Block grant in itself may not be an evil concept but block grant under the guise of efficiency and better service and local control, it needs to be examined. I submit to Members that in the block grants, in cutting, we may indeed be offering an unfunded mandate because those people who are closest to their citizens will be going to their county commissions, be going to their State general assembly, because they have come to understand that these programs are there and they no longer will be there. You will say, we have given the block grant and we have capped them.

The other issue about block grants is that it does not indeed take into consideration the downturn of the economy. It makes no adjustment for that whatsoever.

Given these factors, it cannot be made substantial when we go beyond the rhetoric that more children will be served. The truth is, more children will not be served. Why? Food is going up, and the school and population is growing.

Which of us would rather tell the last 5 kids of the 25 that are there that they are not going to be able to be served? You must begin to understand why people are so outraged is they cannot believe that you understand this and will still go forward. It is not that we think anyone has more of a disregard for young people than we are, but apparently we do not share the same vision for the future to allow this to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge all of us to begin to think not in terms of entitlement when we think of our children but think of our children as our future. To the extent we fail to invest in our future, we fail to invest in our society.

MORE ON FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the preceding speaker joining us in the well, the gentlewoman from North Carolina. I appreciate her point of view and especially her last couple of comments. However, I thought for a time tonight we had made real progress because it seemed the preceding speaker, Mr. Speaker, had decided to back away from the terminology ''cut.''

Let us again state for the record, the proposal offered by your new majority in the Congress of the United States, a proposal that for child nutritional programs adds $200 million over what President Clinton outlines in his budget, a plan that calls for annual increases over the next 5 years of 4.5 percent every single year, friends, those are increases.

The numbers, with all due respect, offered by the opposition are phantom numbers because they speak of $7 billion in cuts, $7 billion that don't even exist.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is this: We do confront a deficit of stark proportions for us all. In fact, by some estimates since in essence the national debt is compounded every nanosecond, it continues to grow, by some estimates we confront a national debt that affects every man, woman and child in this country to the tune of their share in the national debt, for you and me and for everyone else, fast approaching $20,000.

We have a simple choice: Either we can continue to play the tired old politics of the past which are akin to a schoolyard game of am-not-are-too, am-not-are-too, or we can face this serious problem and take a look and decide to rein in the growth of spending to what is reasonable, to what is rational, and, yes, taking into account the inflation rate, what is most effective, and that is behind our notion of changing these grants to block grants, to let those on the front line fight the battle.

It is true there is a very real difference in philosophy here, because those in the new majority, Mr. Speaker, believe that people on the front lines can best fight this battle and believe it is not incumbent upon a bureaucracy run amok in Washington, DC to decide how best to spend money.

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Your new majority in this Congress realizes that what might work in Philadelphia might not work in Phoenix and that people on the front lines in the State of Pennsylvania and Arizona and North Carolina and across this Union can best decide how to fight the battle.

But again, the programs are not being cut. Really, this begs a larger question, and one I think of stark importance to our Republic. Do we face the challenge now and deal with it responsibly, or do we remain wedded to the politics of the past?

We heard with great fanfare my friend on the other side from California just repeat all the arguments and all the incendiary rhetoric. Let me submit to you that if we fail to deal with this problem, if we continue with the same old name-calling, the false numbers, in essence those who are wedded to the past, those who are the guardians of the past have become, in essence, the enemies of the future. For in maintaining a tired old broken-down welfare state, they have, in essence, declared war on the next generation of Americans.

All we ask is this, Mr. Speaker: That we in this body in which it is a great honor to serve, that we do what every American family at one time or another has to do, Mr. Speaker, to gather around the kitchen table and make some hard choices.

Can good people disagree? Yes. Good people can disagree. And certainly there is a difference in philosophy that I delineated.

But I would challenge the other side to come forward with positive programs to tell us where the cuts will come, to tell us where the changes will come, instead of trotting out the tired old rhetoric of the past.

The stakes are too high. The future beckons us.

IN THE FRONT LINES WITH THE WIC PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LUCAS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman who preceded me in the well talked about the front lines. I do not know where he was yesterday, but I was at the front lines. I went and visited a WIC program in Springfield, my hometown in Springfield, OR.

Apparently the gentleman is quite unfamiliar with the programs. They are run by local boards. In fact, the chairman of the board of our local WIC program is a Republican lawyer who a couple of years ago thought about running against me. So there is an incredible amount of discretion and weight given to local control.

What did I not see at the WIC program yesterday? I did not see this: I did not see a low-birthweight baby who was suffering tremendously and who was going to be an extraordinary expense all paid for out of the other pocket of the taxpayers, by Medicaid. I did not see one of these yesterday.

But what I did see were a bunch of healthy kids and some parents coming from a whole bunch of different circumstances. I want to talk just a little bit about that.

I saw a teen mom yesterday, a category of recipient who would be cut off from benefits in the Ozzie and Harriet world of the other side of the aisle. We should not have teenage pregnancies, and, by God, if they have them, they are not going to get any benefits.

What is going to happen to the baby in that world? You want to punish the teenager. What about the baby? I do not even think you should be punishing the teenager. A little counseling is a little more in order. I met a teen mom, and she had gotten some of that counseling at that WIC program. Counseling is one of the things cut off under the Republican block-grant proposal. You will give them the food vouchers still, but you will not get the nutrition counseling. They taught here how to breast-feed her little baby, and they were there yesterday, and they were a testimony to how well this program works.

I saw a working mom with two kids. She is working, a single parent, but she qualified for the WIC program, and you know what, her kids had nutritional problems. They both had a problem with dairy. They had dairy sensitivity. She did not know how to deal with it. She did not have the wherewithal to