

intention to offer the minimum wage on this particular bill.

Mr. DOLE. The Senator from Massachusetts made it clear he is going to offer it at every opportunity. So I thought I better make the Record clear.

MEASURE PLACED ON
CALENDAR—H.R. 2137

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that H.R. 2137 be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOLE. Hopefully we can take up that bill tomorrow. I do not know of any reason—if there are amendments that are relevant, germane, or maybe there can be a separate bill. But I know that the family is very concerned about that. I had an opportunity to visit with Megan's parents. They feel very strongly about this. I do not believe there will be any objection. But there has been objection to its immediate consideration.

WHITE HOUSE TRAVEL OFFICE
LEGISLATION

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, as I understand, the Democrats have had a caucus, and they might now be willing to agree to the unanimous-consent request that I made earlier this morning that there be three votes; division I being the gas tax issue; division II being the TEAM Act issue; and division III being the Democratic proposal for the minimum wage; that each division be limited to 2 hours each, to be equally divided in the usual form, and following the conclusion or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to division I, division II, and division III. Then I assume there would be a vote on final passage.

If I am correct in that, I would be happy to try to obtain that consent agreement now.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I will offer a unanimous-consent agreement to do what I understand the majority leader proposed earlier—later than that particular offer; later on in the morning—that we have three separate bills, and have votes and amendments to those three separate bills. I offer that as a unanimous-consent agreement at this time with amendments.

Mr. DOLE. With amendments?

Mr. DASCHLE. We would offer three separate bills with amendments. We could agree to a time limit, but three separate bills with amendments. That is correct.

Mr. DOLE. I never agreed to anything like that. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DOLE. Let me say that I did indicate—I do not negotiate with the press. As far as I know, they are not

Members of the Senate. Some have more power than we have, but they are not voting.

I was asked that question, and I repeated the question. I might subscribe to that. But I went on to say, I made almost the identical offer today, but I never made any offer that would indicate we would have amendments to these separate bills. That is an entirely different process.

Plus, I am no rocket scientist, but it did occur to me that obviously the President could veto the TEAM Act and sign the other two. He said he would do that today. I would not buy into such an agreement.

I do think this is a very reasonable agreement that I have suggested. Since I have been asked to object to the Democratic leader's proposal, perhaps he would be kind enough to object—

Mr. DASCHLE. I object.

Mr. DOLE. I find it strange that our colleagues on the other side are filibustering minimum wage. We are prepared to have that vote right now. We will not even need 30 minutes of debate. We are prepared to have the vote on TEAM Act, prepared to have the vote on gas tax.

Again, the TEAM Act is just a very little piece of the pie or the puzzle. I hope we could find some way to reach an agreement. If there are amendments, I know the Senator from North Dakota—I have written him a letter, Senator DORGAN, if he has any way to tighten up the effort to make certain that the 4.3 cents will go to the consumer. I had a letter from Texaco, and we will have a response from ARCO. Somebody raised a question about ARCO in the press conference. I did not have the answer, but we are getting the answer from ARCO. I think we will have the assurances that some would need before they act on the gas tax repeal.

As I said at the press conference earlier, we do pay for it. This is really an effort—the President's spending is why we have to have it. He wanted to spend more money, so we had to raise the gas tax. We will not let the deficit grow any larger. We will make certain we offset any loss.

I hope that this is a reasonable agreement, and I would like to proceed with it. If not, I do not see any reason to stay in later this evening.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DOLE. I am happy to yield.

Mr. DASCHLE. Go ahead.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I wonder if the majority leader would yield for a brief question regarding matters that we discussed just a few moments ago.

Mr. DOLE. Certainly.

Mr. KENNEDY. As I understand from the press conference, a question was asked, just to follow up on what Senator DASCHLE has pointed out: "Why not have three up-or-down votes on three different bills, whether they are amendable or unamendable? Why not do it that way?"

Senator DOLE said, "Three separate bills, I might even subscribe to that. But they won't let it happen. They will filibuster the TEAM Act. If we can get an agreement to vote on three separate bills, that is one thing. I have already given that agreement, to have the three separate bills."

As I understood the—

Mr. DOLE. Three separate votes.

Mr. KENNEDY. The question included the words: "amendable or unamendable? Why not do it that way?"

"Three separate bills, I might even subscribe to that. But they won't let it happen."

As I understood it, that is what Senator DASCHLE had offered. I was wondering, since it appeared, at least from the transcript, that that was the position of the majority leader, why that would not be acceptable to do that here as the minority leader has suggested.

Mr. DOLE. As I have indicated, I said in that response, I might and I might not. And I will not. That will take care of that.

