

in protest this cherished symbol of our national heritage; and

Whereas, whatever legal arguments may be offered to support this contention, the incineration or other mutilation of the flag of the United States of America is repugnant to all those who have saluted it, paraded beneath it on the Fourth of July, been saluted by its half-mast configuration, or raised it inspirationally in remote corners of the globe where they have defended the ideals of which it is representative; and

Whereas, the members of the Legislature of the State of Texas, while respectful of dissenting political views, themselves dissent forcefully from the court decision, echoing the beliefs of all patriotic Americans that this flag is OUR flag and not a private property subject to a private prerogative to maim or despoil in the passion of individual protest; and

Whereas, as stated by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, writing for three of the four justices who comprised the minority in the case, "Surely one of the high purposes of a democratic society is to legislate against conduct that is regarded as evil and profoundly offensive to the majority of people—whether it be murder, embezzlement, pollution, or flag burning"; and

Whereas, this legislature concurs with the court minority that the Stars and Stripes is deserving of a unique sanctity, free to wave in perpetuity over the spacious skies where our bald eagles fly, the fruited plain above which our mountain majesties soar, and the venerable heights to which our melting pot of people and their posterity aspire; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 74th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby petition the Congress of the United States of America to propose to the states an amendment to the United States Constitution, protecting the American flag and 50 state flags from willful desecration and exempting such desecration from constitutional construction as a First Amendment right; and, be it further

Resolved, That official copies of this resolution be prepared and forwarded by the Texas secretary of state to the speaker of the house of representatives and president of the senate of the United States Congress and to all members of the Texas delegation to that congress, with the request that it be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States; and, be it further

Resolved, That a copy of the resolution be prepared and forwarded also to President Bill Clinton, asking that he lend his support to the proposal and adoption of a flag-protection constitutional amendment; and, be it finally

Resolved, That official copies likewise be sent to the presiding officers of the legislatures of the several states, inviting them to join with Texas to secure this amendment and to restore this nation's banners to their rightful status of treasured reverence.

WELFARE REFORM

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, there is broad consensus in this country that the current welfare system serves no one well—not the recipients, not their children, not the American taxpayer. I agree with that consensus. The current welfare system is broken and needs major repair. Why? Because it is failing both the people in need and the working people who are paying for it.

The current system has trapped all too many people into a lifetime of dependency rather than assisting them

on a temporary basis to get back on their feet and back into the labor force. Any meaningful welfare reform must be grounded on the premise that government assistance is a way "up and out"—not a "way of life."

The current welfare system has failed us all. It traps all too many, especially women, into a lifetime of dependency and poverty. Their children in all too many instances suffer irreparable harm and are likely to remain poor and disadvantaged for the remainder of their lives. If the past is a predictor, too many children of today's welfare recipients will end up on the rolls themselves or in trouble with the law.

We simply must break this cycle. Unless we move welfare recipients into meaningful educational and work situations, we are doomed to failure. The only system that can work to the benefit of all is one that encourages independence, discourages dependency and demands personal responsibility. All of those elements, it seems to me, are missing in the welfare program we have today. Let us make sure that those key elements are the underpinnings of the bill on which we will cast our votes. Let us make sure we do it right. And let us make sure we do it with great care and compassion.

Mr. President, it is my hope that Republicans and Democrats alike can work together to fashion a bipartisan welfare plan that will be both effective in moving recipients from welfare to work. Our welfare system should provide temporary help—an opportunity for people to help themselves. If we put aside partisan rhetoric and turn instead to the mission of protecting poor kids and helping adults who need a temporary helping hand, I think we will have the best opportunity we have had in many years to forge a reform package which is good for kids, good for their parents and good for the American taxpayer.

Before we begin the debate, I think it is important to dispel some of the myths surrounding welfare. My purpose in detailing the following facts is not to defend the current system, but to ground the debate in truth rather than fiction.

First, AFDC caseloads as a percentage of the general population have remained fairly static over the past 20 years, fluctuating between 4 and 5½ percent. The number of recipients has grown as the population has increased and, cyclically, when the economy has declined.

Second, benefit levels have substantially declined in inflation adjusted dollars over the past two decades. The median State benefit for a family of three, adjusted for inflation, fell by 47 percent between 1970 and 1994.

Third, AFDC does not come close to providing a poverty level income to recipients. The median State benefit for a family of three was only 38 percent of the poverty level in 1994. If food stamps are included, the median State benefit

only reaches 70 percent of the poverty level.

Fourth, the average size of the welfare family is 2.9 while the average size of the typical American family is 3.2.

As legislators, we must craft a welfare reform bill that helps rather than hinders hope and self-sufficiency, especially for poor mothers and their children. And I know we can achieve our goals if we join together in a collaborative effort to accomplish them.

