

Family

TO: Bruce Reed
FROM: Jennifer Klein
DATE: 11/10/98
RE: OPM "Family Friendly Workplace Advocacy" Office

You had asked about the OPM "Family Friendly Workplace Advocacy" Office. As *The Washington Post* reported, Frank Wolf (R-VA) pushed for a provision in appropriations to set up this office to respond to employee complaints and to report back to Congress on ways to improve workplace conditions.

OPM has had a Work/Life Programs office for several years which was formed in response to a July 11, 1994 Presidential Memorandum challenging Federal agencies to create "family friendly" workplaces by creating flexible work schedules, leave programs, part-time employment, on-site child care, telecommuting, etc. On June 21, 1996, the President issued another memorandum directing agencies to review their family-friendly programs, expand them when feasible, and report on their progress. The new requirement passed by Congress will simply add some new responsibilities to the Work/Life programs, including acting as an ombudsman. OPM has asked for \$222,000 and 3 FTEs in their FY(1999) budget to run this office.

2000
Did they set it?
OK



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

November 5, 1998

TO THE HONORABLE BRUCE REED, WH

This is the White Paper on Working Families we discussed. We think a Domestic Policy led working group could pull together an exciting new Presidential initiative for next year.


Donna E. Shalala

Enclosure

cc EK CJ
JEN AK
~~Tom~~ PJW
CR

FYI -
Mostly stuff
we're already
doing.

-BR

Working Families Initiative White Paper

Since 1993, the Clinton Administration has made working families a priority through increases in the minimum wage and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), through the Children's Health Insurance Program, and through expansion of child care funding. Additional important accomplishments include enactment of the HOPE Scholarship and Lifetime Learning tax credits, the Family and Medical Leave Act, welfare-to-work housing vouchers and the Job Access program. In addition, the strong economy has contributed to an increase in the number of working families. Between January 1993 and June 1998, non-farm employment grew by more than 16 million net new jobs, an increase of almost 15 percent. Unemployment has fallen from 7.3 percent to 4.5 percent, while millions of new workers have joined the labor force.

Working parents in America should not have to worry about being unable to feed, house, clothe, or access medical care for their children. Yet 5.3 million children under the age of 13 were poor in 1996 even though their families included an adult who was in the labor force for more than half the year. Over 10.5 million children lacked health insurance coverage. This paper lays out an agenda to move these families out of poverty through work and through strengthening the critical supports to work, an agenda that builds on the considerable progress this Administration has already made in supporting working families and preventing parents from having to choose, in the President's words, "between the job they need and the child they love." The agenda proposed is a broad one, not located in any single Federal Department or state agency, because there is no single magic bullet that will ensure that low-income workers get jobs, keep them, succeed in them, and are able to meet their families' basic needs. Rather, it will take the whole Administration working together, joined by a wide range of public and private partners.

Our basic goal for working families should be that **every working parent can provide for his or her children's basic needs and for the family's health.** This goal means that working parents should be able to support their families at incomes above the poverty line. It also means, for example, that they and their children should have enough to eat, that they should be able to find and afford the child care and transportation that they need in order to work, that the care children receive should promote their healthy development and safety, and that no working family should be forced onto welfare because of a temporary interruption in work, or because earnings are so low or so unstable that welfare seems the only way to provide for the family.

The Administration has made important progress toward this goal. For example, the Administration's expansion of the EITC effectively gave a pay raise to about 18.5 million low-income working families in 1996. Yet much is left to be done:

The Administration's successful efforts to increase the minimum wage and improve the EITC have had a major combined effect on low-income families -- but families still struggle to pay for child care, transportation, health insurance, rent, and food. For example, in 1992, prior to the new policies of the Clinton Administration, a single mother with two children working full-time at the minimum wage would have earned just \$8,840 a year. After subtracting federal taxes and adding the EITC and food stamps, her net income would have

been just \$12,596. In 1997, after the Clinton Administration's changes, the same mother would be earning \$10,712 annually as a result of the minimum wage increase, and her EITC payment would more than double, to \$3,656. Including food stamps, her net after-tax income would increase to \$16,777. (See Attachment A.)

Yet while her family's total income is now above poverty, this mother still is at considerable risk of failing to meet her children's needs and perhaps having to leave her job if something goes wrong. For example, even with the major increase in child care assistance enacted as part of the welfare reform legislation, her chances of getting a child care subsidy would be very uncertain, depending on the state in which she lives or her place on a waiting list. If she couldn't get help with child care, or had to pay a substantial co-payment, she would be juggling rent, food, utilities, transportation, and child care costs out of her income just above the official poverty line -- and probably skimping on food, doctor visits, or utility bills in order to pay the rent.

To make a difference for these working families who fall through the cracks in today's programs and supports, we need to understand why these gaps exist.

Far too often, working families do not receive program benefits or supports that could make a difference to their lives and their children's lives -- and perhaps even make the difference in their ability to hold onto a job rather than give up and seek welfare or other assistance -- even though they are eligible. Sometimes, the benefits are only available at a location (such as the welfare office) or time that is inconvenient for parents who work; sometimes, no one has told them about their eligibility; sometimes, they are discouraged by long waiting lists; and sometimes, detailed policy or verification rules create unintended barriers. HHS estimates that more than four million children are eligible for Medicaid but not enrolled. The Administration has worked with States to begin to attack this problem through efforts such as outreach to families eligible for Medicaid and CHIP, the promotion of child care consumer education, and technical assistance to States provided through the Child Care Bureau and the Office of Family Assistance.

Sometimes, critical programs or supports are targeted in ways that do not reach all the working families who need them. For instance, the EITC, while a critical source of support for many low-income working families, does not provide enough support to lift families from poverty if they work only part-time or face extended periods of unemployment. Large families are also likely to remain poor in spite of the EITC, because payments do not increase for families with more than two children. Similarly, unemployment insurance is often not available to low-wage workers who experience unemployment after a period of part-time or seasonal work.

In other cases, critical programs or supports, like child care and housing assistance, have eligibility criteria that include working families but are underfunded and don't reach all eligible families. In the case of child care, we estimate that only a little more than 1 in 10 of the families eligible under Federal law actually receive assistance.

Therefore, to close these gaps, build on the Administration's accomplishments to date, and take the next steps toward a legacy where every parent who works is able to meet his or her children's needs, we propose a range of strategies that fit under five key themes:

- **Removing bureaucratic barriers to work and maximizing the effectiveness of existing programs**
- **Building secure, reliable supports for work**, such as Food Stamps, child care, health care, housing;
- **Helping families earn a living wage**, through improvements in the minimum wage, education and skill development among low-wage workers, and job creation;
- **Helping families weather temporary breaks in employment** without being forced to rely on welfare, through improved access to unemployment insurance for low-wage workers and possibly through improved availability of parental leave for low-income families; and
- **Meeting the particular needs of families who are especially likely to work and still be poor**, such as families with a disabled member and immigrant families. According to the Urban Institute, families with a foreign-born parent represent 16 percent of all working families, but 25 percent of working families with incomes below 150 percent of the poverty line.

Families Who Work and Are Poor

In 1996, more than one-third of the poor, or about 13 million people, were working adults or children under 13 living with a working adult. In these families, an adult spent more than half the year in the labor force but family income was below the poverty level (approximately \$12,600 for a family of three).

Working poor families live close to the edge of disaster. Even minor problems -- illness, school vacations that leave children without care, a broken-down car -- too often result in job loss and financial crisis. Every day, working poor parents may face wrenching questions: Do I send my sick child to school, or risk losing my job? Is it worth taking six buses every day in order to bring my child to that day care center? Do I tell my boss that I can't work evenings, because I'd have to leave my teenager at home alone? If I pay the rent instead of the electric bill, will they turn off the heat?

Living this close to the edge, low-income working families also suffer consequences that are not directly reflected in the poverty statistics, such as hunger and housing instability. In 1995, according to the USDA, 4 million American households, many of whom included an employed family member, experienced moderate or severe hunger. The National Center on Homeless and Poverty reports that 25 to 40 percent of the homeless population work. And almost half of working poor adults lack health insurance.

Working families may be poor for three major reasons (See Attachment B):

1. **Because they earn low wages, which are often closely related to low levels of education.** People who go to college, on average, earn more than those who do not. In 1996, the poverty rate was 16.2 percent for working adults (in the labor force at least half the year) with less than a high school diploma, 6.3 percent for working adults with just a high school diploma, 3.2 percent for working adults with an Associate degree, and 1.5 percent for those with a four-year degree. Unemployment is also much higher for those with less education. In recent decades, wages have fallen for workers with high school degrees or less, but have risen for those with more education.
2. **Because they experience frequent periods of unemployment and part-time work.** With the help of the EITC, workers who are employed full-time year-round, even at the minimum wage, can escape poverty. However, many low-wage jobs are part-time, temporary, or contingent. In 1996, workers who usually worked part-time were three times as likely to be poor as workers who usually worked full-time.
3. **Because they have only one wage earner in the household.** In 1996, the poverty rate for families with one member in the labor force was more than seven times that of families with two or more members.

Because families headed by a single mother are often affected by more than one of these factors, they are disproportionately likely to be among the working poor. Nearly half of working poor families were headed by a woman in 1996. In addition, immigrant families, families with a disabled member and those facing other barriers to work are particularly likely to be poor.

A final reason why families who work at low wages and intermittent hours may have great difficulty meeting their children's basic needs is the high cost of work. One recent study found that formal child care for a single child would take 38% of the income of a parent employed full-time at the minimum wage. Transportation is also a major expense. A 1992 study found that average transportation costs for low-income working mothers ranged from \$100 to \$200 a month, depending on the availability of public transportation. At the same time, even relatively low levels of earnings may result in reductions in other family income, including welfare, food stamps, medical assistance, and housing subsidies.

What the Administration Has Already Accomplished

The Administration has taken important steps to help working families -- through increases in the minimum wage, expansions in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and in child care funding, and the dramatic expansion in children's health insurance coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). These steps have had an important impact on at least some of these key goals (See Attachment C):

- The 1996 and 1997 minimum wage increases raised the wages of workers in 1.4 million poor families and 649,000 near-poor families.
- The EITC, which provides targeted tax relief to low-income working individuals and families, was greatly expanded during the Clinton Administration. In 1993, the EITC just offset the negative impact of federal income and payroll taxes on poverty; by 1996, it offset the impact of taxes for 1.2 million children and lifted an additional 1.2 million children out of poverty.

- Congress has enacted several Clinton Administration proposals to make college more affordable to low-income and middle-class students. The new "HOPE Scholarship" tax credit provides up to a \$1,500 tax credit for students in the first two years of college or vocational school. The Lifetime Learning tax credit is targeted to adults who want to go back to school, change careers, or upgrade their skills, and to students in the later years of college and graduate education. The maximum Pell Grant was also just increased to \$4,500, a 50 percent increase.
- The new Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) allocates \$24 billion over the next five years to help states expand health insurance coverage to the children of working poor families. Forty-five plans have been approved; these plans estimate that they will provide health insurance for nearly 2.5 million currently uninsured children within the next three years.
- The additional child care funds that the President insisted on in the welfare reform legislation have enabled hundreds of thousands of families to receive affordable child care while they work.
- Child support collections have increased by 68 percent since 1992, to a record \$13.4 billion in 1997. Paternity establishments are also at record levels.
- The new housing law will create 50,000 new Section 8 housing vouchers this year for families moving from welfare to work, and will make an additional 40,000 vouchers available by eliminating a mandatory three-month waiting period to reissue vouchers. The law will also allow communities to reward work and fight concentrations of extreme poverty by allowing moderate-income working families to live in public housing where the poorest residents on welfare are now concentrated, while reserving most Section 8 vouchers for the neediest families.
- The Family and Medical Leave Act has enabled millions of workers to take unpaid leave to care for a young child or other family member, without risking their jobs.
- The Clinton Administration, through welfare reform legislation and earlier waivers, has supported changes that allow families who work at a low wage and receive welfare to keep more of the money they earn.
- The Access to Jobs program represents an investment in transportation for families leaving welfare to work; for the first time, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Labor are working together to leverage resources from all three agencies to improve transportation availability and affordability for low-income workers.

Yet, extraordinary as these accomplishments are, they leave millions of working parents still unable to meet the needs of their children. For example:

- While the increase in the minimum wage has been enormously important to families, it has not yet returned to its 1979 value when adjusted for inflation. The real value of the minimum wage (in 1997 dollars) fell from \$6.29 in 1979 to about \$4.30 in 1989 before being increased to \$5.15 in 1997.
- While CHIP should have a very important impact on the proportion of children who lack health insurance, there continue to be reasons for concern about working poor families. Almost half of working poor adults lack health insurance, and even where children and adults are guaranteed coverage (for example, through transitional Medicaid provisions), some families may be lost in the system. In 1995, just 38 percent of children under age 11 who were eligible for Medicaid but did not receive cash assistance were enrolled in the Medicaid program. More recent evidence points to a much higher incidence of families who are eligible for but not receiving Medicaid.

The continuation of health insurance is an especially critical concern for families with disabled members, because they visit the doctor and are hospitalized more often than the non-disabled population; as noted above, these families are also especially likely to be found among the working poor. (See Attachment D.)

Even with the additional child care resources in the welfare reform legislation, only about 1 in 10 children eligible under the Federal law are now receiving child care subsidies. Because of resource limitations, some states set eligibility far below what is allowed in the law: in as many as 37 states, a family of three with \$28,000 of income is not eligible for any child care subsidy at all. In addition, most states aren't able to reach even all the families that meet their eligibility requirements. Availability of infant care and care during non-standard hours also remains a serious problem. For these reasons, the President has proposed a historic Child Care Initiative to ensure quality, affordable child care for working families.

What We Propose

To build on this record of promise and ensure that families who work are able to meet their children's basic needs, we must put together a range of strategies, because there is no one solution that will help every family make a secure living from work. Instead, we need to look at everything we do that touches working families to make sure that we are supporting rather than discouraging work. Departments throughout the government have numerous opportunities to make a difference in the lives of low-income working families by maximizing the effectiveness of their existing programs and finding new ways of serving working families.

Based on the evidence about why working families are poor and what strategies show the most promise of supporting families effectively, we propose that the Administration should commit to five steps that together will make sure that parents who work can meet their children's basic needs:

1. Remove Bureaucratic Barriers to Work and Maximize the Effectiveness of Existing Programs

Low-income working parents face an incredible challenge to hold down a job, raise their children, and manage relations with multiple bureaucracies to obtain all the supports that the family needs. Families' attempts to support themselves through work should not be hampered by bureaucratic processes nor through the unintended consequences of well-meaning policies. We must mount a major campaign to ensure that families gain access to these supports by using Federal leadership not only to streamline national rules, but to change service delivery at the State and local levels.

Examine programs for low-income families throughout the government to find ways to change program hours and operations, strengthen outreach efforts, eliminate barriers of language and culture, and modify eligibility rules to make them fit the needs of working families.

HHS and other Departments can take on critical leadership in finding and eliminating barriers to work scattered throughout government programs serving low-income people. Efforts to root out

bureaucratic barriers have proved fruitful recently. The Federal and state governments eliminated the old AFDC rules which curbed families' incentives to work while they were receiving cash assistance. In addition, HHS eliminated Medicaid's "100 hour rule," which limited states' ability to serve two-parent families. We should also explore innovations in programs' designs to reach working families. For instance, the EITC is an example of a program that is easily accessible to busy working families; instead of having to visit a welfare office, or fill out a separate application form, workers get the EITC simply by filling out their tax return.

More powerful examples are included in proposals that the Food and Nutrition Service is considering for the FY 2000 budget. Some proposals would affect eligibility criteria, such as proposals in past budgets to ease the consideration of vehicles as resources to help assure that low-income workers have access to reliable transportation, or to restore eligibility for more legal immigrants who work hard and contribute to American society. Other proposals would affect food stamp administrative requirements in ways that simplify working households' participation in the Food Stamp Program and improve their access to the program. Similarly, States are experimenting with ways to make the WIC program more accessible to working parents through adjustment of service hours to accommodate job schedules.

Actively engage state leadership in outreach to working families through incentives, targets, mandates, and technical assistance.

Policymakers and administrators at the state and local level are necessary allies in ensuring that programs meet the needs of working families through the flexibility that is provided to them in Federal law. Many state and local officials are already implementing these strategies. For instance, in the transportation field, some states and communities have removed eligibility restrictions to allow narrowly targeted transportation systems (e.g., for senior citizens and people with disabilities) to help low-income workers to get to their jobs. We should explore ways to build on these efforts by offering technical assistance that helps state and local governments use the flexibility they have to serve working families and by finding ways to create incentives and rewards for states that choose to serve more working families.

State and local outreach is critical in programs like the Food Stamp program; estimates show that less than half of those individuals in households with earnings who were eligible for food stamps actually received them in August of 1995. Some of these individuals may not realize that they are eligible for benefits, while others may not be connected to the right systems to receive benefits or find the receipt of Food Stamps too stigmatizing to apply. State and local administrators are positioned to make adjustments in how they implement the program to meet the needs of working families.

Encourage states to provide earnings disregards or other supplements to working families receiving TANF assistance.

Almost all states have increased earnings disregards in TANF compared to AFDC, which means that working families who are in low-wage jobs can get a direct monthly supplement to earnings through their welfare check. However, because of time limits, this risks having the effect of using up a family's eligibility. Illinois has dealt with this problem by paying individuals who

work more than a minimum threshold in a month with state dollars so that they don't accumulate that month toward the time limit. We could encourage states to consider using MOE dollars to enhance earnings without triggering the TANF rules. A more systematic approach would be to propose legislation that would allow a family to receive assistance funded by TANF without triggering the federal 60-month time limit if they were only receiving work supports or if they were receiving limited assistance to supplement a paycheck.

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NO, there's no evidence that people will or should stay on rolls for 5 years to get this help. Time limits are only a problem for people who aren't working.

2. Build Secure, Reliable Supports for Work

Parents who work in low-wage jobs with uncertain hours need to be able to count on reliable and affordable supports in order to keep their jobs and meet family needs. Child care, health insurance, food assistance, housing and transportation all have important potential to help families. Regular, reliable child support payments are also key for low-income families.

Ensure that Food Stamps and other food programs provide sufficient support for children and adults in low-income working families.

Food stamps provide a critical support for low-income working families. For a family with two children and one adult working at the minimum wage, food stamps would provide about one third of family income (considerably more than the EITC) if the parent worked 20 hours a week. Food stamps would provide just under one fifth of family income (slightly less than the EITC) if the parent worked 40 hours a week.

The Department of Agriculture is exploring ways to strengthen the supports that food stamps and other Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs offer to working families. For example, the Department of Agriculture is considering review of the Thrifty Food Plan (the basis of food stamp benefits) to understand if it appropriately reflects the reduced food preparation time that working households have available.

The Department of Agriculture is also looking to its Child Nutrition programs to support working families. The pending reauthorization bills for the Child Nutrition programs propose to expand eligibility for subsidized after-school snacks for children up to age 18 and to do demonstrations to expand eligibility for school breakfasts, which not only subsidize the cost of the family's food, but also assure working parents that children are receiving a nutritious breakfast before school.

Didn't these pass?

Continue to improve the availability of health insurance through Medicaid/ CHIP.

Much of the work that needs to be done here is about outreach and removal of bureaucratic barriers such as burdensome processes and excessive eligibility documentation.

In addition, for low-income working parents, we should consider strategies which modestly expand Medicaid eligibility, such as simplification of transitional benefits for persons moving from welfare to work, or extension of Medicaid to all adults receiving benefits under TANF. Many of these would require legislation or Medicaid spending increases.

Pass the President's Child Care Initiative.

Because child care is so critical to the ability of parents to work and the ability of children to develop and learn, and because the cost and availability of child care are central to the ability of low-income working parents to succeed at work, it is essential to pass the President's Child Care Initiative. This initiative focuses on both quality and affordability; in particular, it closes a critical gap by expanding child care subsidies to reach low-income working families who are currently not being reached but who earn too little to take advantage of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.

Encourage workplaces to provide employee and family assistance programs to assist low-wage earners in meeting personal and family demands, including substance abuse early intervention and treatment.

