

In response to your request that Nevada stop using private transport companies, please be advised our prison system has ceased its business relationship with Extraditions International and that all of this State's out of state inmate transfers are now being staffed by our prison system.

Good for him. He said, incidentally, Mr. Prestridge is now not going to be sent to North Dakota. Good for us.

But good for him that he changed the policy. In our State, in the most recent days, the company that let this fellow go, the company whose negligence allowed a convicted child killer to walk away and evade authorities for some months, settled with the State for \$50,000. The State sent them a bill for \$102,000 and the company said: We won't pay it. We'd pay you \$50,000. And then the State says this company is a pretty good company and we will use them again.

My State is making a mistake, in my judgment. I would like every State to make a decision when they are going to transport violent criminals around this country, do it with law enforcement officials, do it with the U.S. Marshals Service. They will do it for a flat fee and then some American family won't have to worry that, when they pull up at a gas station, next to them at the pump is a mini van with two inexperienced folks hauling three murderers. What is that about, in terms of public safety?

It seems to me we ought to have enough common sense in this country when we have convicted someone of killing children, when we have convicted someone of murder or violent crimes, at least we ought not to turn them into the arms of someone inexperienced in the private sector, a company that has to meet no standards at all with which to transport them. That doesn't make any sense to me.

So I say to the Governor of Nevada: Good for you. It is the right decision. I would say to our State: Change your mind. Decide this company should not haul violent offenders in North Dakota and that when you are going to transport a violent offender, the U.S. Marshals Service ought to be used to do it.

I say to every State official across this country: Until we get in place basic standards these companies must meet, you ought not use them for transporting violent offenders. Were I a chief executive of a State, I would not use them anyway because I do not think people who kill children, as in the case of Kyle Bell, ought to be turned over to anyone other than law enforcement authorities to transport them to another place of incarceration.

SANCTIONS ON EXPORT OF FOOD AND MEDICINE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to speak about an issue that is of great importance to my State and to all agricultural producers around the country. That is the issue of the sanctions on food and medicine that now exist in our relationships with some countries around the world.

Our country has been in the habit of saying: We don't like certain countries,

we don't like the way they behave, so we are going to slap economic sanctions on these countries and we have included sanctions on the shipment of food and medicine. So countries such as Libya, Iran, Cuba, North Korea, and others, are in a circumstance of having economic sanctions enacted against them to punish them, and we have included in those sanctions food and medicine.

A group of us are trying to change that. We do not think it is the moral thing to do. What is this country doing, saying to others that we will not allow them to have access to food and medicine? Taking aim at dictators and hurting poor people, sick people, and hungry people is hardly something about which we ought to be proud. This is not a moral policy.

I come from a farm State, so I care about having access to these markets as well. I admit that. Aside from the market side of this, which is important—after all, these countries against whom we have sanctions on food and medicine represent almost 11 percent of the world's wheat markets, and we have said to our farmers: By the way, 11 percent of the world's wheat market is off limits to you. Why? Because we decided we do not like these countries and we are going to make them pay a price. Part of the price we are going to exact is the ability for them to access food and medicine from the United States.

Of course, other countries access it from Canada, Europe, or others. We are the country that decides to withhold food and medicine from these countries.

Last year, we had a vote in the Senate on that. Senator ASHCROFT, I, and many others who pushed to repeal the sanction on food and medicine won with 70 out of 100 votes. We were hijacked by the House of Representatives in conference. I was one of the conferees. They just flat out hijacked us. When it was clear to them we were going to win the issue in conference, they adjourned the conference, never to see them again, and they stripped the provision.

I offered the same provision in the Senate Appropriations Committee, and it is now in the Agriculture appropriations bill. That is coming to the floor of the Senate. We have 70 Senators who said they think it is wrong to continue sanctions on food and medicine. The message in the Senate is: Stop using food as a weapon. It is the right message.

There are a lot of people in the House of Representatives who apparently are willing to do that except for Cuba; Cuba is a special case, and they will not withdraw sanctions on food and medicine with respect to Cuba. In fact, that is what derailed it last year.

I am one person, but I tell my colleagues that I am not going to allow, to the extent I can prevent it, the hijacking of this issue again this year by just two or three people who decide they are going to strip this provision and then have the House and Senate

deal with the broader appropriations issues that do not include this provision.

We have spent a lot of time on this issue. This country is wrong in applying sanctions with respect to food and medicine shipments to countries such as Cuba. Yes, Cuba.

I was in Cuba last year. I have no truck with the Castro government. I think the Cuban government and its economic system have collapsed. But the sanctions that exist with respect to this country's actions against Cuba have represented Fidel Castro's greatest excuse to the Cuban people. He says: Of course my economy does not work; of course my country is in trouble. The United States has had its fist around our neck for 40 years.

It is Fidel Castro's greatest excuse, in my judgment, for an economic system that has failed Cuba. It does not make sense, in my judgment, for us to exact a penalty on the Cuban people, on poor people, on hungry people, and on sick people in Cuba, in North Korea, and elsewhere to continue these absurd sanctions on food and medicine.

We can have a broader discussion at some other time about whether the embargo that exists with Cuba ought to be lifted. That is a different subject, a broader subject. Incidentally, I have strong feelings about that as well. This is a narrower issue: Do we believe it appropriate to continue sanctions with respect to the shipment of food and medicine to countries such as Cuba, North Korea, Iran, and others? The answer ought to be a resounding no.

My colleague, Senator SLADE GORTON from the State of Washington, is in the Chamber. He was a cosponsor of this in the Senate Appropriations Committee. He, I, and JOHN ASHCROFT have issued a statement that says to all within hearing distance that if you think you are going to hijack this issue again this year, think again, because we have 70 votes in the Senate that say we ought not use food and medicine as a weapon, and we intend to insist this year that we prevail on this issue.