Mr. President, since there is no Democratic or Republican welfare bill around which the Senate membership of either party has currently coalesced, I thought this would be an appropriate time to offer some suggestions.

IT MUST PROTECT CHILDREN

Protecting the vulnerable children of poor welfare mothers must be our highest priority, and I do not believe that can be accomplished without maintaining the entitlement status of benefits for children. Let me make it clear, I am not talking about entitlement status for the mother, only the child. Despite the best intentions of State governments, despite their basic goodwill, despite their legislative skills, there is no way the Federal Government can guarantee that the welfare child will be protected by each and every State under a with a no-strings-attached block grant approach to reform. And protecting poor children is something I believe the Federal Government must do. It is and ought to be a national priority. I am not simply not willing to take the gamble that each and every State government will successfully meet this most fundamental responsibility.

I am all for giving State governments as much flexibility as possible in designing effective State reform plans that fit local needs. I am all for encouraging States to tap every creative resource available in forging new approaches to reform. But let us be honest with one another, welfare varies widely from State to State. Benefit levels vary widely. Effectiveness varies widely. Successful job training and placement efforts vary widely. And I am simply not willing to sacrifice any child, in any State, to a potentially unsuccessful outcome. These kids are our future. We must protect their interests.

IT MUST BE WORK-ORIENTED AND TRANSITIONAL

After the protection of children, the fundamental focus of the bill must be to move recipients from welfare, to work, to economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. While the original goal of AFDC in 1935 was to pay widows to stay at home and raise their children, the world and workforce have changed a great deal over the intervening decades. Increasingly, we expect both parents to work to support their children. We also expect both parents to share the responsibility of rearing their children. No one denies the difficulties involved in this dual role for parents. But it is done every day by millions upon millions of struggling

families. Is it any wonder, then, why the general public expects the same from welfare recipients?

Today 75 percent of mothers with children between the ages of 6 to 16 are in the labor force. The public expects no less from the welfare mother. And they are right. So it is critically important that welfare be re-framed, in the minds of both the public and recipients alike, as a transitional work assistance program. Our goal must be to replace a welfare check with a paycheck. No more something for nothing. No more revolving door. Strict work requirements, and a time limit on benefits. You take responsibility for yourself and the government will provide you with temporary help to ease your entry into the workforce and to help you stay there.

Easier said than done. No doubt about it. But if we can change the perception of welfare and build upon the lessons learned over the years, at both the State and Federal levels, we should be able to move forward in a constructive way.

Most people on the welfare rolls do not want to be there. They want to work. They want to be role models for their children. They want their children to have better opportunities in life than they have had. But, like the workforce in general, many welfare recipients need some help. They want to work, they want to be successful, but they need help in getting from here to there. Many need help in learning how to look for a job. Others need training. Others need assistance to remain in the labor force. But let us face up to the fact that there may not be enough jobs or the types of jobs available in the private sector to accommodate each and every welfare parent, so community service jobs may have to act as a last resort. And let us admit that reforming the system may require some investment if we want to get it right.

WE MUST ELIMINATE WORK DISINCENTIVES

But how do we move from a program which encourages dependency to one that encourages work? One obvious way is to eliminate the disincentives which exist in the current system. You liberalize earning disregards, you raise asset limitations, and you make support services, the linchpin upon which success in the workplace hinges, more readily available to poor people who want to work.

One decisive lesson we have learned over the past decade is that former recipients return to the welfare rolls after a short time in the labor force due to the inadequacy of transitional support services. We have learned that as soon as the recipient has to begin paying for child care and medical care out of a meager salary which more often than not is significantly below the Federal poverty level, the financial burden becomes too great and—no surprise—the mother returns to the welfare rolls. We must address this problem squarely. Forcing poor parents to choose between work and their chil-

dren's health care or child care is a losing proposition and it is doomed to failure. Who loses? The parent, the child and the taxpayer. So meaningful work is important, but equally important is the continued provision of child care and health care services as these welfare recipients transition to the workplace. These services are a critical bridge to successful work outcomes.

Is 1 year of transitional assistance for those who have gone to work, as required under current law for Medicaid services, sufficient? Probably not. Should child care support end as soon as a recipient has found work. Clearly not. Child care consumes at least a quarter of most low-income family budgets. How many low-skilled workers in low-paying jobs are going to receive a raise in 1 year sufficient to be able to financially absorb the full cost of child care and medical care? Not many, if any. This is simply not a realistic goal. I therefore believe that the plan we pass should continue these vital family support services at a reduced level over a number of years, phasing them out as the recipient's income rises. This will cost money in the short term, but it will be invaluable in ensuring long-term success. But it is my hope that savings to offset this spending can be achieved through other reforms in the system.