We can work to promote the use of employee and family assistance programs (EFAP) and ensure that their design and operation include special assistance to those entering the workplace from welfare. These EFAPs, working jointly with human resources departments and health care plans, should provide prevention, early intervention and treatment for substance abuse and mental health problems, parenting programs for employees and assistance for employees in finding appropriate child and elder care. In addition, we can perform outreach to small businesses to help them identify and access sources of support for their employees, since they are unlikely to have the internal capacity of large corporations with human resource departments and EFAPs.

Ensure that the subsidized housing system is designed to help families connect to employment and employment support services.

Housing assistance has an important role to play in helping families obtain and maintain employment and affects families' ability to work in multiple ways. The recently passed housing bill is an important step in increasing the availability of affordable housing. The Department of Housing and Urban Development could explore their legislation and regulations to avoid and eliminate situations in which a family's earned income gains are subsumed by a reduction in their housing subsidy. Early discussions between HHS and HUD indicate that there is great potential in collaborations that help convene local housing, welfare, and job development agencies, which separately serve the same families, to begin a dialogue about how they can work together to support working families. Other collaborative projects might include exploring ways to promote affordable housing options closer to available jobs, to explore transportation solutions to connect public housing to high-density employment areas, to examine how the system serves immigrant families which are, on average, larger families, and to promote the location of supportive services (e.g. child care) in and around subsidized housing.

Revamp the transportation system to fit new commuting patterns and better serve low-income workers.

The next step beyond the Access to Jobs program is to focus at the federal, state, and local levels on using the entire transportation system to meet the needs of low-income workers. There may

be some interest in additional budget investments in order to leverage changes in the existing transportation infrastructure.

Continue to strengthen Child Support Enforcement, with a focus on working families.

Regular, reliable, sufficient child support payments are a critical support for low-income working families with single parents, because they make it possible to count on a stream of income to supplement earnings and pay the bills even with uncertain work hours. In addition, of course, children deserve and have a right to the financial and emotional support of both parents. Under the Clinton Administration's leadership, child support collections and paternity establishment rates have reached record levels. The Administration and Congress worked together to pass the toughest child support laws in our Nation's history, as part of the 1996 welfare reform law, and we must build on these efforts. It is also important to learn from and expand upon the HHS demonstrations that promote employment and parental involvement opportunities for low-income non-custodial parents.

3. Help Families Earn a Living Wage

Preserve the value of the minimum wage.

We should increase the minimum wage to improve the earnings both of parents at the very bottom of the labor market and those who are in jobs just above those entry levels, whose wages often rise with the minimum wage as employers seek to preserve a spread in the wages of their more skilled or experienced workers. We also need to continue increasing the minimum wage over time, in order to keep up with the rising costs imposed by inflation.

Expand the EITC, support state EITC's, or identify other opportunities to support family income through the tax system.

The Administration could consider the possibility of further expansion of the EITC at the Federal level, but it is also critical to avoid any risk to the progress already made. Another possibility is to seek opportunities for encouraging more states to provide additional support through state EITC's. Nine states currently provide a supplement modeled on the Federal EITC (five refundable, four non-refundable).

Stimulate job creation in areas that still suffer from high unemployment.

While nationwide unemployment is at historically low levels, many pockets of high unemployment remain, particularly in remote rural areas and in inner cities. In these areas, job creation strategies may be appropriate, especially when aimed at populations who are particularly disadvantaged in the labor market, such as young workers, immigrant workers, workers without high school diplomas, or women who are returning to the workforce after years on welfare. The \$3 billion Welfare to Work grants program, proposed and championed by the Administration, is an important step at delivering extra assistance toward areas with many challenges in moving people into jobs.

Experience suggests that community-based projects are more likely to be tailored to local needs and to respond to local labor market conditions than large national programs. We should continue to utilize a network of community-based organizations, specifically community development corporations, that create public-private ventures to stimulate employment at the local level. Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities provide a powerful example of leveraging resources for job creation and a vehicle for testing models tailored to local needs.

There are several local programs that may provide appropriate models for local job creation strategies. The New Hope project in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, places individuals in paid community service jobs with non-profit agencies for up to six months, if they are unable to find full-time work in an eight-week job search. YouthBuild gives disadvantaged teenagers and young adults an opportunity to do meaningful work in their communities while continuing to develop academic and leadership skills. Participants spend half their time learning basic construction skills while building and renovating affordable housing, and half of the time in YouthBuild alternative schools. The AFDC Homemaker-Home Health Aide demonstrations, operated in seven states in the 1980's, provided AFDC recipients with four to eight weeks of formal training in homemaker and home health aide services, followed by up to a year of full-time, subsidized employment.

Make college more accessible for low-income families

Nearly half of low-income students are unqualified or marginally qualified for college when they graduate high school. Moreover, among those low-income high school graduates who were qualified for college, less than 80 percent had attended any post-secondary institution within two years -- compared to almost 90 percent of qualified middle-income graduates and more than 95 percent of qualified high-income graduates. Implementation of the new GEAR UP program represents an essential first step by ensuring that students receive financial aid information, rigorous courses, tutoring, mentoring, and scholarships for college through competitive grants to states and local partnerships of colleges and middle schools in high-poverty areas. In addition, we can take steps to take into account the needs of dependent children in determining financial aid eligibility. For instance, we can increase the Pell Grants' dependent care allowance.

Enhance skills and support career development among low-income workers.

Low wages that don't rise even after a period of time in the labor force are a big reason that families are trapped in poverty. Lack of education and job skills are the primary reasons for persistently low wages. Our success in this area will be increasingly depend on our ability to reach workers whose first language is not English. By 2000, 22 percent of workers entering the labor force will be workers whose primary language is not English.

Among the ways to combat this problem is to work with colleges to make continuing education more accessible to working adults, particularly low-income adults and those who have previously failed in school settings. Adults without high school degrees and those who are unemployed or not in the labor force are actually less likely to participate in adult education than those who have more education and those who are employed. In addition, more needs to be done to ensure that students who combine school and work complete their studies. Of part-time students enrolled in post-

secondary education in 1989-90, just 25 percent had earned a degree or were still enrolled four years later, compared to 73 percent of students who attended school full-time at least part of the year.

States and communities across the country are experimenting with a wide variety of strategies and partnerships to enhance the learning and skill development of entry-level workers and to help them use those skills in a next job. While many of these efforts are still in the preliminary stages, some general principles can be drawn from them: in a strong economy, low-wage earners should seize the opportunity to look for a job with advancement potential. Education and training must be work-focused, and linked to employers' needs with cooperation between employers and training providers. Training must be accessible for all workers, including those with learning disabilities or limited English proficiency.

We should consider a variety of investments in these areas, and we expect that both the Department of Labor and the Department of Education are interested in making investments. In addition to supporting programs directly, it is important to use incentive strategies -- such as the High Performance Bonus and Welfare-to-Work grants performance bonus -- and to invest in technical assistance and evaluation, in order to stimulate, identify, and disseminate new approaches that are successful.

4. Help Families Weather Temporary Breaks in Employment

Improve access to Unemployment Insurance (UI) for low-income working families.

Right now, low-income workers who lose jobs through no fault of their own have less chance than middle income workers to get unemployment insurance to help them through periods of unemployment. We need to change that if we are to help working parents count on work, meet their children's needs, and avoid having to rely on welfare in a time of temporary job loss.

Under current rules, most low-wage workers who become unemployed will not qualify for UI benefits. Low wage earners often work seasonal or part-time jobs and most will not accumulate enough earnings to meet eligibility criteria. In addition, workers who leave their jobs for family responsibilities or who are available only for part-time work will not qualify in many states. This affects low-wage mothers in particular. Recent estimates indicate that among women who leave welfare to work, only about 10 percent would qualify for UI if they became unemployed. The proportion of unemployed workers receiving UI benefits is low among the general population as well, falling from about one-half in 1970 to about one-third in 1996. A significant reason for this decline is state eligibility restrictions, with over three-quarters of states adopting tighter eligibility criteria since 1981.

There are at least two possible strategies that could make more low wage workers qualify for UI. We could expand UI by making changes at the Federal level, or we could encourage state investments to expand UI eligibility, either through the regular UI system or through investment of other resources (such as TANF MOE funds). At the Federal level, the Department of Labor is currently gathering a variety of opinions on what eligibility changes the Administration should propose for the FY 2000 legislative package. For example, one proposal would change the

calculation of prior earnings in determining whether a worker is qualified, counting the most recent quarter of earnings whereas currently the calculation is usually based on an earlier period. This change would increase the number of workers qualified for unemployment insurance benefits by about 8 percent.

Improve the availability of parental leave for low-income working families.

To help low-income working parents keep the stability of their work lives through the birth and infancy of a child, we could build on the important step that the Administration took by enacting the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Unfortunately, for low-income parents, there are two important gaps in this protection:

First, while FMLA guaranteed to many workers that they could take unpaid leave without losing their jobs, many others are not covered, either because they work for a small employer, or because they did not work enough hours in order to qualify. In addition, unpaid leave may not be a real option for these families, forcing parents either to choose work over the needs of an infant or to suffer a sharp decrease in family income. In a recent survey on leave usage, 3.4 percent of workers reported needing FMLA leave in the previous eighteen months, but not taking it. The most common reason (63.9 percent) for not taking leave was that they couldn't afford it.

To address these problems, we could consider expansion of unpaid leave or the introduction of paid leave strategies for either the Federal or the state level. We know that at least two states have chosen to use Federal or state child care money to support low-income families at home with children, and we could explore whether others are interested in experimenting with approaches to paid leave for low-income families. A few states have also raised the possibility of using the UI system to provide paid parental leave.

5. Meet the needs of families with particular barriers to work, such as families with a disabled member or immigrant families.

There is an important overlap between the immigrant and disability agendas on which HHS has been providing such leadership and the working families agenda, because these are families who are especially likely to work and still be poor. Families may need supports that address their particular needs - such as a job coach so a disabled adult can succeed on the job or English classes at night for a working parent. They also need full access to the basic supports described earlier: for example, child care to meet the needs of children with disabilities and skill development opportunities need to be accessible to parents with limited English.

In families with a child or children with a disability, there are enormous needs related to child care, personal care assistance, and health care and other home care needs that must be addressed to enable the parent(s) to continue, or begin, employment. For adults who have a disability, whether mental illness, mental retardation/developmental disability, or a physical disability, there may be a need for additional assistance to allow the family to remain together and promote the fullest independence of all the family members in the most integrated setting possible. Support for workers with disabilities is also an important part of the welfare-to-work agenda, as survey data indicate that as many as 40 percent of welfare recipients have a disability of some type.

Ensure that immigrant working families have access to the English and citizenship instruction and that legal, language, and cultural barriers do not keep them from receiving the work supports and training that they need to succeed at work.

The President has welcomed all immigrant families, with a charge to “honor laws, embrace our culture, learn our language, know our history, and when the time comes, [to] become citizens.” Working poor immigrant families will face a tougher challenge in fulfilling the President’s charge due to the demands of simply feeding and housing their children. In order to end poverty among immigrant working families and speed their process in becoming Americans, there are a number of specific strategies to implement. First, working immigrant parents must have access to English classes and employers should be encouraged to offer worksite English classes before, during, or after work. Second, we should ensure that barriers of language and culture do not preclude working immigrants from getting the training that they need to succeed at work and move up career ladders. Families should also have access to bilingual and bicultural child care for their children while parents are working. Third, we should partner with employers to ensure that working families have assistance in preparing for citizenship.

Finally, we should consider whether there are further next steps in increasing access of working immigrant families to Medicaid, CHIP, TANF and Food Stamps, regardless of when they entered the U.S. For instance, the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA) is developing specific outreach strategies for Latino/Hispanic groups across the country. These safety net programs can assist immigrant working families in reaching and sustaining economic self-sufficiency.

Ensure that both public and private health coverage systems are designed to meet the needs of workers with disabilities.

The Administration has been active in developing options for states to offer for people with disabilities opportunities to retain access to their health coverage when they go or return to work. Last year’s Balanced Budget Act contained a new option for states to continue Medicaid coverage for SSI-eligible individuals with incomes up to 250 percent of poverty. Currently, HHS is considering proposing legislation that would extend and improve on this recently adopted option, extending Medicaid to disabled people with higher incomes and assets and also permitting certain disabled Medicare beneficiaries to remain permanently on the program even if they return to work.

The Health Care Financing Administration is responsible for administering the Mental Health Parity Act of 1996, which is designed to make sure that private sector health coverage does not have different, lower limits for mental health services compared to general medical/surgical services. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is currently involved in gathering information through various studies on the costs and benefits of parity, which will help employers and consumers make informed decisions about purchasing health plans where mental health benefits are included. In plans where mental health benefits do not have parity with medical/surgical benefits, this information could be used to improve mental health benefit coverage, which is crucial to helping people who struggle with mental disorders to stay employed.

Integrate employment and supportive services for workers with disabilities into a one-stop system.

HHS is participating in an inter-agency effort to eliminate barriers and support employment for people with disabilities. This effort, led by the Department of Labor, is developing a program of competitive grants to states entitled the BRIDGE (Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment) program. The BRIDGE program will emphasize a single point-of-entry or "one-stop" service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability should be able to learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the services needed to succeed in competitive employment with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Each of the services should be sufficiently integrated with all of the other services so that they accomplish the goal of supporting long-term employment. The BRIDGE program exemplifies new workforce system infrastructure approaches at the state and local level that promote universal access through One-Stop Centers, integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

Attached are additional charts and examples.

DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR A SINGLE MOTHER AND TWO CHILDREN

By Hours Worked each Week

(in current dollars)

1992 Prior to Clinton Administration Policies

	20 hours at \$4.25	40 hours at \$4.25	40 hours at \$5.10
Annual Earnings	\$4,420	\$8,840	\$10,608
FICA	-338	-676	-812
EITC	813	1,384	1,384
Food Stamps	3,504	3,048	2,724
Net Income	\$8,399	\$12,596	\$13,904

1997 After Clinton Administration Policies

	20 hours at \$5.15	40 hours at \$5.15	40 hours at \$6.18
Earnings	\$5,356	\$10,712	\$12,854
FICA	-410	-819	-983
EITC	2,142	3,658	3,461
Food Stamps	3,780	3,228	2,844
Net Income	\$10,869	\$16,777	\$18,176

Change (Clinton - Pre-Clinton)

Earnings	\$936	\$1,872	\$2,246
FICA	-72	-143	-172
EITC	1,329	2,272	2,077
Food Stamps	276	180	120
Change in Net Income			
in current dollars	\$2,469	\$4,181	\$4,272
in constant 1997 dollars	\$1,260	\$2,367	\$2,270

This analysis reflects the following:

- The minimum wage increased to \$5.15 from \$4.25 (\$4.86 in 1997 dollars).
- The maximum EITC subsidy increased from 18.4% of the first \$7,520 to 40% of the first \$9,140.
- Child Care expenses are assumed to be 20% of earnings.
- Food Stamp benefit calculations assume an excess shelter cost deduction of 100% of the allowable maximum.

DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR A SINGLE MOTHER AND TWO CHILDREN
Living In a Moderate Benefit State - By Hours Worked each Week

(In current dollars)

1992 Prior to Clinton Administration Policies & Welfare Reform

	20 hours at \$4.25	40 hours at \$4.25	40 hours at \$5.10
Annual Earnings	\$4,420	\$8,840	\$10,608
FICA	-338	-676	-812
EITC	813	1,384	1,384
Cash Assistance	2,592	0	0
Food Stamps	3,060	3,048	2,724
Net Income	\$10,547	\$12,596	\$13,904

1997 After Clinton Administration Policies & Welfare Reform Were Enacted

	20 hours at \$5.15	40 hours at \$5.15	40 hours at \$6.18
Earnings	\$5,358	\$10,712	\$12,854
FICA	-410	-819	-983
EITC	2,142	3,656	3,461
Cash Assistance	3,444	1,838	1,188
Food Stamps	3,156	2,676	2,484
Net Income	\$13,689	\$18,061	\$19,004

Change (Clinton - Pre-Clinton)

Earnings	\$938	\$1,872	\$2,246
FICA	-72	-143	-172
EITC	1,329	2,272	2,077
Cash Assistance	852	1,838	1,188
Food Stamps	96	-372	-240
Change in Net Income			
in current dollars	\$3,141	\$5,465	\$5,100
in constant 1997 dollars	\$1,623	\$3,651	\$3,098

This analysis reflects the following:

- The minimum wage increased to \$5.15 from \$4.25 (\$4.86 in 1997 dollars).
- The maximum EITC subsidy increased from 18.4% of the first \$7,320 to 40% of the first \$9,140.
- Child Care expenses are assumed to be 20% of earnings.
- Food Stamp benefit calculations assume an excess shelter cost deduction of 100% of the allowable maximum.

Attachment B Causes of Poverty among Working Families

Several factors contribute to the extent of poverty among working families:

- **Low wages:** The working poor are concentrated in certain low-wage jobs. In 1996, nearly three-fourths of the working poor were employed in one of the following three occupational groups: service; technical, sales, and administrative support; and operators, fabricators and laborers. Low wages are often closely related to low levels of education. Workers without a high school diploma were more than twice as likely to be poor as workers who had completed high school, and 10 times more likely to be poor than workers who had graduated college.
- **Unemployment and part-time work:** With the help of the EITC, workers who are employed full-time year-round, even at the minimum wage, can escape poverty. However, many low-wage jobs are part-time, temporary, or contingent. In 1996, workers who usually worked part-time were three times as likely to be poor as workers who usually worked full-time (12.4 percent versus 4.1 percent), and those who worked part-time because they could not find full-time employment were even more likely to be poor (24.9 percent). Many poor workers who usually worked full-time experienced unemployment (28.4 percent) or involuntary part-time work (15.8 percent) at some point during the year. In addition, a recent report based on monthly data suggests that a significant number of non-poor families (based on annual income) may be poor for one or more months due to fluctuations in income.
- **Family structure:** Families with only one wage-earner are much more likely to be poor than families with two or more working members. In 1996, the poverty rate for families with one member in the labor force was more than seven times that of families with two or more members in the labor force (14.6 versus 1.9 percent). Also, because the poverty threshold increases with family size, given the same income, families with more children are poor more often than families with less.

Because families headed by a single mother are often affected by more than one of these factors, they are disproportionately likely to be among the working poor. Nearly half of working poor families were headed by a woman in 1996. The poverty rate for families with children that were maintained by a woman who was the sole supporter of the family was 26.6 percent.

Source: BLS: *A Profile of the Working Poor, 1996*. December 1997

Attachment C
Impact of Transfers and Taxes on Poverty

The official poverty rate calculations include cash benefits, such as AFDC/TANF and Social Security, but do not include near-cash benefits, such as Food Stamps and housing assistance. They also do not include payroll and income taxes, which reduce families' take-home pay, or the Earned Income Tax Credit, a refundable credit which adds to family income. However, by recalculating the poverty rate, first excluding all transfers, and then adding both cash and near-cash benefits, as well as taxes, we can estimate the impact of these programs on poverty.

In 1995, the pre-transfer poverty rate for individuals in families with children under 18 was 20 percent. Transfers from the federal government reduced that rate to 13 percent, a decline of more than 35 percent.

The fraction of individuals in poor families lifted from poverty has grown consistently since 1983. Most of this growth has come from increases in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Before 1993, the net impact of federal taxes was to take money away from poor families, primarily through Social Security payroll taxes. (The EITC is only available to families and individuals with earned income.)

Unemployment Insurance has a relatively small impact on the poverty rate because most poor workers do not have enough earnings or consistent labor market participation to qualify for UI benefits.

**Anti-Poverty Effectiveness of Cash and Near-Cash Transfers
for All Persons in Families with Related Children Under 18, 1995**

Percent of Otherwise Poor Persons Removed from Poverty Due to:	
Social Insurance (other than Social Security)	3.5
Social Security	6.1
Means-Tested Cash Benefits	6.6
Food and Housing Benefits	12.5
EITC and Federal Payroll and Income Taxes	6.6
Total	35.2

Source: DHHS, Indicators of Welfare Dependence, October 1997

Attachment D
Health Care Coverage of Poor and Near-Poor Adults and Children

Health care coverage is a fundamental aspect of well-being. Individuals without health insurance are less likely to seek preventive care and early treatment, and could be more likely to develop serious illnesses as a result.