I cannot speak for anybody else, but the statement we issued is pretty self-explanatory. I am here to give fair warning to those who want to do what they did last year that it is going to be a pretty difficult proposition if they intend to hijack this issue. We have the votes. Vote on it in the Senate, and it will pass by an overwhelming margin. Allow a vote in the House, and it will pass by an overwhelming margin. The only way those who want to defeat this proposition because it contains Cuba—which is an irrational position, for those who think through this a little bit—the only way they can possibly defeat it is to try to use some hijinks in the process to avoid an up-or-down vote.

I and others intend to see we have a full opportunity to have votes in the

House and the Senate on it. If the House leadership does what it did last year, I say to them: Fair warning, I am going to be here on the floor of the Senate objecting to a whole series of things. We need to straighten this out now. This country, at this time, on this issue, says we will no longer use sanctions with respect to the shipment of food and medicine. It does not work, it is not a moral policy, and it ought to stop now.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, morning business is concluded.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, at 12:47 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:30 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the President pro tempore.

SENATE PHOTOGRAPH

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I could ask our colleagues to take their seats, then we will begin a series of photographs. Please, stay in place until we are given the all-clear sign. If you can go ahead and be seated, we will be able to determine exactly which Senators may still be missing.

STEVE BENZA

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, as we prepare to have this photograph taken, I note that the Senate photographer, who has been with the Senate some 32 years, Steve Benza, is preparing to retire. Steve started out as a page. He worked in the Architect's Office. He worked in the Senate Post Office. He worked in the photo lab. And for years he has taken photographs of us in various and sundry places, some of which we would not like to recount but we will remember warmly.

I ask my colleagues, before we begin these series of photographs, to express our appreciation to Steve Benza for his 32 years of service to the institution.

[Applause.]

(Thereupon, the official Senate photograph was taken.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Would the Chair kindly advise the Senate with regard to the pending business.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is consideration of the Defense authorization bill, S. 2549, which the clerk will report.

Mr. WARNER. I am ready to proceed.

I ask my distinguished friend and colleague from Michigan if he is likewise ready to go.

Mr. LEVIN. We are indeed. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2549) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2001 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3173

(Purpose: To extend eligibility for medical care under CHAMPUS and TRICARE to persons over age 64)

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Virginia [Mr. WARNER], for himself, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. MURKOWSKI, proposes an amendment numbered 3173.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

Strike sections 701 through 704 and insert the following:

SEC. 701. CONDITIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR CHAMPUS UPON THE ATTAINMENT OF 65 YEARS OF AGE.

(a) ELIGIBILITY OF MEDICARE ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—Section 1086(d) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) The prohibition contained in paragraph (1) shall not apply to a person referred to in subsection (c) who—

“(A) is enrolled in the supplementary medical insurance program under part B of such title (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.); and

“(B) in the case of a person under 65 years of age, is entitled to hospital insurance benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act pursuant to subparagraph (A) or (C) of section 226(b)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 426(b)(2)) or section 226A(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 426-1(a)).”; and

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “paragraph (1) who satisfy only the criteria specified in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2), but not subparagraph (C) of such paragraph,” and inserting “subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) who do not satisfy the condition specified in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph”.

(b) EXTENSION OF TRICARE SENIOR PRIME DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Paragraph (4) of section 1896(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ggg(b)) is amended by striking “3-year period beginning on January 1, 1998” and inserting “period beginning on January 1, 1998, and ending on December 31, 2002”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATES.—(1) The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2001.

(2) The amendment made by subsection (b) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

Mr. WARNER. This is an amendment relating to the change in the existing

military medical program to, in the future, encompass retirees over age 65. I shall address this later, and I am sure the Senator from Michigan is aware I would like to have that as the first amendment up. That was my understanding.

Mr. LEVIN. If the Senator will withhold on any unanimous consent request relative to that, I am trying to see if we have been informed of it. Of course, the Senator has a right to offer it.

Mr. WARNER. I am not able to hear my colleague.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I wonder, is this the amendment to which the Senator made reference this morning?

Mr. WARNER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, is there a unanimous consent request pending now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is none.

Mr. LEVIN. I believe the only request either pending, or perhaps already granted, is to withhold reading of the amendment. Is that correct?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. LEVIN. Is my understanding correct that this amendment will be set aside temporarily for opening statements to be given?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, that is correct.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Senator.

Mr. WARNER. Does the Democratic whip desire to be recognized?

Mr. REID. No.

Mr. WARNER. This amendment was shared beforehand with my colleague from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I don't know of any understanding, but the chairman has a right, of course, to offer an amendment. We just understand that this amendment now is to be temporarily laid aside so the opening statements can be given. The Senator has a right to offer an amendment at any time he wishes.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, this is the amendment about which I spoke on the floor earlier this morning. I think colleagues have had an opportunity to inform themselves about it. It is my hope that a number will desire to be cosponsors. We have a number of cosponsors right now.

This amendment relates to the continuing work of the Armed Services Committee with regard to the necessity to provide a health care program for retirees over 65. As the Presiding Officer well knows, the committee has addressed this in several increments, and now with another amendment by the Senator from Virginia, which I offer on behalf of many. I want to recognize that this is a subject that has quite properly gained the attention of a number of colleagues. I know Senator MCCAIN, on our side of the aisle, and Senator HUTCHISON have worked on this subject of health care. In no way do I indicate that anyone—certainly not myself—has been the principal; we have all worked together as a team.