

this problem to. We cannot pass the baton to someone else. It is our problem. We are going to have to confront it now. We are going to have to try to prevail. That means move to a balanced budget. That means it has to be done fairly and evenhandedly.

Mr. President, we are going to have to take steps in these Chambers to remove the burdens of business so that we can expand our economy.

I contend that when we look at this conversion of but five outlays that consume all of our revenues, we are going to have to confront what I would characterize as generational contracts. We are going to have to take these entitlements and honor our agreements to those who are at the end of their work careers. But for those coming into the work career, we are going to have to entertain and shape new agreements.

Mr. President, this generation of Americans has a choice. It can do those things I just talked about—tighten the belt, move to a balanced budget, expand the economy, move to generational contracts on entitlements. If we do that, the American dream, which has been a part of this country since its inception—that life would always be better for the new generation, that the new generation would have more opportunity, be better educated, it would be a stronger nation—is still possible. If we do the tightening of the belt, if we enter into generational contracts, if we do the things to expand the economy, we will create millions of new jobs for America's future. If we do these things, we will create thousands of new businesses. And in forming the new businesses, we will generate new ideas and better ways to live, and we will elevate our standard of living in this country.

But what if we choose to flinch? What if we ignore what we have been told—that five expenditures will consume all of our revenues in but a decade. What if we ignore this, while history is full of nations in ruins because they failed to confront this kind of crisis?

If we let this happen, the future generations will have to bear an 82-percent tax rate to pay for our failure to confront this issue. Mr. President, 82 percent of earned wages would be consumed just in order to take care of our fiscal abuse.

We would be saying to the future that the present is all we are worried about. We do not care about those jobs in the future. We do not care about the burden of the working family in the future.

Mr. President, I began these remarks by saying that I believe that this generation of Americans will be called upon as no other. We are at a unique crossroads in the history of this Nation.

The other enemies were outside our borders. They were easier to identify—Hitler marching. Across America, the great divide in our Nation, this is a battle amongst ourselves. This is an in-

sidious, creeping development that is much harder to recognize.

Just as sure as the Sun comes up in the morning and sets in the West, this generation of Americans will have to confront this crisis or we will undo our own Nation.

I want to add one other thing, Mr. President. There is only one world power today. We all acknowledge that we are still living in a very dangerous world. If we destabilize our currency, if we wound ourselves because we lack the discipline to manage our fiscal affairs, we will make the world a very dangerous place for the future families of America. It will not be difficult for our world adversaries to know that if we do not care for our financial health, we will be unable to defend our freedom here or anywhere else in the world.

I have but one request, Mr. President. I hope that every American family will take a look at this very simple chart that says within 10 years, we will consume all U.S. revenues with but five expenditures—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Federal retirement, and the interest on debt—and put that chart on their kitchen table and contemplate what that means to the planned retirement of the parents, to the aspirations for education and jobs of the children, and the future of their country. I believe, from around that kitchen table, will come the will and the resolve to confront this great moral challenge for the United States.

I ask them to do this for themselves, Mr. President, and for their families, and for this Union.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. THOMAS] is recognized to speak for up to 35 minutes.

HOW TO PROCEED ON WELFARE REFORM

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join my freshman colleagues to discuss some of the solutions and some of the facts, the interest, that go into the Nation's welfare system.

Before the debate on welfare reform can proceed, however, it seems to me that we have to make some stipulations. We have to begin with the basic premise, the premise that everyone in this Chamber is compassionate about helping over 26 million people climb out of poverty. That is not the question.

I think if we are really seeking some solutions to our welfare problems, some solutions to help Americans advance themselves, we have to get away from this idea of saying that this group—because they have a different view—wants to throw everybody out in the cold.

I think we do all start with that notion that every day, each person has a responsibility to make this a better place to live. With that premise, we

wanted to talk some about the fundamental question of how we proceed, and what is the role of the Federal Government; how can we make changes that will cause some changes in the results of the welfare program?

Mr. President, let me first recognize the Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for yielding. The 11 freshman Republican Senators have made it a point to come to the Chamber and speak each week on an important topic because we have just gone through an election, have just spoken very directly with our constituents, with a large segment of the block of voters who called for change in this last election. The Presiding Officer experienced that as well, and knows the fervor with which our constituents approach the issues of reform and change.