In 1997, 43.4 million people, or 16.1 percent of the population, did not have any health insurance coverage, an increase of 1.7 million from 1996 in spite of the robust economy. Among poor people, 11.2 million (31.6 percent) were not covered. Almost half of working poor adults lack health insurance. Because many low-wage jobs do not provide health insurance, working poor and near-poor adults are actually less likely to have health insurance coverage than their non-working counterparts, who are more likely to be covered by Medicaid.

Percent Lacking Health Insurance Coverage

	Total	Poor
Total	16.1	31.6
Adults who worked during year	18.1	47.6
Working-age adults who did not work	26.2	38.5
Children	15.0	23.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, March supplement to the 1998 Current Population Survey (data from calendar year 1997)

By law, families leaving the TANF rolls maintain their eligibility for Medicaid for up to one year. Nonetheless, there is evidence, from a 1997 GAO study of three states and from several states' own studies of welfare "leavers", that among families whose welfare benefits are terminated or who leave welfare for work, participation in Medicaid declines significantly and is not offset by a corresponding increase in private insurance coverage.

The continuation of health insurance is an especially critical concern for individuals with disabilities, as they visit the doctor and are hospitalized more often than the non-disabled population, and have higher average medical expenses. One study showed that annual per capital health care spending for adults with moderate disabilities was six times, and for adults with significant disabilities was twelve times, that for non-disabled working age adults.

Family -
Paid Leave

Karen Tramontano 05/05/99 01:59:27 PM

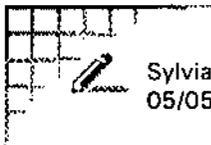
Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: Paid Parental Leave

PAID LEAVE
TAX CREDIT?

i'm not sure you're in the loop on this one --- but this is high on alexis' list ---

----- Forwarded by Karen Tramontano/WHO/EOP on 05/05/99 01:58 PM -----



Sylvia M. Mathews
05/05/99 01:32:08 PM

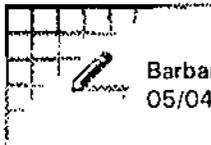
Record Type: Record

To: Karen Tramontano/WHO/EOP
cc:
Subject: Paid Parental Leave

FYI.

We will continue to work the issue with the DPC, but thought an early heads up on some of the difficulties might be helpful.

----- Forwarded by Sylvia M. Mathews/OMB/EOP on 05/05/99 01:31 PM -----



Barbara Chow
05/04/99 07:24:50 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jacob J. Lew/OMB/EOP@EOP, Sylvia M. Mathews/OMB/EOP@EOP
cc: Robert L. Nabors/OMB/EOP@EOP, Victoria A. Wachino/OMB/EOP@EOP, Debra J. Bond/OMB/EOP@EOP
Subject: Paid Parental Leave

You received a note from Karen Tramontano saying Sec. Alexis Herman was sending over to OMB a proposed interpretation regarding unemployment compensation that would expand the application of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). You should be aware that this is a controversial proposal, some forms of which have been considered but rejected in the past.

I convened a meeting last week at the request of DOL to discuss the issue of paid parental leave and the intersection with unemployment insurance (UI) proposals in various States. NEC, DPC, WHLA, CEA, Treasury, and DOL staff attended the meeting. The idea of paid

parental leave was discussed the last two years as possible budget initiatives, but did not make it through the process in either year. DOL raised the issue again because of interest by the Hill, specifically Sen. Kennedy, in the Administration's position on paid parental leave.

The meeting focused on the Administration's position on paid parental leave, the different mechanisms available to address this issue (UI, tax credits, etc.), and whether DOL should change its position on use of UI funds for paid parental leave (opposed in the past). DOL did not present a clear position on any of these issues. While Kitty Higgins herself supports a change to DOL's position, at a minimum she wants to meet with the supporters on the Hill to explain the concerns of the UI program and explore alternatives.

We plan to meet with the Hill on Friday. DPC is taking the lead on an interagency group to develop proposals for paid parental leave.

Background on Paid Parental Leave

As it was developed in 1997, the Administration's paid parental leave initiative would have provided eligible new parents \$200 a week in paid leave, funded by the Federal government, for up to six weeks. Eligibility was based on income and time in the workforce. This initiative would have used the UI system to deliver the leave payments, but would not have used UI funds to pay for these benefits. The policy goal was to offer persons who cannot afford to take leave after the birth or adoption of a child an option to stay at home, versus child care. It was estimated to cost \$1 billion annually. This proposal was considered in the context of child care proposals but never included in the budget or any subsequent policy announcement.

The data on the size of the problem are scant and was collected very soon after the law was passed. We do not have data on recent experience. I understand that a survey conducted by the Commission on Family and Medical Leave found that 3.4 percent of respondents stated they needed to take leave but did not take advantage of unpaid protected leave; 2 percent cited affordability as the main reason. By offering paid leave, the Administration could try to address this problem.

State UI Proposals and DOL Concerns

Four states have introduced legislation that would allow use of UI trust funds to pay individuals on some form of family and medical leave (Vermont, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Washington). DOL has objected to this proposed use in the past because the individuals receiving the benefit are not available for work -- a fundamental requirement of the UI program known as the "availability test."

These States are either proposing to use a "recall" concept or "deeming" to get around the "availability test." The "recall" concept comes from the classic manufacturing lay-offs where the employer initiates the unemployment but expects to recall its workers -- for example, auto workers. Although the laid-off auto workers may not be required to actively seek work, they

must still be available for work when they are recalled. The other idea is to simply "deem" that the new parent has met the "availability test."

The UI staff at DOL are insistent that the States use the UI system to pay benefits only to workers who lose a job through no fault of their own, and continue to be unemployed because no other work is available. However, Federal law does not contain any explicit requirement that UI claimants be available for work, and DOL has relied for many years on the legislative history of the UI program to enforce its availability interpretation.

The major concern of DOL is that a change in the Department's long-standing position on availability -- because it is not in Federal law -- would create a "slippery slope" for other aspects of the UI program. States also might decide to even pay benefits to other people not available for work because of vacations, sick leave, sabbaticals, or retirement. Another problem area is means testing. DOL has long interpreted UI as a non-means tested program, that it is insurance against wage loss when involuntarily unemployed. The FMLA policy discussed in 1997 and 1998 would have limited the benefit to those with incomes below a certain amount -- as initially discussed the limit was \$50,000 then it was \$36,000. If, however, features that are not explicitly in Federal law are left wholly to State discretion, DOL fears that some States may means-test UI to reduce its costs.

DOL also points out that changing its interpretations does not assure that States will provide paid parental leave. The decision will still be up to each State legislature.

Alternative Approaches to Paid Parental Leave

Some of the issues we will be exploring follow. Others may arise.

- *A Separate State Tax to Fund Parental Leave.* DOL has no objections to using the UI system to make parental leave payments -- the objection is to using UI trust funds. DOL has informed the States that they can create a separate State tax to fund parental leave (that will not be part of the UI trust fund) and that they can even reduce their State UI taxes to make this new program revenue-neutral for employers. Several States have already established separate taxes for training or for employment security administration.
- *Use of State Temporary Disability System.* Only six States have such a system now. Last year California introduced a bill that would use its temporary disability system for family and medical leave purposes.
- *Conduct a Limited Pilot.* This approach would keep the issue under Federal control and would provide information on such critical cost issues as take-up rates. Decisions would need to be made on how to encourage State participation and whether this pilot would use discretionary funds or permit use of mandatory UI trust funds.
- *Tax Credits.* The Administration could revisit creating a new tax credit for this purpose.

Family

Families Agenda for the Fiscal Year 2000 Budget

Over the last 30 years, there have been increasing pressures on the family --more dual-earner couples, families working longer hours, all creating a squeeze that leaves parents with less and less time with their children. At the very least, this time squeeze is a source of anxiety for parents --at its worst, it places more children at risk. As part of the fiscal year 2000 budget, the Clinton Administration can put forward an agenda that puts families first by helping parents as they cope with this most important of all duties --raising their children.

Expansion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant. We propose to expand the Child Care and Development Block Grant as previously proposed in the FY 1999 Budget. The block grant is the primary federal child care subsidy program, helping low-income working families struggling to pay for child care. Funds are distributed by formula to the states to operate direct child care subsidy programs, as well as to improve the quality and availability of care. Currently, over one million children are served by the program, leaving roughly nine million children who are eligible but unserved. **Cost: \$7.5 billion over five years.**

Expansion of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit provides tax relief for families who pay for the care of a child under 13 or a disabled dependent or spouse in order to work. The credit is equal to a percentage of the taxpayer's employment-related expenditures for child or dependent care, with the amount of the credit depending on the taxpayer's income. As in the FY 1999 Budget, we propose increasing the credit for families earning under \$60,000, providing an additional average tax cut of \$358 for these families and eliminating income tax liability for almost all families with incomes below 200% of poverty (\$35,000 for a family of four) who take the maximum allowable child care expenses under the law. **Cost: \$5.1 billion over five years to expand the credit for three million working families.**

New Parent Paid Leave Plan. Many workers who have access to unpaid (whether through the FMLA or employer-provided leave) are unable to take it because they simply cannot afford to do so. To address this problem, the President could propose a New Parent Paid Leave Plan to provide eligible parents with partial wage replacement for up to six or twelve weeks following birth or adoption. The cost of the plan will vary considerably based on the selected eligibility criteria. One option: all new parents with median income or below (roughly \$37,000/yr) who have been in the workforce for at least one year would be eligible for a \$200/week partial wage replacement for up to four weeks (weekly figure based on average UI benefit). Eligible workers would be required to use the federal benefit immediately following birth or adoption and before using any employer-provided leave benefit, but could receive the benefit whether or not they ultimately returned to work. The program would be administered through the Unemployment Insurance System. **Cost of option: very roughly, \$875 million for FY 2000 (including start-up and administrative expenses).** We will have more options and better costing next week.

FMLA Expansion to Businesses with 25 Workers. Since the Family and Medical Leave Act was enacted in 1993, millions of Americans have taken FMLA-covered leave to care for a

newborn or adopted child, attend to their own serious health needs, or care for a seriously ill parent, child or spouse -- without fear of losing their job or health insurance. Under current law, workers are eligible for FMLA coverage only if they work at a business with *50 or more* employees and if they have worked at least twelve months and 1,250 hours for the employer. (Today, about 67 million Americans -- over half of all workers -- are covered by the FMLA. Senator Dodd proposed lowering the threshold to businesses with 25 or more employees, and Senator Kennedy champions a proposal to lower the threshold to 10. While the President has consistently referenced his support for expanding the FMLA benefit, the Administration has not formally presented a proposal in this area. **We recommend advancing a specific proposal to lower the FMLA threshold to 25 or more workers, expanding coverage for up to ten million more American workers. No budget implications.**

Parent Education and Support Fund. The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning spotlighted the critical importance of children's earliest years of life to their development and later success in life. Parents play the central role in providing children with developmentally appropriate stimulation and attention during these years. In addition, studies have revealed the promise of home-visitation programs to reduce child abuse and support children's development. We propose the creation of a competitive grant program administered by HHS to fund parent education and support programs, including the development or expansion of home visitation programs, efforts to educate and engage parents in child care and other efforts to improve child care quality, and the establishment of "second chance maternity homes" to support teen mothers and teach parenting skills. This fund would support programs such as HIPPPY, Parents as First Teachers, home visitation, and other parenting education programs. **Cost: \$500 million over five years.**

Tax Relief for Parents, Including Parents who Stay at Home. The following are a series of proposals that would benefit families in which a parent stays at home (all estimates are rough and preliminary). We are currently exploring a variety of iterations of each proposal, but will settle on only one proposal. Also note that these proposals interact differently with an expanded Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and therefore, the selection of one of these policies will be informed by our decision on the DCTC. Options:

a. Expand the Child Tax Credit. The Child Tax Credit is currently \$500 per child for children under 17. We propose to double the credit to \$1,000 per child for those children under the age of three. The Child Tax Credit begins to phase out for taxpayers whose adjusted gross income exceeds \$110,000 each year (\$75,000 if not married). **Cost: Roughly \$11 to \$13 billion over 5 years.** Another option is to double the credit for families with children under the age of two, which would cost roughly \$4 billion over five years.

b. Increase the Standard Deduction. Most lower-income families (incomes of less than \$50,000) do not itemize their deductions, choosing to take the standard deduction (and using the simpler form) instead, while most higher income families choose to itemize. Therefore, a proposal to expand the standard deduction for children would help lower-income families. In FY 2000, the standard deduction will be roughly \$7,400 for married couples, and \$6,500 for heads of households. We could increase the standard deduction by \$1,500 for families with children for

each child under 4, regardless of the marital status of the parents, and would cover roughly 4 million taxpayers (three quarters of whom are married couples) and 4.4 million children. The average benefit would be \$223 per taxpayer. **Cost: \$3.7 billion over five years.** We are currently exploring a variety of other options, including a proposal to expand the standard deduction by \$2,000 per family.

c. Expand the DCTC. We could extend the benefits of our DCTC proposal to stay-at-home parents with children age three and under, by applying the same eligibility guidelines and assuming minimum child-care expenses of \$150 per family per month. This proposal would also phase out the credit for families with annual income over \$105,000. **Cost: A variant of this proposal was estimated at roughly \$13 billion over 5 years (\$8 billion above our DCTC proposal).**

Expansion of After-School Programs. An estimated five million school-age children spend time as "latchkey kids" without adult supervision during a typical week. Research indicates that during these unsupervised hours children are more likely to engage in at-risk behavior, such as crime, drugs, and alcohol use. To meet this pressing demand, the President can propose a dramatic expansion of after-school care. Areas of expansion:

a. 21st Century Learning Centers: The program increases the supply of after-school care in a cost-effective manner primarily by funding programs that use public schools and their existing resources, such as computers, gymnasiums, and sports equipment. We should build on the success of our recent expansion of the program by increasing funding by \$300 million this year. **Cost: \$500 million for FY 2000.**

b. Supporting community-based after-school programs. Because so many of the most effective after-school programs are community based, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, we propose expanding the Department of Justice's At-Risk Youth Initiative. We propose expanding the program by \$50 million, but targeting the funds for after-school initiatives by community-based organizations. **Cost: \$250 million over five years.**

c. Expanding AmeriCorps' support for after-school. An expanded AmeriCorps could increase the availability of after school and summer programming for children and youth while providing additional opportunities for young adults to earn money for college through service. AmeriCorps Members serve with many of the major community-based organizations that provide after school care (including YMCA, Save the Children, and Boys and Girls Clubs); many others serve in public schools. We propose supporting a targeted initiative in which ten thousand AmeriCorps Members would conduct a 10-week summer program involving up to 100,000 middle-school children. **Cost: Roughly \$35 to \$40 million per year, or a cost of \$200 million over five years.**

Child Welfare: Children "Aging Out" of Foster Care. Each year, nearly 20,000 18-year-olds "age out" of the public child welfare system. These young adults entered foster care due to abuse and neglect, were unable to return to their birth families, and were not adopted. Federal financial support for these young people ends just at the time they are making the critical transition to

support for these young people ends just at the time they are making the critical transition to adulthood. Research shows that they face unstable housing and homelessness, low educational achievement, depression, poor health, and violence and incarceration. When they turn 18, they also very often find themselves with no health insurance, as Medicaid eligibility ends at age 18. Areas for increased investment:

a. Expand the Independent Living Program. Administered by HHS, the Independent Living Program provides services to foster care children aged 16 to 18 to help them (1) make the transition to independence by earning a high school diploma; (2) receive vocational training; and (3) learn daily living skills such as budgeting, locating housing, planning a career, and finding a job. Begun in 1986, the program assists 85,000 young people and has been funded at \$70 million since 1992. **We recommend increasing the Independent Living Program by 50 percent -- to \$105 million in FY 2000 and \$525 over five years.**

b. Expand the Transitional Living Program. The Transitional Living Program is an HHS-administered, \$15 million competitive grant program that funds community-based organizations that provide services to this population, including housing support. We recommend doubling the increasing to **\$30 million in FY 2000 and \$75 million over five years.**

c. Provide Medicaid Coverage. We recommend giving states the option of using Federal Medicaid dollars to provide health care coverage for this population -- **cost TBD; roughly hundreds of millions over 5 years).**

Child Welfare: Adoption Registry. In 1996, the President called for a plan to double to number of children adopted each year from the foster care system. *Adoption 2002* -- the initiative developed by HHS in response to President's charge -- included efforts to break down barriers to adoption. The Administration secured \$10 million in FY 1999 for HHS discretionary Adoption Opportunities Grants for this purpose. One use of this grants will be the creation of an Internet-based adoption registry of foster care children waiting to be adopted, so that prospective adoptive parents can learn about these waiting children. **We recommend increasing the Adoption Opportunities grants by 20 percent to \$12 million for FY 2000 and \$60 million over five years, targeted to the upkeep of this Internet-based national adoption registry.**

Child Welfare: Court Improvement. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, aimed at moving children in foster care more quickly to adoptive and other permanent homes, shortened the timeframes in which permanency decisions must be made for children in foster care. This has put more pressure on an already over-burdened and resource-deficient family and juvenile court system. Courts particularly need additional support to improve automation and computer systems to track foster care children and to reduce the pending backlogs of abuse and neglect cases. In addition, the Court Appointed Special Advocate program, which pairs a trained volunteer with child abuse cases to serve in an advocacy role, needs to be expanded to under-served areas. We recommend the creation of a new DOJ-administered grant program to automate the data collection and tracking of proceedings in abuse and neglect courts and a one-time grant to expand CASA to under-served areas. **Cost: TBD, roughly 15 million for FY 2000 and \$55 million over five years.**

[**Flexible Work Hours for Families.** Bruce/Elena: We are beginning to think through this proposal, and are looking for guidance as to whether we should continue to pursue it.] Options:

a. Tax credit for businesses that provide flexible work schedules for their employees. We propose to offer tax credits to companies that offer a variety of family-friendly benefits, including flexible work hours for their employees, compressed work weeks, part-time work with benefits, job sharing, career sequencing, and extended parental leave. Such a tax credit would enable parents to spend more time with their children by providing companies, both small and medium sized, the ability to respond to the time crunch families are facing. In addition, it builds on our flex-time and family-leave proposals. Awaiting estimation by Treasury.

b. Subsidies: We propose that the Commerce Department would make grants to states who would in turn provide grants to eligible businesses that provide flexible work hours for their employees, including flexible work hours for their employees, compressed work weeks, part-time work with benefits, job sharing, career sequencing, and extended parental leave. Within the grant-making process, priority would be given to small and medium sized businesses. Businesses would be required to ensure that the funds would be used to supplement and not supplant any ongoing efforts in this area. **Very rough cost estimate: \$500 million over five years.**

Families and the Labor Force

FAMILY

I. Conventional wisdom

There is a popular perception of a "time bind" -- that families are working more in the marketplace and are pressed for time at home. Relatedly, there is a belief that much of this increase in work has been done simply to maintain family income. In other words, Americans are working harder -- and families are being squeezed for time -- simply to stay in place.

Paper will look at:

- Is this true? And in particular, for what *groups* is it true?
- What are the causes (of whatever is true)
- What are the consequences

II. Are Families Working More? Trends in Hours of Market Work

A. Are Americans Working More in the Marketplace?

Include a brief discussion of problems in measuring hours of work. Report annual hours worked, annual weeks worked, and hours of work per week, by sex, marital status, and presence of children, education and age of head (25-54, 55-64).

1. Women's working hours increase, while men's decrease. On net, annual hours of work for both men and women increase.
 - Estimates from the CPS for the 18+ population from 1969 to 1989 show that annual hours of work increased by 276 hours for women, decreased by 139 hours for men, for a net per capita increase of 86 hours. Estimates from 1976 to 1993 for the working age population (25-54) show stable hours for men and an increase for women of 412 hours (45%).
2. Differences for key demographic groups:
 - a. Marital Status and Presence of Children: Married women had largest increase in work from 1969 to 1989. Single mothers had largest increase from 1989 to 1996.
 - b. Education of Head: Largest increase in work for most educated men and women.
 - c. Age of Head: Work effort declines for 55-64 relative to 25-54.

