



# “Snip, Snip, Snip.”

Sounds of budget cuts only Democrat imaginations

Republican plans for revamping Medicare have Democrats acting like children

Oh, for the life of a six year old. Things were pretty simple back then. I'm especially fond of the problem solving style of six-year-olds: If you don't like the way the game is going, take your ball and go home.

**DAVID TAYLOR**  
COLUMNIST



Of course, that only works for six-year-olds... until now, or to be more precise, until this past Monday. On Monday, the Democratic members of the House Commerce Committee decided they didn't like how the game was going. So they took their balls and went home.

I suppose we should start this story back a few months. The Medicare program is in trouble. Money for this important program comes from contributions to a trust fund — just like Social Security. These “voluntary” contributions are deducted from every paycheck we receive (we'll save the discussion of “voluntary” for another column).

Medicare provides the only source of health care for millions of older Americans. For many others, it functions as a kind of “safety net” in case of severe illness. No one on Medicare would ever claim it to be efficient, but it is necessary.

There's only one problem: it's broke, or soon will be. According to a commission appointed by President Clinton, the Medicare trust fund will

run out of money within seven years. So a few weeks back, the Republicans began working on a plan to salvage Medicare. The response was almost predictable.

Well, the plan came out this past week, and it went to the House Subcommittee for debate. Some debate.

While the House Democrats went out for recess, other alleged leaders of the Democratic party stood in front of the ever-so-eager cameramen.

The President cried (read this resolutely), “We can't cut Medicare!”

House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt said (read this indignantly), “The Republicans are cutting Medicare to fund a tax cut for the rich.”

In the Senate, Minority Leader Tom Daschle urged (read desperately), “Workers of the world rise up and overthrow your capitalist masters.”

Whoa, boys. There's some nasty fightin' words... too bad they ain't true.

First of all, under the new plan, average spending per Medicare recipient will go from this year's expected \$4,800 to \$6,700 in the year 2002. Now I must have missed that day when my English teacher told us that “cut” and “increase” mean the same thing.

Maybe the President is just using some of that “new” English.

As for Gephardt, Medicare isn't funded by tax-

es, so how can it provide a tax cut to anyone? What about Sen. Daschle? Well, he didn't say that. He just sounded like it.

Sen. Daschle claims to be looking out for the “working people” of America — he really said that.

Just a thought: How do you look out for them by making sure the Medicare fund is gone by 2002? Oh yeah, by 2002, the Democrats' economic plans will be complete, and none of us will have jobs anyway.

**By the year 2002, the Democrats' economic plans will be complete ... and none of us will have jobs anyway.**

This week, a few Democrats proposed a Medicare revamping which will save almost \$90 billion over 10 years (the Republican plan will save about \$270 billion over seven years).

This represents a good thought, but poor math. The fund goes broke in seven years. Just when you thought the story couldn't get any better, along came last Tuesday.

At a hearing that day, “only for people with the super-secret decoder ring,” House Democrats valiantly fought the Republican hordes by calling them names.

One Congressman referred to the Republicans

as “bloodsuckers.” Not to be outdone, another called the Republicans “vampires.”

One claimed that House Republicans “are animals on the attack.”

Yeah, they also eat their young. In response to Republican claims that the Democrats were being “childish,” my sources report hearing one Democratic Congressman taunt, “I know you are, but what am I?” Another was heard to say, “I'm rubber, and you're glue. Whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you.”

This Medicare problem sounds pretty remote to us, while our parents may still provide our health insurance. Or even if they don't, most of us are a long way from having to use Medicare. So why should we care?

Simple. A few years down the road, our parents will need Medicare.

More importantly, our grandparents probably already do. They deserve better than these stupid games.

Sick of this yet? So am I. If the Democrats are really interested in solving this problem — or any other one, for that matter — they need to grow up and stop throwing temper tantrums when things don't go the way they want.

The rest of us learned that when we were six.

David Taylor is a senior management major



## MAIL CALL

### Bus Ops not to blame for rain

I'm writing in response to Scott Emory's letter in the Oct. 3 Battalion.

After reading the article I couldn't believe that he and 75 other people actually stood in the rain for half an hour. Especially when shelter was only 20 feet away.

Obviously that rainy day was chaotic, but the bus drivers were also confused by the situation.

Bus Operations did not shut down! The University Police Department and College Station Police Department had closed some streets, rendering service impossible.

Also, we were instructed to stay on the bus. This was done for safety — our primary goal at this point.

Emory was at the MSC, which has plenty of free phones inside. Being a former driver, he knew who to call to find out what was going on.

