Block grant in itself may not be an evil concept but block grant under the guise of efficiency and better service and local control, it needs to be examined. I submit to Members that in the block grants, in cutting, we may indeed be offering an unfunded mandate because those people who are closest to their citizens will be going to their county commissions, be going to their State general assembly, because they have come to understand that these programs are there and they no longer will be there. You will say, we have given the block grant and we have capped them.

The other issue about block grants is that it does not indeed take into consideration the downturn of the economy. It makes no adjustment for that whatsoever.

Given these factors, it cannot be made substantial when we go beyond the rhetoric that more children will be served. The truth is, more children will not be served. Why? Food is going up, and the school and population is growing.

Which of us would rather tell the last 5 kids of the 25 that are there that they are not going to be able to be served? You must begin to understand why people are so outraged is they cannot believe that you understand this and will still go forward. It is not that we think anyone has more of a disregard for young people than we are, but apparently we do not share the same vision for the future to allow this to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge all of us to begin to think not in terms of entitlement when we think of our children but think of our children as our future. To the extent we fail to invest in our future, we fail to invest in our society.

MORE ON FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the preceding speaker joining us in the well, the gentlewoman from North Carolina. I appreciate her point of view and especially her last couple of comments. However, I thought for a time tonight we had made real progress because it seemed the preceding speaker, Mr. Speaker, had decided to back away from the terminology ''cut.''

Let us again state for the record, the proposal offered by your new majority in the Congress of the United States, a proposal that for child nutritional programs adds $200 million over what President Clinton outlines in his budget, a plan that calls for annual increases over the next 5 years of 4.5 percent every single year, friends, those are increases.

The numbers, with all due respect, offered by the opposition are phantom numbers because they speak of $7 billion in cuts, $7 billion that don't even exist.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is this: We do confront a deficit of stark proportions for us all. In fact, by some estimates since in essence the national debt is compounded every nanosecond, it continues to grow, by some estimates we confront a national debt that affects every man, woman and child in this country to the tune of their share in the national debt, for you and me and for everyone else, fast approaching $20,000.

We have a simple choice: Either we can continue to play the tired old politics of the past which are akin to a schoolyard game of am-not-are-too, am-not-are-too, or we can face this serious problem and take a look and decide to rein in the growth of spending to what is reasonable, to what is rational, and, yes, taking into account the inflation rate, what is most effective, and that is behind our notion of changing these grants to block grants, to let those on the front line fight the battle.

It is true there is a very real difference in philosophy here, because those in the new majority, Mr. Speaker, believe that people on the front lines can best fight this battle and believe it is not incumbent upon a bureaucracy run amok in Washington, DC to decide how best to spend money.

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Your new majority in this Congress realizes that what might work in Philadelphia might not work in Phoenix and that people on the front lines in the State of Pennsylvania and Arizona and North Carolina and across this Union can best decide how to fight the battle.

But again, the programs are not being cut. Really, this begs a larger question, and one I think of stark importance to our Republic. Do we face the challenge now and deal with it responsibly, or do we remain wedded to the politics of the past?

We heard with great fanfare my friend on the other side from California just repeat all the arguments and all the incendiary rhetoric. Let me submit to you that if we fail to deal with this problem, if we continue with the same old name-calling, the false numbers, in essence those who are wedded to the past, those who are the guardians of the past have become, in essence, the enemies of the future. For in maintaining a tired old broken-down welfare state, they have, in essence, declared war on the next generation of Americans.

All we ask is this, Mr. Speaker: That we in this body in which it is a great honor to serve, that we do what every American family at one time or another has to do, Mr. Speaker, to gather around the kitchen table and make some hard choices.

Can good people disagree? Yes. Good people can disagree. And certainly there is a difference in philosophy that I delineated.

But I would challenge the other side to come forward with positive programs to tell us where the cuts will come, to tell us where the changes will come, instead of trotting out the tired old rhetoric of the past.

The stakes are too high. The future beckons us.

IN THE FRONT LINES WITH THE WIC PROGRAM

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman who preceded me in the well talked about the front lines. I do not know where he was yesterday, but I was at the front lines. I went and visited a WIC program in Springfield, my hometown in Springfield, OR.

Apparently the gentleman is quite unfamiliar with the programs. They are run by local boards. In fact, the chairman of the board of our local WIC program is a Republican lawyer who a couple of years ago thought about running against me. So there is an incredible amount of discretion and weight given to local control.

What did I not see at the WIC program yesterday? I did not see this: I did not see a low-birthweight baby who was suffering tremendously and who was going to be an extraordinary expense all paid for out of the other pocket of the taxpayers, by Medicaid. I did not see one of these yesterday.

But what I did see were a bunch of healthy kids and some parents coming from a whole bunch of different circumstances. I want to talk just a little bit about that.

I saw a teen mom yesterday, a category of recipient who would be cut off from benefits in the Ozzie and Harriet world of the other side of the aisle. We should not have teenage pregnancies, and, by God, if they have them, they are not going to get any benefits.

What is going to happen to the baby in that world? You want to punish the teenager. What about the baby? I do not even think you should be punishing the teenager. A little counseling is a little more in order. I met a teen mom, and she had gotten some of that counseling at that WIC program. Counseling is one of the things cut off under the Republican block-grant proposal. You will give them the food vouchers still, but you will not get the nutrition counseling. They taught here how to breast-feed her little baby, and they were there yesterday, and they were a testimony to how well this program works.

I saw a working mom with two kids. She is working, a single parent, but she qualified for the WIC program, and you know what, her kids had nutritional problems. They both had a problem with dairy. They had dairy sensitivity. She did not know how to deal with it. She did not have the wherewithal to

deal with it. She went to the WIC program, and got nutrition counseling. She got a diet. I saw those two kids yesterday. They are beautiful kids. They are thriving now through the WIC program.

