this world. And we want to be a leader in doing that. We just have to assume that leadership responsibility.

A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT FOR SENIORS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, having said that, I want to mention two additional quick items.

We have had a discussion, and will have a discussion, about the subject of Medicare. It will be a significant issue in this Congress, and should be. We have been talking, for a long while, about the health needs of senior citizens who do not have access to prescription drugs because they are too expensive. Too many senior citizens are told: You must take prescription drugs for these ailments you have; and they discover: Well, I can't take prescription drugs. I don't have the money.

Republicans and Democrats have been debating how to add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare plan. Today I see the President is going to send us a proposal that says we would like to give everybody a discount card who would qualify under Medicare, and then say to others, if they want to get some real help for real prescription drug coverage, they have to join an HMO or a managed care organization. That doesn't make any sense to me as a matter of public policy. We need to put downward pressure on prescription drug prices first and foremost.

Second, I believe we ought to provide a prescription drug benefit in the Medicare Program. If we were writing that program today, we would do that. I