to the physical or mental health of the individual, or is related to payment for the provision of health care to the individual.

CONCLUSION

As the number of elderly in our society increases, the number and proportion of drugs used by these older Americans will also increases. It is true that drugs, when used appropriately, can reduce or eliminate the need for surgical and hospital care, prevent premature deaths, and improve quality of life. Unfortunately, a good deal of drug use among older persons is inappropriate, often resulting in hospitalization. While some drug-related hospital admissions are unavoidable, many can be attributed to errors in prescribing. By implementing the Medicare Medication Evaluation and Dispensing System Act, we could greatly improve the quality of care received by our Nation's elderly. I look forward to receiving any comments and feedback from interested parties.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 27, 1995

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Republicans' welfare reform proposal. Welfare reform should promote self-sufficiency in a way that does not compromise human dignity and self-respect, the cornerstones of the American tradition.

Tragically, the Republican proposal does little to promote self-sufficiency. It fails to provide specific resources for job training and placement which are necessary to help recipients become productive members of the work force. Yet it punishes those who, although willing, are unable to find work.

The Republican plan violates the basic principles of human dignity and self respect. It punishes poor families, especially our children, by eliminating the guarantee of health services for poor families and denying critical health care to millions of women and children. In addition it allows States to deny benefits to innocent children who are born into families currently receiving assistance.

Equally as tragic, the Republican bill eliminates our country's long-standing commitment of a guaranteed safety net for people living in poverty. In Los Angeles County alone, thousands of children will join the nearly half a million children who already live below the poverty line.

And it eliminates the safety net for all Americans who experience economic hardship resulting from the loss of their jobs and who depend on this safety net to protect their family until they can find other employment.

The Republican plan does not do what it claims. It does not encourage responsibility and self-sufficiency. It will not help people to help themselves and worse, it severely punishes the most vulnerable among us, our children.

While we can all agree on the need for welfare reform, the American people do not want a plan which violates the basic American principles of fairness, human dignity, and self-respect; the Republican bill violates all of these.

TRIBUTE TO LOUISE WOLFF KAHN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 22, 1995

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in remembrance of one of the great women of Dallas who reflected the true meaning of giving.

Her name is Louise Wolff Kahn and she was given with unswerving dedication in support of the arts, education and historic preservation in Dallas.

In Dallas, we enjoy a rich heritage of philanthropy. We live in a giving community, and if Louise Wolff Kahn believed in a program, institution, or building project, she would devote herself to making it successful. She dedicated herself to many important endeavors such as the Dallas Symphony, breathing life into the organization during some of its darkest financial days. Much of her work has gone without any publicity, but publicity is not what she wanted; she to create a wonderful learning environment for children of low income families. It is evidenced by her devotion to the East Dallas Community School and the Dallas Public Library systems.

With her passing, Dallas has lost one of its greatest philanthropists.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 1995

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the welfare reform conference agreement. Instead of addressing the causes of poverty, this bill penalizes people for falling on hard times.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we do need to change the welfare system; but it is cruel and mean-spirited to dismantle altogether the safety net and basic services for poor families and disadvantaged children.

The Republicans' answer to welfare reform is to deny basic assistance to lawful immigrants who pay Federal taxes, pit foster children against victims of domesitc violence for the same scarce funds, eliminate assistance to disabled kids, and cut programs to reduce child abuse.

The reductions in basic programs for low-income children, families, and elderly and disabled people contained in the conference agreement on welfare reform total nearly $80 billion over 7 years, compared to what the programs would cost under current law.

As a result of these reductions, the legislation would increase poverty among children. An Office of Management and Budget [OMB] analysis found that the welfare conference agreement would add 1.5 million children to the ranks of the poor.

Furthermore, these figures understate the bill's overall impact on child poverty. These figures reflect the legislation's impact just on children whose incomes would exceed the poverty line without the legislation but who would be pushed below the poverty line by the legislation. Yet, the conference report also would have a second major effect on child poverty—it would make large numbers of children who already are poor still poorer. According to the OMB study, the depth of child poverty would be increased by one-third.

The deep benefit reductions in the welfare reform conference report extend far beyond single-parent families on welfare. The large food stamp benefit cuts affect the working poor, the elderly and disabled poor, and welfare recipients alike. The changes in the SSI program adversely affect large numbers of low-income disabled children as well as elderly poor individuals. Changes and reductions in the child protection area will result in fewer services for abused and neglected children. These changes have little to do with reducing out-of-wedlock births or moving welfare families to work.