No issue that they talked about in the last campaign had more emotional feeling to it, I think, than the issue of welfare reform. Because they not only recognized that welfare reform could result in huge savings of money to the Federal Government, but that we were destroying generations of people, creating a cycle of dependency from which too many people were finding it impossible to extricate themselves.

So it is a very personal challenge as well as a sound, prudent fiscal policy that causes us to look to the issue of welfare reform. We do that this week because we want to compliment our House colleagues for passing a meaningful fundamental welfare reform package, the first real effort to reform our failed welfare system in decades, and to say to our House colleagues: You got the ball rolling and now it is our opportunity in the Senate to take advantage of the momentum you have created, to take the legislation you have passed and to try to improve upon it if we can, and to get a bill to the President which he can sign, truly ending welfare as we know it.

The House bill, in most people's view, is not a perfect bill. But it is a very good start toward this issue of welfare reform. As I said, it is now our opportunity.

Let me just make four quick points about what I think our approach to this problem ought to be.

Our current system, I think almost everyone has now recognized, does not foster independence, and family, and responsibility—all values that we know are essential, but, instead, perpetuates both material and behavioral poverty. The most compassionate, responsible course of action that I think we can take is to find a way to free our Nation's children and families from dependency in this terribly flawed welfare system.

Toward that premise I think we should first admit that continued dramatic increases in Federal social welfare spending have failed to reduce the number of people in poverty in this

country and that more money is simply not the answer. The Federal Government has spent more than \$5 trillion on social welfare programs since President Johnson declared the war on poverty, yet, according to the Congressional Budget Office figures, total spending will rise to 6 percent of the gross national product by 1998. Since the mid-1960's, poverty has actually increased from 14.7 percent to 15.1 percent today. So after spending all this money we have not eradicated poverty. It is more in our land than before.

Second, the Federal Government does not know best how to spend our hard-earned dollars. One of our colleagues gave us a test. If you inherit \$100,000 and because you are a good citizen you want to, in effect, tithe a tenth of that to solve the problem of social deconstruction in our country, to whom would you give that \$10,000? What organization would you give it to, to best help eradicate poverty in your own community? I daresay none of us would invest that in the U.S. Government. None of us would say the Federal Government welfare programs are pretty good, let us give the \$10,000 to them. We would pick the local homeless shelter or Salvation Army or some other local group that really knows how to stretch the dollars and make the individual decisions in the community that we know work.

It is interesting, several Governors, including Tommy Thompson from Wisconsin, whose welfare roles have declined 25 percent over the past few years, have had to ask for literally hundreds of waivers from the U.S. Government in order to achieve welfare reform in their own States. So giving States more flexibility to quickly achieve welfare reform will help those in need.

Third is the point the Senator from Wyoming just made, and it is a very important point, we must end the damaging and incorrect rhetoric which suggests that somehow by reforming welfare we are going to be taking food out of the mouths of young children. This is rhetoric of the worst kind. The House bill, for example, has been criticized, but few point out that the House bill actually increases funding for school lunch programs by 4.5 percent each and every year for the next 5 years, an increase of \$1 billion; and that the block grants to the States will save money and enable them to apply those funds to the children.

Fourth, the Federal Government and the States must continue to search for ways, whether they be difficult initial choices or not, which foster self-sufficiency, encourage marriage, and work. The House bill contains several such incentives. For example, we should eliminate the marriage penalty created in the Tax Code. Fathers should be required to live up to their financial responsibilities. Again, giving States the flexibility to design programs which will effectively reduce out-of-wedlock births and other similar conditions

which create poverty are an important element of any welfare reform program.

There is more, but I think we make the point that there are several things that need to be done here. The House was on the right track and we in the Senate need to give our backing to that in the kind of bill we pass out of Senate and not let this momentum flag but be able to send a bill to the President.

I conclude with this point. There is a big difference between taking care of people and caring for people. Taking care of people was the philosophy of the Great Society programs. It has not worked. True compassion is caring for people in a way that provides them a hand up, not a handout. That should be the guiding philosophy to end the cycle of dependency that has been created by 40 years of misguided welfare policies. That should be the guiding philosophy of true welfare reform that comes out of the U.S. Senate.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and the Senator from Wyoming for again getting the freshmen Members of the Senate here to talk about this important subject.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. The Senator from Arizona, I think, has made one of the key points in this whole discussion, and that is this is a compassionate society. All of us are committed to the concept that we help people help themselves. Unfortunately, almost everyone agrees that the war on poverty has failed, and that we have more of a problem now than we did when it began. That is what this is about—how do we have a better system of helping the people help themselves.