WE MUST REMOVE TWO-PARENT FAMILY DISINCENTIVES

One issue on which I believe there is virtual unanimity is that the best environment in which to raise children is in loving, two-parent families. Yet welfare assistance is not available for two-parent families, regardless of their income, unless one parent is unemployed or incapacitated. A system that discourages marriage of low-income single parents and encourages the breakup of married couples who find themselves in economic need is shameful. It is bad social policy, bad welfare policy, bad family policy, bad children's policy, and it ought to be changed. Another thing we ought to change is our policy toward absent fathers who want to share in the support of their children, but do not have the economic means to do so. Why not offer them job training and placement services as well as the mother?

IT MUST DEMAND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

I believe it is the best interest of society to discourage out-of-wedlock births. But if individuals continue to choose to have children outside of marriage, they must take responsibility for their actions. It is their responsibility to support their child. They must learn that actions have consequences and parents have responsibilities. If they want temporary assistance, it is their responsibility to identify the father who must be required to share, at the very least, in the financial burden of raising the child. If they seek temporary government help, they must be willing to go to work to help pay for that assistance.

Most welfare proposals contain a requirement for the welfare parent to sign a contract with the State agency agreeing to abide by the work plan that has been designed for the recipient, with the recipient's input, after careful assessment by a team of case managers of the individual's personal history, work experience and educational and training needs. Once the contract has been signed, the recipient must honor its terms or suffer sanctions. Actions have consequences. That makes eminent good sense to me. It demands accountability and responsibility.

IT MUST ADEQUATELY ADDRESS THE TEEN PREGNANCY CRISIS

Although last on my list, curbing teen pregnancy is one of my highest priorities. And it is one of the most crucial yet vexing components of welfare reform. Teen pregnancy is a crisis by any standard of measurement. Too many teens are becoming parents and too few are able to responsibly care for their children either emotionally or financially. The result: the child is deprived of a fair start in life and the mother will very likely be doomed to a lifetime of poverty.

The teen pregnancy crisis is escalating at an alarming rate. The data are shattering: Before age 20, 43 percent of teenage girls become pregnant; 1 million teens become pregnant each year; 70 percent of teen mothers are not married today in comparison to 15 percent in 1960; the unmarried teen mother rate has doubled in a single generation and continues to climb; 77 percent of unmarried teen mothers end up on the welfare rolls within 5 years of the birth of their first child, and all too many remain there for years thereafter; and approximately half of AFDC recipients in 1993 had their first child as a teen.

What can we reasonably do about this seriously escalating social crisis? There is clear data linking teen births with long-term welfare dependency. Data also tell us that teen births go down as educational and economic options go up. So one thing we must do is require AFDC teen mothers to stay in school and finish their educations or pursue a vocational alternative in return for benefits. We can and must insist that these teen mothers immunize their children and participate in parenting and pregnancy prevention classes. And we can and should require that teen mothers on AFDC live with their families or in supervised homes where they can get the support and guidance they need to become successful parents and good citizens. Finally, we must all become engaged in finding solutions to this devastating societal problem.

Each of us in one way or another has the bully pulpit. Every entity of government, every community, every church, every corporation must trumpet the alarm about teen pregnancy, and we must speak with a single voice: out of wedlock births, especially

among teens, are wrong; they are a prescription for disastrous outcomes for both the mother and the child—both will undoubtedly be seriously disadvantaged for the remainder of their lives. We must preach—and I do mean preach—that marriage is the proper social unit in which to have and raise a child. We must, each of us, discourage illegitimacy as harmful to the parents, the child and society at large. And we must do it now. This is not an issue we can push to the back burner. We are in a serious crisis now, and every single indicator points to it getting worse each and every year into the foreseeable future.

These are some of the threshold issues that I believe must be addressed in whatever reform package reaches the Senate floor. When the debate begins, I hope it will not become another missed opportunity. I hope we will work on the reform together. I hope we will do it right, with firmness but fairness. And I hope it will produce the desired results. Our efforts will impact all of our lives in one way or another. But it will affect more directly the lives of our children and their children.

WELCOMING HER MAJESTY QUEEN SIRIKIT OF THAILAND

Mr. JOHNSTON. Mr. President, this month the United States is privileged to welcome Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand. She is here as an honored guest. On May 25 Queen Sirikit will be awarded the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by the Johns Hopkins University. On Tuesday, May 16, Queen Sirikit became the first woman ever to receive the prestigious Lindbergh Award. In the words of the Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation, Her Majesty was honored for her "educational and humanitarian efforts, her conservation and wildlife preservation work, and programs which are maintaining the Thai heritage and culture."

