

REMARKS OF SENATOR ROBERT DOLE
WOMEN'S RESEARCH AND EDUCATION INSTITUTE CONFERENCE

JUNE 5, 1984

IT IS A PLEASURE TO ADDRESS THIS YEAR'S WOMEN'S RESEARCH

AND EDUCATION INSTITUTE CONFERENCE. DUE IN NO SMALL PART TO WOMEN'S
RISING POLITICAL INFLUENCE, ELECTED OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY
ARE ASKING MORE AND MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW VARIOUS POLICIES IMPACT
UPON WOMEN. AND THE PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM ARE HELPING US FIND ANSWERS.

CLOSING THE FIRST CHAPTER

RECENTLY, THE SENATE PASSED A BILL TO ELIMINATE MOST OF
THE REMAINING FEDERAL LAWS WHICH OVERTLY DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS
OF SEX. THE BILL, S. 501, WHICH I SPONSORED, IS THE RESULT OF A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE FEDERAL CODE UNDERTAKEN BY PRESIDENT
REAGAN'S JUSTICE DEPARTMENT. SOME OF THE BILL WOULD SIMPLY CLEAN UP
OBSOLETE REFERENCES, THOUGH A NUMBER OF THE CHANGES WOULD BE OF REAL
BENEFIT TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS. INDEED, MY WIFE HAS SUGGESTED THAT

SOME DAY I MIGHT PERSONALLY BENEFIT BY ONE CHANGE WHICH WOULD EXTEND SECRET SERVICE PROTECTION AND OTHER BENEFITS TO THE "HUSBANDS" AND "WIDOWERS" OF U.S. PRESIDENTS.

LAWS WHICH EXPLICITLY DENIED WOMEN EQUAL RIGHTS WERE PROBABLY WHAT PREOCCUPIED TWO KANSANS -- SENATOR CHARLES CURTIS AND REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL ANTHONY -- WHEN THEY FIRST INTRODUCED THE E.R.A. OVER 60 YEARS AGO. TODAY, A BILL LIKE S. 501 PASSES THE SENATE WITHOUT DEBATE OR DISSENT. THE ELIMINATION OF MORE SUBTLE INEQUITIES, PARTICULARLY AS THEY PERTAIN TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC STATUS, IS WHERE THE CONTEMPORARY BATTLE LINES HAVE BEEN DRAWN.

ECONOMIC EQUITY

LAST SUMMER, THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AN UNPRECEDENTED SET OF COMPREHENSIVE HEARINGS ON POTENTIAL ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN. DURING THESE HEARINGS, TWO AREAS EMERGED AS RIPE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND WE SHOULD SEE SIGNIFICANT REFORMS ENACTED THIS YEAR.

THE FIRST AREA IS PRIVATE PENSION REFORM. TOO MANY ASPECTS OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM FAIL TO ADDRESS ADEQUATELY THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF WOMEN, BOTH AS THE WIVES OF WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN PRIVATE PENSION PLANS, AND AS WORKERS WHO SEEK TO BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR PENSIONS OF THEIR OWN.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAS ABLE TO DEVELOP A CONSENSUS PROPOSAL WHICH PASSED THE SENATE LAST NOVEMBER. THE BILL INCLUDES PROVISIONS WHICH WOULD LOWER THE MINIMUM AGE FOR PARTICIPATION AND VESTING, LIBERALIZE CERTAIN BREAK-IN-SERVICE RULES, AND SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY OF SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS. RECENTLY, THE HOUSE PASSED SIMILAR LEGISLATION AND WE SHOULD BE GOING TO CONFERENCE SOON.

THE SECOND AREA IS STRENGTHENING THE FEDERAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM. CURRENTLY, THERE ARE WIDE VARIATIONS IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STATE EFFORTS UNDER THE PROGRAM AND HEAVY ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS BORNE PRIMARILY BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. CLEARLY, THE PROGRAM SHOULD DO A BETTER JOB FOR THE 8.4 MILLION WOMEN RAISING CHILDREN ALONE,

ONLY A FRACTION OF WHOM ACTUALLY RECEIVE FULL CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS.

BUILDING UPON THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSALS, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE DEVELOPED A BILL WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, WOULD REQUIRE STATES TO USE CERTAIN PROCEDURES OF PROVEN EFFECTIVENESS IN THE OPERATION OF THEIR PROGRAMS, AND WOULD ALSO REWARD STATES FOR COLLECTIONS MADE ON BEHALF OF BOTH AFDC AND NON-AFDC FAMILIES. RECENTLY, THE SENATE UNANIMOUSLY PASSED THE BILL. THE HOUSE HAS APPROVED SIMILAR LEGISLATION. WE ARE NOW WAITING FOR THE HOUSE TO DISAGREE TO THE SENATE AMENDMENTS AND REQUEST A CONFERENCE.

