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Congressional Record S. 3169 - Social Security Benefits

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enhance the objective of early adoption of social security legislation, be it therefore

Resolved, That the Senate Democratic Policy Committee suggests that the Committee on Finance report any recommendations on social security benefit increases, welfare reform and foreign trade as separate legislative measures.

The Policy Committee's action was unanimous in approving that resolution. Two of its members—the distinguished senior Senator from Georgia (Mr. TALMADGE) and the distinguished Senator from Arkansas (Mr. FULBRIGHT)—are members of the Committee on Finance. Senator TALMADGE and a third member of the Policy Committee, the assistant majority leader, the distinguished Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) were instructed by the Policy Committee to convey this action to the chairman of the Committee on Finance and attempt to work out a mutually agreeable format.

It should be said that the Policy Committee's involvement in this matter was undertaken only because the issue was of the highest national importance. It was undertaken without regard to partisanship in any shape or form. It was undertaken with the hope of achieving an early scheduling date for social security. It was undertaken unanimously and solely in the interest of gaining for our elderly citizens what is only theirs by right.

I commend the chairman of the Committee on Finance for offering this amendment. It demonstrates once again that he is unexcelled in this body in his concern for the aged, for the sick, for the old and the infirm.

I urge the adoption of the amendment.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, pending before the Senate is an issue about which there can be no dispute. Providing a modest benefit increase for social security pensioners is a proposal that is not just overdue; it is delinquent beyond all justification. Indeed, this increase was overdue last December when the Senate passed social security increases essentially identical to those contained in the pending proposal. The vote then was 8 to 0. I would hope that the Senate's resolve on this issue could again be demonstrated just as resoundingly. Our elderly citizens deserve no less.

It should be noted that inflation has eaten up every penny and more of the last social security increase granted back in 1969. Ten percent beginning this year is thus a minimal and wholly justified increase. The sooner it becomes law together with a higher minimum payment, the better off will be those older Americans whose very survival depends upon this insurance program.

Expedition on this issue is imperative. To assist in this regard, the Majority Policy Committee undertook an examination of means by which an early scheduling date on social security could be reached. To that end, on February 2, it adopted a resolution providing in part, as follows:

Whereas, The adoption by early Spring of the social security measure itself is an objective of great urgency and of the highest priority to those relying upon these annuities, and

Whereas, the welfare reform, foreign trade and social security proposals each involve issues that compel their independent consideration from a procedural standpoint, and

Whereas, simultaneous consideration by the Senate of welfare reform, foreign trade and social security legislation as separate legislative measures would enhance the adoption of each of these measures, especially