The description does not begin to do justice to Queen Sirikit's 45-year effort to care for the people of her country, to improve their health and living standards, and to preserve their environmental and cultural heritage. She has given generously of her time and energy to traditional humanitarian causes. She has served as honorary president of the Council of Social Welfare of Thailand, an organization of 150 public and private social work agencies. In her capacity as president of the Thai Red Cross, a position she has held since 1956, she established shelters for refugees from the war in Cambodia. But her particular genius, and I do not use that word lightly, the accomplishment for which the queen has been honored by the United Nations and for which she was awarded the first International Humanitarian Award by the Friends of the Capital Children's Museum in 1992, has been in finding ways to preserve traditional Thai culture and ecology while simultaneously

making life easier for impoverished farmers and hill tribes.

Her deep concern for the welfare of the Thai people is matched by her knowledge of their needs. Her husband, His Majesty King Shumibol Adulyadej, has made it his admirable policy to "visit the people", spending more than half of each year traveling around Thailand, often to remote areas accessible only by helicopter or jeep. Accompanying him on his trips, the queen witnessed at first hand the hardships of rural life, the damage to forests, wildlife and water supplies caused by primitive farming practices and the threat posed by modernization to traditional Thai arts and crafts. It was her inspiration to, in effect, capitalize culture, to train farm families in producing handicrafts which could be sold to bring in regular income. Since 1978, Queen Sirikit's SUPPORT Foundation has trained 30,000 such families in crafts ranging from ceramics to silk-weaving to bamboo basketry.

In 1982, the Queen initiated the Forest-Loves-Water project, to demonstrate that SUPPORT handicrafts projects could encourage reforestation. At Ban Mae Tam village, the rich teak forests once threatened by illegal logging are being replaced. Villagers able to earn a living from cottage industries do not need to rely on tree-cutting or slash-and-burn farming for subsistence. Under her gentle leadership, through encouragement and practical training, solutions are being found to pressing environmental problems.

Queen Sirikit's likeness is on the Cares Medal awarded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. This is an honor reserved for women who by their lives and their work have helped to lift the status of women. It is a beautiful medal, reflecting the beauty of spirit of its model, a woman whose motto has always been "To give without discrimination." It is always a pleasure to welcome Her Majesty to the United States, and to tell her how much we admire her efforts on behalf of the Thai people.

GEORGIA AND LARRY TALSMAS

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, this week I have been fortunate to visit with two citizens from Springfield, SD—Georgia and Larry Talsma. Georgia and Larry made their first trip ever to Washington, DC, by car. The Talsmas are the quintessential hard-working South Dakota ranch family. They and their ancestors have worked the land for five generations. They know the importance of proper stewardship of the land, because without this respect there would be nothing for the next generation.

The Talsmas came to Washington to tell their story of how the Federal Government is intruding on their land and threatening to take over their private property. Amazing as this may sound, Mr. President, it is true.

In 1991, Congress passed legislation to designate the 39-mile segment of the Missouri River from the headwaters of Lewis and Clark Lake to the Ft. Randall Dam as a recreational river to be administered by the National Park Service. Today, however, the process to achieve this designation has raised great controversy. In fact, the local citizens along this segment of the Missouri River now question the need for the designation. I agree with those South Dakotans, including the Talsmas.

During the first public meeting on the designation, pamphlets were handed out describing how the Park Service acquires private property. Mr. President, most, if not all, of the South Dakotans in attendance were not even aware of the river designation, let alone the possibility of the Federal Government condemning their land and buying it out from under them.

Their concerns and fears were fed by representatives of the National Park Service who stated that if they, the Park Service, cannot own this land, then they will control it.

This morning I asked the Director of the National Park Service to come to my office and listen to the Talsmas. At that meeting I told the Director that I intended to introduce legislation to undo the designation in South Dakota. This is an effort the Talsmas and other South Dakotans strongly support.

I also asked the Director to listen to the Talsmas and see what steps could be taken by the Park Service to address the needs of South Dakotans. While Director Kennedy informed the Talsmas that the Park Service did not want to buy or control their land or claim eminent domain, the Talsmas correctly pointed out that the "Devil is in the details."

The Talsmas informed the Director they were being told just the opposite at the public meetings and that is why they felt they had to come to Washington to get their message across. Their primary concern is not for themselves, but for their children and future generations of South Dakotans who depend on the land for their survival.

I am pleased to report that due to the efforts of the Talsmas, something good came out of the meeting. First, the Park Service agreed to push back the deadline for a preferred alternative to no earlier than August 1, 1995. Just a few days ago the Talsmas were told they had only 5 days to review and comment on the preferred alternatives. This extreme time limit simply is not fair. I told the Director that South Dakotans needed the time to tell their story and have input into the decision-making process. Director Kennedy agreed.

Director Kennedy also assured the Talsmas there would be at least a 60-day comment period on any preferred alternative. If more time is needed, Director Kennedy said he would be willing to provide such time.

Director Kennedy also told me his office would provide legislative language