One of the persons who has worked very hard and very diligently, and I think is most knowledgeable in this area, is the Senator from Pennsylvania, who last year in the House was basically the author and principal architect of the proposal put together by the Ways and Means Committee that would accomplish some of those things.

I yield to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for yielding the time. I appreciate the kind words in the introduction.

I, too, want to say the Senator from Wyoming and Senator from Arizona have hit the nail on the head. I think the reason, the impetus behind us being here this morning is really to start this debate out on welfare reform with a little different tone than it took in the House of Representatives. The fact of the matter is, the debate in the House, with ample support from the national media, turned into a really disgraceful event that turned so mean-spirited and accusatory that it focused very little on what actually was going to occur and what the underlying principles were in the reform effort that were underway. It focused just on

name-calling and, I think, outrageous allegations about the mean-spiritedness of the Republican proposal.

We are here this morning as the freshman class to say we have examined and are examining this proposal, and we see it as a very positive move forward in helping people get out of poverty. That is what this is all about. You will hear some say, "The Republicans, they just want to cut people off." I would tell you that I would not be here today—and I do not think any of us would be here today—if we thought that was the motivation behind the welfare reform proposal, just to hurt people.

I am not in the business of hurting people. I do not like hurting people. I want to try to help folks. But I truly believe, as I think my colleagues will also state, that you do not help people, as Senator KYL said, by taking care of them, by making them dependent on you, by providing for them instead of giving them the opportunity to provide for themselves. That is not truly taking care of. That is not truly helping people.

So when you look at these proposals, look at it not as to how much are we doing for somebody, but how much are we helping them help themselves. How much opportunity are we creating; not how much are we taking care of. That is really the test here, because we know from our history that taking care of people destroys them, destroys communities, destroys families, destroys country. That is what is brewing in our communities that are heavily laden with welfare populations today. That destructive element of Government dependency is taking control and is not creating better communities, families, individuals, and neighborhoods.

I have been asked, because of my background in the House on this issue, what the prospects are here in the Senate. The general conventional wisdom is the Senate will water it down and we will get something that is just sort of tinkering with the system, that they will not be nearly as dramatic as the House. I say this: The more the Senate looks at the problem, the more we focus in and see the absolute destruction that is occurring in our neighborhoods today, the morality behind what we have to do—this is not an economic issue; providing for the poor in our society is a moral issue. We have to look at it in that context.

When you look at what we are doing to children, families, communities, and our Nation, I believe the U.S. Senate will follow the path very similar to the House of Representatives.

The chairman of the Finance Committee just yesterday said that the block grant idea has merit and that we should move forward on that track. It does have merit. Why? Because it takes all of the power and control out of this town that thinks it knows best for everybody, where we make sure that everything is taken care of from here and

that all the decisions are made here, and puts them back into the States and, more particularly, into the communities and into the families of America. That is the right direction for us to take when it comes to taking responsibility for the poor in this country. That is the right direction. I believe that is the direction we all will take here in the U.S. Senate.

It will be a dramatic bill that comes out of this Senate. It will not be a watered down version that looks very much like the system today. I do not believe the Senate will stand for that. And I think we can get bipartisan support to do it. I am encouraged by that.

There will be some who stand up and defend the status quo. They will stand up because they were the creators of the status quo, and they will defend the system and accuse anybody who wants to change it as being cruel, inhumane, and mean spirited. And they will say in many cases, as happened in the House, outrageous things about our intent.

Let me clear the air one more time about our intent. Our intent is to help people help themselves. Our intent is to get people off the welfare rolls. I find it absolutely incredulous that when you have a program in place that actually gets people off the welfare rolls, that is bad. What? A good welfare program gets more people on the welfare rolls? Is that what we want? Is that our analysis? Is that our benchmark as to what is good? Getting more people on welfare, making more people dependent? That is good? No. What is good is solving poverty, not sustaining it. Moving people off the welfare rolls is good. Decreasing those rolls is good. That is a good objective. That is what we hope to accomplish here.

Those who stand up and say so many people are going to be cut off and all these people are going to be leaving. That is good. People leaving welfare and on to productive jobs in America is good. That is what this program is going to be all about. You will hear people say, "Well, you cannot change this. You are going to harm children." Folks, look at all the welfare payments, AFDC, SSI, on down the list. How many of those benefits get paid directly to the children? How many of them? The answer is none. A child in this country does not get any money paid directly to them. It all goes to parents. They all go to parents.