B. Effects on Family Hours of Work and Family Incomes (see attached)

1. Change in hours of work and family income for families with children.
2. Changes in work hours, earnings, and total family income by marital status and education of head for families with children.
3. Changes in work hours, earnings, and total family income by marital status and family income quintile.

III. Causes of above trends in hours and income.

- A. On average, women's real wages have increased, while men's have decreased.
- B. Changes in social programs (particularly EITC and welfare reform for post 1989 trends).
- C. Trends in family structure (single parenthood; number of children), timing of births and age of parents at birth.
- D. Changing societal values / norms about role of women / mothers in market place

IV. Changes in other requirements on families (keep short)

- A. Increases in single parent families.
- B. Decreases in numbers of children per family.
- C. Changes in numbers of elderly dependents trends in number of children, number of elderly

V Consequences of above trends in hours and income on family well-being

- A. *Time Devoted to Children:* How do families adjust to increase in market work and how does this affect well-being of children?
 - 1. Available time use data from 1965 to 1985 suggests that on average most increases in women's work was offset by decreases in housework and not in time with children.
 - 2. However, effects may differ for resource and time-constrained families, such as single parent families and low-earning couples. Available research suggests that single parents have less time for leisure, less time for child care and that they have higher levels of stress than married couples.
- B. *Changes in Household Allocation of Time:*
 - 1. The increase in women's financial contributions to families may affect family consumption patterns. For example, some research has found that money allocated to mothers has a larger impact on children's consumption than money allocated to fathers.
 - 2. Greater women's work activity may be important to insure their long-run financial security, particularly in the light of increases in divorce / separations, which imply that women can not rely on the husband's income as a lifetime source of income support.
 - 3. Changes in father vs mother's role in house care and child-care may affect children's socialization and learning.
- C. *Dynamic Considerations:* What are consequences of concentration of work into younger years, and increase in free time when older?

VI. Policy

Things this administration has done to help with balancing work and family:

FMLA

EITC

Child tax credit

Child care initiative

Do we want to also talk about family-friendly business practices? (e.g. flex time, telecommuting etc. see Treasury report on child care.)

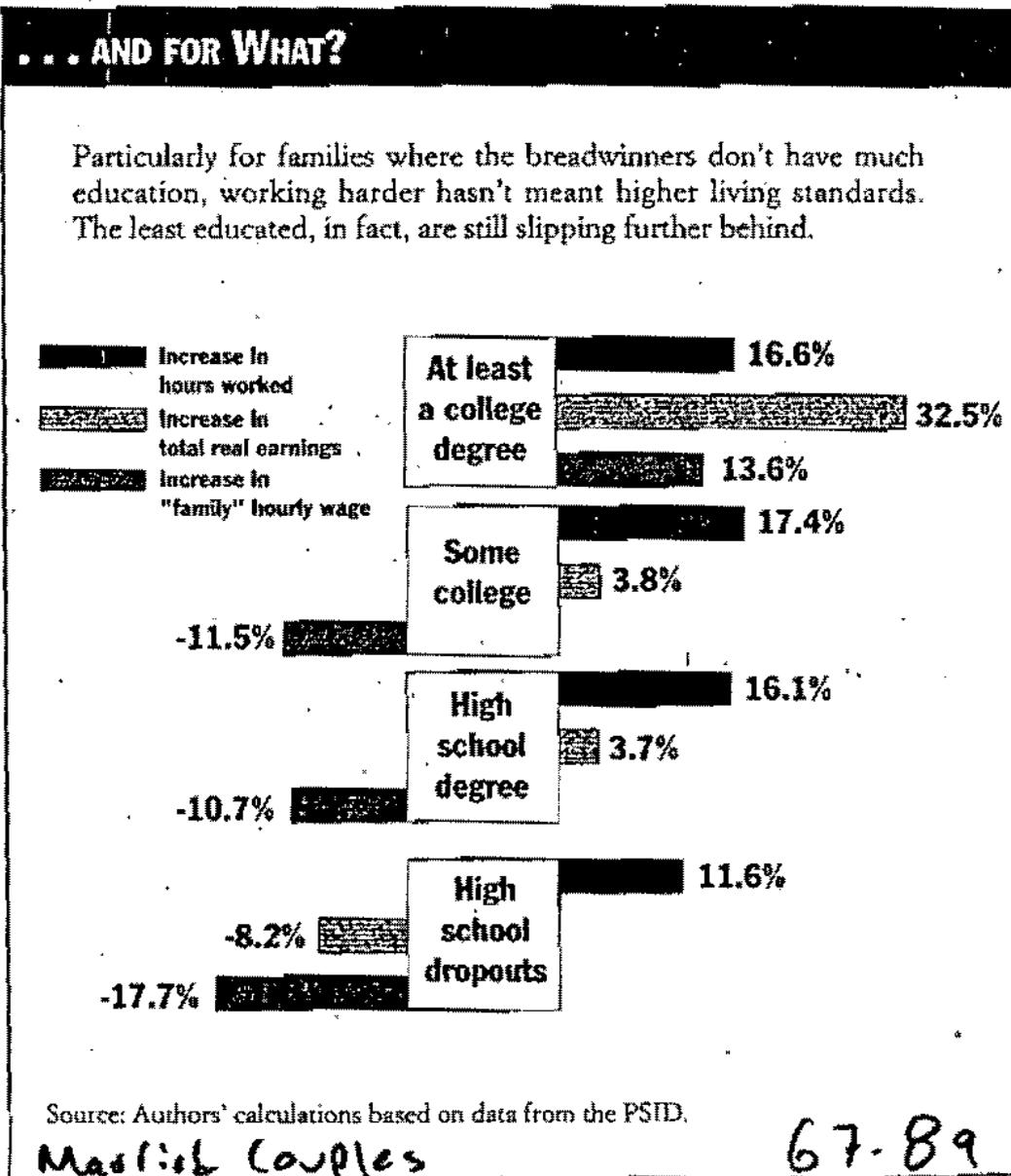
Over the entire 15-year period, the com-
 average husband-wife hourly wage increased
 only 1.8 percent—the equivalent of a real hourly
 wage increase of less than 30 cents over the entire
 period, or 2 cents each year!

As such, Schor's "squirrel cage" does not appear
 to be far off the mark. American mythology holds
 that long hours will pay off in a steadily increasing
 standard of living; in other words, sacrificing time
 with family can pay for a dishwasher or microwave
 and, down the road, a more expensive college for
 one's children. Yet from a purely material perspec-
 tive, all the extra hours
 from the "average"
 working family have
 yielded only a very
 modest improvement
 in the amount of goods
 and services they can
 buy.

But even this story
 is too sanguine for
 most families. When
 we break down the
 hours and earnings
 data by education
 group the tale gets
 even more depressing.
 Most Americans are
 not working harder so
 they can afford a fanci-
 er minivan; they're just
 trying to make pay-
 ments on their old car
 or cover the rent.
 When you remove
 from the equation fami-
 lies headed by a work-
 er with at least a col-
 lege degree, it turns
 out that the enormous
 increase in work effort
 over the past 20 years
 has allowed families to
 maintain their old
 standard of living—
 but almost nothing
 more. For families headed by high school
 dropouts, the situation is the most dismal. Between
 1973 and 1988, such families increased their annual
 work effort by nearly 12 percent yet ended up with

8 percent less annual income. For families headed
 by high school graduates or some college, work
 effort was up by 16 to 17.4 percent, producing less
 than a 4 percent increase in total earnings. These
 families are trapped in an *Alice in Wonderland*
 world, running faster and faster just to stay in the
 same place. For all of these families, the "family"
 hourly wage has fallen precipitously, by as much as
 17 percent in the case of the high school dropout.

Of course, more work still pays off for one
 group: families headed by a college graduate.
 These families increased their work effort by



about the same percentage as those headed by
 high school graduates or those with some college,
 yet their material consumption standard increased
 by nearly a full third between 1973 and 1988.

*Blue state
 Rose*

**Subcommittee on Children and Families
 Committee on Labor and Human Resources
 Senator Christopher J. Dodd
 Ranking Member**

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL FORM

**Phone: (202)224-5630
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COPY: _____
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DATE: 7/14/98 TIME: 11:05 A.M.
 P.M.

TO: Erskine Bowles

of _____

FAX # () 456-1121

PHONE # () _____

FROM:
 _____ Brooke Byers
 _____ Suzanne Day
 _____ Jim Fenton
 _____ Jeanne Ireland
X _____ Other: Christopher Dodd

NUMBER OF PAGES, including this form: 2

COMMENTS / MESSAGE: _____
Staff Contact - Suzanne Day (4-0207)



To: Erskine Bowles
 From: Christopher Dodd
 Re: 5th Anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act
 Date: July 13, 1998

*Erskine Bowles
 Please follow up
 with me*

As you know, August 5 marks the fifth anniversary of the implementation of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. I remain convinced that the FMLA will long stand as one of the signature accomplishments of the Clinton Administration -- as well as of those of us in Congress who worked for nearly a decade to get it signed into law.

This anniversary offers an important opportunity to remind the nation of this achievement as well as lay out an agenda for the future. As you know, President Clinton announced his support for my initiative to expand the FMLA to include the 13 million Americans who work at mid-sized firms of between 25 and 50 employees in this year's State of Union address. The President has not yet officially rolled out this new policy. The anniversary would be an excellent time to coordinate an event focusing on five years of success and the expansion of the Act to more families.

To increase interest and relevance in this event, the President could release new findings about the success of the FMLA and announce several new Administration initiatives to promote the expansion of the FMLA in ways that do not require legislative action.

Findings:

- **Positive Business Experience with the FMLA.** The Families and Work Institute is completing a study showing that 75 percent of companies can document that the FMLA has either saved them money or has been cost neutral. This positive data continues to undermine Republican arguments that the Act has had a negative impact on business.
- **Number of Employees who have used FMLA.** There has been no data since 1996 on the number of employees that have used the FMLA. The National Economic Council could update its 1996 estimate to provide us with a new number of how many working Americans and their families have benefitted from the FMLA.

Administration Initiatives:

- **Support for Expansion Legislation.**
- **Educational Campaign Targeted at Small Business.** Announce an educational campaign by the Small Business Administration and the Department of Labor to work with small and mid-sized businesses to encourage them to implement beneficial family and medical leave policies.
- **Support for Study on Affordability.** Announce the Administration's support for the National Academy of Sciences' work on how to make FMLA more affordable for working Americans.

Timing of this event would be important. As you know, the Senate is scheduled to be out of session all of August. The event should be timed for the last week of July and we can plan coordinated events on the actual anniversary in our states to amplify this important message.

Family Policy

GRANDPARENT AND FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT ACT OF 1997

Summary

The Grandparent and Family Caregiver Support Act of 1997 would prohibit States from applying the work requirements and time limits in the welfare reform law to grandparents and other family caregivers. The proposal contains the following provisions:

- **Work Requirements.** States would be barred from using their TANF grant to impose work requirements on families headed by a relative caregiver. These families would not be included in the calculation of the work participation rates and could not be required to work after two years. States could not sanction these families for refusing to work. If a State used the grant to require these families to work or penalized these families, the Secretary could reduce a State's TANF grant by 5 percent.
- **Time Limits.** States would be prohibited from establishing time limits for relative caregivers. In addition, in determining the number of months of assistance received, States would be required to disregard any months of assistance received by a family head who is a relative caregiver. If a State violated these provisions, the Secretary could reduce a state's TANF grant by 5 percent.
- **Grants to States.** States providing support for grandparent and other family caregivers would be eligible to receive a federal grant equal to the amount expended by states to provide assistance to these caregivers.

Background

The background information provided with the legislative proposal discusses 3.5 million children living in relatives' households. This figure overstates the issue somewhat, because in approximately half of these households the children's parents are also present. A much smaller, although still quite significant, number of children are living with relatives without a parent present. Multi-generational, extended family households are somewhat different from households in which a relative has taken over primary responsibility for the children and the parent is not present. (All the figures below are from an ASPE study to be released soon entitled *Informal and Formal Kinship Care*.)

In the period 1992-1993, an estimated 1.39 million children lived with relatives and without their parents. This includes 1.1% of white children, 6.1% of African American children and 2.7% of Hispanic children. Just under half of all U.S. children in relatives' care (without a parent present) live in the South, as defined by the Census Bureau. Since the early 1980s the number of such families has grown significantly among African Americans and has remained reasonably stable among whites. Relatively few of these children are in formal foster care arrangements with relatives. Most relative care consists of informal arrangements organized by the families themselves.

As the Congressman's background sheet on the bill points out, many relative caregivers are older than parents. Two thirds of the children in relatives' care live with grandparents. Of the relatives caring for children when parents are not present, 27% are age 60 or over; 29% are age 50-59; 24.5% are 40-50 years old; and 18% are under 40. Nearly 60% of these caregivers are employed, but nearly 40% of the children in relatives' care live in families with incomes below the poverty line. Approximately 27% of kinship care children live in families that receive public assistance or welfare, 31% receive Food Stamps, 14.5% receive SSI, nearly half receive free school lunches, and 35% live in households which receive income from Social Security.

Analysis

The needs of relative caregivers are real and important. Several aspects of this proposal, however, could have significant unintended consequences and are inconsistent with the President's proposals on welfare reform. In addition, current law and guidance provided to the States on maintenance of effort and the operation of separate programs with state-only money gives them flexibility to use their own funds to support relative caregivers should they choose to do so.

Potentially Weakens Family Stability. We must take care not to encourage parents to abandon their children. In the same way the welfare system has been accused of driving men out of families and contributing to the explosion in single parent households, making a single parent's departure from the household the key to continued family assistance may inadvertently create additional no-parent families. For a single mother facing the loss of assistance benefits because of time limits, work requirements, or other restrictions, abandoning her children to a relative's care may seem like the best option. In addition, States would have an incentive under this proposal to encourage this possible trend given that they would receive additional funding when assistance is provided to relative caregivers rather than parents.

Significant Costs. This proposal would have significant budgetary implications, given that States would receive Federal reimbursement for the full amount of assistance they provide to relative caregivers. States would have a strong incentive to use this new funding stream to maximum advantage.

Reduces State Flexibility. This proposal reduces State flexibility by banning States from establishing time limits or requiring work, even if States find that such requirements would be appropriate in certain circumstances. States currently have the flexibility to ease time limits for grandparents or other relative caretakers by including them under the 20 percent extension, by using State dollars to provide assistance, or by only providing assistance to the children in the family.

Weakens Work Emphasis. In many instances, it may be appropriate to require relatives to work in order to help them make the move to self-sufficiency. In circumstances where it may not be appropriate to require work because of age or disability, the State can choose under current law to exempt these individuals from the work requirements (and meet the rates by targeting other individuals) or serve them in separate State programs.

Grandparent and Family Caregiver Support Act

Background

The Grandparent and Family Caregiver Support Act, which Representative Waters and others in the Congressional Black Caucus support, requires states to exempt grandparents and other family members caring for children from the welfare law's time limits and work requirements. Currently, states have discretion to exempt these persons (or any others the state selects) from the law's time limits, up to 20% of the welfare case load. In addition, of course, the work rates are now set at only 25% of the caseload (going up to 50% in 2002).

Talking Points

- In welfare reform, we agreed to give states the discretion to identify their most vulnerable populations -- battered women, people with AIDS, those too disabled to work, grandparent caregivers -- and decide who would be exempt from time limits and work requirements.
- We are reluctant to reopen this issue and ask for particular exclusions. For one thing, we think Congress would use our attempt to reopen the law as an opportunity to push for proposals we disagree with. But we are glad to talk with you further about this proposal.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

*Family leave -
Flex Time*

FAX COVER SHEET

Number of pages 2
(excluding cover sheet)

Date 3/19/97

Time 11³⁰ am / pm

TO: SAP DISTRIBUTION LIST

FROM: OMB LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
Phone: 395-4790

SUBJECT OF SAP:

H.R. 1 -- Working Families Flexibility Act of 1997



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

March 19, 1997
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

(THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN COORDINATED BY OMB WITH THE CONCERNED AGENCIES.)

H.R. 1 - Working Families Flexibility Act of 1997 (Ballenger (R) NC and 99 others)

The President will veto H.R. 1 if it is passed in its current form. The President will not sign H.R. 1, or any other comp time legislation, unless it adheres to three fundamental principles: (1) real choice for workers; (2) real protection against employer abuse; and (3) preservation of workers' rights.

H.R. 1 purports to give working families greater flexibility. In reality, it grants employers more rights at the expense of working people:

- H.R. 1 fails to offer workers real choice. In particular, H.R. 1 would allow an employer to decide when a worker could use his or her compensatory time-off by disapproving such time-off if the employer claims it would "unduly disrupt" its operations. In addition, H.R. 1 would permit an employer to "cash out" a worker's earned compensatory time over 80 hours.
- H.R. 1 fails to protect workers against employer abuse. For example, H.R. 1 offers inadequate protections for vulnerable workers and part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees, including garment and construction workers, and those who are employed in industries with histories of Fair Labor Standards Act violations. H.R. 1 also fails to prohibit employers from substituting compensatory time-off for paid vacation or sick leave benefits. Furthermore, H.R. 1 lacks meaningful remedies for workers when employers penalize them for electing to receive overtime pay in lieu of compensatory time-off. In addition, H.R. 1 contains inadequate worker safeguards in cases where an employer goes bankrupt or out-of-business.
- H.R. 1 fails to preserve workers' rights. Workers who take compensatory time-off can be forced to work additional overtime in the same week -- even on the weekend -- without being paid overtime premium pay.

The Administration supports the substitute amendment to be offered by Representative George Miller, although procedural obstacles in the House have prevented the amendment from addressing all of the important issues that need to be treated, including expansion of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The Administration strongly believes that any legislation to authorize compensatory time under the Fair Labor Standards Act should be linked to expansion of

the FMLA. Expanding the FMLA to give working families greater flexibility to foster the education of their children or provide routine health care for their children or elderly relatives will go a long way toward achieving the stated goals of H.R. 1.

The Miller amendment, however, would ensure real employee choice, by adding crucial provisions not found in H.R. 1. For example, employers that adopt comp time programs would have to make comp time available to similarly-situated employees on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. Working families are guaranteed real protection against possible comp time abuse through the Miller amendment.

Furthermore, the Miller amendment would preclude employers from using comp time to modify or reduce existing paid leave plans. It would entitle employees choosing comp time to get regular statements of their accrual and use of comp time; put a reasonable limit on the number of hours of comp time that can be accrued; and allow employees to seek damages when they incur costs because an employer wrongfully denies them use of the comp time they earned. The Secretary of Labor would have the authority to bar employers with a pattern and practice of comp time abuse from continuing to offer comp time. H.R. 1 has none of these protections. These are all improvements to H.R. 1 that guarantee the legislation enhances rather than decreases flexibility for America's working families.

**President Clinton Wants Flex-Time Legislation that Gives Real Choices
to Employees and Their Families
March 19, 1997**

PRESIDENT CLINTON STRONGLY OPPOSES THE REPUBLICAN COMP TIME PROPOSALS BEFORE CONGRESS BECAUSE:

- **The President believes employees should be able to choose to receive overtime in income, or trade it in for time off to be with their families.**
- **The Republican proposals could drastically limit the ability of employees to earn overtime pay. Many working families rely on overtime wages to pay for their rent, food, and clothing. The Republican proposal could take that valuable overtime pay out of their pockets. It allows companies to force employees to take comp time instead of overtime, e.g., by allowing only workers who will take comp time to work more than 40 hours a week.**
- **Under Republican proposals, employees lose control over when to take the comp time they have earned. The Senate GOP bill allows employers to "cash out" any earned comp time with just 30 days notice -- even if the employee was planning to use that time for extended maternity leave. Employers could also deny an employee's request to use comp time if they claim business would be "unduly disrupted" -- even if the employee is simply doing something that's already covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act.**
- **The Republican proposals have no effective remedy against employer abuses. The only remedy available to employees is a lawsuit against employers who force them to take comp time. That's not a practical remedy for most lower-paid workers. And there is no remedy at all when employers deny overtime to an employee who prefers that option.**
- **Republican proposals undermine the 40-hour work week. Under the GOP proposal, employers could make employees work extra hours (beyond the 40 hour) during a week they have taken comp time without paying overtime. Under Senator Ashcroft's biweekly work or flexible credit programs, employees are never entitled to overtime unless the employer specifically requested it in advance.**

HERE IS WHAT PRESIDENT CLINTON DOES SUPPORT:

- **Flex-time that gives employees more choice, not less -- letting them choose between time off and overtime pay, whichever is best for them. Under the President's plan, employees and their families are the ones who choose if, how, and when they use comp time. Under the Republican bill, employers, not employees, make those decisions -- and employees are not adequately protected from employer abuses of these laws.**
- **The President's legislation would Expand the Family and Medical Leave Act and Give Employees New Choices on Flex Time. The President's plan would allow a**

worker to take unpaid hours off -- up to 24 hours annually -- for parent-teacher conferences, their children's regular doctor visits, or to care for older relatives' health needs.