They talk a lot about fraud and abuse. There are no allegations of fraud and abuse in the WIC program. People get vouchers for a healthy diet.

You know, there are allegations, substantial allegations, in the food stamp program. What is very interesting is the Republicans originally proposed to block grant the food stamp program. But you know what, they backed off, not because they did not want to get at the $3 billion of fraud and abuse. I believe they want to get at that as much as I do and the organized crime. But because Safeway and A&P and Stop and Shop and all the farm lobby came in and said, ''You can't do that to us.''

Now, WIC unfortunately, the Women, Infants, and Children's Program, low-birthweight babies, the nursing moms, they do not have those kinds of lobbyists, the same kind of lobbyists Safeway has or the agriculture groups have.

So food stamps is back on with ineffective measures to deal with the $3 billion of fraud and abuse, but WIC is on the chopping block. It is going into a block grant program about 80 percent of the funding it gets now, and 20 percent of that money can be diverted by the Governor of any State to any other purpose they want. And they tell me, ''Don't worry, the WIC program won't be hurt.'' Well, there is an unmet need in my hometown of Springfield, OR, and I know there are unmet needs in many other towns across America, and the WIC program is one of the most cost-effective ways of meeting that need.

I met another gentleman, a man, who was there with his baby. He and his wife, both college graduates, both employed, but in the current job market they are not making a lot of money; they are having a little trouble making ends meet. They are new parents. They qualified for the WIC program. They are getting nutritional supplements for their baby, and they have learned a lot about parenting through this program.

I met another woman there whose child had had a routine pinprick blood test. They do that to the kids who come into the program to see if they have any deficiencies. They discovered that that child had childhood leukemia, and the child is now in treatment.

But this program in their world will not be required to exist anymore because of all of the Federal bureaucrats mandating so many things. I was there yesterday. I did not see any Federal bureaucrats. I saw a bunch of healthy, happy kids. I saw a bunch of parents who were doing better and getting just a little bit of help, and most everybody there was working. Funny thing, given the current minimum wage; and how well do you think you can provide for a family of four? That is why we have the Women, Infants, Children Program.

What does one low-birthweight baby cost, both in terms of trauma to the parents, both in terms of developmental disabilities for that child, both in terms of cost to the Medicaid program? Is it too much to ask that we continue the Women, Infants, Children's feeding program and prevent those low-birthweight babies? I do not think so. And I think America can afford that.

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

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

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, once again, I think we have to make the facts known, especially in light of the last speaker. We are not cutting this program. We are increasing this program.

Here are the charts. Now, that chart is a hypothetical, what if, and I guess I could say that in an expenditure where we would hypothetically have $20 billion or $30 billion to care for some type of children's program, I could say we should have $60 billion to care for it, so we have really shortened and short-changed that program. That is what this chart is. That is exactly what this chart is.

The fact remains we are increasing it. Something I am going to agree about with the last speaker about a successful program. yesterday I was in Zanesville, OH, Muskingum County, Mr. Speaker, and the people that run the WIC program were in, and it is a successful program, and it is a good program, and I believe that we have recognized that time and time again. We are recognizing it again and again and again by saying we believe in it and we are going to increase it, and here is the chart that tells we are going to do it.

So we have not said it is a bad program. We have no question of the effectiveness of the program. We have no question how it has helped people.

But I have got to tell you, they call this the well. They ought to rename it the swamp, because I think we get to a low point when we come in and bring a picture in and try to say that by increasing this we are going to do harm to children. I think that is absolutely ridiculous.

Let us state the facts as they are, and the fact is that it has been a good program. The fact is that the new way to do the WIC program does not take away counseling, as the last speaker told you, Mr. Speaker. It does not, because nothing changes in this program.

The question of where are we going to live up to the food standards, we do, Mr. Speaker, live up to the food standards, because that is also taken care of through this program.

But it is a bigger picture, and the bottom line in this country, Mr. Speaker, is that tomorrow morning everyone in this country looks into the mirror and sees the face of the human being that is morally responsible as to whether our children live in a country that is safe, prosperous, and secure.

So we all have to ask ourselves, Mr. Speaker, as we look into our faces in the mirror, Members of Congress and people throughout this country, are we doing the best job to make sure that this country is safe, prosperous, and secure for our children? And I answer we are. But not just in how we revise this program to take the Federal bureaucratic end of it out, but in the overall picture of what we are also doing is stepping up to the plate and balancing this Nation's budget, of trying to reempower families to help them by reempowering them to make decisions, and this is what it is all about. It is a bigger picture.

Because what we have done in this country by letting Washington remain the same old, same old, time after time, is we have let a bureaucracy build up, and as I told people from the WIC organization yesterday, we have let it build up to the point if we do not take control now of this deficit, if we do not take back control and reempower families out in the heartland, Mr. Speaker, in this country, we are not going to have to worry about charts on either side of this aisle, because there is not going to be anything left. We will have nothing to leave our children. When we look in the mirror, we are going to know we did not leave our children with a safe country. We did not leave our children in prosperity. And we did not leave, Mr. Speaker, our children with peace.

So not only are we doing the right thing, not only are we increasing this, we are also looking at a bigger overall picture to restabilize this government, to reempower where it counts, in the hands of the citizenry, Mr. Speaker.

And with that, I think we have just got to stay to the facts and quit using scare tactics from this side of the swamp, not the well, to use this type of scare tactic. We should speak to the reality of what we are trying to do, to make a better America, and that is what we are. We are sending our message, Mr. Speaker, to you tonight and to our colleagues, and we know that if we work together in the bigger picture, we are going to give back to families their dignity and give back to families their ability to help empower themselves for a better future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.