

this floor—we had an amendment we tried twice to pass—a budget trigger which says if the phase-in of the tax cut dips into Social Security and Medicare to pay for it, if we go back into debt, we will suspend that action, further tax cuts or spending, until the revenue comes in.

In Michigan, we call that common sense. Don't spend it unless you have it. We believe fiscal responsibility, keeping the budget balanced, paying down the debt, protecting Social Security and Medicare are critical and should not be compromised for any other actions no matter how well intended. We have a train going down the track. My fear is there will be no budget trigger to stop the train before it goes off the track. That is common sense.

We are going to be asked at some point to vote on a final budget proposal that spends Medicare and Social Security moneys for the future. When we look at the fundamental unfairness, we see that those who are most dependent on Social Security, most in need of Medicare health benefits, are those who receive little or nothing from the tax cut but their Social Security and Medicare, will help pay for it.

It is not fair. It is just simply not fair. We have in front of us a proposal that kept us moving in the same policy track as the 1990s. I urge we still have time to consider that. It is a proposal that gives tax relief but makes sure we condition it upon using none of Social Security and Medicare and that we keep our commitment to fiscal responsibility and paying down our debt while we do it.

The proposal I support also would put aside dollars for education to continue our ability to keep labor productivity going in our country. When we asked Chairman Greenspan at the Budget Committee hearing what was the one thing driving this economy, he said it was increased labor productivity. So why in the world would we be creating a situation where education funds are going to have to be cut and research funds and technology development will have to be cut in order to pay for the tax cut in front of us?

I believe common sense would dictate we pay down the debt, we protect Medicare and Social Security, we give a major tax cut focused on our middle-income families and small businesses and family farmers, and that we can do that and also be able to continue investments to keep the economy going.

This is the approach that worked. It is hard to argue with success. The policies in the 1990s were successful because of the hard work of both the private sector and the public sector to move us out of debt, to balance the budget, and to make investments in education and the economy.

I hope we will take a deep breath and reconsider what is about to be done in

the next few hours or the next few days. We can do better than that.

Also, when we talk about putting money back in people's pockets, there are multiple ways to do that, all which I support, which we need to do and can do while being fiscally responsible. No. 1 is a tax cut. No. 2 is keeping interest rates down so your mortgage is down, as are your car payment and your student loan—those things are low enough for people to be able to afford those items for their families.

Finally, for the senior citizen in this country who gets up in the morning and sits at the table and decides, do I eat today or get my medicine, which too many seniors are doing in the greatest country in the world, we can put money in their pockets by lowering the cost of prescription drugs. They will not see much of this tax cut, but they deserve some money in their pocket, too.

If we do this right, if we use good old common sense, we can put forward a plan that keeps the economy going, puts money in people's pockets, and supports our families in a way that allows the economy to grow and prosper. We owe no less to our children.

We can do better. It is time to take a second look at what we are doing.

I yield my time.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous request to be recognized as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mrs. FEINSTEIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 976 are located in today's RECORD under "Introduction of Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

#### KOREAN WAR HEROISM

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, with the approach of Memorial Day, it is my privilege to call the attention of this body to one of the greatest, yet least known, acts of sustained heroism in the history of the United States. It occurred 50 years ago in the sixth month of the Korean war.

In December of 1950 American forces accomplished the unbelievable evacuation of 100,000 Allied troops from the port city of Hungnam in North Korea, barely hours ahead of the charging forces of our two newest enemies, North Korea and Communist China. At

the same time our American soldiers, sailors, and marines, managed to evacuate another 100,000 persons, all North Korean civilian refugees who were fleeing their own harsh dictatorship and the ruthless Chinese army whose leaders had threatened to cut off their heads because some had been aiding our United Nations forces.

One of the most heroic acts in the evacuation of Hungnam is the virtually unknown story of a small American merchant marine freighter, the S.S. *Meredith Victory*. With space for only twelve passengers, the ship loaded and rescued 14,000 North Koreans—the innocent people of our enemy—old men, young mothers with their babies on their backs and at their breasts, children carrying children. Their rescue was accomplished during one danger-filled voyage of three days and three nights in bitter winter cold that ended in safety and freedom on Christmas Day. The United States Government, through its Maritime Administration, has called it "the greatest rescue operation by a single ship in the history of mankind."

The Korean war has been called "America's forgotten war," and the evacuation of Hungnam has been called "the forgotten battle in the forgotten war." I submit, that the heroic story of the men of the S.S. *Meredith Victory* is "the forgotten rescue."

Fortunately, this story is now being brought to the attention of the American people in a new book "Ship of Miracles" by Bill Gilbert, a former reporter for the Washington Post who served in the U.S. Air Force during and after the Korean war. The foreword to his book is written by General Alexander M. Haig Jr. whose career included serving as White House chief of staff, NATO commander, and Secretary of State. Appropriately, however, General Haig served in Korea during the war and was directly involved in the rescue of our troops and the refugees from Hungnam. The book was released by Triumph Books of Chicago.

General Haig states in his foreword, "The story of Hungnam and the *Meredith Victory* is a brilliant yet relatively unknown chapter in American history that can now take its place, during this fiftieth anniversary of the Korean war, among such legendary names as Bunker Hill, Midway, the Battle of the Bulge, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. This book did not just deserve to be written—it needed to be written."

The men of the *Meredith Victory*, led by their captain, Leonard LaRue of Philadelphia, emerge as the heroes of this amazing story. Every one of the 14,000 refugees aboard that ship survived, plus five babies born enroute to safety with no doctors to help. There was no food for the refugees, no water, no sanitation facilities, no interpreters, and no protection against the enemy. The men of the *Meredith Victory*

accomplished their rescue while sailing through one of the heaviest-laid mine fields in the history of naval warfare with no mine detectors. They had no anti-aircraft guns in case of an air attack. Radio contact with other ships was forbidden for security reasons. To add to the prolonged tension, the ship was carrying a large supply of jet fuel.

