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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 1995, at 12 noon.

Senate

TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1995

(Legislative day of Monday, July 10, 1995)

The Senate met at 9 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, thank You for the rest of the night and the fresh energy to begin a new day. As the brightness breaks through the clouds of the morning sky, illuminate our hearts with Your own darkness-dispelling presence. Drive away the clouds of doubt that question Your faithfulness in trying circumstances and the clouds of fear that make us cautious when we need to be courageous. We know that anytime we get wrapped up in ourselves, we're a pretty small package. Unwrap us Lord. Set us free from self-concern so that we may focus on the needs of others. Renew our assurance that we are loved and forgiven by You so that we may be communicators of Your grace to the people with whom we work.

As we press on seeking Your best for our Nation in the complicated issues of welfare reform, give us that lively enthusiasm that comes from believing that there are solutions and that consensus can be reached. Liberate us from defensiveness. Give us efficiency in the use of time and frugality in the use of words. Help us to say what we mean and mean what we say. Fill this day with serendipities, unusual happenings in usual circumstances. Surprise us again with the amazing way You can untangle the knotted threads

of process and weave Your thoughts from many minds into answers we could not achieve without each other and most of all, without You. Thank You, Lord, for guiding us today. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, this morning, leader time has been reserved, and the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4, the welfare bill, for the purposes of debate only until the hour of 12:30 today.

At 12:30, the Senate will recess until the hour of 2:15 today for the weekly policy conferences to meet. Rollcall votes can be expected during today's session on or in relation to the welfare bill or possibly the Department of Defense authorization bill.

All Senators should anticipate a late session this evening in order to make progress on a number of items prior to the August recess.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4) to restore the American family, reduce illegitimacy, control welfare spending, and reduce welfare dependence.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:
Dole modified amendment No. 2280, of a perfecting nature.

Mr. PACKWOOD addressed the Chair. The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. PACKWOOD. Mr. President, as I understand it, we are not under controlled time. I believe the Senator from Delaware is prepared to speak.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator DOLE, Senator PACKWOOD, and my other colleagues in introducing this comprehensive welfare reform legislation, S. 1120, America's Work and Family Opportunities Act of 1995.

The American people know our welfare system is fatally flawed. The present welfare system is not serving the best interests of either the beneficiaries or the taxpayers. S. 1120 is a bold initiative that will help prevent even more Americans from falling into the trap of dependency.

Mr. President, in 1965, the average monthly number of children receiving aid to families with dependent children was 3.3 million; in 1992, there were 9.3 million children receiving AFDC benefits. While the number of children receiving AFDC increased nearly threefold between 1965 and 1992, the total

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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number of children in the United States aged 0 to 18 has declined by 5.5 percent.

The Department of Health and Human Services has estimated that 12 million children will receive AFDC benefits within 10 years. To do nothing to prevent this growing tragedy is unacceptable.

Congress has created a confused and confusing welfare system which rewards idleness and punishes work. At a recent hearing I chaired on welfare reform, former South Carolina Governor, Carroll Campbell, testified that his office found a family in which four generations were dependent upon the welfare system in which no one had worked. That is a system which does not protect children. That is a system which is cruel and heartless.

Properly understood, welfare reform is about reforming government. Under our present system, no one is accountable for results. One of the basic flaws in the system is that there is always someone else to blame for failure.

More than 90 Federal programs administered by 11 separate Federal agencies provide education, child care, and other services to young children from low-income families. The Department of Agriculture administers 14 food assistance programs for low-income individuals. Yet the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health and Human Services also run separate food programs. There are 163 Federal programs scattered across 15 Federal agencies providing employment and training assistance.

Let us be clear, however, that the individuals in need of assistance will still receive it. Children will still be fed. Child care will still be provided. Individuals with disabilities will still be provided with the full range of services they need. This legislation presents the opportunity to restore the proper role of the States to consolidate funding from many of these separate programs and design their own solutions. Under the present system, for example, a low-income mother with 2 children may need to visit several different offices to obtain benefits from 17 different programs. I firmly believe the States can improve the quality of services at lower costs to the taxpayers.

Mr. President, to be successful in welfare reform, we must change the structural status quo. The transformation of these programs into block grants will yield tremendous savings over time. It costs \$6 billion just to administer the AFDC and food stamp programs. When you include the cost of errors, fraud, and abuse in these two programs alone, another \$3 billion of the taxpayers' money is wasted. Some of the smaller categorical programs have administrative costs as high as 40 percent of the cost of the benefits.

The welfare system is a complex array of about 80 means-tested programs which provide not only cash assistance, but also medical care, food, housing, education and training, and

social services. In this fiscal year, Federal and State governments will spend approximately \$387 billion on these programs. It is clear that the failures of the current welfare system are not caused by a lack of money, but rather by the structure of the system itself.