Unfortunately, certain members of the Republican Party have perpetuated the myth that welfare recipients do not want to go to work, leading to a feeling of resentment toward recipients by the American public. This is simply not true. Forty percent of single mothers combine work and welfare or cycle between these two income sources while on welfare. The majority of people who cycle on and off welfare have substantial work experience—on average about 6.5 years.

However, there are many barriers facing poor American families that prevent them from holding down a permanent job. The primary barriers are lack of medical coverage and lack of adequate child care services. Single-parent families, making up the vast majority of families on AFDC, cannot leave welfare because many jobs do not offer health insurance. AFDC recipients lose their Medicaid benefits when they accept a job and there is no safety net coverage to fill this important need if their new job does not include health insurance. In addition, in every State, including Hawaii, there are waiting lists of up to several years for guaranteed child care for the children of poor families who seek work after welfare. Welfare reform should ensure that these two major barriers are addressed.

Furthermore, many AFDC recipients do not have adequate education or job skills to find a job which would earn them a family wage. Most jobs available to unskilled and uneducated head of households pay the minimum wage, currently $5.25 an hour in Hawaii. With a minimum-wage job, an individual in Hawaii would earn approximately $10,000 each year. This is not adequate for a family to survive. It is also important to remember that our economy does not generate enough jobs for all the people who want them. Today approximately 8 million Americans are currently unemployed and looking for work. Criticizing families on welfare without keeping in mind the limits of the job market condemns them for the failings of the economy.

Many welfare reform advocates have suggested that by eliminating benefits or enacting punitive measures we can solve the problem of welfare dependence. Welfare reform including punitive measure such as cutting off recipients at 2 years or cutting off benefits for additional children would be devastating to poor families in America. According to recent studies, welfare programs are not the reason for rising births to unmarried mothers. Similar

studies reveal that welfare recipients are not motivated to have additional children by the prospect of additional benefits. The fact is that, on average, families receive only up to $69 per month for an additional child. This is not even enough to cover the cost of diapers for a new baby. In Hawaii an additional child brings in only $147 in additional cash assistance.

Current AFDC payments are not windfall benefits. In Hawaii, an AFDC family of three receives $712 in cash assistance each month. This amount is reflective of the high cost of living in Hawaii when compared to other States. In Alabama, for example, three-person families receive $164 in cash assistance each month. I challenge any critic of welfare recipients to live comfortably on this income. Furthermore, AFDC benefit levels have declined by 42 percent in the last two decades. The average monthly benefit for a mother of two children with no earnings has shrunk in constant 1992 dollars from $690 in 1972 to $399 in 1992. In addition it is estimated that welfare recipients now lose up to a dollar in benefits for each dollar earned in a new job. Welfare recipients need the same incentives to work that other Americans have. We must end welfare as we know it by crafting a fair and just system to empower recipients to achieve permanent self-sufficiency without punishing them for being poor.

I believe that the people of Hawaii and all Americans recognize that government has a role to play in ensuring that our families maintain an adequate quality of life and have access to basic human needs. We understand that by simply eliminating benefits for poor families we do not eliminate their needs. Most importantly, we cannot forget who is receiving the AFDC benefits. Over 66 percent of all recipients of AFDC are children and 100 percent of the adults receiving AFDC are caring for children. Thirty-five percent of all AFDC families include a child under age 3. If we remove the minimum safety net completely we will be abandoning our children. We know that family poverty harms children significantly and places young children at risk. Ultimately society will suffer for the abandonment of families and States will have to shoulder the burden of homelessness, crime, family violence, substance abuse, and health problems. We should improve the lives of the American poor by changing the welfare system in a positive, not a punitive, effort.

FREE THE CLERGY ACT, H.R. 2829

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 22, 1995

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Free the Clergy Act, a bill:

To prohibit funding by United States Government agencies of the participation of certain officials of the Chinese Government in international conferences, programs, and activities until the Chinese Government releases certain individuals imprisoned or detained on religious grounds.

Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds of people serving long prison sentences in China for practicing their religious faith. Let me repeat that for my colleagues; hundreds of people, Catholics, Protestants, and Buddhists are spending many years of their lives in prison for observing religious practices. Unfortunately, the situation is getting worse.

According to a report released today by Human Rights Watch/Asia:

The Chinese government is subjecting unauthorized Catholic and Protestant groups to intensifying harassment and persecution. . . .''

During the last two years, the Chinese government broadened its drive to crush all forms of dissent. . . . all religious believers, and especially Christians, are seen as potential security risks . . .

