of compassion than not making fundamental reforms to our welfare system. When Bill Clinton campaigned for President, he told American that he was going to ''end welfare as we know it.'' In reality, what the President and the Democrats are doing is defending welfare as we know it.

The Republican bill will make the welfare system more just, more compassionate, more efficient, and more responsible. It does this by recognizing and facing up to the fact that the current system simply does not work. The current system has compounded the problems that it set out 30 years ago to eliminate.

If we are truly interested in breaking the cycle of dependency; if we are truly interested in maintaining a safety net for those who are unable to help themselves; if we are truly interested in offering credible and responsible solutions for the 21st century; and if we are truly interested in creating and expanding opportunities for all Americans; then we must pass the Personal Responsibility Act. Now.

□ 2115

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

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to address the House. I ask permission to revise and extend my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to this debate on welfare reform over the past 2 days. I have read my mail, trying to understand how the people I represent feel about this important tissue. And, yesterday, I received some correspondence from the Christian Coalition, a group whom I respect, articulating their strong support for H.R. 4, the Republican welfare reform bill, and at the same time, their equally strong support for the $500 per child tax break for families with incomes up to $200,000.00 per year. And, having grown up in a fundamentalist church, being a southern Baptist by personal choice, I have struggled in my spirit to understand these seemingly disparate views.

The Christian Coalition, as have other religious groups in the past, has chosen to enter the political arena and to use the weight of their membership to influence public policy. The particular position of the Christian Coalition on any given issue is almost always the Republican position and thats understandable. After all, it is run and financed by Rev. Pat Robertson, a former Republican presidential candidate. The vote of each member of Congress is recorded on a scorecard and sent out to the membership of the Christian Coalition and, by and large, Democrats score poorly. And, as a result of that, although it is not explicitly stated, the inference drawn by Christian Coalition members is that Democrats are less Christian, more ungodly. This is, afterall, the ''Christian'' scorecard.

As a Democrat, as a Christian, as a southern Baptist, as someone who fundamentally believes in the words of the Bible, this approach troubles me greatly. Not because of what a low score on the Christian Coalition scorecard means to my political career. Everybody puts out scorecards—we have so little control over what people say about us or how they judge us. That doesn't bother me. What troubles me is when I see a particular position taken by the Christian Coalition, that position being portrayed as the ''Christian position'' and yet in my heart I feel, as someone who has shared this basic Christian culture all my life, that the position doesn't match up to my understanding of the Bible.

Which brings me to this debate on welfare reform. Let me say that I do not believe that God's response to the poor is some wild-eyed liberalism running around with a guilt ridden conscience, trying to do more things, asking neither responsibility nor good judgment from those whom we seek to help. Not realizing that often in our desire to do good, we build systems that end up manipulating and controlling the poor, more than liberating them.

But, neither do I believe that God's response to the poor is to treat them as though they are the least priority, almost as though they are a nuisance to be dealt with. And, if the words of the Scripture are true, God would never have us stand in judgment of a poor person by saying in our hearts or assuming in our minds that ''there he stands in the midst of rural Appalachian poverty or ghetto tenements, among the homeless, the dispossessed, the disenfranchised because he chooses to be there.'' God would never condone that presumptuous attitude.

And with all due respect to the Christian Coalition and its position on this, the recission bill and the tax relief legislation next week, where does it say in the Scriptures that the character of God is to give more to those who have and less to those who have not? I understand that there is still an overall increase in the growth of the federal spending for some of these programs, but it is questionable as to whether or not that will keep up with the need, and in any case, it should not be the position of the Christian community to slow down the growth of assistance to the poor while increasing the growth of assistance to the wealthy. Out of a $1,600 billion budget less than $300 billion go directly to support the poor.

If there is one thing evident in the Scriptures, it is that God gives priority to the poor. In the Old Testament, the subject of the poor is the second most prominent theme only to idolatry. In the New Testament, one out of every 16 verses is about the poor.

In Christ's first sermon at Nazareth, he laid down the mission of his ministry, He said:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and to give sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.

In the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, time and again he says, blessed are the poor.

He said in the day of judgment:

> I will say enter my good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a few things, now I will make you master over many things. When I was thirsty you gave me drink, when I was hungry you fed me, when I was naked you clothed me, when I was in prison you visited me.

And we will say in that moment,

> Lord when did I do these things?

And he will say,

> When you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.

The least, the poorest, those who are at the bottom-most rung of the ladder—these are the ones to whom God gives the priority. This to me is the Christian message as I understand the scriptures.

Mother Teresa last year spoke to us about God coming to us in the ''distressing disguise of the poor.''

Dorothy Day of the Catholic Worker said this:

> The mystery of the poor is this: that they are Jesus and what you do for them you do for Him. It is the only way we have of knowing and believing in our love. The mystery of poverty is that by sharing in it, making ourselves poor in giving to others, we increase our knowledge of and belief in love.

I do not question nor judge Rev. Robertson nor the Christian Coalition, nor my colleagues here who embrace this legislation. I do not believe they are mean-spirited. They are all good people, I'm sure they are true to their faith and desiring to do what is right.

But, I pray that you do not judge me, or any other Democrat, in the name of the Christian faith as though the leading of the Holy Spirit within us is somehow less valid or less Christian than the way you are led by that same Spirit.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as I go through life, there are many events and things people say that become very riveting and memorable for me, and one of the most memorable events that I experienced in my campaign for the U.S. Congress was when I met a man who was an administrator of one of the hospitals in my community in the 15th District of Florida, and this gentleman told me that, before he had moved to Florida, he had lived in Oklahoma, and he had taken part in a program where he would go into inner city housing projects and read to young children in those projects. This program started because it has been

shown in research studies that, if you read to a child, you can improve their reading score. Actually there are some studies that show that, if you read to a child, you may actually be able to raise their IQ slightly, and he told me something that I will never forget.