Here is what the General Accounting Office recently said about this collection of programs:

The many means-tested programs are costly and difficult to administer. On one hand, these programs sometimes overlap one another; on the other hand, they are often so narrowly focused that gaps in services hinder clients. We note that although advanced computer technology is essential to efficiently running the programs, it is not being effectively developed or used. Due to their size and complexity, many of these programs are inherently vulnerable to fraud, waste, and abuse. We also point out that some of our work has shown that the welfare system is often difficult for clients to navigate. Finally, administrators have not articulated goals and objectives for some programs and have not collected data on how well the programs are working.

At best, we have created a masterpiece of mediocrity. But I think it is much worse. Government has trivialized what it has professed to esteem, specifically family and work. The welfare system which was designed to protect children has failed to consider the consequence of idleness.

Thirty years of experience have ratified what many of us have known all along—Government programs and our welfare system cannot replace stable families. Perhaps the greatest mistake the Federal Government has made during this period is to act as if family life can be reduced to a mathematical diagram and that the wisdom of Solomon can be reproduced in the Federal Register.

The moment to truly change our welfare system is here and now. It has been said that the first act of common sense is to recognize the difference between a cloud and a mountain. It is time to recognize that the system created to end poverty has helped to bring more poverty. It is time to recognize that the cost of the system is excessive and wasteful. The American people clearly see that Washington has failed. And it is time we act accordingly.

True reform has been quietly evolving in the States. Our objectives should be to unleash the latent creativity of these States. We need to test new approaches, to experiment with new methods that seek to address the varying conditions to be found in our 50 States. That is what the Dole-Packwood bill does, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. PACKWOOD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PACKWOOD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRIST. I thank the Chair.

My fellow colleagues, it has been 30 years since President Lyndon Johnson launched his unconditional War on Poverty. One overriding fact remains, the War on Poverty has failed. In welfare, as in most government policies, you get what you pay for.

For 30 years, the welfare system has paid for nonwork and nonmarriage and has achieved massive increases in both. By undermining the work ethic and rewarding illegitimacy, the problems of the poor and the inner city have actually gotten worse, not better, in the subsequent years. Not only are there more people living in poverty today than ever before but, thanks to welfare, whole generations of Americans have lived and died without every owning a home, holding down a steady job, or knowing the love and support of both a mother and a father.

This failure is not due to a lack of Government spending. In 1993, Federal, State, and local governments spent \$324 billion on means-tested welfare programs for low-income Americans. To date, welfare now absorbs 5 percent of the gross domestic product, up from 1.5 in 1965 when the War on Poverty began. According to Congressional Budget Office figures, total annual welfare spending will rise to nearly \$500 billion and 6 percent of gross domestic product by 1998.

Though President Johnson declared that "the days of the dole are numbered," welfare now involves an ever-expanding share of the population. Today nearly one out of seven American children is enrolled in aid to families with dependent children [AFDC], with Uncle Sam's welfare check serving as a surrogate father. About half of the children currently on AFDC will remain on welfare for over 10 years.

The core problem behind this growth is that the current welfare system promotes self-destructive behavior: nonwork, illegitimacy, and divorce. Mr. President, in my practice as a heart transplant surgeon in Tennessee, I witnessed the effects of our misguided welfare system every day.

One out of three of my patients was below the poverty level. Some tried, but couldn't get a job. Some didn't want to work. But almost all felt trapped by the current welfare system which pulls families apart.

Caring for these individuals, I heard the same stories, again and again. Young teenage mothers would explain that the Government would pay them \$50 more a month if they moved out of their parents' home, away from their family and away from the only support system they had to pull themselves out of the welfare trap.

Mr. President, we must act now to reverse this disintegration and destruction of the American family. We cannot afford to pass on the opportunity to put forward a proposal that will end

the generational cycles of welfare dependence. The American people elected us to do the very thing we are now trying to do.

They asked us to return control of their lives and their government to local communities.

They asked us to spend their money wisely.

They asked us to create a system of mutual responsibility in which welfare recipients would be granted aid but would be required to contribute something back to society for assistance given.

They asked us to change incentives, and create a welfare system that promotes work, that reduces illegitimacy, that strengthens families, and that provides an opportunity for all Americans to succeed.

Mr. President, I believe the Dole substitute amendment, No. 2280, goes a long way toward doing what the American people have asked us to do.

It consolidates AFDC cash benefits, JOBS, and related child care programs into a capped block grant to States and gives States a large degree of flexibility to address their unique problems. The Dole substitute also requires a 30-percent reduction in Federal staff currently administering AFDC and the JOBS Program. By consolidating programs, we can reduce the costs of bureaucracy and get the money to our children.