Why didn't he? He could've stayed dry and then informed all those people in the rain (or under the protection of the overhang) what was going on.

If he had been a driver, would he have gotten out of his bus and run across Simpson field to tell the customers?

I doubt it. This was not blatant incon-sideration, nor was it poor service. We feel the customer has the right to know what is going on, but we were doing what we were told to do by UPD.

We are extremely sorry for the inconvenience that day, but Bus Ops should not be blamed for the confusion.

Blame mother nature.

Sean Kilgore  
Class of '95  
accompanied by 32 signatures

### Simpson would be “guilty” in Texas

Yeah, yeah. Go ahead and celebrate. The Juice is loose!

But don't forget what else O.J. supporters are celebrating: The decline of the American judicial system.

We've told the world, “Model after our sense of justice and fair treatment under the law.”

Then you too can kill anyone you want. The more heinous and bloody, the better. Then go free, if you have enough money.

Most important though, don't forget the media. Those blood-suckers are on your side!

Johnny Cochran turned the trial into a racial issue.

That is a disgrace to America and African-Americans who have stopped hiding behind race

as a reason for injustice. Letting Simpson go free was a slap in the face to anyone who wanted equal treatment.

Those jurors were Los Ang-elites. They were worried about the consequences of what a guilty verdict might do.

They chose to save themselves rather than let justice be served.

They were also star-struck, believing that this could only happen in the movies.

Not famous O.J. If O.J. had been tried in Texas, where we aren't intimidated by riots, movie celebrities, or even dilapidated football stars, then he would have been found guilty, and hung.

Chance J. Word  
Class of '97  
Accompanied by 4 signatures

### Times, Post made correct decision

“Never Fold,” the editorial concerning the printing of the Un-abomber's 35,000 word essay, did not take both sides of the story into account.

This essay, which journalism has supposedly “bent” to, may be the very thing to end the Un-abomber's killings.

By publishing the essay, there may be someone who recognizes a certain phrase, a particular expression or a familiar diction they have heard before.

The Unabomber obviously feels strongly about his cause, and the FBI have reason to believe he's spreading his message by mouth, too. Someone could lead authorities to the man behind these bombs.

In addition, though his promise may be completely bogus, he has said he will end his bombing streak if his manifesto was published.

The newspapers involved dealt with this ethical dilemma the best way they could.

They gave it a shot. Yes, journalism is submitting to being held hostage by printing the manifesto under the threats of the terrorist.

Perhaps this route will be taken by other terrorist groups to attain media attention.

But what alternative did they have? Risking someone's life because we couldn't give up our standards?

We obviously didn't have a choice, and this could stop him.

Giving in to the demands of a terrorist could set a dangerous precedent, negatively affecting all media organizations.

But as a society, we are all being held hostage.

We are all afraid of what's next; but he has murdered indiscriminately.

Most anyone in the United States would fit his profile. Teachers. Students. Us.

I'm not saying that printing the essay will stop the Un-abomber's hate crimes.

I'm just not saying it won't. I'm saying that we should put this on a level where every human life is valued as much as standards in journalism are.

Did we really have a choice?

Lori L. Lee  
Class of '99

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student ID is required. Letters may also be mailed to:

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# EDITORIAL NO RESPECT

ABC should not have reneged on its decision to air A&M game.

Once again, the A&M football team has not received the respect they deserve.

ESPN, ABC, Raycom and Prime Sports all decided not to show the Texas A&M — Texas Tech game this Saturday.

Thus, Aggies who want to watch the game will have to fork over \$19.95 for a pay-per-view broadcast on TCA cable.

Perhaps the reasoning behind this action is be due to A&M's loss to Colorado. Losing this game eliminated A&M's hopes of a national championship title, and knocked them down six places in the polls.

However, the networks failed to notice that A&M is still ranked in the top 10 in the country. Also, A&M is the hands-on favorite to win the Southwest Conference.

A&M remains one of the most important teams in college football.

Usually a top 10 team could be confident that they would be shown on regional network television, especially if they were playing a formidable conference opponent.

However, A&M fans are being robbed of this right.

Not to mention that Texas Tech has been in the top 25 this year, and they almost beat national powerhouse Penn State.

This game measures up to be one of the most exciting and challenging conference games of the year for A&M. Yet the networks have overlooked this fact, resulting in yet another slap in the face to the A&M football team.

Usually, the lack of respect given to A&M only hurts the football team's rankings in the polls. But this time, A&M fans are the ones that directly bear the costs.