How exactly does Beijing repress religious practitioners? The Communist government sentences a 76-year-old Protestant leader to 15 years in prison for distributing Bibles. It sentences a 65-year-old evangelical elder to an 11-year prison term for belonging to an evangelical group outside the Government-sanctioned religious organizations. A 60-year-old Roman Catholic priest was sentenced to 2 years of reeducation through labor for unknown charges. He had previously spent 13 years in prison because of his refusal to renounce ties with the Vatican. The 6-year-old Panchen Lama and his family have been detained since May and their whereabouts are unknown. Scores of Tibetan Buddhists who refused to participate in the Communist Chinese sham enthronement of Beijing's ''Panchen Lama'' have been sent to prison and one of their spiritual teachers committed suicide rather than take part in the Chinese charade.

Mr. Speaker, my good friends and colleagues, there are hundreds of such cases. Mind you these people are not spending time in prison and wasting their lives away for calling for political pluralism or democracy. They are being severely punished for following their religious beliefs.

The administration argues that economic liberalization will bring about political pluralism. Many policy makers articulate that position due to political pressure from business groups. It needs to be pointed out, however, that sweeping religious practitioners under the same rug as prodemocracy advocates for short-term economic interests could be a political mistake that will be a long-term liability. The American people are very concerned about jobs and the economy but not if it is at the expense of their core moral and religious beliefs.

The Free the Clergy Act would prohibit any United States funds to be spent on any official in China who is involved with the repression of religion in China and occupied Tibet. It sends a message that we find religious repression repugnant and at grave odds with important American values.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2829 and ask that the full text of the bill be printed in the RECORD at this point.

H.R. 2829

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) It has been reported that at an internal Central Communist Party meeting in 1994, Chinese President Jiang Zemin asserted that religion is one of the biggest threats to Communist Party rule in China.

(2) On January 31, 1994, Premier Li Ping signed decrees number 144 and 145 which restrict worship, religious education, distribution of bibles and other religious literature, and contact with foreign coreligionists.

(3) The Chinese Government has created organizations that have as their purpose controlling all religious worship, activity, and association in China and supplanting the Roman Catholic Church, independent Protestant churches and independent Buddhist, Taoist, and Islamic associations.

(4) In July 1995 Ye Xiaowen, a reputed atheist and rigid communist, was appointed to head the Bureau of Religious Affairs, an agency controlled by the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Government, that has administrative control over all religious worship and activity in China through an official system of registering or denying rights and privileges to religious congregations and leaders.

(5) In the past year, the Chinese Government has expressed great concern over the spread of Christianity and particularly over the rapid growth of Christian religious institutions other than those controlled by the government, including the Roman Catholic Church and the evangelical Christian ''house churches''.

(6) Soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese Government imprisoned Christians who refused to relinquish their faith to become servants of Communism, charging them as ''counter-revolutionaries'' and sentencing them to 20 years or more in labor camps.

(7) Hundreds of Chinese Protestants and Catholics are among those now imprisoned at ''reeducation through labor'' camps because of their religious beliefs.

(8) The reeducation camps are run by the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Chinese Government.

(9) The Chinese Communist Government refuses to permit the appointment by the Vatican of Catholic Bishops and ordination of priests for China and insists on appointing its own ''Catholic bishops''.

(10) The Tenth Panchen Lama died in January 1989 at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, his traditional spiritual seat in Shigatze, Tibet's second largest city.

(11) The Dalai Lama has the right to recognize the successor to the Panchen Lama, and has always done so.

(12) On May 14, 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced recognition of a 6-year old boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as the Eleventh Panchen Lama, according to Tibetan tradition.

(13) The young boy recognized by the Dalai Lama and his family have been brought to Beijing by Chinese authorities and have not been seen in several months.

(14) Chatrel Rimpoche, abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery and head of the original search committee for the Eleventh Panchen Lama, and his assistant, Champa Chung, are believed to have been seized and detained by Chinese authorities in May of 1995.

(15) Chinese Government authorities subsequently detained other Tibetan Buddhists in connection with selection of the Eleventh Panchen Lama, including Gyatrol Rimpoche, Shepa Kelsang, Lhakpa Tsering, and Ringkar Ngawang.

(16) The Chinese Government convened a conference in Beijing of Tibetan Lamas who were forcibly brought to Beijing in order to select a rival candidate to the child selected by the Dalai Lama as the Eleventh Panchen Lama.

(17) On November 29, 1995, Luo Gan, Secretary General of the State Council, and Ye Xiaowen, Director of the Bureau of Religious Affairs, orchestrated an elaborate ceremony designating a 6-year old boy selected by the Chinese Government as the Eleventh Panchen Lama.