So when you hear this argument we are going to cut children off, we are going to hurt children, think of where the money goes and think of where that money is being spent and by whom it is being spent; not the children. I wish the money could be sent directly to those children so they could get the food and education that they need. But, unfortunately, in many cases it does not.

Let us focus in on the real problem. The people who are going to defend the status quo have put forward a plan for the past 30 or 40 years that has in-

creased poverty, decreased hope and opportunity, has increased crime and decreased the sense of community safety and neighborhood, has increased illegitimacy from 5 percent in the mid-sixties—5 percent of children in this country were born out of wedlock—30 percent today and rising. As a result, we have seen a decrease in fathers taking responsibility for their children and a resulting increase in gang activity because fathers bond with other males instead of bonding with females to take care of children. It is a vicious cycle that is created by very good intentions of the people who created this system; very good intentions, but very wrong programs.

I challenge the national media to give us a break. Tell the truth. Quit printing that we are repealing the School Lunch Program when they know darned well we are increasing the money. We are cutting out, as was said in the House, the lunches, the free lunches, here in Washington by the bureaucrats who suck money from the system before it even gets to the kids. Tell the truth about what is going to go on here in the U.S. Senate with the welfare reform. Do not be afraid that your friends on the other side will not like you by telling the truth about helping people, that the Republicans can actually be kind, compassionate, and be for a more progressive and uplifting opportunity type of society for the poor. Do not be afraid of that. Stand up and tell the truth about what is going on here in the U.S. Senate.

Finally, the welfare system in this country has to change, and there are four principles we have to accomplish. First, work. The only true measure of success of a welfare program is how it gets people off welfare and into work. Work has to be a central component.

Second, there has to be a system that supports families and does not tear families apart, that supports marriage and does not foster fathers walking away from their children.

Third, it has to focus on flexibility to provide States and communities the opportunity to have programs that truly do tailor their needs to the individual families and communities and not be bureaucratic and regulatory from the Federal level.

Finally, we have to save money. We heard so much about the people program, cutting people off. The Republican program allows welfare to grow over the next 5 years 32 percent. If we did nothing, it would grow 39 percent. I do not think cutting the program that is scheduled to grow to 39 percent is mean spirited or draconian. In fact, a lot of people listening would probably say, "Why don't you do more?" We do not do more because we want to try to help and not just be handing out. That costs money, but it is a good investment. We are willing to make the investment of helping people get out of poverty, but we are going to stop throwing money at people who stay in poverty.

I thank the Senator from Wyoming for yielding the time. I appreciate his indulgence in my discourse. I look forward to the rest of the day.

Thank you.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CAMPBELL). The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. THOMAS].

Mr. THOMAS. The Senator from Pennsylvania has obviously given a great deal of thought to this. I think it is interesting that almost everyone in this country, including President Clinton, says welfare is broken and needs to be fixed. Yet, when you begin to look at it and take the opportunity to seek to find a better way to deliver services, then we run into all of this criticism and, as the Senator says, untruths about what is really happening. But I think there is a real opportunity this time to do something.

One of the reasons is that there are people in this body who are new here and who are bringing to the body a brandnew idea, some of it having come from the campaign, some of it having come from living regular lives. And one of those is the Senator from Tennessee. I would like to yield time to him.

Mr. THOMPSON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his leadership in this area and also the Senator from Pennsylvania for his eloquent remarks and for his leadership in this area, both in the House of Representatives and in the U.S. Senate. He, as usual, assesses the problem very precisely.

I would like to lend my remarks to my own assessment of the situation as we begin this debate because we are indeed addressing one of the most fundamental problems facing the Nation at this time. I think if one true thing can be said about the welfare system, it is that the American people have overwhelmingly concluded that we have a mess on our hands and an intractable problem that we must do something about for the preservation of our society as we know it.

Too often the program has been run by the wrong level of government, by the wrong people.

We have spent \$5 trillion trying to address the welfare program in this Nation, and we have created more poverty, more out-of-wedlock births, a higher crime rate, more dependency than we ever thought would be possible. If the Federal Government had deliberately gone out and tried to wreak such havoc with \$5 trillion, it would not have been able to do it, yet we have done by accident what could not be done by design.