Again, nobody is trying to negotiate. Democrats like to negotiate, but I do not negotiate with press people unless there is one up there who works for the Democrats, but I do not think so, not directly.

We would be very happy to proceed on the basis we have outlined this morning. We think it is very reasonable. I think the President ought to accept it in the spirit he invoked in his 1:30 press conference. He did indicate he would sign—he mentioned something about workers' rights. That is what we are talking about, workers' rights.

I do not understand how we expect the majority to permit the minority to have their way and we not be entitled to have any say at all. We are prepared to repeal the gas tax, have that vote, have the TEAM Act vote, and have the minimum wage vote and then have a final vote. I think my colleagues on the other side might appreciate the fact we would probably have a fairly healthy vote on final passage, which I think would bode well for what might eventually happen to this legislation.

There is a lot of merit to keeping the three together. There may not be any merit on that side of the aisle, but there is merit on this side of the aisle.

Again, I tried to work with—certainly, always tried to work with—the Democratic leader. I am happy to meet with him at any time and see if there is some agreement we can reach.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will not belabor this. Let me just say that I think both sides have made their position very clear. The majority leader wants to combine the TEAM Act, the minimum wage, and the Travel Office bill all in one package, in addition, of course, to the gas tax reduction. In one package we would combine all of these things.

I must say I do not know that we will ever be able to resolve this until we

can find a way to allow separate bills to be considered. The problem we have is, we cannot offer amendments. That is the essence of it. We cannot offer amendments to these. We may ultimately have a TEAM Act of our own. We may have a substitute of our own to the gas tax reduction proposal. We may have a lot of amendments that are very relevant to this bill that we are precluded from offering under this arrangement.

I have had a very productive and very good relationship with the leader over many months now. I am hopeful that we can find a way through this and see if we cannot resolve it. I do not see a way to resolve it until we can finalize some understanding about the opportunity that we must have to offer amendments to bills that we care deeply about.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, again, I think we all try to work things out around here. At least that has been my experience. I see my distinguished colleague from West Virginia, Senator BYRD, may not agree on what will be the final outcome, but we try to agree. If there is an effort or wish to offer substitutes, we might have a substitute to the minimum wage.

We are willing to divorce these three matters from the Travel Office bill and bring them up separately, or if there is another H.R. bill around here somewhere—there is another H.R. bill. We can accommodate that request. We can go ahead and separate, if that would help, and let the Billy Dale matter be passed.

I think the point is that the Senator from Massachusetts made it very clear he was going to amend every bill with the minimum wage, which, in effect, served notice on us that anything that we brought up would be blocked. We want to resolve this issue, get it behind us, so we can move on a number of legislative areas that we think are important, important to the people of America.

I am perfectly willing to try to work it out with the Democratic leader. We have never had a problem before. Sometimes these things are not easy. Sometimes they can be resolved. I make no offer to the Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, if I could just say one other thing that I meant to add, the distinguished majority leader this morning said that he took good notes from his predecessor, the majority leader in the 103d Congress, George Mitchell. I know he is a great note taker, and I do not deny that he probably, like all of us, learned from past experience.

However, we went back in the 103d Congress just to try to find an example or an instance when the majority filled the parliamentary tree, filled the tree in every way, to preclude the minority from having an opportunity to offer an amendment. We could not find 10, we could not find 5, we could not find 1 in

stance where the majority so dominated the political tree—it is a political tree in this case—the parliamentary tree so as not to allow the minority the opportunity to offer any amendments. It is not something the majority did in the past.

Even in the most troubling circumstances, the minority had an opportunity to offer an amendment. We had to offer second degrees, and we did. We had to come up with counter strategies, and we did. We never filled the tree and filed cloture and precluded the minority from even having the opportunity to offer an amendment. Having looked at the record from at least that perspective, I do not find an example that could be called a precedent for what is happening right now.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I meant—and I talked about Senator Mitchell as my friend and the friend of everybody on this side and the other side, and he is doing quite well in the private area—that he would file cloture rather quickly.

But the point is, I can recall the stimulus package being held up. I think Senator Mitchell did a good job of preventing us from voting on capital gains for many years. I cannot remember, it has been so long. So I think he was quite effective. Maybe I have not been quite as effective and I had to fill the trees because I did not know the other ins-and-outs of the place. He did a good job, and I certainly have high respect for Senator Mitchell. I very much appreciate the fact that he was willing to pass on some of the ideas he had that I have been able to pick up.