File
Family Leave

February 7, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JOHN HILLEY & GENE SPERLING

SUBJECT: COMP TIME/ FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT LEGISLATION

Parua -

AYC. I think this is a pretty fair memo. I would choose Option 1, with the caveat that I'd make sure to state the relevant principles with sufficient vagueness as to not

lock the President in

Elena

I. BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

This memorandum offers options for how to achieve the optimal outcome from the current legislative debate on comp time and expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

This week and next week, the House and Senate labor committees are holding hearings regarding comp time legislation: the Ballenger bill in the House and the Ashcroft bill in the Senate. Both bills address only comp time and not FMLA expansion, and they provide fewer guarantees of employee choice and fewer protections against potential abuse than your bill, which was sent to Congress last September. For example, the Republican bills:

- 1) Do not exclude vulnerable workers;
- 2) Do not include special protections for workers whose employers go bankrupt or shut down unexpectedly;
- 3) Do not guarantee real choice for employees because they allow employers to refuse employees' use of comp time if it would "unduly disrupt" operations. (Your bill, on the other hand, allowed employees to take comp time for FMLA purposes at any time, and to take it for other purposes with two weeks notice unless it would cause the employer "substantial and grievous injury.");
- ?? - 4) Allow employers to cash out employees' comp time over 80 hours, thereby denying them the use of comp time;
- 5) Provide weaker remedies for violations. Your bill has solutions to all of these problems.

In addition, the Ashcroft bill has additional provisions that would effectively eliminate the 40 hour week by allowing employers to establish 80 hour biweekly schedules and, in certain circumstances, to pay employees straight time, not time and a half, for hours worked over 40 in a week or 80 in two weeks. Sen. Jeffords plans to mark up the Ashcroft bill on February 26, and Rep. Ballenger plans to mark up his bill in early March.

Senator Dodd, Sen. Murray, Rep. Clay, and Rep. Maloney have instead introduced bills to expand the FMLA. The bills introduced by Maloney and

Murray would expand FMLA for an additional twenty-four hours for the purposes of routine medical care for children and elderly parents or school related activities, similar to your bill. The bills introduced by Dodd and Clay would lower the threshold of FMLA applicability from 50 employees to 25 employees, which would cover an additional 10 million employees in small businesses.

The FMLA bills have support from women's groups and the labor movement, both of which are more enthusiastic about dropping the threshold than providing an additional 24 hours of leave. The labor movement strongly opposes the Republican comp time bills, and finds the provisions in the Ashcroft bill that eliminate the 40-hour work week to be particularly offensive. Most Republicans oppose any expansion of FMLA.

The current legislative strategy among congressional Democratic leaders is to criticize the comp time bills and try to add the various FMLA expansions to the Republican bills. Your bill has not been introduced, nor is there any Democratic version of a comp time bill. The labor movement has requested that the Administration threaten to veto any bill that doesn't (1) improve the comp time provisions to provide real choice and real protections for employees, and (2) link FMLA and comp time.

II. ACTION-FORCING EVENT

The Vice President will be addressing the AFL-CIO at an annual meeting on February 18 and will be forced to address these issues either in remarks or in questions and answers. Thus, a decision must be made now regarding whether to adopt a strategy of insisting on linkage between FMLA and comp time, and whether to issue any veto threats. The options are laid out below. In each case, the Vice President would articulate the Administration position on February 18 at the AFL-CIO meeting.

III. OPTIONS

1. **Threaten to veto the bill if your principles are not addressed.** The Administration would lay out a set of principles needed for a bill to be truly family friendly. We would say that the bill should include FMLA expansion, and that any bill that doesn't meet certain principles will be vetoed, but we would not link a veto to FMLA expansion. These principles are embodied in your bill from last year:

- A) **Real Choice for Employees**, including the right to take comp time when needed for FMLA purposes, the right to choose to use comp time for any purpose with two weeks notice to their employer unless use of comp time will cause substantial and grievous injury to the employer,

the right to cash out comp time for overtime pay on 15 days notice and employers can't choose to cash out comp time; and

B) **Real Protection Against Employer Abuse**, including the various protective provisions in your bill that are not present in the Republican bills, such as exclusions for vulnerable workers, special protections in case employers go bankrupt or close down unexpectedly, a prohibition against employers' substituting comp time for paid vacation or sick leave benefits, a prohibition against employers penalizing employees who choose overtime pay instead of comp time, and strong provisions for enforcement.

C) **Preservation of Basic Worker Rights**. The Administration would threaten a veto of any bill that eliminates the 40 hour work week, as the Ashcroft bill does.

Pros: A. Would strengthen the position of congressional Democrats arguing to improve the Republican bills. Would encourage congressional Republicans to negotiate in an effort to produce a bill that would become law.

B. If the strategy resulted in changes to the bills, it would significantly improve upon bills that presently do not carry guarantees of employee choice or adequate protection against employer abuse.

C. Would be welcomed by constituency groups that view the Republican bills as a weakening of employee protection laws, and would strengthen the leadership position of Democrats on women's issues.

D. Since this strategy doesn't threaten a veto if the FMLA expansion is not in a final bill, it has the effect of assisting the Democrats who are trying to add FMLA expansion to the bills without locking you in to a veto on that specific issue.

Con: You might have to veto a comp time bill, although it would be one that would fall far short of the family friendly principles you have laid out.

2. **Threaten to veto a bill if your principles are not addressed AND FMLA expansion is not included**. This strategy is the same as #1 above except that a fourth veto principle would be the expansion of FMLA. The rationale is that FMLA and comp time are linked family friendly policies. Since comp time is not mandatory, the only guarantee that covered workers will have any additional leave is through FMLA expansion amendments. FMLA is one of your signature programs and this is one way to ensure its passage in a Republican Congress.

Pros: Same as A, B & C above. In addition, the AFL-CIO has requested this particular strategy and veto threat. Sen. Kennedy also prefers this strategy and veto threat.

Cons: A; Sen. Daschle is skeptical that his colleagues will support a strategy that insists on FMLA expansion as the price for any comp time bill, however strong. It is difficult to defend the logic of refusing to accept one positive change in the law merely because a second positive change has not also been made.

B. If the strategy fails to produce a bill that includes FMLA expansion, you might have to veto a very strong comp time bill just because it doesn't include FMLA expansion.

3. Introduce principles for a family-friendly bill. We would lay out the principles listed in #1 above and would insist that they are all vital to a family friendly bill, but would not explicitly threaten a veto.

Pros: A. Would lay out principles for a bill without locking you in to a veto.

B. Would leave open the option of vetoing a weak comp time bill or a bill that fails to expand FMLA.

Cons: Not likely to produce changes to the Republican bills, thus could make it more likely that you face signing a bill that doesn't include sufficient employee choice and protections. Signing such a bill would have the dual results of significantly altering the Fair Labor Standards Act without sufficient safeguards and also seriously angering the labor movement and disappointing women's groups.

IV. DECISION:

Option 1 _____ Option 2 _____ Option 3 _____ Let's
Discuss _____

MEMORANDUM

TO: Don Baer, Gene Sperling, Ann Lewis, Rahm Emanuel, Mike McCurry,
Bruce Reed

FROM: Eli Attie/Jon Kaplan

RE: Saturday's FMLA Radio Address

DATE: Friday, January 31, 1997

Here is a near-final run-down of the FMLA radio address, to be taped live in the Oval Office tomorrow:

Message of Event

As discussed, there are three main points:

1. To describe the accomplishments of the Family Leave law on the fourth anniversary of its signing (the exact anniversary is 2/5);
2. To announce a new 800 number and public education campaign to increase awareness of FMLA;
3. To reaffirm the President's campaign commitment to expand Family Leave to parent-teacher conferences and children's routine medical appointments.

It was decided not to include mention of our flextime proposal, or to discuss when we will resubmit the FMLA expansion bill (originally submitted on the last day of the 104th Congress), since we do not yet know if these two proposals would be combined in one bill.

Terry Edmonds is preparing the President's remarks.

Event and Picture

A briefing will be held in the President's dining room, from 9:45 to 10:00. The event will take place at 10:06 in the Oval, followed by the usual receiving line.

Josh King is arranging the picture; the goal is to incorporate both a sign with the new 800 number, and some real people who have been affected by FMLA. We are bringing in Christine Sens, a first-grade teacher from Fairfax, VA, and her husband. Christine became pregnant in 1993 and 1995, and without FMLA would only have been allowed 6 weeks off to recover and be

with her baby -- unless she took a full year off from teaching, which she could not afford. FMLA allowed her 12 weeks off for both pregnancies. (Her children will be coming, but are too young to have in the room without risk of disruption.) We are also bringing in Clifton "Stan" Sorrell, CEO of the Calvert Group, a \$5.2 million, 175-employee investment company in Bethesda, which has been implementing FMLA and already offers the leave policies we are proposing under our FMLA expansion. Mr. Sorrell was at the FMLA signing in 1993 (his company has been recognized as one of Working Mother's best 100 companies four years in a row, and was also one of Bush's Thousand Points of Light). Sorrell will be bringing two of his employees who have used Family Leave.

The current plan is for the President to read the radio address from his desk, with Mr. and Mrs. Sens standing behind the desk on one side, and Mr. Sorrell and his employees on the other side. Josh is preparing a small sign-tent which would be placed on the desk to be at the center of the picture, which might say something like "Learn More About Family Leave: 1-800-959-FMLA." (Josh will have additional options ready.)

Press and Materials

Most likely, only still photographers would be allowed in this event. NEC has drafted an overall one-pager (attached), Labor is finishing one-pagers on their public education campaign and on the Sens family and Sorrell's company, and the Press Office could also distribute copies of Labor's new Family Leave PSA's (attached).

Please let us know if you have any additional thoughts.

**EXPANDING THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT --
TO HELP FAMILIES BALANCE WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Four Year Anniversary

February 1, 1997

DRAFT

PRESIDENT CLINTON DELIVERED ON HIS PROMISE TO PROVIDE FAMILY LEAVE: On February 5, 1993, President Clinton delivered on his promise and signed into law his first piece of legislation, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The law allows workers at businesses with 50 or more employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to care for a newborn or adopted child, to attend to their own serious health needs, or to care for a seriously ill parent, child or spouse.

BIPARTISAN REPORT SHOWS THE LAW IS WORKING: A 1996 report on the impact of the law by the bipartisan Commission on Leave, chaired by Senators Dodd and Craig, shows that the law is working:

- **67 million Americans -- over half of workers -- are guaranteed they can take leave from their job to care for a sick relative or a newborn child without fear of losing their job or their health insurance.**
- **More than 12 million eligible workers have taken leave with federal protection since its enactment.**
- **40% of all workers think they will need to take leave for a covered reason at some time in the next 5 years. The leading reason is to care for a seriously ill parent.**
- **Despite opponents' claims, compliance is easy and costs low for most employers:**
 - 9 in 10 employers find the law "very" or "somewhat" easy to administer
 - Compliance entails either little or no costs for 89%-99% of businesses
- **Some businesses have reported reduced employee turnover, enhanced productivity and improved morale which they attribute to the Act.**

NOW IT IS TIME TO EXPAND THE LAW TO BETTER HELP WORKERS CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND PARENTS. While the law is a major step forward, it does not cover many situations facing working families. President Clinton proposes expanding the law to cover more family obligations to better help working families care for their children and elderly relatives without sacrificing their work obligations. Under the proposed expansion, workers could take up to 24 hours of additional leave each year to meet additional specified family obligations, including routine doctors appointments and parent-teacher conferences. Leave could be taken for the following purposes:

- **Participating in school activities** directly related to the educational advancement of your child, such as parent-teacher conferences or interviewing for a new school;
- **Accompanying your child to routine dental or medical appointments**, such as annual checkups or vaccinations;
- **Accompanying an elderly relative to routine medical appointments or other professional services** related to their care, such as interviewing nursing homes or group homes.

A NEW PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN WILL INFORM PEOPLE OF THEIR PROTECTIONS UNDER FMLA. According the Commission on Leave, less than 1/4 of workers learned about FMLA on the job. The Clinton Administration has launched a public education campaign -- a recommendation of the Commission -- to ensure that employees and employers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the FMLA.

- **New toll-free FMLA Hotline -- 1-800-959-FMLA --** to provide employees and employers with basic information on the law. In under two weeks, over 14,000 people have called the Department of Labor's FMLA Hotline.
- **Internet information on FMLA** is found at a special web site on the Department of Labor's home page -- <http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa/fmla.htm>.
- **Upcoming public service announcements** in newspapers and on the radio will publicize the FMLA hotline and Internet address to workers and employers across the country.

Sometimes, The Best Investments Are The Small Ones

Strong workers come from strong families -- and in tough times we all need to make investments in families to keep them strong.

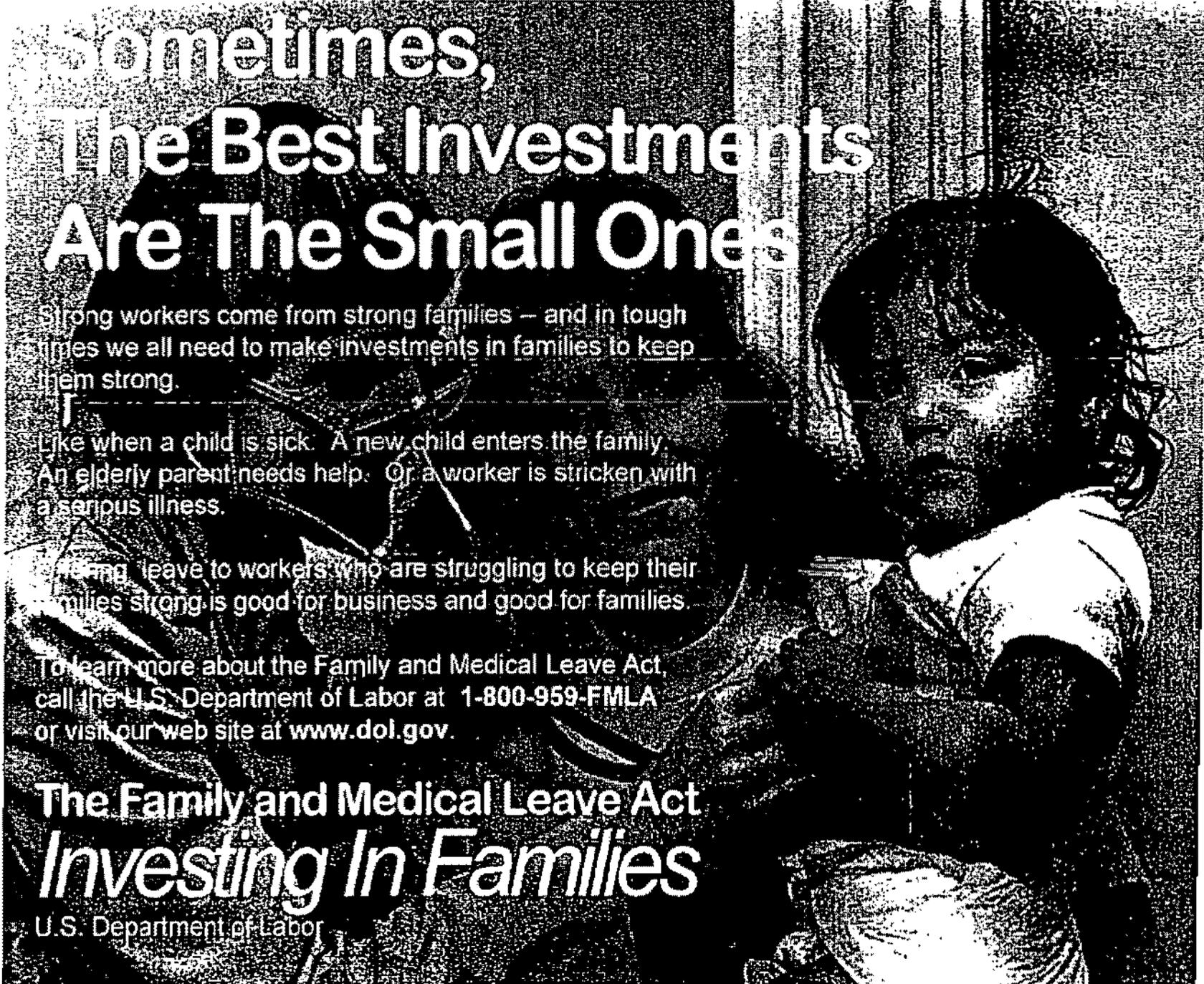
Like when a child is sick. A new child enters the family. An elderly parent needs help. Or a worker is stricken with a serious illness.

Offering leave to workers who are struggling to keep their families strong is good for business and good for families.

To learn more about the Family and Medical Leave Act, call the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-800-959-FMLA or visit our web site at www.dol.gov.

The Family and Medical Leave Act
Investing In Families

U.S. Department of Labor



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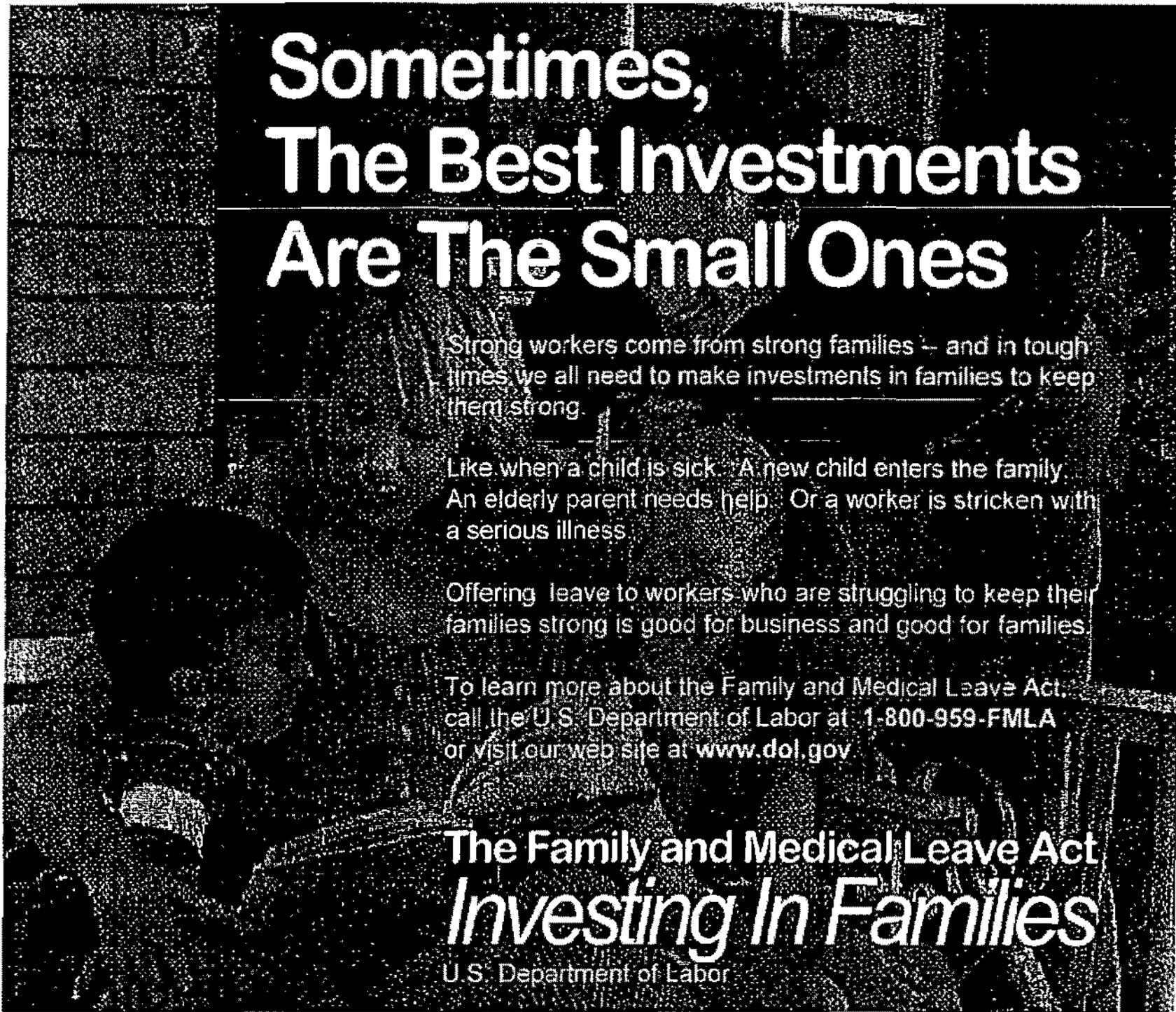
Like a new child enters the family, an elderly parent needs help, or a worker is stricken with a serious illness.