Mr. President, I think it would be appropriate, as we address this problem, that we do so with a certain amount of humility. We are not the first people to address this problem. This is not the first time the Senate has addressed it. This is not the first time the House of

Representatives has addressed this problem. It has been with us for many years. It has been growing and growing. Many people have come up with different ideas and different people of good faith can have different ideas about this.

So I think as we proceed into this debate, we ought to be openminded. We ought to be constructive. I think there is only one thing that we should not tolerate and that is the status quo. We have a miserable system now that is in large part participating in the decline of the United States of America; a country that we have all grown up in and has been the strongest, most powerful and most respected Nation not only in the world but in the history of the world.

The time has come for change. It seems to me these problems fester and are debated for years on end, but finally there comes a time when we really have to face up to them. I think we are beginning to do that in the Senate, and in the Congress of the United States with regard to many areas for the first time. We are talking about changing the way we do business in the Congress of the United States, and there is no more clear example of that than our approach to the problems in our welfare system.

I think that going into it we can certainly conclude there are certain things that have been proven not to work. We know, for example, that merely throwing money into a failed system is not the answer. We could have taken all of the assets of all the Fortune 500 companies in America and given those assets to the poor and still have saved money. That alone gives us some indication of the amount of money we have poured into a system, and a rising poverty level indicates the results we have achieved from that money.

I think it is also clear that large Federal programs are not the answer. We are now talking about workfare. We are talking about job training as if this was the first time these ideas have come about. Some people think if you take a little more money out of this pot and put it in here or if we reduce a program a little bit and add it to another, if we fine tune it enough, we are smart enough that we can come up with the right solution to solve this problem from Washington, DC.

We have been trying this for 30 years to no avail. We are dealing with a single problem, and that is poverty. It is a problem that has many causes. We are trying with one set of overlay programs from Washington, DC, to cover situations where on the one hand we have a person who is trying to get off welfare and trying their best to get out of a temporary hardship; on the other hand we have people who have been on welfare for generations and have no interest in working until they are absolutely forced to do so. The same program from Washington, DC, cannot cover the myriad of conditions and circumstances that we face.

There are certain principles we can adhere to as we begin to address this problem, and one is that we must give the States more flexibility. We must get this problem down closer to the people who can see their neighbors, who know the person down the street or across the way, and who knows who is trying and who is not trying and who legitimately needs help and who should be told it is time to go to work. All of the innovation that has taken place in this country with regard to the welfare problem in the last decade has been at the State and local level.

We have to take advantage of those innovations and those remarkable Governors we see all across this Nation who are coming up with solutions and trying different things under heavy criticism and heavy barrages of acrimonious statements but are standing tall and standing strong and changing those programs and showing that certain basic programs and changes of motivation of people can really work and help the system.

We should not be embarrassed to ask local churches, local communities, private organizations to step up to the plate and do more. That is the way it used to be in this country. It is not turning back the clock. It is a way of moving forward. I still believe that this country is full of well-meaning, caring, big-hearted people who, if they knew the nature of the problem, they knew someone down the way who really was having a hard time, would be willing to jump in and lend a hand. If it were brought to our attention and we had the responsibility and felt the responsibility to do something about it, there are millions of people out there who would be willing to step forward and do something about it. They cannot take care of the whole problem, and we cannot turn over the whole problem to them overnight, but they have to be brought back into the system. People have to feel a sense of responsibility for their neighbors the way they used to in this country.

We have to have a system that pays more to work than it does not to work. As I travel around the State of Tennessee and go into these little restaurants and coffee shops and see these young women working hard, many hours a day, some of them with a child or maybe two children at home, never been on welfare, you talk to them, working at low-wage jobs trying their best, working hard, and they see someone down the street from them or across the road who does not work, who has never worked and are netting out more than they are in terms of take-home pay, they see that, Mr. President. People see that. It has a debilitating effect on them and our country. It has a debilitating effect on these people, young people especially, who are not into the welfare mentality, who have worked all their lives and want to work, and we are delivering a message to them that really it pays more sometimes not to work.

We have to change a system like that. As the Senator from Pennsylvania pointed out, there will be those against reform. There will be those who want to stay with the status quo. A lot of people have done very well on the system that we have. A lot of people in Washington, DC, elected representatives over the years by sending out more money and getting more votes have done very well for themselves under the current system. Certainly the bureaucracies that run the tremendous system that we have now, that siphon off most of the money before it ever gets to anybody that it can help, have done very well under the system. They will come up with every horror story known to man to keep from having to do without a little more money for their agency or a few less jobs as we try to move this down to the State and local level where the problem is and where people know what to do better to solve that problem.