But I would be very happy to visit with my friend, the Democratic leader. If it is a question of working out an agreement with amendments, I think we can do that. But when the Senator from Massachusetts makes it impossible to bring up any bill—and he says he is not going to do it on Megan's law, but he has everything else, with the exception of the bill he wanted passed, the health bill—then it makes it rather difficult to do the business of the Senate. So I do not believe that we are doing anything that cannot be resolved, regarding the efforts initiated on that side. I am perfectly willing to work it out, if we can, with the Senator from South Dakota, the Senator from Massachusetts, and everybody else. I know the Senator from Mississippi is willing to try and has tried. I think we have all been in good faith.

So if we can work it out, that is fine. We would be happy to meet this evening and see if we can resolve this and have not only these three issues behind us, but a number of others that should be dealt with, if we are to have a Memorial Day recess.

I will be happy to yield the floor.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I wanted to inquire of the leader. Of course, on the minimum wage, a majority of the Members have actually voted for an increase in the minimum wage. So, in this instance, the minority is

really the majority, and they have been denied the opportunity these many weeks and months from having an opportunity to be able to have a clean bill on the minimum wage. I think that the actions that were taken are taken out of frustration, on an issue that the American people are so overwhelmingly in support of, and that is, people that work hard ought to be able to have a livable wage, and we ought to be addressing that on the floor of the Senate.

So I just suggest to the leader that, actually, we are not a minority on that issue, we are a majority, and with good Republican support. I am just puzzled about why we are constantly characterized as a minority when we have been able to demonstrate from votes here on the Senate floor that a majority wants to have an increase in the minimum wage. I do not see how that is so unreasonable.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, it would be my view that when that vote comes, there will be a substantial majority. The vote the Senator refers to is a cloture vote, and sometimes they are a bit deceptive, as I have learned.

Mr. KENNEDY. Is the Senator now stating to the American people that he will only schedule a vote up or down on the increase in the minimum wage if we get cloture? Is that the position of the majority leader on this issue?

Mr. DOLE. I did not even raise cloture. I thought that was the position of the Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. No, no. I do not believe that the majority leader does not understand what my position is on this.

Mr. DOLE. I think I do understand your position. I sometimes admire it—sometimes. But I think the point is that we need to resolve this, if we can. I would be happy to try to work with the Senator from Massachusetts, or the Democratic leader, or both, and see if we cannot work out some arrangement where they can offer amendments. But I do believe it is pretty difficult to explain to the majority—and I do not often refer to the minority. I think we are all Senators. It is pretty hard to explain to the majority on this side why we should permit the Senator from Massachusetts to do everything he wants, but we cannot do what we want. If the Senator can help me with that, maybe we can work it out.

Mr. KENNEDY. If the Senator will yield on that point. It is not what the Senator from Massachusetts wants, it is what 13 million Americans deserve.

Mr. DOLE. Oh. I will say the same about a lot of things President Clinton has vetoed, such as the child tax credit, welfare reform, balanced budget, all those things were vetoed. The Senator from Massachusetts did not vote for them. The child tax credit will help 50-some million children in 28 million homes.

So if we want to get into the numbers game here, we can extend the debate for some time. I think, since I

have an appointment at 5, I will be happy to either recess until tomorrow morning, or if we want to continue debate, we can. I know the Senator from Georgia is here, and the Senator from Idaho wishes to be recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ABRAHAM). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELFARE REFORM

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, last Saturday the White House political machine was running at full tilt trying to convince the American people that welfare reform is well underway when, in fact, President Clinton has vetoed welfare reform twice. Once again we find that the administration is using the old theory as to whether you can fool all of the people all of the time. This time, the administration is trying to use figures to confuse the public into believing that it is implementing a successful welfare reform strategy when, in fact, it has not.

Last Saturday, President Clinton told the American people that, All across America the welfare rolls are down, food stamps rolls are down, and teen pregnancies are down compared to 4 years ago. Unfortunately for the administration, the facts get in the way of the rhetoric.

According to the latest available data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the estimated average monthly number of AFDC recipients for 1995 was 13.6 million. The final figures for all of 1995 are not yet available, and there is a 9-month average from January to September 1995. By comparison, the monthly average for all of 1992 was 13.8 million recipients. This is a modest decline of 200,000 people, or 1.5 percent.

But the real story about the welfare rolls which this administration does not want the public to see is how the current welfare rolls compare to previous years and administrations. This first chart shows the number of people receiving AFDC benefits over time, and while the estimated 1995 AFDC caseload is 13.6 million people, the average monthly number of AFDC recipients between 1970 and 1995 was 11.3 million.