Covering leave to work and family programs to keep their families strong is good for the economy and good for families.

To learn more about the Family and Medical Leave Act, call the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-800-769-FMLA or visit our web site at www.dol.gov.

The Family and Medical Leave Act
Investing In Families

U.S. Department of Labor



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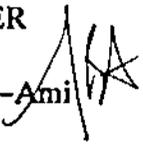
The Family and Medical Leave Act
Investing In Families

U.S. Department of Labor

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 24, 1996

MEMORANDUM TO DON BAER

From: Jeremy Ben-Ami 

Subject: Executive Action: Making the Federal Government A Model Employer -- Providing 24 Hours of Family Leave To Its Employees

OMB is putting into clearance a Presidential Memorandum ordering agencies to ensure that federal employees get the 24 hours of Family Leave we are proposing in FMLA II - to participate in their children's education and take their kids or elderly relatives to the doctor. The Office of Personnel Management believes there is statutory authority for such an action, and I have no reason to believe there will be a problem in clearance -- which can hopefully be obtained by early-mid next week. In addition, the administration is about ready to send the FMLA II legislation to Congress.

A few of us (Carol, Elaine Kamarck, Jim King of OPM) think this could be a good Presidential announcement -- highlighting the President's concern over a key family issue -- the tension between work and time -- and demonstrating executive action. The downside, of course, is this could be perceived as yet another perk for federal bureaucrats.

Proposal -- Devote a radio address to the issue. Announce the executive order and announce that he is sending the FMLA II legislation to Congress. Highlight in the radio address a couple of private sector employers who already do this - and challenge other employers to do it as well. We could invite to the radio address families who have used such policies and employers who believe in it.

If you like the idea, we need to: (1) Ask that the legislation be transmitted to Congress on the day of the announcement, (2) Press OMB for clearance, (3) Start identifying families and employers to invite. Let me know what you think.

cc: Carol Rasco John Hilley
George Stephanopolous John Angell
Elaine Kamarck Bruce Reed
Gene Sperling Vicki Radd

FAMILY POLICY for COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Statement of Principles, NRH 11/14/93

"Governments don't raise children, families do." - President Clinton

A spirit of humanity and a celebration of the creativity and strength of families and communities pervades this approach to policy. Reinventing Family Policy means putting people first, and restoring a human face to government.

I. Strong families are essential to strong communities.

- We must build on the strengths and capabilities of families and communities. We must move away from an "I'm here to fix your deficits" model, and build on the successes of existing community based initiatives.
- We must be willing to listen to the needs of families and community residents, and respond in a timely way that respects their differing situations.
- Family members feel a sense of community through mutually supportive human relationships. Families must be able to connect with other families and community institutions, and to feel their support for both employment and family strength.
- Families are strengthened when they are economic stakeholders in the future of their communities.
- Private sector investors, both for-profit and non-profit, must be committed to the future of families and children and act as partners with local governing bodies.
- Strong communities are places that families are proud to live in, places in which they feel safe and secure, and in which they hope to raise their children.

II. Economic independence and family strength are inseparable

- Empowered communities enable individuals to be successful as family members and as workers; enhancing the ability to "love and work".
- Parents, including fathers, must be encouraged and enabled to take responsibility to provide for their children as nurturers, first teachers, partners with schools,

mentors of adolescents, and coaches of the transition from school to work.

- **Communities must address the economic, educational, social, religious, health, mental health, housing and recreational needs of members of each generation.**

- **Parents' ability to raise children in a way that develops their full potential to become productive members of the community, is essential to the community's economic well-being.**

III. Services that strengthen families must be collaborative, flexible and accessible, and involve parents as partners

- **Narrow, rigid funding categories and eligibility requirements are destructive of healthy families and communities. The divisive and competitive approach to resources that currently exists destroys creativity and decimates families.**

- **Community residents are the "customers" of federal state and local government, and must be treated accordingly.**

- **Accessibility to support services such as child care will enable parents to join the work-force more readily.**

- **The family should be the focus of services and the home or community should be the locus of services, services should not be focused on the pathology of individuals and delivered by distant institutions.**

- **The Vice President's concept of "on time delivery" of support at critical moments of family development, prevents family disintegration. "Home visitors" at times such as childbirth, school transition, and family crises such as accident or illness, can prevent costly family disruption, family violence and the need for extensive services.**

- **"People to People" programs, utilizing volunteers and indigenous helpers, and built on human relationships, are effective in building both family strength and job readiness in both urban and rural communities.**

IV. Community Residents Must be the Stakeholders, Change Agents and Entrepreneurs in Responding to Family & Community Needs

- **"Natural helpers" in communities must become part of the work-force** as they are employed to implement change and strengthen family relationships. It is important to promote a sense of "communal responsibility" among community members, and to encourage voluntarism.
- In order to encourage and preserve positive change, the transformation must be both **"bottom up" and "top down"**. Federal, state and local governments will "reinvent" themselves in whatever ways are necessary to achieve flexible partnerships with communities.
- An entirely new approach to training and technical assistance will be necessary if communities are to develop both human and economic resources fully. New methods are needed to train and support workers to be generalists who are able to respect the integrity of families and build on their strengths.
- **Governance and control of the economic and human development of communities, must rest at the local level, and must reflect concern for the well-being of families and children.**
- The application process for Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community Grants should be a transformative one, that results in **positive change for all applicants**, regardless of designation. In this process communities can be helped to develop an understanding of the needs of families that will serve them and their children in the future.
- Measurements must allow for **small, achievable steps and long term progress** in both individuals and communities. Accountability should begin at the local level and represent the interests of local families.
- There must be **incentives** for programs that are locally flexible, responsive to whole families, utilizing "natural helpers", and delivered in the home and community.

[At this point, the President was presented with a second gift.]

Let me say, I wish she were here to thank her personally. But this is a gift for the White House, for the American people. And I hope a lot of you from New Jersey will see this when you come in and know that it is yours. We'll

leave it there for all time from the people of New Jersey.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:43 p.m. at the Washington Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to William H. Faherty, president, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce.

Remarks on Signing the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 February 5, 1993

Mrs. Yandle, I never had a better introduction. Before we thank anyone else, I think all of us should acknowledge that it was America's families who have beaten the gridlock in Washington to pass family leave, people like this fine woman all over America who talked to Members of Congress, both Democrat and Republican, who laid their plight out, who asked that their voices be heard. When Senator Gore and I ran in the election last year, we published a book called "Putting People First." I'm very proud that the first bill I am to sign as President truly puts people first.

I do want to thank the United States Congress for moving expeditiously on this matter and for doing it before their first recess so that every Member of Congress who voted for this bill can go home and say, "We are up there working on your problems and your promise, trying to make a better future for you." This sends a clearer signal than any words any of us could utter, that we have tried to give this Government back to the American people. And I am very appreciative that the Congress has moved so rapidly on this bill.

There are many, many Members of Congress here and many others who are not here who played a major role in this legislation. Time does not permit me to mention them all, but I do want to thank the Senate majority leader for his heroic efforts in the 11th hour to make sure we passed this bill; Senator Kennedy and Senator Dodd for their passionate and years-long commitment to this effort. I want to thank the Speaker, Speaker Foley, and Congressman Ford, the chairman of the committee that had jurisdiction over this bill, and Congresswoman Pat Schroeder and all the other Democrats who

worked on this bill.

But I want to acknowledge, too, consistent with the promise I made in my Inaugural to reach out to members of both parties who would try to push for progress, that this bill also had passionate support among Republicans. My old colleague in the Governors' Association, Senator Kit Bond from Missouri, I thank you for your leadership. Senator Jeffords and Senator Coats I don't believe are here, but they supported this bill strongly; and Congresswoman Marge Roukema from New Jersey, her commitment on this was unwavering; Congresswoman Susan Molinari from New York and many other Republicans voted for, spoke for, and worked for this bill. I thank them, the subcommittee chairs who are here, and all the others who worked so hard to make this bill a real live promise kept for the Congress to the people of the United States.

Family medical leave has always had the support of a majority of Americans, from every part of the country, from every walk of life, from both political parties. But some people opposed it. And they were powerful, and it took 8 years and two vetoes to make this legislation the law of the land. Now millions of our people will no longer have to choose between their jobs and their families.

The law guarantees the right of up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year when it's urgently needed at home to care for a newborn child or an ill family member. This bill will strengthen our families, and I believe it will strengthen our businesses and our economy as well.

I have spent an enormous amount of time in the last 12 years in the factories and busi-

nesses of this country talking to employers and employees, watching the way people work, often working with them. And I know that men and women are more productive when they are sure they won't lose their jobs because they're trying to be good parents, good children. Our businesses should not lose the services of these dedicated Americans. And over the long run, the lessons of the most productive companies in the world, here at home and around the world, are that those who put their people first are those who will triumph in the global economy. The business leaders who have already instituted family and medical leave understand this, and I'm very proud of some of the business leaders who are here today who represent not only themselves but others all across America who were ahead of all of us who make laws in doing what is right by our families.

Family and medical leave is a matter of pure common sense and a matter of common decency. It will provide Americans what they need most: peace of mind. Never again will parents have to fear losing their jobs because of their families.

Just a week ago, I spoke to 10 people in families who had experienced the kinds of problems Mrs. Yandle has talked about today. Vice President Gore and I talked to people all across America who moved us deeply. We were saddened to hear their stories, but today all of us can be happy to think of their future.

Now that we have won this difficult battle, let me ask all of you to think about what we must do ahead to put the public interest ahead of special interest, to pass a budget which will grow this economy and shrink our deficit, and to go on about the business of putting families first. There's a lot more we need to do to help people trapped in welfare move to work and independence; to strengthen child support enforcement; to reward those who work 40 hours a week and have children at home with an increase in the earned-income tax credit so we can really say we're rewarding work instead of dependence; to immunize all the children of this country so more parents won't have to take advantage of family leave because their children will be well and strong and healthy.

Let all of us who care about our families, our people, the strength of our economy, and the future of our Nation put our partisan and other interests aside and be inspired by this great victory today to have others when Congress returns to this city and we go on about the people's business.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:22 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vicki Yandle, whose daughter's illness had resulted in both parents losing their jobs. H.R. 1, approved February 5, was assigned Public Law No. 103-3.

Statement on Signing the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 February 5, 1993

Today, I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1, the "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993." I believe that this legislation is a response to a compelling need—the need of the American family for flexibility in the workplace. American workers will no longer have to choose between the job they need and the family they love.

This legislation mandates that public and private employers with at least fifty workers provide their employees with family and medical leave. At its core is the provision for employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for the care of a newborn or newly adopted child, for the care of a family member with a serious

medical condition, or for their own illness. It also requires employers to maintain health insurance coverage and job protection for the duration of the leave. It sets minimum length of service and hours of work requirements before employees become eligible.

The need for this legislation is clear. The American workforce has changed dramatically in recent years. These changes have created a substantial and growing need for family and medical leave for working Americans.

In 1965, about 35 percent of mothers with children under 18 were labor force participants. By 1992, that figure had reached 67 percent.

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By the year 2005, one of every two people entering the workforce will be women.

The rising cost of living has also made two incomes a necessity in many areas of this country, with both parents working or looking for work in 48 percent, or nearly half, of all two parent families with children in the United States.

Single parent families have also grown rapidly, from 16 percent of all families with children in 1975 to 27 percent in 1992. Finally, with America's population aging, more working Americans have to take time off from work to attend to the medical needs of elderly parents.

As a rising number of American workers must deal with the dual pressures of family and job, the failure to accommodate these workers with adequate family and medical leave policies has forced too many Americans to choose between their job security and family emergencies. It has also resulted in inadequate job protection for working parents and other employees who have serious health conditions that temporarily prevent them from working. It is neither fair nor necessary to ask working Americans to choose between their jobs and their families—between continuing their employment and tending to their own health or to vital needs at home.

Although many enlightened companies have recognized the benefits to be realized from a system providing for family and medical leave, not all do. We all as a nation must join hands and extend the ethic of long-term workplace relationships and reciprocal commitment between employer and employee. It is only when workers can count on a commitment from their employer that they can make their own full commitments to their jobs. We must extend the success of those forward-looking workplaces where high-performance teamwork has already begun to take root and where family and medical leave already is accepted.

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics support the conclusion that American business has been fully responsive to the need of workers for family and medical leave. This data showed that, in 1991, for private business establishments with 100 workers or more, 37 percent of all full-time employees (and 19 percent of all part-time employees) had unpaid maternity leave available to them, and only 26 percent of all

full-time employees in such establishments had unpaid paternity leave available. The most recently available data for smaller business establishments (those with fewer than 100 workers) are for 1990, and show that only 14 percent of all these employees had unpaid maternity leave available, and only 6 percent had unpaid paternity leave available.

The insufficient response to the family and medical leave needs of workers has come at a high cost to both the American family and to American business. There is a direct correlation between health and job security in the family home and productivity in the workplace. When businesses do not give workers leave for family needs, they fail to establish a working environment that can promote heightened productivity, lessened job turnover, and reduced absenteeism.

We all bear the cost when workers are forced to choose between keeping their jobs and meeting their personal and family obligations. When they must sacrifice their jobs, we all have to pay more for the essential but costly safety net. When they ignore their own health needs or their family obligations in order to keep their jobs, we all have to pay more for social services and medical care as neglected problems worsen.

The time has come for Federal legislation to bring fair and sensible family and medical leave policies to the American workplace. Currently, the United States is virtually the only advanced industrialized country without a national family and medical leave policy. Now, with the signing of this bill, American workers in all 50 States will enjoy the same rights as workers in other nations. This legislation balances the demands of the workplace with the needs of families. In supporting families, it promotes job stability and efficiency in the American workplace.

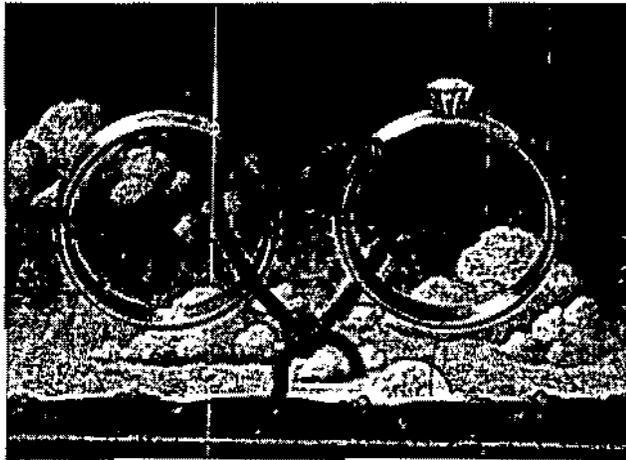
The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 sets a standard that is long overdue in working America. I am very pleased to sign this legislation into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 5, 1993.

NOTE: H.R. 1, approved February 5, was assigned Public Law No. 103-3.

Family



How to Make Marriage Matter

IT IS EASIER IN THESE UNITED STATES TO WALK AWAY from a marriage than from a commitment to purchase a used car," says Professor Thomas Morgan of the George Washington University School of Law. "Most contracts cannot be unilaterally abrogated; marriages in contemporary America can be terminated by practically anyone at any time, and without cause." Assume that as a society we treat marriage too lightly. A few decades back, we decided that marital bonds tied too tightly. In those days many had to travel to Mexico to obtain a divorce, or acquire residency in Nevada. Others had to make believe that one of the parties had engaged in a nefarious affair. We responded with no-fault divorce. A generation later, many feel that our society oversteered the other way, rendering marriages almost disposable.

A new course correction could be forced by the heavy hand of the law. However, most Americans are properly leery of excessive reliance on government. Our society requires a change in the habits of the heart, in the ways we think about marriage and how we value it.

"Supervows" would send a powerful message. Such vows are premarital contracts in which those about to be betrothed declare that they are committing more to their marriage than the law requires. They may choose from a menu of items what they wish to incorporate in their voluntary agreement. For instance, if either spouse requests marital counseling, the other promises to participate. If one asks for a divorce, he or she promises to wait at least six months to see if differences can be worked out. Once the couple freely arrives at an agreement, the supervows become legal commitments between the spouses.

Not very romantic, demur critics. Fair enough. Shoring up marriages may well require less infatuation and more responsibility. Church and synagogue programs that encourage engaged couples to discuss with each other, before they tie the

knot, who will attend to the children, who will control the bank account and other such pivotal questions are fulfilling a similar societal need. Even better are school programs that teach conflict resolution. Studies have shown that stable and contented couples fight about as often as those in marriages that are failing. However, the happy couples have learned to fight better—to be issue- rather than person-oriented, for instance.

Before the salvation of marriage can progress, society requires an encompassing consensus that there is a problem. Currently, evolving such a consensus is being waylaid by an ideological word game. As long as the term family is used to cover both the "real" family and its antithesis—the single-parent version—the question of whether a society can do without families is hopelessly obfuscated. Moreover, a challenging thesis is hidden: the thesis that it does not matter which social arrangements adults devise to bring up children. It is implied (rather than demonstrated) by calling single-parent households "families" that one parent can do the job of two, that grannies and aunties can replace Mom and Pop, and so on. All will serve equally well. Hence all may be accorded the august title "family," and whether the couple is married matters not.

Here science chimes in, its voice rising. Over the past years, a growing body of evidence shows that children who grow up under the tutelage of people other than their natural parents are more likely to fail in school, have social difficulties and get arrested. To a large extent, their failings reflect the fact that single parents are economically disadvantaged as compared with two-parent families. However, this difference is also affected by the dismemberment of the family. It costs more to run two households than one.

Slowly, more and more people are realizing what anthropologists have long observed: that throughout the enormous variety of human experience, over all continents and throughout all history, no society ever thrived without family. True, there were all kinds of arrangements, from extended families to clans that helped do the parenting. In India, it is said, a child was always in somebody's arms. In Africa, we are told, it takes a whole village to raise a child. But these wondrous social fabrics gave additional support rather than replaced the nuclear family. Our society increasingly has neither.

Once we firmly agree that there is a problem, to change course society requires a vision: Where are we headed? Social conservatives nostalgically envision a return to the days when moms did the nurturing and pops brought home the bacon. However, there is no moral justification for treating women as having lesser rights than men, denying them the right to work outside the home and largely exempting men from parental responsibilities. The communitarian movement—which seeks to shore up the moral, social and political foundations of society—is closer to the mark. Communitarians, for whom I often speak, envision a family in which fathers and mothers share the tribulations and joys of parenting and of securing a livelihood.

A recommitment to family requires new practices. Social sciences show that values do not fly on their own wings; they must be embodied in our rituals. Supervows may serve as one such sociological device. If it becomes chic to state "We have a supervow!"—with the implicit question "And how about *you*?" hanging in the air—we will be on the way to valuing marriage and thus family more highly, without relying on punitive laws. Supervows alone will not carry the day, but they will help mend the American family. ■

Amitai Etzioni is the author of The Spirit of Community and the founder of the communitarian movement.