So, Mr. President, these are my observations as we go into this debate. We have a problem on which we all agree. We all know that we have been trying for years to do something about it, essentially nibbling around the edges. I think we have all concluded now that the time has come for action; that we must take bold action; we must change. We are better than this. We cannot go down the road to destruction of this Nation. The people who genuinely need help in this country deserve a better system, and the people who work hard for a living and pay for this system deserve better.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming has 5 minutes and 24 seconds remaining.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we got started a little late. We would like to have about 15 more minutes, if there is no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Hearing none, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I think it is exciting; I think it is exciting that Senators like the Senator from Tennessee and others are willing to take a look at this program. It has been a long time since we have said: Does this program work? What are the results? How do we measure the results? What is the measurement of success?

Instead of that, over the years, we have simply said: We have a program. It is not working. Let us put some more money in to make it bigger.

Now we have an exciting opportunity, and that opportunity is to evaluate it, to change it, to find better systems, to look for duplications, and to eliminate some of the things that do not work.

One of our colleagues who has had an opportunity to work with this very closely at the local level as Lieutenant Governor is the Senator from Ohio. I yield to the Senator.

Mr. DEWINE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, let me first thank the Senator from Wyoming for putting this group together this morning. His comments are certainly well taken, as are the comments of my colleagues from Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

I think it is fitting and appropriate that the new Members of the Senate, who just finished the campaign, just finished talking directly to the American people, should be the ones who are on the floor this morning talking about welfare reform, because I am sure that the experience my friend from Wyoming, or my friends from Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and Arizona, had was the same experience that I had.

I could not find one person—not one person—in the State of Ohio who thought welfare worked. And that included people who were on welfare. It included taxpayers. It included the average citizens, whom I see day after day after day. I could not find anybody who thought welfare works. So it is appropriate that we, really, in this country engage in this national debate.

Mr. President, the House has just concluded this debate and the Senate will take up this debate in a few weeks. In this debate, we seem to be focusing on adults, on money, on jobs. But, Mr. President, underlying all these considerations is really the future of our children, because that is really what this debate is all about. It is about our children. It is about breaking the cycle of poverty. It is about breaking the cycle of despair.

We are, it is true, Mr. President, trying to rescue the adults who are trapped in the welfare system. But if we are brutally frank and honest with ourselves, I think most of us will admit that it is our concern for the children that really underlies this debate and makes it so imperative that we do something, that we do something different.

Fixing welfare will not be easy, and it will not be done overnight. And fixing welfare, frankly, is not all we have to do. We also have to tackle the broader problems of violence, poverty, and lack of education that is posing such a threat to the well-being of our country's children.

Mr. President, the fact is that America's children are in crisis, and welfare dependency is part of the cause of that crisis.

The statistics in regard to our young people today are absolutely staggering and frightening. In 1960, about 5 percent of the children born in America were illegitimate. Today, almost one-third are. In some major cities, that figure is now at two-thirds, and in some cities, even higher than that.

Since 1972, the rate of children having children has doubled. What happens to these children, Mr. President? According to the Congressional Budget Office, half of all teenage unwed moth-

ers are on public assistance within 1 year of having their first child, and within 5 years, 77 percent are on public assistance. This takes a huge toll on the children. The poverty rate among children is the highest of any age group in the country.

Our young people today are the only age group in America—listen to this—the only age group in America that does not have a longer life expectancy than their parents did at the same age. A recent study revealed that of the children born to a married adult with a high school education, only 8 percent live in poverty. But of the children born to unmarried minors without a high school diploma, 80 percent live in poverty.

The children born out of wedlock are three times more likely than the children of married parents to become welfare clients when they grow up.

What kind of a life are these children being prepared for? What kind of values are they learning in a family where many times no one works, and bare subsistence income is given by, frankly, a distant and grudging Federal Government?

Mr. President, what do we do? That is what we are going to be talking about in the weeks and months ahead.

I think it might be tempting, particularly for those of us on this side of the aisle, now that Republicans control the Senate and Republicans control the House, to once again do what we have done in this country time and time and time again, and that is to impose a Washington solution on this problem. I think, however, Mr. President, that would be a mistake. I think it is very tempting to do this now that we are in control, but I believe it would be a grave mistake because history has simply taught us that Washington does not have all the answers.

