So, as a practical matter, if you want to vote for that amendment, the average old person is going to be $16 a year worse off than if we leave it in.

Mr. THURMOND. And how many people would be involved, in each category?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. There are about 17½ million aged people, over 65, and practically all of them would be benefited by one of the two provisions. Practically all of them would be benefited by one provision.

Mr. THURMOND. By one or the other?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. Yes. Potentially, practically everybody would be benefited by the drug provision.

Mr. THURMOND. That is, those over 65?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. Those over 65 would be benefited——

Mr. THURMOND. Those over 65 would all be benefited by one category or the other?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. I think it would be fair to say that virtually all of them who have any medical expenses would be benefited by the tax provision, which is the most expensive from the Government's point of view. All those who pay taxes would be benefited if they have medical expenses. And out of those who are under medicare, all of them would be benefited, potentially, by the drug provision.

Mr. THURMOND. I wonder if the Senator could get the actual figures. I am not trying to be unduly inquisitive, but if the Senator could furnish that for the record, if we could get the figures in each category, I would appreciate it.

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. There are about 17,500,000 aged people, over 65, in this country. Potentially, these two provisions could benefit every one of them.

Mr. THURMOND. I might say to the Senator that I have introduced proposals in this Congress similar to this. My proposal would allow complete deductions without the 3 percent and 1-percent limit to any taxpayer who pays medical expenses for a dependent over age 65. I was just wondering what the Senator's most recent figures were.

Mr. AIKEN. If I may ask my final question, I am interested in the provision for the furnishing of drugs, to old people because I offered a drug amendment to the medicare bill, 2 years ago, and the committee turned me down. It seems they have had a change of heart. But as I understand, the provisions relative to the furnishing of drugs under medicare take effect July 1, 1968. Is that correct?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. A member of my staff was speaking to me at the same time the Senator was speaking.

[*P. 25355*]

Will the Senator please repeat his question?

Mr. AIKEN. The provisions of the bill relevant to the furnishing of drugs takes effect on July 1, 1968.

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. The Senator is correct.

Mr. AIKEN. Mr. President, as I said when the Senator was engaged in conversation with a member of the staff, I offered an amendment to provide drugs for old people 2 years ago when medicare was before the Senate. I was turned down rather abruptly by the committee.

I am glad that there has been a change of heart. However, I do not see why this provision could not take effect on July 1, 1968, whether the bill is passed this week or next February.

I thank the Senator for answering my question.

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. Mr. President, as far as I am concerned, the bill will be in conference and if the Senator wants to offer an amendment to move the date forward, I would be willing to accept it.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. I yield.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, is there any reason why the suggestion of the Senator from Vermont cannot be accepted? I respect the gracious conduct of the Senator from Louisiana who said that he would accept such an amendment. However, it would seem at this point that there would be no reason why that particular date should be in the bill.

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. Mr. President, I regret to say that I was somewhat in error. The chief counsel of our committee staff has refreshed my recollection on this matter.

If the Senator will look at page 230 of the bill he will see that it reads as follows:

> The amendments made by this section shall be come effective on whichever of the following occurs first: (1) the first day of the first month with respect to which the rate of the monthly premium or participation is raised, pursuant to section 1839(b) of the Social Security Act, after the date of enactment of this Act, or (2) July 1, 1968.

It could become effective any time in 1968, as soon as the part B premium rate was adjusted.

Mr. MURPHY. The statement about raising the social security would have no effect on this.

Mr. LONG of Louisiana. It would be effective no later than July 1, 1968, but it could be effective earlier.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I read from page 79 of the report as follows:

> A formulary committee would be established—