The Dole substitute requires able-bodied adult welfare recipients to work. Welfare recipients will no longer be able to avoid work by moving from one job training program to the next. They must begin work no later than 2 years after getting on the rolls and cannot receive benefits for more than 5 years.

Finally, it contains several provisions designed to strengthen families and require personal responsibility. States can deny cash payments to teenage mothers and place family caps on cash assistance. Single teen parents must stay in school and live under adult supervision. And deadbeat parents will face financial penalties and tough sanctions, including the loss of drivers and professional licenses.

Mr. President, a number of amendments will be offered this week which can strengthen the Dole substitute.

For example, I believe a welfare bill should include a pay-for-performance work requirement, so that there is a proportional reduction in benefits for work missed by a welfare recipient—no work, no benefits.

I would support an amendment to reward Governors for their efforts in reducing illegitimacy rates within their States.

And we should strengthen the requirements that unwed mothers establish the paternity of their children in order to get benefits.

Mr. President, we have a chance to make history here this week. We have the opportunity to regroup, to restructure, and to find new ways of helping those in need.

Those of us who are committed to change have behind us the full force of the American people. Those who argue against those changes have nothing on their side but the dismal history of the past 30 years.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. I wish the Presiding Officer a good morning. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

FARM BILL

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, every 5 years, Congress has the opportunity to review the Government's role in sustaining domestic agriculture production and determine the effectiveness of those programs. That effort is underway as we begin, again this year, the legislation that modifies and extends USDA programs. The multiyear farm bill allows us to step back and shine the light on current conditions on each and every one of the programs affected by this legislation.

As the Senate Agriculture Committee took its first look under the hood earlier last month, it is already clear that some of the programs need a tune-up, some need a complete overhaul, and still others may need to be hauled away.

No piece of legislation Congress takes up this year will affect the lives of South Dakotans and rural Americans more than the 1995 farm bill. Commodity support programs, trade, conservation, research, domestic food assistance, rural credit, and the rural development programs will all be under very close scrutiny.

In my years in Congress, I have had the honor of representing the interests and concerns of South Dakota farmers and ranchers in a number of these farm bill debates. In close consultation with the agricultural community, I have worked to improve farm income and bolster the rural economy by offering amendments that were eventually incorporated in the final legislation.

Nonetheless, as each of these bills have come up for final votes, I have had to ask myself whether they truly represented our best effort to respond to legitimate needs of the agricultural sector. I sincerely hope this year, as we begin to weigh pros and cons of the legislation, that we recognize that the stakes could not be higher.

As we debate the 1995 farm bill in the coming months, I hope the Democrats

and Republicans alike can move beyond the partisanship that so often dominates Congress and work together to draft a farm bill that truly reflects the genuine appreciation for an agricultural community that is too often taken for granted. On many issues, I am optimistic that broad consensus is possible and, indeed, likely. As in years past, however, there are those in Congress who will push for drastic and disproportionate cuts in agricultural spending, claiming that in these times of tight budget constraints, we can no longer afford to support American agriculture, including family farmers.

I say we cannot afford to. American agriculture is making an extraordinarily important contribution to the national economy. In a time when our manufacturing base continues to decline, agriculture contributes more to our exports and produces one of the largest positive balances of trade of any sector within our economy.

Let me remind my colleagues of the extent to which the agriculture sector has already contributed significantly to deficit reduction in the last several years. Since 1986, agriculture spending has been cut by 60 percent, from \$26 to \$9 billion today. If other Federal programs had been slashed as severely as agriculture over the last 10 years, the U.S. Government would now have a budget surplus.

Such past contributions will not and should not preclude the Federal agricultural programs from being thoroughly reviewed once again. The farmers I talked to realize and accept this proposition. They are as concerned about the Federal deficit as anyone. Amidst ever-increasing production costs and stagnant commodity prices, they know how difficult it is to balance a budget, but they do it in their daily lives and expect us to do it as well. Farmers and ranchers are willing to lend their hand to the effort. They simply ask that once a hand is extended, it receives a fair shake.

Our task is to ensure fairness and responsibility in drafting a new farm bill. Farm programs are like many other Government programs: They can be refined; they can be streamlined. Their costs can be reduced and their effectiveness can be increased.

All agricultural policy initiatives must be crafted with the intelligence and with the simultaneous appreciation for the role that family farmers play in the daily lives of all Americans and the budgetary constraints in which we now find ourselves.

We must not, however, let those woefully ignorant of farming realities run roughshod over sound agricultural policy under the guise of fiscal responsibility. Farmers across the country know the difference between political expedience and fiscal responsibility, even if we in Congress confuse the two.

Fashioning a farm bill that will reduce the cost and still provide the necessary services and support for agriculture is one of the top priorities in