NEW CHALLENGES

ANOTHER AREA THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MAY BE LOOKING AT IN THE FUTURE IS SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM. THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM WAS ESTABLISHED NEARLY A HALF CENTURY AGO, AND IS CONSISTENT WITH A PATTERN OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH MARRIAGES LASTED A LIFETIME, WOMEN WERE MOTHERS AND HOMEMAKERS, AND MEN WERE THE SOURCE OF ECONOMIC SUPPORT. BUT PROFOUND CHANGES HAVE SINCE

TAKEN PLACE. WOMEN ARE NOW AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PAID WORK FORCE AND A SIGNIFICANT, OFTENTIMES THE SOLE, SOURCE OF ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR THEIR FAMILIES. THUS, THERE IS BROAD SUPPORT FOR CRITICALLY REEXAMINING THE IMPACT OF THE SYSTEM ON WOMEN.

LAST YEAR'S FINANCING BILL CALLED FOR A STUDY BY HHS ON THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING EARNINGS SHARING PROPOSALS. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THIS STUDY, WHEN COMPLETED, WILL SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR COMPREHENSIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARINGS.

A FURTHER AREA OF CRUCIAL CONCERN TO WOMEN WHICH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL BE DEALING WITH IS HEALTH CARE -- SPECIFICALLY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID.

THE NUMBER OF PERSONS OVER AGE 65 IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE 40% BY THE YEAR 2000; THE NUMBER OVER AGE 85 IS EXPECTED TO GROW A STARTLING 91%. THIS GROWTH IN THE ELDERLY POPULATION WILL CAUSE A SERIOUS STRAIN ON THE NATION'S HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, WITH POTENTIALLY ENORMOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR WOMEN IN PARTICULAR.

IT'S BECOMING APPARENT THAT WE MUST BEGIN SHIFTING OUR FOCUS FROM THE ACUTE HEALTH CARE MARKET TO THE LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE MARKET. CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS HAVE MADE LONG-TERM CARE SPENDING THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF THE U.S. HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY. THUS, FINANCING HAS BECOME A MAJOR CONCERN FOR CITIZENS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS ALIKE. BUT TWO QUESTIONS REMAIN: WHO SHALL PAY FOR THESE SERVICES AND FOR WHAT SERVICES SHALL WE PAY?

SLOWING THE GROWTH OF LONG-TERM EXPENDITURES AND AGREEING ON THE MIX OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA NEED FURTHER DISCUSSION. SO TOO, THE ISSUE OF SERVICE MIX. MOST LONG-TERM CARE IS NOW BEING PROVIDED IN COSTLY INSTITUTIONS. A REDIRECTION OF THIS FUNDING PATTERN TOWARD MORE HOME - OR COMMUNITY - BASED CARE IS LONG OVERDUE.

THE DEFICIT

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PENSION AND CHILD SUPPORT BILLS WILL BE OF IMPORTANT ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO WOMEN, AND THAT FURTHER

REFORMS CAN BE ENACTED IN SOCIAL SECURITY AND OTHER AREAS. UNFORTUNATELY, THE BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED BY THESE TYPE REFORMS COULD BE WIPED OUT IF NOTHING IS DONE TO REDUCE THE DEFICIT.

UNDER THE MOST OPTIMISTIC OF ASSUMPTIONS, THE DEFICIT WILL REMAIN AT \$200 BILLION DOLLAR LEVELS OVER THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, UNLESS DRASTIC ACTION IS TAKEN. VIRTUALLY ALL ECONOMISTS AGREE THAT THESE SUSTAINED ENORMOUS DEFICITS WILL BE ECONOMICALLY HARMFUL. THUS, CONSIDER, IF YOU WILL, AN ELDERLY WIDOW WHOSE FIXED INCOME IS EATEN AWAY BY REKINDLED INFLATION. OR A YOUNG WIFE WHOSE FAMILY IS UNABLE TO PURCHASE A HOME BECAUSE OF HIGH INTEREST RATES. OR THE SINGLE MOTHER WHO IS FORCED BACK ONTO THE WELFARE ROLES BECAUSE HER JOB IS EXPORTED AWAY BY AN ABNORMALLY STRONG DOLLAR. THESE ARE VERY REAL SCENARIOS.

THE PRESIDENT TOOK THE LEAD ON CUTTING THE DEFICIT IN 1984 BY CALLING FOR A \$100 BILLION DOLLAR REDUCTION OVER 3 YEARS. HE SUBSEQUENTLY WORKED WITH CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS TO OUTLINE A

\$150 BILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE. THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE PACKAGE WERE RECENTLY PASSED BY THE SENATE.

THIS "DOWNPAYMENT" WILL MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DENT IN THE DEFICIT, BUT MUCH MORE WILL HAVE TO BE DONE IN THE YEARS AHEAD. I INVITE YOU TO LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO THESE EFFORTS. HELP US LET THE PUBLIC KNOW WHAT THE DEFICITS MEAN TO THE AVERAGE WOMAN, AND MAN.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU ON THESE ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND CONCERN, AND AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO SPEAK.

LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES

AS YOU KNOW, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HAS JURISDICTION OVER TWO HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE VERY REAL IMPLICATIONS FOR WOMEN. FOR TODAY, THOSE PROGRAMS--MEDICARE AND MEDICAID--MEET A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF THIS NATION'S POOR AND ELDERLY, MANY OF WHICH ARE WOMEN. FOR THE FUTURE, THE PROSPECTS OF LONGER LIFE WILL SPARK A REVOLUTION IN THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY THAT WILL PALE IN COMPARISON TO WHAT WE HAVE SEEN SINCE THE PASSAGE OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID.

WHILE THOSE REACHING AGE 65 IN THE FUTURE ARE LIKELY TO BE HEALTHIER, THE INCREASE IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OLDER PERSONS WILL NO DOUBT CAUSE A SERIOUS STRAIN ON THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM. THE NUMBER OF PERSONS OVER AGE 65 IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE 40% BY THE YEAR 2000 AND ANOTHER 60% BY 2025. THE POPULATION OF THOSE 85 AND OLDER IS PROJECTED TO GROW EVEN FASTER, WITH A STARTLING 91% INCREASE BY THE YEAR 2000.

FOR WOMEN, THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS GROWTH IN THE ELDERLY POPULATION ARE ENORMOUS AS THEY WILL HAVE AN INCREASING STAKE IN OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM AS A WHOLE AND MEDICARE AND MEDICAID IN PARTICULAR.

EACH DAY IT IS BECOMING MORE APPARENT THAT WE MUST BEGIN SHIFTING OUR FOCUS FROM THE ACUTE HEALTH CARE MARKET TO THE LONG-TERM CARE HEALTH MARKET. CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS HAVE MADE LONG-TERM CARE SPENDING THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF THE U.S. HEALTH

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CARE INDUSTRY. AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASES IN OUR NATIONAL EXPENDITURES FOR NURSING HOME CARE, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSISTENTLY EXCEED THE AVERAGE FOR ALL OTHER EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING HOSPITAL CARE.

THE FINANCING OF LONG-TERM CARE THUS HAS BECOME A MAJOR CONCERN FOR CITIZENS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS ALIKE. BUT TWO QUESTIONS REMAIN TO BE ANSWERED-WHO SHALL PAY FOR THESE SERVICES AND FOR WHAT SERVICES SHALL WE PAY.

TODAY, RESPONSIBILITY FOR LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES IS SHARED ALMOST EQUALLY BY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY RESTS MAINLY WITH THE MEDICAID PROGRAM WHICH PAYS ABOUT 56 PERCENT OF OUR NATION'S NURSING HOME BILL. BUT THE REMAINDER OF THIS BILL, OVER \$11 BILLION, COMES DIRECTLY FROM THE POCKETS OF PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. PRIVATE INSURANCE PLAYS ALMOST NO ROLE IN THE FINANCING OF LONG-TERM CARE, NOR DOES MEDICARE, WHICH HAS ONLY LIMITED PROVISIONS FOR POST-HOSPITAL SKILLED NURSING OR REHABILITATIVE CARE. SLOWING THE GROWTH OF LONG-TERM CARE EXPENDITURES (PERHAPS THROUGH A PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM) AND AGREEING ON THE MIX OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS AREA ARE ISSUES THAT WILL REQUIRE FURTHER DISCUSSION.

SO TOO, THE ISSUE OF SERVICE MIX. MOST LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES NOW ARE BEING PROVIDED IN COSTLY INSTITUTIONS. LESS

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THAN ONE-QUARTER OF OUR PUBLIC LONG-TERM CARE EXPENDITURES PAY
FOR SERVICES DELIVERED WITHIN THE HOME OR COMMUNITY. A
REDIRECTION OF THIS FUNDING PATTERN IS LONG OVERDUE.

Pension Bill

Summary: To address women's unique work patterns, the bill would lower the minimum age for participation and vesting and liberalize break in service rules. To address the needs of homemakers who must depend on the spouse's retirement benefits, the bill would significantly expand the availability of survivor's benefits. It would also require that the spouse consent before survivor's benefits can be waived.

Status: Passed unanimously by Senate last November. Similar bill recently passed by the House. Waiting for conference.

Child Support Bill

Summary: Building upon the Administration's proposals, the Finance Committee bill would require States to enact laws providing for the use of specified procedures of proven effectiveness in the operation of their programs, such as mandatory wage withholding. It would also revise the present incentive formula to reward States for collections made on behalf of both AFDC and non AFDC families. Finally, it would authorize \$15 million a year for demonstration grants to States to test methods of improving interstate collections.

Status: Recently passed by the Senate. House had already passed similar legislation. Waiting for the House to disagree to the Senate amendments and request a conference.

Conte -

child care day. Defend Out → (11/11/11)

get me list of attendees - + address
→ (Duke)