Bill Clinton
FOR PRESIDENT COMMITTEE

Family Values Address
Governor Bill Clinton
Cleveland City Club
Cleveland, Ohio
May 21, 1992

File:
Family

Thank you. Thank you very much. It certainly was a unique introduction and it was partly true. Maybe you ought to run for President.

I have really looked forward to coming here today, and I thank you for the opportunity to appear. As has already been said, I want to depart from the standard message I normally give talking about my eleven years as governor and the work I've done to generate jobs and educate children and balance budgets and bring people together and try to ignore traditional Democratic and Republican solutions to problems when they are plainly out of date.

For several weeks, I have planned to come here to discuss what stands at the heart of America's Dream, and as much of the core of the disappearance of the American Dream: the American family and its problems.

But this topic has acquired, as all of you know now, quite a bit more currency because of the recent speeches that the President gave at the Notre Dame commencement and the speech that the Vice President gave at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco the other day.

The President's speech extolled the virtues of family life, lamented the breakdown of the family, said family life had more to do with what happens in America than what goes on in Washington -- that's probably true, and thank goodness. But it offered no real action agenda for improving the plight of our most troubled families.

The Vice President's speech has become known by its reference to the television show "Murphy Brown" -- and you've all probably had your laughs about that -- but the fact is that the Vice President's speech had more substance than the President's.

While the President urged Notre Dame graduates to help solve our nation's social and family crisis, it typically offered no agenda and assumed no responsibility. Vice President Quayle, while repeating the sad statistics of teen pregnancy and divorce and out-of-wedlock birth in America, reiterated the empowerment agenda that is most closely identified, among Republicans, with HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, and among Democrats with the Democratic Leadership Council -- a group that I chaired when we came here to Cleveland and met in national convention last year -- more home ownership for poor people, urban enterprise zones, and welfare reform designed to encourage work and independence.

Unfortunately, the Vice President's speech also is, in my view, cynical election-year politics in that it ignores the relationship of our family problems to our national economic decline, holds out Murphy Brown as a bigger problem than TV's crass commercialism and glorification of selfishness and violence, and denies the Administration's responsibility to face the full range of America's staggering family problems.

I want to talk about these issues today because family questions are terribly important to our nation and to me personally. As a public official, I have worked on family issues harder and longer than anybody else running for president this year. And I do believe that they are at the heart of our national discontent.

And as well as anyone, I know the importance of family values to personal growth. In 1946, I was born to a widowed mother. My father died in a car wreck three months before I was born. Shortly after I was born, my mother went back to nursing school to learn skills that would enable her to support me. Until I was four, I was fortunate enough to be raised by loving grandparents of modest means but great determination -- who began teaching me to count and read when I was two.

My mother's extended family included great-grandparents and great-uncles and aunts, all of whom were poor or nearly so, but they were wonderful, old-fashioned country people who brought love and joy and values to my life.

When I was four, my mother remarried. And though their marriage was not free of difficulty -- some of which has been reported in the press -- my brother and I benefited from the love of my step-father and his extended family. They enriched my life and my sense of what I could do with it. My mother has been widowed in her life three times, but luckily is married to a wonderful man who has also been a friend and inspiration to me.

Every year I ask all the relatives from all my extended families, and my wife's family, to gather at Christmas time. It's an amazing celebration of the different threads of family, a broad fabric of love and support that raised a child from modest means to a rewarding career in public service and a serious campaign for the presidency of the United States. I know the value of family.

Over 20 years ago, I met and fell in love with a wonderful woman in law school who would become my wife and a lot of my life. It was Hillary who, in 1971, was already concerned about the problems of poor children and their parents, and who began to teach me about them then.

In 1975, we married. In 1977, after I became Attorney General in my state, my wife founded a remarkable organization called the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children. In that year, long before it was the national rage, she organized the conference called Parenting is Primary.

In 1979, when I first became governor, with my wife's help, we began to try and build a pro-family policy for our state. In 1980, our one and only child Chelsea was born. She's been the great joy of our life, and watching her grow and flourish has given me a greater sense of urgency about the task of helping all of our children and their parents to do better.

Over the last 12 years, those efforts have evolved into initiatives to lower the infant mortality rate through expanded material and child health services. To reduce teen pregnancy through aggressive and often controversial but value-based sex education efforts. To enhance child care for working families through an innovative voucher system. To reduce long-term welfare dependence by aggressively promoting more education, and training, and child care, and medical coverage for the children of welfare families, then requiring parents to take available work. To increase pre-school programs for poor children with a special emphasis on involving parents as their children's first teachers through a remarkable program we borrowed from the nation of Israel called HIPPIY -- Home Instruction Program for Pre-School Youngsters -- a program in which even illiterate parents are taught to spend 20 minutes a day, five days a week, 30 weeks a year preparing their children to learn.

And finally, we've worked to increase child support enforcement through innovative efforts like reporting every delinquent parent who owes more than a \$1,000 to every major credit agency in our state.

The thrust of all these efforts is to find, what I would call, a third way to approach the American family -- beyond the traditional politics of both parties, beyond the Administration's cheerleading for family values on the one hand, and on the other hand, the old big-government notion that there's a program for every social problem.

There is a third way, a common-sense path that offers more opportunity to families in return for more personal responsibility and the assumption of more family values. Family values alone can't feed a hungry child. And material security alone cannot provide a moral compass. We must have both.

There is a way to embrace family values and enhance the value of America's families at the same time. A president should do both. President Bush is right to lament the high rate of teen pregnancy, yet he does not bring value-based sex education and health clinics into our schools to prevent pregnancies in the first place.

He is right to decry the high divorce rate, yet he has no national economic plans to help families under economic strains.

The President is right to speak out on the violence that stalks our children. And I believe he's been wrong to cut back the funds that cities like Cleveland can use to hire more policemen for their streets -- and he is wrong to oppose the Brady Bill that your Congressman sponsored and even President Ronald Reagan supports to require a waiting period before people can purchase handguns so that their criminal and mental health history and their ages can be checked.

Like any parent, I'm troubled by the gratuitous violence and sex and mixed moral signals we see on television. The same tough value questions for America's children and parents run from the affluent suburbs on New England to the poorest blocks of South Central Los Angeles -- and they reach into our own family too, with Hillary as a working mother and our daughter Chelsea, who's about to become a teenager.

And if those questions are hard for us, with all the privileges

that God has given us, think about how much tougher they are for most families who are working harder for less money these days, and how devastating they can be for those families confronted with layoffs, illnesses, alcohol and drug abuse, poverty, or a violent neighborhood.

The question is not are family values important? Of course they are. It's not are they under fire? You bet they are. It's not is TV destructive of family values. All too often it is. The question is what are we going to do about it?

It isn't enough for America's leaders to blame past social programs or current TV programs. It isn't enough for Americans to change channels. We need to change course.

Family values can't simply be Washington code for Beltway Republicans who really mean, "you're on your own" -- or Beltway Democrats, who want to spend more of your tax money on programs that don't embody those values.

If family values are going to mean something, we must offer a nation a third way. A nation that guarantees opportunity for every family, but a society that demands responsibility from every individual.

Of course there's a values crisis in America. But there's an action gap as well. Addressing one without the other isn't a plan of action, it's posturing to distract from inaction.

Today the dominant message from this Administration is, "You're on your own."

Parents have to work two jobs and spend more hours at work and too little time with their kids because wages are declining in America, you're on your own. If parents without health care who live in deadly fear they won't be able to care for their children without going bankrupt, they're on their own. If poor, uneducated parents need pre-school for their children so they'll have a chance to do better than their parents, well, they're on their own.

The problem is, nobody is on their own in this country, we're all in this together. The more we ignore these problems today, the more we'll all pay for them tomorrow in lost economic strength, in increased violence, in costlier jails, in poorer schools, and lost futures. As my friend Governor Ann Richards of Texas said of the looters and the shooters of the streets of Los Angeles: "These young hoodlums who burn and batter and turn our streets into killing fields were once our children -- small and helpless and needing our attention and our love, and we let them go --- tossed them aside like yesterday's news. Now they are making headlines that we don't want to read. God may forgive them but we can't condone their action or reclaim their lives. They are lost to us. This tragedy must end with this generation. It must stop now."

A very great Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, once called the Presidency a Bully Pulpit. Then President Kennedy said that the Presidency was the vital center of action. Both presidents were right. A president's words can move a nation, but talk must be backed up with action or we risk diminishing the Bully Pulpit into a Pulpit of Bull.

When I was born in Hope, Arkansas, in 1946, our state's per-capita income was barely half the national average. Though my family and I later moved into a middle-class life, thanks to both my step-father and my mother working, in the beginning, like most people in my state, we were poor.

But one of the values my family pounded into me was that if I worked hard and played by the rules, I'd be rewarded -- and I have been, beyond my wildest dreams. We were taught to take responsibility for ourselves and for each other. And we were taught that if we did, we would do better.

I understand something about hard times and how hard things can get. My mother was widowed before I was born and I lived with my grandparents when I was little as I said. My most vivid memory of my mother and childhood was when I went to visit her at nursing school when I was three, and when my grandmother and I pulled out of the station, she knelt down by the side of the railroad tracks and cried. I remember that to this day. I remember how she bore her grief every day because she believed that, if she sacrificed in the short run, in the long run she could build a better life for me.

Now there are millions of stories like that in America today. Remember, most poor people, those with and without jobs, did not loot and riot in Los Angeles, because their values kept them from doing so. They would not do wrong. Most Americans today do give their children love and discipline and respect for others and for the law.

There is a great deal of love in the poorest welfare families in America today. But we have to face the hard truth that too many Americans are cut off from these values and the life that we want them to live, that reinforces those values. And too many Americans who live by their values are denied the progress they were promised -- the progress that was real for the poor of my generation.

We simply cannot go on under these circumstances being the only major nation in the world without a family policy -- one that enshrines family values by placing a value on family. We've tried to develop one in Arkansas. And I outlined it to you a moment ago. And I think we need one in America.

Here is a good beginning:

First, we should reward work and family. Today millions of Americans work full time but don't make enough to lift their families out of poverty. That's wrong. No one who works full-time and has children at home should be poor in America.

We should expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to guarantee a "working wage" to lift above the poverty line anyone with a family who's working full time. This initiative is not terribly expensive. It won't require us to spend one red cent for any public bureaucracy. Yet, it will reward work and lift one million working poor families and their children out of poverty.

Second, we need to reform our welfare system so that it puts people back to work and ends permanent dependency. In Arkansas, under the Federal Family Support Act of 1988, which I helped to draft as the governor's representative, we've created a system of

training, and vouchers for day care, and medical coverage for children so that welfare families can return to the dignity of a job once again. As a result, our welfare rolls have grown less than the national average in the last three years, even in spite of the recession and high unemployment.

The truth is, most people on welfare don't like it any more than you do. A few years ago, I asked the woman in our welfare-to-work program in Arkansas what she liked best about her new job. And she said -- wasn't earning a paycheck -- it was knowing that when her son went to school and they asked him what your mother does for a living, he could give an answer. People want the dignity of work.

We should give everyone the chance to have that kind of dignity. We should give everyone on welfare the education, training, child care and medical coverage for their children they need. But I think we should go beyond the present law. After two years, if people can't find private sector employment, I think they should be required to do public service work in return for the income.

We can end welfare as we know it, not by punishing the poor, but by empowering them to take care of their children and to be role models.

Third, we need to do more to protect America's children from the consequences of divorce and absent fathers -- and on some occasions, absent mothers. I was born to a single mother who was lucky enough to have the support of an extended family. Today, in the governor's office, I have old pictures of my grandfather and my great-grandfather. Unfortunately, too few children know who their great-grandparents were, and too many have parents who should pay for their upbringing but don't.

We need to get tough on child support enforcement with a nationwide crackdown on deadbeat parents. In our state, if you fall more than a thousand dollars behind in your child support, we report you to every major credit agency in the state. People shouldn't be able to borrow money for other things before they take care of their children.

Because of that and other efforts, like putting the name and social security number of a father on a birth certificate if a mother shows up to give birth without a father -- thus shifting the burden to the man to disprove his heritage -- we collected more than \$41 million from "deadbeat parents" in 1991 -- money that we didn't have to pay in welfare or other public spending. These are the kinds of things that we ought to do. We have to do more of them.

We must make the toughest possible child support enforcement efforts in this country. We should enlist major credit agencies all across the country to follow the example that Arkansas and a few other states have. We ought to say to people everywhere, "Pay for your children first or you shouldn't get credit." We ought to have a national system of child support collection utilizing the Internal Revenue Service and tax records.

I'm tired of seeing custodial parents bear the whole burden for the problem of raising their children. Governments can't raise children -- people do -- and the people who bring children into this world should all bear a responsibility for raising them.

Fourth, we need to help parents do the best possible job of rearing their kids. Government can't create good parents, but it can make it easier for them to tend to their children's needs.

In 1988, George Bush promised to make sure, and I quote, "women don't have to worry about getting their jobs back after having a child or caring for a child during a serious illness." But when Congress passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, George Bush vetoed it. I would sign it. Other nations do the same thing.

Millions of Americans are already caught in a squeeze between taking care of their parents and taking care of their children. We should not now make them choose between work and family -- not if we are going to be a pro-family country where most parents have to work.

Fifth, we can also bolster the family's crucial role in education. We should fully fund the Head Start program and quit delaying it. But in doing it, we should put increased emphasis on enlisting parents, even illiterate parents, as their children's first teachers. As I said earlier, the HIPPIY program in Arkansas trains welfare mothers to teach their pre-school children to read. The Head Start programs with the most long-lasting benefits for children are those in which the parents' role is greatest, no matter how limited the parents' own educational skills.

Our schools should also reinforce these family values and parental involvement by bringing more parents in. Schools all over America can follow the example of the Beasley Academic Center, a public junior high school in Chicago. It's located in a neighborhood with the highest murder rate in all of Illinois. But every week, 75 fathers and even more mothers regularly volunteer in the schools.

Against the odds, this school ranks in the top 10% of test scores in the state, with no guns, no drugs, no dropouts -- in part because of a culture which includes a dress code, strong family values, and parental role models. Not just talk, action!

Sixth and lastly, I want to ensure that American families and individuals make the best personal decisions with their life with a full sense of personal responsibility and concern for the consequences of their behavior. That means letting teens know that it is wrong for children to have children, and also providing them with the education about how to prevent that.

In Arkansas, my nationally renowned health director, Dr. Joycelyn Elders and I, fought for school-based health clinics and sex education. It wasn't popular and it still isn't easy, but with teen pregnancy and AIDS claiming more and more of our young people, it is now a matter of life and death.

There are many other issues that we have to face: restoring economic growth to our nation so we can restore economic strength to our families, providing affordable health care to all of our families and their children, giving poor people more say over their own lives through initiatives like community policing and tenant management of housing projects and preserving personal and family privacy -- including, in my view, not repealing Roe v. Wade.

The President says he wants private school choice even if it means taking public money away from public schools that are already

underfunded compared to many other nations. He's willing to make it a crime for a woman to exercise her right to make the most private choice of all. I don't understand those priorities.

When my daughter was in her last month of sixth grade last year, I remember taking her to school one day -- as I do everyday when I'm home -- and seeing a very handsome man walking his child to school. He had two other little children with him. And one of these little children came running up to me, holding out his hands and jumping up into my arms. He held me very tight. Now, as you know, I'm a politician, so I love that -- I mean, the baby wanted to kiss me.

But, if you know anything about child development -- this child was almost two years old -- it's not a very good sign for a two-year-old child still to be indiscriminately bestowing this sort of affection. So I asked this man, I said, "How many children do you have?" He said, "five." I said, "You mean you have the one that went in there, these two, and two others?" And he said, "Oh, no, no, these two are not mine." He said, "My wife and I had a daughter who died. And in honor of her memory, we decided that we would spend the rest of our lives, serving as foster parents for children in need. These two children I have are not mine, they were abandoned by their mother, alone at home, for two whole days." They were twenty months old.

"So the state gave them to us to care for for a while and we're loving them and hoping that their mother can learn to love them and be a good parent and eventually to take them back."

There are millions of children like that all over this country -- hanging in the balance. They are part of our national family. Of course, we must exhort their parents to do a better job, and we must write into our social programs incentives for stronger family values. But we cannot ignore the plain need for a national policy to value families...to reconnect all Americans to our most cherished values and the idea of progress for those who live by those values.

Ultimately, it is up to each of us to build the bridge across that gulf that stands wide today between what we are as a nation and what we are meant to be. We must believe that we once again can make a difference, that tomorrow will be better than today if we build that bridge and make it so. We have the tools. The question is do we have the vision and the will. This election will tell the tale.

Thank you very much.

March 8, 1993

File:
Family
Policy

TO: Carol Rasco
FROM: Bill Galston *WAG*
SUBJ: Children, Youth, and Family Initiatives

The following memorandum is in response to your request for an inventory of Administration budget proposals and other initiatives concerning children, youth, and families. It is divided into four sections. The first enumerates what has been accomplished or proposed to date; the second compares that list to the President's principal campaign promises; the third compares that list to the principal recommendations of the National Commission on Children; the fourth offers an analysis of some trouble spots and recommendations for addressing them.

1. Accomplished or proposed to date

Legislation

o Family and Medical Leave Act--passed by the Congress and signed into law by the President

Stimulus Package

o Head Start Summer Program--a new Head Start summer program, which would eventually ~~employ~~ *serve* up to 350,000 disadvantaged children

o Chapter 1 Summer School Program--new, one-time supplemental funding of \$500 million to expand summer school programs for educationally disadvantaged children

o Chapter 1 Census Supplemental--\$235 million in 1993 to mitigate (but not eliminate) the effects on distribution of Chapter 1 funds caused by changes in the location of poor children that occurred between the 1980 and 1990 census

o WIC--added 1993 funding of \$75 million, which will permit the program to serve 300,000 additional participants, most of whom will be children ages 1-4

o Child and Adult Care Food Program--an increase of \$56 million to pay for meals and snacks at Head Start centers to serve children in the proposed Summer Head Start program

o Childhood Immunizations--\$300 million to support a community based effort to finance vaccine purchases and education and outreach campaigns, with the goal of immunizing 1 million children during the summer of 1993

o Summer Youth Employment and Training Program--an additional \$1 billion for the summer of 1993, which will finance almost 700,000 additional summer jobs for disadvantaged youth ages 14-21

o HOME investment partnership--accelerated spendout of \$2.5 billion in previously released affordable housing funds

o Public housing modernization--accelerated spendout of HUD's backlog of unspent modernization funds

o Supportive Housing Program--accelerated investment of \$423 million in the Program, which offers shelter and a wide range of services to homeless persons

o Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans--an additional \$235 million in single family guaranteed loan authority, serving principally rural and small town family needs

Investment Package

o Housing subsidies--double HOME funds to the authorized level of \$2.2 billion; increase housing vouchers from 40,000 annually in 1993 to 100,000 in 1998

o Supportive Housing Program--a \$138 million increase for 1997, a doubling of the program, which addresses homelessness and its causes

o Public Housing Operating Subsidies--an additional \$121 million in 1997

o Preserving and renovating low-income housing--\$384 million in 1997, and \$858 million over the next four years

o Crime in public housing--\$138 million for an Urban Partnership Against Crime Initiative to address the increase in gang- and drug-related crime activity in many public housing developments

o Restore dilapidated public housing--an additional \$138 million in 1997 to rehabilitate severely run-down public housing projects that cannot now be inhabited

o Full funding of Head Start--an increase of \$3.2 billion in 1997, \$8 billion over four years, achieving full funding for 1.4 million eligible children by 1999

o Head Start-related child care feeding--an additional \$237 million in 1997 to pay for additional meals for participants added by the Administration's Head Start initiative

