

be no question of a veto override. Hence, the judgment of Robert Pear of the New York Times that "The President's action concludes a 4-year drama that began when Mr. Clinton, as a Presidential candidate in 1992, promised to 'end welfare as we know it.'"

Last September 19, essentially the same bill, indeed H.R. 4, passed the Senate 87-12, with only 11 Democrats opposed. In the interval Elizabeth Shogren of the Los Angeles Times and Judith Havemann and Ann Devroy of the Washington Post reported that the Department of Health and Human Services had submitted an analysis of the bill to the White House. Owing largely to the 5-year time limit, it would throw some 1.5 million children into poverty. No one could have wished this, and Democrats were especially bound to take into account this assessment of a Democratic administration. And so, in the end, 45 of 46 Democrats voted against the measure, Republican Senators CAMPBELL and HATFIELD joined us.

On the day of the final Senate vote, the 11 Democratic Senators who had been opposed from the first, wrote President Clinton to warn against including any "broad welfare measure * * * in the end of session budget agreement." This was not something, we judged, to be concluded in a matter of days by a small group under great pressure.

However, we now learn that on Saturday, January 6, as part of a balanced budget proposal offered by the President in those talks, a section "Welfare Reform Savings"—\$46 billion over 7 years—includes this:

Cash Assistance: AFDC would be terminated and replaced by a new conditional entitlement of limited duration. There would be a 5-year maximum time limit with a state option for vouchers at the end of that period to assist children.

Thus, the administration seemingly proposes to deliver the same 1.5 million children into poverty.

Why is this happening? I can think of two partial explanations.

First, it is widely assumed that AFDC is a Federal entitlement that the Federal Government can restrain without relinquishing. It is not. There is no Federal entitlement to welfare for individuals. Each State devises its own program. The Federal Government provides a matching grant. Abolish the matching grant and you can reasonably expect a race to the bottom.

Second, even as we deplore welfare dependency, we do not seem to grasp just how serious it really is. A quarter—24 percent—of American youth just turned 18 have been on AFDC. Half—46 percent—of the children in Chicago will be on AFDC in the course of a single year. Of children on AFDC, three-quarters are there for more than 5 years. Hence, a 5-year limit invites chaos and ruin.

In particular, liberal-minded persons must proceed with care. For decades now there has been a liberal tendency

to understate, even to deny the welfare problem. Now, of a sudden, a liberal administration proposes a repeal measure that would have been unthinkable just a few years back. Both positions have the common fault of underestimating how serious and dangerous this problem really is.

Even so, let us all be ready for a careful, bipartisan exploration of the issue in the 105th Congress. It was, I think, a close call. But as Churchill remarked, there is nothing so exhilarating as to be shot at and missed.

Mr. SPECTER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I compliment the distinguished majority leader, Senator DOLE, and all parties to the budget negotiations and urge them to continue their talks after hopefully only a brief suspension. It seems to me likely that an agreement can be reached since the parties are reportedly \$100 billion apart. While that is a large sum of money in absolute terms, it is relatively a small percentage of the more than \$12 trillion of a 7-year budget. It is eight-tenths of 1 percent. If an agreement cannot be reached, it is my strong view that the Government should not be closed because of gridlock. We should not try to run Government by blackmail. If an agreement cannot be reached, I suggest, as strongly as I can, that we should keep the Government running and crystallize the issues and present them to the American people for their decision in the 1996 Presidential and congressional elections.

During the first week of the shutdown—actually, on the second day, back on November 14 of last year, I urged this course of action. It is a fundamental principle of U.S. constitutional government that the Congress and the President are partners, really equal partners, unless each House of Congress has a two-thirds majority to override a Presidential veto. And if we can get a two-thirds majority by appealing to the centrists on both sides of the aisle, then we can structure a budget agreement without the President and without closing the Government. But, absent that, it is my strong view that we ought to keep the Government running and crystallize the issue for the 1996 election.

I understand those in my party who seek to enact our agenda through the political pressure of gridlock and shutdown. I agree with the majority leader, Senator DOLE, who has rejected that approach. I remain totally committed to a balanced budget within 7 years with genuine Congressional Budget Office figures. Since my first vote for the balanced budget amendment in 1983, I have stood fast for this important principle. But it is time to acknowledge that it is a failure with the American people to try political pressure through

gridlock and shutdown. It is like Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart said about obscenity, that he could not define it, but he knew it when he saw it. The American people, similarly, know the difference between Government by blackmail and legitimate political pressure.

Had there been any doubt about the difference, it was reduced to plain arithmetic by last night's NBC poll, which showed that 50 percent of the American people approved the President's handling of the budget crisis with 46 percent against, compared with 22 percent who support the Republican handling of the budget crisis with some 78 percent against.

One further word on blackmail versus legitimate political pressure. I urge my colleagues not to try to use the debt ceiling to bludgeon the settlement on the budget dispute. I personally have grave legal reservations about the procedures currently being used by the administration to avoid exceeding the debt limit, and I have said that directly to the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. If they have violated the law by keeping the Government running without raising the debt limit, let them be impeached or subjected to other appropriate legal procedures.

When Treasury Secretary Jim Baker borrowed from the Social Security trust fund in the mid-1980's, I spoke up on this floor and objected to the conversion of trust funds for an unintended purpose. If any other person violated the trust fund, they would be subjected to criminal prosecution for fraudulent conversion. But I suggest that is a fundamentally different proposition for Congress to use that kind of a nuclear weapon in the budget battle. It is not proportionate and I suggest it is not proper.

The full faith and credit of the United States would be damaged worldwide. So I hope my colleagues will reject that approach.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until the hour of 1:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for not more than 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object. At 1:30, do you intend on going out?

Mr. LOTT. It is the leader's intent to go out at that time.

Mr. FORD. I have no objection.

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

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, with the time extended, I ask consent to speak for 2 additional minutes.