The *Meredith Victory* arrived at Pusan on the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula on Christmas eve but was not allowed to land because the port was already overflowing with refugees and rescued American troops. Captain LaRue wrote later of "these people aboard who, like the Holy Family many centuries before, were themselves refugees from a tyrannical force." The ship did land safely on Christmas Day on Koje-Do island, fifty miles southwest of Pusan.

One of the Navy officers who participated in the Hungnam evacuation was the late Admiral Arleigh Burke who became Chief of Naval Operations. He later said, "As a result of the extraordinary efforts of the men of the *Meredith Victory*, many people are now free who otherwise might well be under the Communist yoke. Many unknown Koreans owe the future freedom of their children to the efforts of these men."

Larry King, the talk show host, said "Ship of Miracles' will make you proud to be an American."

The book has already won its first award. Mr. Gilbert has been awarded the Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt Naval History Prize, awarded annually by the New York Council of the Navy League. The Council's president, Rear Admiral Robert A. Ravitz (USNR, ret.), said Mr. Gilbert was selected "because his book tells a story of American heroism and humanitarianism which has gone overlooked for 50 years and should be told and made a shining part of our military history."

Admiral Ravitz added, "At a time when we are reading other stories about what American forces did or didn't do in Korea and elsewhere, Mr. Gilbert has made a valuable contribution to American history of revealing this story of both the bravery and the goodness of America's men in time of war."

For these reasons, our nation owes a debt to Bill Gilbert on this Memorial Day for writing a book which reminds the American people of that forgotten war and of an heroic incident in that war by the brave men of the S.S. *Meredith Victory*.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of "Older Americans Month." Since 1963 when President Kennedy began this important tradition, each May has been des-

ignated as a time for our country to honor our older citizens for their many accomplishments and contributions to our Nation. Those of us who have worked diligently in the U.S. Senate to ensure that older Americans are able to live in dignity and independence during their later years look forward to this opportunity to pause and reflect on the contributions of those individuals who have played such a major role in the shaping of our great Nation. We honor them for their hard work and the countless sacrifices they have made throughout their lifetimes, and look forward to their continued contributions to our country's welfare.

Today's older citizens have witnessed more technological advances than any other generation in our Nation's history. Seniors today have lived through times of extreme economic depression and prosperity, times of war and peace, and incredible advancements in the fields of science, medicine, transportation and communications. They have adapted to these changes remarkably well while continuing to make meaningful contributions to this country.

Recent Census figures reveal that the number of Americans 85 and older grew 37 percent during the 1990's while the nation's overall population increased only 13 percent. Baby boomers, who represented one-third of all Americans in 1994, will enter the 65-years-and-older category over the next 13-34 years, substantially increasing this segment of our population.

At the same time the number of older Americans is skyrocketing, they are in much better health and far less likely than their counterparts of previous generations to be impoverished, disabled or living in nursing homes. More older Americans are working and volunteer far beyond the traditional retirement age to give younger generations the benefit of their wisdom. These figures show that commitment to programs such as Medicare and Social Security, and investment in biomedical research and treatment are improving the quality of life for older Americans. One of our national goals must be to ensure all older Americans experience these improvements. We must continue to enact meaningful legislation to help meet the needs of this valuable and constantly expanding segment of our society.

By 2020, Medicare will be responsible for covering nearly 20 percent of the population. Yet 3 in 5 Medicare beneficiaries lack affordable, prescription drug coverage. Though Medicare works, it was created in a different time before the benefits of prescription medicines had become such an integral part of health care. Today it is unthinkable to think of quality healthcare coverage without including the medicines that treat and prevent illnesses. I have and will continue to fight for Medicare prescription drug

coverage. As a cosponsor of the Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Act of 2001, I recognize the predicament many older Americans are in as they struggle to live independently on a fixed income and afford costly prescription drugs. It is imperative that we address the needs of the Americans who have devoted so much of their life experience and achievement to better our society.

The celebration of Older Americans Month provides us with the opportunity to highlight the importance of the Older Americans Act. As a vigorous and consistent supporter of measures to benefit older Americans, I am pleased that Congress and President Clinton reauthorized this important legislation last year. I commend my colleague from Maryland, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, for her tireless efforts in pressing for enactment of The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000. This legislation funds a dynamic network of community and home-based services so critical to many of our Nation's seniors, including home care, ombudsman services for residents in long-term care facilities, and subsidized employment for older workers.

One of the most beneficial provisions of the Act is the creation of the National Family Caregiver Support Program. The Administration on Aging estimates that each day, as many as 5 million older Americans are recipients of care from more than 22 million informal caregivers. On average, these caregivers will limit their professional opportunities and lose an average of \$550,000 in total wage wealth as they care for their loved ones. Women are 50 percent more likely to be informal caregivers, and as a result, they are more likely to risk their health, earnings and retirement security. As programs such as Medicare and Medicaid continue to feel the pressures of the current Federal budget process, the noble and compassionate work of these dedicated individuals is particularly critical. The National Family Caregiver Support Program addresses the challenges faced by informal caregivers. It authorizes funding for distribution of information to caregivers regarding available services, caregiver training, and respite services to provide families temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities.

I have always believed strongly that this wise population contributes greatly to American society. Our Nation's older generations are an ever-growing resource that deserves our attention, our gratitude, and our heart-felt respect. As observance of Older American Month comes to a close, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to implement public policies that affirm the contributions of older Americans to our society and ensure that they continue to thrive with dignity.