I do believe that there will be times, as we debate this bill and this reform, when I will vote for some uniformity. I think, for example, that it makes eminent sense in the area of child support enforcement, an area that has been a problem for many, many years, to have more uniformity, to have more cooperation between the States. I saw this 20 years ago as a young assistant county prosecuting attorney when we tried to enforce child support. I saw the problems we had in going from State to State to State. I think uniformity in that area does make sense.

But I think, in most cases, we are going to be much better off in allowing the Governors, the legislators, and the people of the States to design their own programs.

Too often, Mr. President, we think, here in Washington, we have all the answers. Indeed, the crisis of welfare dependency in today's America is, I believe, in large measure a consequence of Federal policies written right here in this Capitol.

Mr. President, to be very blunt, I do not believe we should replace the Democratic Party's version of Federal

micromanagement with the Republican version of Federal micromanagement of our welfare system. I think it would be a mistake. The answers are not here in Washington, not even on this side of the aisle.

If we are going to find answers, we need to be looking to the States and the local communities.

My colleague from Tennessee, Mr. THOMPSON, said it very, very well. Who better knows their neighbors, their friends, their communities? Who better knows the solution to this problem than the people of the local community?

I believe, Mr. President, that welfare reform experiments in Ohio, Wisconsin, Michigan, and other States do in fact show a great deal of promise. But we should not try to force all States into a single mold. We still have a great deal to learn about what works in welfare, and we certainly know already what does not work.

We should not standardize the Federal solution to which all States and communities have to conform. We need the States to continue to experiment, to be the laboratories of democracy, and to lead the way toward a 21st century welfare system in this country that does, in fact, work.

Finally, Mr. President, we, I believe, as we approach this welfare debate, must always remember that welfare is not, first and foremost, a money problem. Over the last few weeks, we have heard a great deal about the money side of welfare, and that is quite natural. Some say we are taking money away from the needy. Others say we are saving money for the taxpayers.

But beyond the welfare debate in regard to money is something much more important, and that is human beings, and that is young children.

The problem, frankly, Mr. President, is the kind of culture we are building in this country and the kind of lives America's children will inherit.

As we begin this debate, I propose a very radical solution. It is particularly radical for this town and this city, this Capitol Building, this Chamber. And the radical solution is to say, "We don't have all the wisdom here. We don't know all the answers."

Let us trust the States to be the laboratories of democracy. Let us turn back power to the States and let them try things, and let them find out what will work and what will not work.

They cannot do a worse job than the Federal Government has done. That may be a radical solution. It may be something that is foreign to Congress in the past. Quite frankly, Mr. President, we have tried everything else. I think it is time for a radical solution, a radical change, and I think, quite frankly, that it will work. Thank you very much.

Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I would like to wrap up our focus, our effort this morning.

Let me just say, again, that I congratulate the House on what they have done. I think they moved forward. I think they have examined and have come up with new ideas. Do I support all of it? Probably not. Is it a perfect bill? Of course not. But it gives us an opportunity to take a new look at something that needs a new look.

What we are seeking is the best way to deliver services, the best way to help people help themselves, to find a way to help people who need help back into the workplace. That is what it is all about. That is the purpose of this program.

I went into our welfare office in Casper, WY. I expected to find a staff that was very defensive when we talked about change. That is not true. They felt frustrated with the program that they now have to administer. The director showed me this whole shelf full of regulations. He said, "God, I spend half my time working on regulations." They come from different Departments. They come from Agriculture, they come from Housing, they come from the welfare program. We need to put them together so that they do work.

We try to do something to encourage people to work, and if a mother on AFDC does not have a job or does not look for one or does not do what is required, they seek to reduce the payments. They reduce the payments here and they go up in food stamps, they go up in housing. They are very frustrated that they are not being able to accomplish what they want to accomplish.

There is a perception that more Government is needed by some, that more money is needed. Since the war on poverty, the Federal Government has spent nearly \$5 trillion on social welfare programs. Federal, State and local governments combined now spend \$350 billion a year, 20 percent more than the Government spends on national defense.

Separate Medicaid from food stamps and aid to families with dependent children and you find a program that costs taxpayers approximately \$90 billion a year, more than five times what it was in 1981.