When you look back at the AFDC program over time, you find that the AFDC rolls under the Clinton administration are still well above the historical levels. Comparing 1995 to the averages of the 1980's, it is even more dramatic. If the 1995 welfare rolls had declined to the level of the 1980's, there would have been 2.7 million fewer people on AFDC.

Let me also point out, as this chart shows, that the AFDC rolls were rel-

atively constant throughout the 1970's and 1980's. There was an average of 10.6 million AFDC recipients over the 1970's. In the 1980's, the AFDC rolls rose at a slightly higher level, at 10.8 million.

The AFDC rolls increased dramatically in the early 1990's. In fact, the AFDC rolls reached their highest point ever during the Clinton administration in 1993. There have been only 2 years in which the AFDC caseload has ever exceeded 14 million people, and those years were 1993 and 1994.

Until 1994, there were 14.1 million recipients on AFDC, well above the 1992 level. If the welfare rolls would have declined just to the historical average, never mind ending welfare as we know it, there would be 2.2 million fewer people on AFDC than there are today. At best, the Clinton administration can only claim that the number of AFDC recipients is just now returning to the level of 4 years ago. Thus, President Clinton is claiming success for bringing the number of AFDC recipients to a level which is nearly 20 percent higher than the historical average. It is a little bit like the teenager claiming victory in the Indianapolis 500 just because he found the keys to the family car.

In the Food Stamp Program, we find similar patterns but the news is slightly worse for the White House spin doctors. Let me first point out, as this second chart shows, that the 1995 food stamp caseload was higher than the 1992 level, not lower, as the administration has claimed. On average, there were about 900,000 more food stamp recipients in 1995 than in 1992. And even if you use only 1 month of data, the most recent food stamp caseload is still higher than the 1992 level. The February 1996 food stamp caseload was at 25.7 million people. This is 300,000 more people than the 1992 level. And second, there were nearly 7 million more food stamp recipients in 1995 than for the 25 year historical average.

Over the past 25 years, the average monthly number of food stamp recipients is 19.4 million people. In 1995, there were 26.3 million people receiving food stamps. There were nearly 6 million more food stamp recipients in 1995 than the average for the 1980's.

As welfare rolls are linked at least in part to the economy, you should expect the number of welfare recipients to decline even without any change in welfare policy.

We can see this relationship especially in the food stamp program in the late 1970's and 1980's. This chart shows significant growth beginning in 1979. At the same time the median money income for families was declining in real terms from \$39,227 in 1979 to \$36,326 in 1982, food stamp caseload peaked in 1981 at 22.4 million recipients. But the chart shows the subsequent steady decline in food stamp caseload during the Reagan administration to less than 19 million recipients in 1988 and 1989. What was happening with the econ-

omy? Well, the median money income for families during the Reagan-Bush years increased to \$40,890 in 1989 in real terms.

The relationship follows in bad economic times as well. Caseloads increased once again as family income declined sliding down to \$37,905 in 1993. According to Census Bureau reports, the 1993 poverty rate for all families with children under age 18 was 18.5 percent, the highest level since 1962.

If administration officials can claim success, they need to explain precisely which Clinton welfare policy change is responsible for bringing the caseload back to the 1992 level. We need to question whether the Federal bureaucracies at USDA and HHS are really responsible for this decline.

The waivers the President continues to talk about appear to have very little if any effect. Obviously, the administration can claim credit for only those waivers which have been actually approved and implemented since 1993. Even then, the waivers must be evaluated to determine if they are or not some other factors were, indeed, the cause of the change.

In 1993, only four State welfare waivers were implemented. Obviously, these four waivers had no effect on other States. They may not have had any effect within the respective States depending upon when they were implemented during that year. In 1994, 14 waivers were implemented, in 1995 another 7. But these figures tell us very little. Waivers may not be implemented throughout the State. A State may have more than one waiver, some of which may have no impact on caseload. Some States with waivers have seen increases in their welfare caseload.

What this confusion should really tell the American people is that waivers are no substitute for authentic welfare reform. President Clinton did not mention that the welfare rolls and other programs have increased from their 1992 levels.

In September 1995, the most recent data available, there were 6.5 million people receiving supplemental security income benefits. This is an increase of nearly 1 million people from December 1992. We have also added about 5 million people to the Medicaid Program since 1992.

Mr. President, here are a couple of more facts to go with the White House data. It has now been 39 months since President Clinton outlined his welfare reform goals to the American people and promised to deliver welfare reform to the Nation's Governors. Instead, he has vetoed authentic welfare reform not once but twice in the past 5 months.

Mr. President, there are important differences between a vision and an optical illusion. The Republicans have outlined their vision for ending the vicious cycle of dependency through restoring the timeless values of work and family life. Meanwhile, the White