

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