

the President in February, the first of the year. Still nothing. But there he was, just a few days later, talking big before the National Association of Counties, while the President's waiver application grows cobwebs on the President's desk, Bill Clinton declared, to applause in fact, here it is in the paper, in the Washington Times, "Clinton wants States to have freedom to adjust welfare."

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He basically said, to applause, that we should abolish the waiver system altogether. Well, Mr. Clinton, we are waiting.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SALMON. No, I will not yield.

Approve the waiver now, President Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, I also forgot to say that there is one other crucial difference between President Clinton and Charles Barkley. I still believe Charles Barkley somewhere in the country could win an election.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to tell the gentleman we will have a great deal for you tomorrow, because in the Deal substitute plan we give the flexibility to the States to not have to deal with those waivers. It is a wonderful proposal that will be presented tomorrow and it is an opportunity for you to take a look at things that we will be able to offer to the States, flexibility to deal with their own plan.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, I reclaim the balance of my time, and I would like to say I believe in private sector jobs and in more government-funded programs.

Mrs. LINCOLN. That is exactly right; that is what we do.

Mr. SALMON. I do believe people ought to have the dignity to be able to go out into the private sector to be able to get jobs, and really, if sincerely you do believe that this is a good idea, would you call President Clinton for me tomorrow and tell him to pass that waiver?

DIGNITY OF WORK IS WHAT WELFARE REFORM IS ALL ABOUT

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

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, let me just say as I start here, I have been here 6 years and we have been working on this welfare reform program almost from the day I got here.

The people who have been working on the Deal substitute have been working tirelessly for the last 3 years that I know of, and we appreciate the opportunity to come to the floor tomorrow and offer the Congress, the House, a chance to vote with us.

I have been disappointed in the debate tonight. I still have trouble determining why a school lunch program has anything to do with helping people go back to work. When we started our welfare reform plan, we went from the principle that work is dignity, work is what people need, work will make this country stronger, and we insist that if you want something from the Government you must do something for yourself.

For people who are talking about the school lunch program, the school lunch program started 49 years ago and it was a national program. The reason it was started by President Truman was because so many kids from around the country in poor, rural States were unable to pass their draftee physical.

School nutrition, what kids have for lunch is not what we are about. We are about reforming the welfare system so people can go back to work and earn their own way.

We give more State flexibility in the Deal bill than anybody does. Right here, provisions, AFDC benefits, State option; mandated in H.R. 4. Families, States option, mandated in H.R. 4. Child support pass-through, State option for Deal, mandated in H.R. 4.

It is ironic that on the day the President signs the unfunded mandates legislation, which many of us have been working on for 2 or 3 years, and again we thank the majority for bringing that to the floor, that we have seen a bill now come before the floor on welfare for mandating to the States many of the things that we leave to State flexibility on the wonderful theory that many Republicans have professed through the years that local people know best.

We have work first. We give States flexibility in how they do that, and we do one other thing for those people that are just barely getting by and they are working, they are living by the rules, playing by the rules and that is this: We include public assistance for purposes of taxable income on the basic fair theory that a welfare dollar should not be worth more than a work-earned dollar. We are the only plan that does that.

Now we have, many of us who have been voting for some of the contract provisions as conservative Democrats, have asked some of our moderate Republican friends to join us on the theory, as the gentleman said earlier tonight, neither party has a monopoly on wisdom and virtue, and I think anybody who does not subscribe to that theory is fooling themselves. We asked for some bipartisan support on our plan. The Deal plan is the best plan in this Congress. You would not have had to have all of these amendments today you have had to put up. It is already in our package, if you would just give us the same consideration you ask from time to time from us, and it would be bipartisan. Come on over, read the Deal bill. If you have not, you ought to, because what we do in this substitute is exactly what many of you all have pro-

fessed you want to do, and that is bring back the dignity of work to the American people and help them get off of welfare.

That is what welfare reform is about. We can talk all night about whether there is a cut in the child school lunch program or not. It does not have much to do with helping someone get back to work, an adult, and that is what we try to do, and that is what we will do. And we know this: Real welfare reform has to be a Federal-State partnership and you cannot just block grant it and say States, here is some money, do the best you can with it. That will not work. That will not put people back to work. And that is why we got this letter today from the United States Conference of Mayors. They know what is going to hit them and they do not have the equipment or the ability to handle it, quite frankly, and you cannot just say block grant it and let the States do it any way they want to.

We do, and we enter into a true Federal-State partnership and we clean up the mess here in Washington in the Deal bill before we turn it over to the States. And I believe, and I would ask everybody here to read our bill and to give us serious consideration tomorrow.

I think you will find it is by far the best approach.

WELFARE REFORM

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the comments of the last speaker. I think it is important to note that the gentleman from Tennessee thanked the majority party for getting the unfunded mandates legislation to the floor of the House as has the majority party brought welfare reform finally to the floor of the House. And I will say this to my moderate Democrat friends over there, that we are glad you have a plan.

I was real disappointed when the President decided to end the welfare debate as we know it by not offering a plan. I thought he was going to end welfare, but it was just end the welfare debate. So I am glad you all have stepped in and filled what is obviously a leadership vacuum and tremendous void over there both from the White House and I would say the party leadership. I am glad to see the Deal plan is on the floor. A lot of good aspects on the Deal plan, a lot of good aspects in it and I am looking at it.

Favor H.R. 4 though. It is a bill that offers hope and independence and opportunity for people. I think it is important.

Today I had an opportunity to meet a lady named Felicia Patterson from Savannah, GA. She had been on welfare. She is right now living in public housing and she has now got a job. She is