

of these programs rather than make quick decisions in the name of downsizing federal government. It is time to end childhood hunger, not successful nutrition programs that feed hungry children.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the elderly and the millions of Americans, most of them children, who rely on the various nutrition programs funded by the local, State and Federal Governments.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle would have us believe that these nutrition programs are welfare and should be included in welfare reform.

Further, they indicate that these programs are overlapping, and that there is no need for several separate programs at the Federal level.

So they propose that these programs all be consolidated into a block grant to the States.

Then they take the next step—they would remove all nutrition guidelines currently in the programs, leaving it to the wisdom of State administrators to develop their own guidelines.

That proposal is wrong-headed from the start.

Federal nutrition programs, such as the School Lunch Program, were not created because of the welfare state.

At the end of World War II, as America looked back on its 5-year effort to rid the world of Nazi tyranny and Japanese aggression in the Pacific, a Republican Congress considered this country's state of readiness to field massive armies to deal with future aggressors.

Review of military physical records disclosed an alarming fact—many of the Nation's young potential recruits were barely able to pass selective service physicals—because of the effects of poor nutrition during their maturing years.

It was because of the necessity to ensure that future calls to arms would find healthy young people available to serve the Nation in time of war that the Congress developed the National School Lunch Program.

The program provided assistance to the Nation's local elementary and secondary educational schools with one purpose in mind—to ensure that the children attending those schools received at least one fully nutritious meal every school day, and, in cases where the child could not afford to pay for the meal, he or she received it at reduced or no cost.

So this was not created as a welfare program, and it is not a welfare program now—it is a program that enables the Nation to be more sure that its children will grow up healthy.

What are the direct economic costs of eliminating that program—let me list a few:

Our already out of control medical costs will increase as people age with a history of poor nutrition as children.

Studies confirm something we have known for over 50 years—poor nutrition as a child leads to increased illnesses as an adult.

Our economy suffers from increased employee absences, lower production at the workplace, and increased direct medical costs.

It this Congress removes the school lunch program direct funding, many school districts will find it impossible to sustain school cafeterias, and will terminate hot school lunch programs, leading to poorer nutrition for all students—and I mean all students—whether rich or poor.

Focused school lunch programs are also good for the economy because the national

school lunch industry—and make no mistake about it, it is an industry—from the farmer who produces the milk and other foods, to the former welfare mother who finally landed a job in the cafeteria, and all of the processing, packaging and delivery workers in between will find themselves unemployed.

According to the Agriculture Department a loss of as many as 138,000 jobs.

At the other end of the spectrum we have the nutrition programs for senior citizens funded in part by HHS and the Agriculture Department.

The Federal contribution to senior citizen nutrition programs, along with significant funding by States, localities and private individuals and organizations, provide nutrition to senior citizens in two ways.

Where a senior citizen is homebound, either because of physical frailty, remoteness of the residence, or other cause, and regardless of the economic status of that individual, the nations aging services network can and does provide home delivered meals.

In some localities, this means a volunteer comes to the home every day and prepares the meal, or delivers one that the homebound senior can reheat.

In others, meals are delivered once a week, and the senior or a caregiver prepares the meal on a daily basis.

If the senior citizen can get out of the house, he or she may visit a senior citizen center—either one sponsored by the local area agency on aging or a private group—a church or synagogue, or a senior citizens' association—and join fellow seniors for lunch, and sometimes for dinner.

Where federal funds are used in these programs, no specific charge is made for the meals, although most senior centers solicit contributions.

Seniors of all economic classes are very willing to eat these meals, and 225 million meals were served in 15,000 community nutrition sites all over the United States.

In my discussions with senior citizen groups who operate congregate meal programs, I have often been told that it is in our Nation's poorest neighborhoods that elderly participants contribute the most money in voluntary collection boxes.

Why is this program so important. Because, again as studies over the past few decades have consistently shown, good nutrition among our aging population translates into significant savings in out health care system.

These meals provide highly directed nutrition, and a strong sense of social integration to a population that benefits immediately from those meals.

A healthy senior, who does not feel isolated from society and his or her peers, is active, productive and far less likely to need very expensive medical care or hospitalization.

Studies have shown that for every dollar spent on senior nutrition programs, a direct savings of three dollars in health care costs results.

So, if you want to save Federal dollars, and we all do, make sure you know where the costs are.

Protect the elderly who are responsible for the greatness of our Nation, protect the children who are our future.

Reject the Republican's misguided effort to destroy America's nutrition.

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

[Ms. MCKINNEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. KILDEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. PASTOR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

PROPOSED \$40 BILLION UNITED STATES LOAN GUARANTEE TO MEXICO

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, on November 18, 1993, I cast my vote against the NAFTA, not because I oppose free trade; not because I oppose the economic integration of the Western Hemisphere; and not because of the incomplete, albeit substantial, movement toward political and economic reform in recent years in Mexico. No—I cast my vote against the NAFTA because I believed that Mexico as an economy was not prepared to enter an argument of this magnitude with the United States.

I believed then as I believe now, that a more gradual approach toward economic integration, such as that adopted by the then-European Community toward nations seeking membership, is wiser. These nations were required to meet high economic and political standards before enjoying European Community benefits.

The hard-working families of the 13th District of New Jersey, which I represent, do not join exclusive clubs which they cannot afford. They do not buy expensive homes if they can't afford the down payment. They do their sweating at work—not in fancy health spas. These middle class families know their limits.

We should have anticipated the possibility of a peso devaluation. We should have regarded Mexico like the developing economy that it was—not as the developed economy we portrayed.

Many supporters of NAFTA told me that if I were to vote for NAFTA, I would be doing the right and responsible thing. Now they claim that the

right and responsible thing is to bail out Mexico.