He was going into those projects and reading to those kids, and those children were, by and large, children of single parents on welfare, and he would ask, many of them 5, 6 and 7-year-old children, ''What do you want to be when you grow up?'' And, yes, some of them would say I want to be a fireman or a nurse, but some of them would say:

''I don't want to work. I want to collect a check.''

Mr. Speaker, a program that does that to millions of children is not a program of compassion and caring to children. It is a program that is cruel and mean spirited to children.

Today a young male being born to a mother, a single mother on welfare in the United States, has a greater likelihood of ending up on drugs or in the penitentiary than graduating from high school. The problem that we have with illegitimacy in our Nation today is a problem that has been created by the program that we are trying to change, and you cannot fix this problem by tinkering around the edges. The illegitimacy rate in this country has gone up from 5 percent to almost 25 percent in the white community. In the black community it has gone from less than 25 percent to, in some areas, as high as 70 percent.

If you look at what correlates best, what correlates in communities with problems like teenage pregnancy, drug use, illiteracy, juvenile crime, the thing that correlates best in those problems in those communities, Mr. Speaker, is the amount of illegitimacy, the amount of fatherlessness in those communities. A program that perpetuates and cultivates things like this is a cruel and mean-spirited program, and that program needs to be changed, and our bill makes a serious attempt at doing that.

We are not talking about tinkering around the edges. We are talking about promoting family unity, discouraging teen-age pregnancy and illegitimacy.

The fact that this program perpetuates it, Mr. Speaker, was driven home to me when I was a medical student working in an inner-city obstetrics clinic, and I had a 15-year-old girl come in to see me who was pregnant, and I had never seen this before, and I was so upset. I was grieved to see this. I looked at her and said her life is ruined, she cannot go to college, and I said to her, ''How did this happen, why did this happen,'' and she looked up to me and told me that she did it deliberately because she wanted to get out from under her mother in the project, and she wanted her own place and her own welfare check.

This program needs to stop. The people have asked for it; we are trying to deliver.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Members of the minority to stop their partisan rhetoric and join with us in reforming welfare and creating a program for the poor and the needy that strengthens family, does not undermine them, that strengthens the bonds of marriage, because it is strong families that make strong communities that makes strong nations, and our Nation cannot survive with a perpetuation of a program like this.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO WELFARE REFORM PLANS

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to add my little figure of the 8,200 students in my district in Massachusetts who are in danger of losing their School Lunch Program.

Mr. Speaker, we are nearly at the end of the debate on the Welfare Reform Program, and I do not understand really how anybody who has been listening to this debate or watching this debate could really understand the essential differences between the major bills, the Deal bill named after Congressman NATHAN DEAL from Georgia, and the Republican bill because I have rarely seen such deliberate misrepresentation in a debate. Today we saw Republican Representative from Missouri—and each of us has our charts—claiming with his chart that the Deal bill does not require work, does not require people to work, when the fact is that because—it was only because the Republican bill was ridiculed all over the country for not requiring work that they added an amendment just yesterday that brought the work requirement in their bill close to the Deal bill.

□ 2130

We had another top Republican leader from Pennsylvania going to the very edge of personal vilification today in suggesting to a Member that it was corrupt and immoral, yes, the words corrupt and immoral, not to support the Republican version of this legislation.

Well, my colleagues, the Deal bill had the strongest work requirement of any of the bills by honestly recognizing that if you care about getting people to work, you have also got to combat illiteracy and provide people with job training and a good piece of education and maybe some job placement services and reliable and safe child care so that parents can go to work.

All of those programs were cut under the Republican bill. All of those provisions were cut under the Republican bill.

Also a bill, by the way, that does not cut breakfast and lunches in a mixture, in a whole shell game of block grants. And it does not cut protection for abused children, and it does not cut day care for children so that their parents can work.

That was the kind of a bill that every Member of my party proudly voted for, and it represented real reform and a real opportunity to change the way we deal with welfare people in this country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Republicans say that the war on poverty is lost, so they are substituting a war on poor children for the war on poverty. Five million families with 9.5 million children who are living on AFDC, plus millions more families with millions more children who are working families but low-income working families, those families would, under the Republican bill, lose $50 billion of income and of food and of care for children while the parents work.

And for protection for children, protective services for abused children, all of those would be given over instead to some of the wealthiest people in America.

It is not to balance the budget, not even to deal with the deficit that we have in this country that we have been running. That is the kind of deficit that has been building, those huge deficits under President Reagan and President Bush year after year after year after a nearly balanced budget for many years beforehand. Not to do anything like that because they added an amendment that allows this money to not be used for the deficit but to be used for the tax cut that I have described.

This $50 billion, and I have left out the $17 billion that is used to pay by way of legal immigrants and changes in the legal immigrant status, this $50 billion is exactly the amount of money that would be used in the next 5 years to provide tax cuts for the top 2 percent of Americans, those families making more than $200,000 per year.

Mr. Speaker, only in NEWT GINGRICH's Washington would cutting $50 billion in food and housing and income for low-income working and nonworking people and shifting that to the wealthiest Americans, only in NEWT GINGRICH's America would that be even possible.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AND REQUEST OF MEMBER ON SPECIAL ORDERS LIST

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order and substitute for the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. SMITH].

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection?

There is no objection.

CREATIVITY IN ARGUMENTS

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