Specifically, the Federal share for Medicaid spending in the State of Wyoming has grown from \$42 million to over \$107 million from 1990 to 1994. The State's share for that program has grown from \$24 to \$61 million in that same period of time. And we all know what the results have been.

We have heard a great deal of criticism from the administration regarding the Republicans' efforts to reform welfare. On the other hand, that is what the President talked about when he came here. He said, "We're going to change welfare as we know it." Unfortunately, we have not heard much lately from the administration. The proposal introduced by the President in

1994 exempted all welfare mothers born before 1972 and proposed \$9.3 billion in additional spending. Exempting 80 percent of the current caseload is not an answer, nor is the infusion of more money without change.

So what we are talking about is a great opportunity to provide real help, to provide a system that delivers the help to the people who need the help, not take it off on the way there.

I hope that we can start, as we said in the beginning, with a stipulation that everyone in this place is compassionate about children, everyone in this place wants to find a system that works and that we do not polarize ourselves by saying, "These folks want to throw everybody out; these folks want to help everybody." That is not the case.

Like the Senator from Pennsylvania, I call on the media to help, to help really say what the facts are, to really lay out that cuts are not cuts, reductions in spending proposals are not cuts, that consolidation of programs can end up with more benefit to recipients, and that is where we are.

Mr. President, we appreciate this opportunity in the morning time, and we look forward to participating in developing a program of assistance to Americans that will bring them out of poverty and into the workplace.

I yield the floor.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, last Saturday the people of Greece celebrated 172 years of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire. The Greek emancipation from the reins of tyranny brings to mind our own ancestors' struggle for freedom. Greece and the United States share a common struggle rooted in a common philosophy of liberty and self-governance put forth by the ancient Greeks.

Thomas Jefferson looked to the ancient Greeks when he made the case for representative democracy. Jefferson once said, " * * * to the ancient Greeks * * * we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves out of Gothic darkness." The Declaration of Independence closely mirrors the ideals of ancient Greek philosophers. Greek Independence Day not only commemorates Greece's victory over oppression, but also celebrates deeply rooted philosophical symmetry—one honed by great statesmen from Aristotle to Thomas Jefferson.

America's relationship with the Greeks came full circle when, on the eve of their revolution for independence, the Greek commander in chief, Petros Mavomichalis implored Americans for assistance:

Having formed the resolution to live or die for freedom, we are drawn toward you by a just sympathy since it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode, and by you that she is prized as by our fathers. Hence, honoring her name, we invoke yours at the same time, trusting that in imitating you, we

shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you . . . it is for you, citizens of America, to crown this glory.

Cognizant of the familiar ideals upon which the United States was founded, Greeks emigrated to the United States en masse during the early 1900's. Thus, generations of Greek-Americans have been able to contribute to the reaffirmation of their ancestors' political philosophies.

Greek immigrants emulated their ancestors' drive for knowledge. By 1970, Greek-Americans already topped other ethnic groups in median educational achievement. Combined with this intellectual drive, Greeks brought with them a diligent work ethic. Greek Independence Day also gives us an opportunity to pay special tribute to the industrious traditions of Greek-Americans and their outstanding contribution to our society.

I take this opportunity to wish all Greeks, whether they be in Greece or my home State of South Dakota, the very best during this 172d year of Greek independence.

TRIBUTE TO JENNIE BLAIR

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, the Democratic Party of Alabama lost one of its most ardent supporters and activists on March 12, when Madison County Chairwoman Jennie Blair passed away. She was a strong, dedicated woman who contributed greatly to her State and community over the years.

Jennie was a very eloquent spokesperson for the causes and programs that help the people who are least able to help themselves. She was a positive force for good. Activists on the other side felt a kindred spirit with her, and also felt the loss.

She was a retired South Central Bell employee and labor activist who had long been involved in local Democratic Party politics. Just last month, Jennie was elected to a 4-year term as Madison County chairwoman. Huntsville, Alabama's third-largest city, is located in Madison.

A native of Lincoln County, TN, she was a member of the Communications Workers of America and a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. She held many other leadership positions in the State and national party, and played a pivotal role in the 1992 convention.

Jennie Blair's determination, energy, enthusiasm, and drive will be sorely missed by those who knew and worked with and against her. She took her politics seriously, and truly believed in the principles of the Democratic Party. She believed that Government can be a positive force in people's lives and was never shy about expressing that view. She was a dynamic example of the best things about politics and public service.