The value of the Mexican currency, the peso, fell a dangerous 40 percent in just three weeks. In one week alone, American investors withdrew \$12 billion dollars from Mexico. But—that's the free market at work.

Our middle class stands to be a big loser in this deal. Of the billions of dollars pumped into Mexico in the wake of NAFTA, many were invested by U.S. speculators who sent to Mexico the hard-earned dollars of middle class families in the form of mutual or pension fund investments.

With the passage of NAFTA, we created a speculative environment in which middle class investors, the mom and pop investors so vital to Wall Street brokers, were led to believe that investing some of their hard-earned life savings on emerging Mexico was a safe bet. But billions of dollars later, we know it's not.

Now the United States proposes to act as a lender of last resort to salvage the Mexican economy. But will this bailout really help? Even the most ardent NAFTA supporters have their doubts. Listen to avid NAFTA backer, Wesley Smith of the Heritage Foundation: "This takes real pressure off the Mexican Government to make substantive changes." James K. Glassman of the Washington Post agrees that the loan guarantees may provide a disincentive for reforms in Mexico. Like parents who are too lenient with a rebellious adolescent, we may be encouraging misbehavior in the future. We may be helping the speculators who poured money into Mexico, but harming the prospects there for economic and political reform. I have serious doubts as to whether the Administration's proposals will win my support.

If the United States is going to be generous as a lender of last resort, then it is appropriate that we ask Mexico to be a first-rate client. The administration must insist on assurances that would make the loan guarantee effective:

The money that the United States guarantees must only be used for what it is intended: to pay the debts on short-term Mexican bonds.

If we are going to bail out speculators, then we should protect middle class Americans by reporting to the American people through this legislation the losses they incurred through mutual or pension funds invested in Mexico.

The billions in oil revenues that Mexico earns annually must be used as collateral should the Mexican Government default.

The Mexican Government should accelerate and broaden its privatization program.

The Mexican Government should continue the political, economic, and social reforms that it requires if it is to achieve long-term stability.

And by the way, none of this money should be used to prop up the 36 year

Cuban dictatorship of Fidel Castro, who has recently benefited from generous Mexican investments, debt forgiveness, and debt-for-equity swaps. No Mexican foreign assistance, nor any investments sustained by United States credit lines, should go to Cuba's oppressors—neither from the Mexican Government nor any of its banks or state-related companies. Not one red cent.

This crisis is about speculation. It is about the speculative environment created by those who supported NAFTA without the appropriate safeguards. That speculative environment has led to the loss of billions of United States dollars invested by hard-working American families who put their savings in mutual funds and pension funds investing in Mexico. It is time to bring a reality check to the risks of the emerging markets and to the joys of the good old U.S. Treasury and blue chip stocks.

□ 2100

NUTRITION PROVISIONS IN THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the provisions in the Personal Responsibility Act which contain a food assistance block grant.

The child nutrition provisions in the Personal Responsibility Act will completely eliminate the National School Lunch Program as it has existed since 1946. The Personal Responsibility Act would combine a set of Federal food assistance programs—including food stamps, school lunch, school breakfast, the WIC Program, elderly nutrition, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program [TEFAP] into a single block grant to States, with a reduction in overall funding for the programs. The House Republican Conference has estimated that the 4-year reduction in funding as compared with current law would be \$11 billion. Probably a more accurate reduction is \$17.5 billion as projected by the center on budget and policy priorities.

There are many reasons why I oppose the block grant method for the distribution of funds:

Historically, when Federal funds have been left to the discretion of a few, they have not been distributed to the most impoverished or the ones in need the most. Giving States carte blanche authority does not guarantee that Federal funds will be used to address the national needs that Congress has identified.

By definition, block grant programs do not require that specified programs are provided for specifically targeted populations. Reporting and evaluation requirements for most block grants are so limited that information about program participation levels, implementation and effectiveness is not sufficient to provide guidance for continued funding of the programs.

Even though education is administered through 50 States and over 15,000 local educational agencies [LEA's], and conditions do differ among States and LEA's, certain identi-

able national problems are of sufficient importance to merit special Federal programs.

For these and other reasons, I ask my colleagues to oppose this movement to combine nutrition programs into a block grant.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. FORBES] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

WHY I SUPPORT THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, I rise today in support of the Contract With America's version of the balanced budget amendment that requires a three-fifths vote of this body in order to raise taxes. It is the most responsible proposal on the table for bringing down our national debt and applying discipline against this Nation's outrageous spending programs.

I support the tax limitation amendment because I agree with President Reagan who so often reminded us that the problem is not that the government spends too little. It is that the American people are taxed too much.

The budget must be balanced, and it must be balanced by cutting spending, not by raising taxes.

On election day, Mr. Speaker, the people in my area on Long Island and the rest of the country spoke loud and clearly. They sent me and my new colleagues in the freshman class—in fact they sent all of us here to Washington with a very specific mission, to end business as usual. No more raising taxes, no more reckless spending, no more of the arrogance and the double standards that have plagued this distinguished body and that have punished this country for the past half century. My neighbors on eastern Long Island want Members of Congress, and in fact all of Washington, to start acting like so many families have to act, with responsibility for our actions and a good dose of common sense in our decisions. But the people's call for responsibility was not an angry and hysterical demand for change of any sort. On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, it was a very specific endorsement of a very particular set of policies.

The Contract With America is a study in middle class values, and ideas and goals that can bring our government, once and for all, under control and restore fiscal integrity across this Nation, and the notions contained in the Contract With America, to the chagrin of many of my Democratic colleagues, have been embraced by the people whom we have the privilege and the obligation to serve, and key to our contract with the people is a tax limitation balanced budget amendment, a call to live within our means, a demand