- o **Head Start-related Medicaid**--\$116 million in 1997 to fund new entrants in the Medicaid program resulting from Head Start expansion
- o **Full funding of WIC**--an additional \$1 billion in 1997 to serve all eligible children ages 1 to 4, including some 2 million who were not served in 1992
- o **Parenting and family support**--\$500 million for FY 1997
- o **Education reforms and initiatives**--\$2.7 billion in 1997, \$6.2 billion over four years, to support systemic educational reform, improvements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a new Safe Schools Program, student loan program improvements, and support of Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- o **National Service**--new investment of \$7.4 billion over the next four years to increase education and training opportunities for young people while addressing a range of unmet national needs
- o **Summer youth employment and training program**--an increase of \$625 million in 1997 and \$2 billion over the next four years, financing about 2 million additional summer jobs
- o **Youth apprenticeship**--\$500 million in 1997, \$1.2 billion over four years, to finance a nationwide system of school- and work-based learning programs for high school youth who do not plan to attend college
- o **Earned Income Tax Credit**--an EITC increase of \$6.7 billion in 1997, \$19.9 billion over four years, to assure that families headed by full-time workers will no longer live in poverty
- o **Welfare reform**--a forthcoming comprehensive plan to end welfare as a permanent way of life through increased training, parenting, and family support for moving people from welfare to work, coupled with tougher enforcement of parental responsibilities

2. Comparison with principal campaign promises

<u>Promise</u>	<u>Action</u>
Family and Medical Leave	Enacted and signed
Fully fund Head Start	Proposed
Fully fund WIC	Proposed
National standards and testing	To be proposed in fast-track education reform bill

Youth apprenticeship program	Proposed, with partial funding
Public school choice	No action; pending
Use Chapter 1 to "level the playing field"	Partially addressed in the stimulus package; to be addressed in the ESEA reauthorization later this year; partial funding provided in the Investment Budget
Increase flexibility in local use of federal education funds	To be addressed in fast-track bill and ESEA reauthorization
Parenting programs	Proposed
Require federal contractors to offer jobs for disadvantaged youth	Pending
School safety and security	Proposed
Bilingual education reform	Pending; to be addressed in ESEA reauthorization
Tougher child support enforcement	Pending; to be addressed in the context of welfare reform
National child care network	No action; pending (?)
Tougher standards for child care facilities	Pending <i>How is this pending?</i>
Welfare reform	Pending
\$300 child tax credit	No action
Increase EITC to eliminate working poverty	Proposed
Expand the HOME program	Proposed
Increase funding to maintain public housing	Proposed

3. Comparison with key National Commission recommendations

<u>Commission recommendation</u>	<u>Administration action</u>
\$1000/child refundable tax credit	No action
EITC expansion	Proposed
Child support assurance <i>What does this mean?</i>	No action; possible in the context of welfare reform
Transitional assistance for welfare recipients	Pending
Fundamental health care reform	Pending
Full funding for Head Start	Proposed
Systemic school reform	Pending; to be addressed in "fast-track" reform bill
Equitable school finance	Addressed in stimulus package; pending in ESEA reauthorization
Public school choice	No action/pending
Increased effort to combat dropouts, teen pregnancies	No action ; pending <i>for summer announcement</i>
Youth employment/apprenticeship	Proposed
Family and medical leave	Legislation enacted
Employer-based flex-time and career sequencing	No action; requires DoL jawboning
Improve availability, affordability, and quality of child care	Minimal action
Expand/improve preventive services for vulnerable children and their families	No action <i>Proposed (Parenting Ed. & Family Support)</i>
Greater coordination of child and family policies across the executive branch	No action /pending <i>(?) Don't need any public/even semi-public announcement at moment; target late summer?</i>
Joint Congressional committee on children and families	No action

(I'm sure this should appear on a list given the trimming going on in Congress)

Decategorization of selected federal programs to bring greater cohesion and flexibility

~~No action~~; pending (?) to extent in welfare reform

Incentives to encourage state/local coordination on child/family programs

No action

Increase salaries and training opportunities for teachers and early childhood/child welfare practitioners - *this will happen potentially in family preservation*

No action

Enhance recording industry efforts to avoid distribution of inappropriate materials to children

No action

Enhance efforts by television producers to improve content of programming for children

No White House action; some preliminary steps by the FCC

Increase opportunities for national and local community service

Pending

4. Brief analysis and recommendations

As you can see from the above, we have numerous areas of strength in the children, youth, and family arena, particularly in Head Start, WIC, Family and Medical Leave, education, and public housing. (As you have pointed out, adequate funding is a necessary but not sufficient condition for sound public policy; we also need to ensure that our proposals in programs such as Head Start and Chapter 1 embody genuine reform, not just mindless expansion of the status quo.)

*Shirley
Setting
up
meeting*

Beyond the bright spots, we have some very conspicuous weaknesses. Let me enumerate a few current or potential problems.

o The Administration budget does very little for child care, although some non-budgetary regulatory changes affecting quality and flexibility are of course possible.

o The budget does very little if anything to provide new opportunities for vulnerable children and their families. The time is ripe for innovative family preservation strategies, but this budget doesn't seize the moment.

*↓
New to happen*

o While the budget does use the EITC aggressively to address the problems of the working poor, its failure to include a broader child tax credit leaves most middle-income families out in the cold. (This is obviously a problem to be addressed in the medium to long term.)

o The Education Department's draft of the fast-track reform bill will include no more than a passing mention of public school choice. If the President's promise is to be honored, the DPC will have to move aggressively. (I will expand on this when that draft reaches me later today or tomorrow.)

o The Family and Medical Leave Act is a terrific first step, but it does not address all of the multiple tensions between work and family. I believe we need systematic consultation with the Department of Labor to determine how employers can best be encouraged to move forward on issues such as flex-time and job-sharing.

o Much is riding on the welfare reform process, but as you know so well, it is not clear how far comprehensive reform can go in the absence of serious funding. As an interim measure, it may make sense to break out specific issues such as tougher child support enforcement and parental responsibility for the conduct of their children.

o As of now we are nowhere on teen pregnancy prevention. I understand why this was dropped during the early flurry, but I strongly recommend initiating discussions with HHS leading to a major anti-teen pregnancy initiative.

o More broadly: the National Commission emphasizes family structure as one of the principal determinants of child well-being. I think they are dead right about this and that we ought to work their analysis into our policies and public statements. We can and should collaborate with Sen. Moynihan in this effort.

o We should think about giving highly audible visible White House support to the creation (and where appropriate, enforcement) of standards for the content of recordings and television oriented to children and youth. Would it make sense to get Tipper involved? *Talk to her staff for their current thinking*

o As of now, we are weak in the area of policy coordination (at both the federal and state/local level), which the National Commission rightly emphasizes. I continue to believe that we need an inter-agency, White House-drive DPC working group on children, youth, and families, along the lines of the community development operation.

Under review
The pledge was made for summer announcement.

Thought?

I am discussing this w/ HHS, we discussed in 3/9 meeting w/ Ellwood, Sawhill; late summer target perhaps.

Conclusion

On the basis of this review, I am not convinced that we are yet ready to go with a systematic children, youth, and families statement along the lines of the President's science and technology paper. Instead, I believe that we should use the process initiated by this memorandum to move forward on our areas of vulnerability, with the aim of producing such a document by late summer or early fall.

A choice by the President to speak at the National Commission summit could serve as a very useful action-forcing event. But even if he declines to do so (perhaps because of its proximity to the crucial April 4 meeting with Yeltsin), we should decide on a course of action and pursue it aggressively in conjunction with Education, Labor, HHS, and anyone else you deem appropriate.

Fig:
Family

The social-science evidence is in: though it may benefit the adults involved, the dissolution of intact two-parent families is harmful to large numbers of children. Moreover, the author argues, family diversity in the form of increasing numbers of single-parent and stepparent families does not strengthen the social fabric but, rather, dramatically weakens and undermines society

DAN QUAYLE WAS RIGHT

BY BARBARA DAFOE WHITEHEAD

DIVORCE AND OUT-OF-WEDLOCK CHILDBIRTH ARE TRANSFORMING THE LIVES of American children. In the postwar generation more than 80 percent of children grew up in a family with two biological parents who were married to each other. By 1980 only 50 percent could expect to spend their entire childhood in an intact family. If current trends continue, less than half of all children born today will live continuously with their own mother and father throughout childhood. Most American children will spend several years in a single-mother family. Some will eventually live in stepparent families, but because step-

families are more likely to break up than intact (by which I mean two-biological-parent) families, an increasing number of children will experience family breakup two or even three times during childhood.

According to a growing body of social-scientific evidence, children in families disrupted by divorce and out-of-wedlock birth do worse than children in intact families on several measures of well-being. Children in single-parent families are six times as likely to be poor. They are also likely to stay poor longer. Twenty-two percent of children in one-parent families will experience poverty during childhood for seven years or more, as compared with only two percent of children in two-parent families. A 1988 survey by the National Center for Health Statistics found that children in single-parent families are two to three times as likely as children in two-parent families to have emotional and behavioral problems. They are also more likely to drop out of high school, to get pregnant as teenagers, to abuse drugs, and to be in trouble with the law. Compared with children in intact families, children from disrupted families are at a much higher risk for physical or sexual abuse.

Contrary to popular belief, many children do not "bounce back" after divorce, or remarriage. Difficulties that are associated with family breakup often persist into adulthood. Children who grow up in single-parent or stepparent families are less successful as adults, particularly in the two domains of life—love and work—that are most essential to happiness. Needless to say, not all

children experience such negative effects. However, research shows that many children from disrupted families have a harder time achieving intimacy in a relationship, forming a stable marriage, or even holding a steady job.

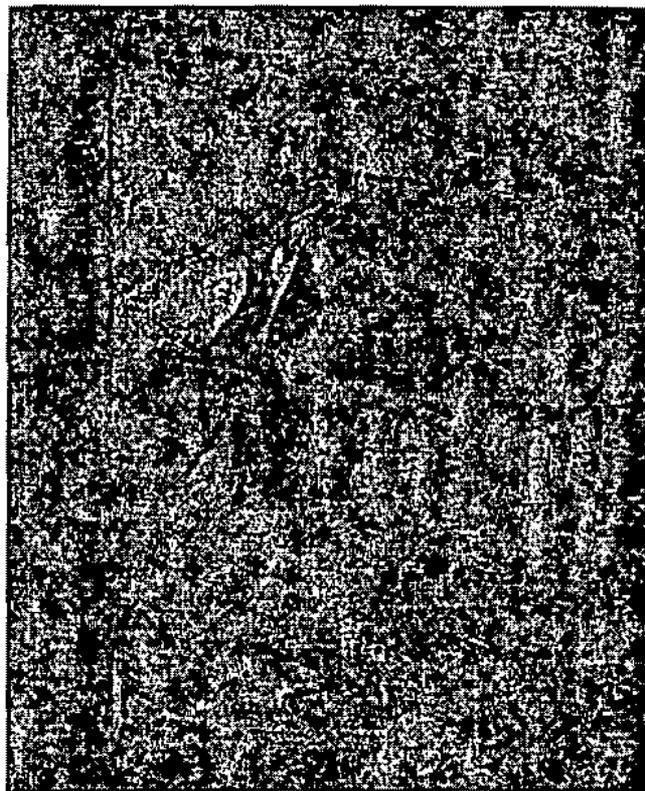
Despite this growing body of evidence, it is nearly impossible to discuss changes in family structure without provoking angry protest. Many people see the discussion as no more than an attack on struggling single mothers and their children: Why blame single mothers when they are doing the very best they can? After all, the decision to end a marriage or a relationship is wrenching, and few parents are indifferent to the painful burden this decision imposes on their children. Many take the perilous step toward single parenthood as a last resort, after their best efforts to hold a marriage together have failed. Consequently, it can seem particularly cruel and unfeeling to remind parents of the hardships their children might suffer as a result of family breakup. Other people believe that the dramatic changes in family structure, though regrettable, are impossible to reverse. Family breakup is an inevitable feature of American life, and anyone who thinks otherwise is indulging in nostalgia or trying to turn back the clock. Since these new family forms are here to stay, the reasoning goes, we must accord respect to single parents, not criticize them. Typical is the view expressed by a Brooklyn woman in a recent letter to *The New York Times*: "Let's stop moralizing or blaming single parents

and unwed mothers, and give them the respect they have earned and the support they deserve."

Such views are not to be dismissed. Indeed, they help to explain why family structure is such an explosive issue for Americans. The debate about it is not simply about the social-scientific evidence, although that is surely an important part of the discussion. It is also a debate over deeply held and often conflicting values. How do we begin to reconcile our long-standing belief in equality and diversity with an impressive body of evidence that suggests that not all family structures produce equal outcomes for children? How can we square traditional notions of public support for dependent women and children with a belief in women's right to pursue autonomy and independence in childbearing and child-rearing? How do we uphold the freedom of adults to pursue individual happiness in their private relationships and at the same time respond to the needs of children for stability, security, and permanence in their family lives? What do we do when the interests of adults and children conflict? These are the difficult issues at stake in the debate over family structure.

In the past these issues have turned out to be too difficult and too politically risky for debate. In the mid-1960s Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then an assistant secretary of labor, was denounced as a racist for calling attention to the relationship between the prevalence of black single-mother families and the lower socioeconomic standing of black children. For nearly twenty years the policy and research communities backed away from the entire issue. In 1980 the Carter Administration convened a historic White House Conference on Families, designed to address the growing problems of children and families in America. The result was a prolonged, publicly subsidized quarrel over the definition of "family." No President since has tried to hold a national family conference. Last year, at a time when the rate of out-of-wedlock births had reached a historic high, Vice President Dan Quayle was ridiculed for criticizing Murphy Brown. In short, every time the issue of family structure has been raised, the response has been first controversy, then retreat, and finally silence.

Yet it is also risky to ignore the issue of changing family structure. In recent years the problems associated with family disruption have grown. Overall child well-being has declined, despite a decrease in the number of children per family, an increase in the educational level of parents, and historically high levels of public spending. After dropping in the 1960s and 1970s, the proportion of children in poverty has increased dramatically, from 15 percent in 1970 to 20 percent in 1990, while the percentage of adult Americans in poverty has remained roughly constant. The teen suicide rate has more than tripled. Juvenile crime has increased and become more violent. School performance has continued to decline. There are no signs that these trends are about to reverse themselves.



If we fail to come to terms with the relationship between family structure and declining child well-being, then it will be increasingly difficult to improve children's life prospects, no matter how many new programs the federal government funds. Nor will we be able to make progress in bettering school performance or reducing crime or improving the quality of the nation's future work force—all domestic problems closely connected to family breakup. Worse, we may contribute to the problem by pursuing policies that actually increase family instability and breakup.

From Death to Divorce

ACROSS TIME AND ACROSS CULTURES, FAMILY DISRUPTION has been regarded as an event that threatens a child's well-being and even survival. This view is rooted in a fundamental biological fact: unlike the young of almost any other species, the human child is born in an abjectly helpless and immature state. Years of nurture and protection are needed before the child can achieve physical independence. Similarly, it takes years of interaction with at least one but ideally two or more adults for a child to develop into a socially competent adult. Children raised in virtual isolation from human beings, though physically intact, display few recognizably human behaviors. The social arrangement that has proved most successful in ensuring the physical survival and promoting the social development of the child is the family unit of the biological mother and father. Consequently,

any event that permanently denies a child the presence and protection of a parent jeopardizes the life of the child.

The classic form of family disruption is the death of a parent. Throughout history this has been one of the risks of childhood. Mothers frequently died in childbirth, and it was not unusual for both parents to die before the child was grown. As recently as the early decades of this century children commonly suffered the death of at least one parent. Almost a quarter of the children born in this country in 1900 lost one parent by the time they were fifteen years old. Many of these children lived with their widowed parent, often in a household with other close relatives. Others grew up in orphanages and foster homes.

The meaning of parental death, as it has been transmitted over time and faithfully recorded in world literature and lore, is unambiguous and essentially unchanging. It is universally regarded as an untimely and tragic event. Death permanently severs the parent-child bond, disrupting forever one of the child's earliest and deepest human attachments. It also deprives a child of the presence and protection of an adult who has a biological stake in, as well as an emotional commitment to, the child's survival and well-being. In short, the death of a parent is the most extreme and severe loss a child can suffer.

Because a child is so vulnerable in a parent's absence, there has been a common cultural response to the death of a parent: an outpouring of support from family, friends, and strangers alike. The surviving parent and child are united in their grief as well as their loss. Relatives and friends share in the loss and provide valuable emotional

and financial assistance to the bereaved family. Other members of the community show sympathy for the child, and public assistance is available for those who need it. This cultural understanding of parental death has formed the basis for a tradition of public support to widows and their children. Indeed, as recently as the beginning of this century widows were the only mothers eligible for pensions in many states, and today widows with children receive more-generous welfare benefits from Survivors Insurance than do other single mothers with children who depend on Aid to Families With Dependent Children.

It has taken thousands upon thousands of years to reduce the threat of parental death. Not until the middle of the twentieth century did parental death cease to be a commonplace event for children in the United States. By then advances in medicine had dramatically reduced mortality rates for men and women.

At the same time, other forms of family disruption—separation, divorce, out-of-wedlock birth—were held in check by powerful religious, social, and legal sanctions. Divorce was widely regarded both as a deviant behavior, especially threatening to mothers and children, and as a personal lapse: "Divorce is the public acknowledgment of failure," a 1940s sociology textbook noted. Out-of-wedlock birth was stigmatized, and stigmatization is a powerful means of regulating behavior, as any smoker or overeater will testify. Sanctions against nonmarital child-birth discouraged behavior that hurt children and exacted compensatory behavior that helped them. Shotgun marriages and adoption, two common responses to nonmari-

tal birth, carried a strong message about the risks of premarital sex and created an intact family for the child.

Consequently, children did not have to worry much about losing a parent through divorce or never having had one because of nonmarital birth. After a surge in divorces following the Second World War, the rate leveled off. Only 11 percent of children born in the 1950s would by the time they turned eighteen see their parents separate or divorce. Out-of-wedlock childbirth barely figured as a cause of family disruption. In the 1950s and early 1960s, five percent of the nation's births were out of wedlock. Blacks were more likely than whites to bear children outside marriage, but the majority of black children born in the twenty years after the Second World War were born to married couples. The rate of family disruption reached a historic low point during those years.

A new standard of family security and stability was established in postwar America. For the first time in history the vast majority of the nation's children could expect to live with married biological parents throughout childhood. Children might still suffer other forms of adversity—poverty, racial discrimination, lack of educational opportunity—but only a few would be deprived of the nurture and protection of a mother and a father. No longer did children have to be haunted by the classic fears vividly dramatized in folklore and fable—that their parents would die, that they would have to live with a stepparent and stepsiblings, or that they would be abandoned. These were the years when the nation confidently boarded up orphanages and closed foundling hospitals, certain that such institutions would never again be needed. In movie theaters across the country parents and children could watch the drama of parental separation and death in the great Disney classics, secure in the knowledge that such nightmare visions as the death of Bambi's mother and the wrenching separation of Dumbo from his mother were only make-believe.

In the 1960s the rate of family disruption suddenly began to rise. After inching up over the course of a century, the divorce rate soared. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s the divorce rate held steady at fewer than ten divorces a year per 1,000 married couples. Then, beginning in about 1965, the rate increased sharply, peaking at twenty-three divorces per 1,000 marriages by 1979. (In 1974 divorce passed death as the leading cause of family breakup.) The rate has leveled off at about twenty-one divorces per 1,000 marriages—the figure for 1991. The out-of-wedlock birth rate also jumped. It went from five percent in 1960 to 27 percent in 1990. In 1990 close to 57 percent of births among black mothers were nonmarital, and about 17 percent among white mothers. Altogether, about one out of every four women who had a child in 1990 was not married. With rates of divorce and nonmarital birth so high, family disruption is at its peak. Never before have so many children experienced family breakup caused by events other than death. Each year a million

children go through divorce or separation and almost as many more are born out of wedlock.

Half of all marriages now end in divorce. Following divorce, many people enter new relationships. Some begin living together. Nearly half of all cohabiting couples have children in the household. Fifteen percent have new children together. Many cohabiting couples eventually get married. However, both cohabiting and remarried couples are more likely to break up than couples in first marriages. Even social scientists find it hard to keep pace with the complexity and velocity of such patterns. In the revised edition (1992) of his book *Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage*, the sociologist Andrew Cherlin ruefully comments: "If there were a truth-in-labeling law for books, the title of this edition should be something long and unwieldy like *Cohabitation, Marriage, Divorce, More Cohabitation, and Probably Remarriage*."

Under such conditions growing up can be a turbulent experience. In many single-parent families children must come to terms with the parent's love life and romantic partners. Some children live with cohabiting couples, either their own unmarried parents or a biological parent and a live-in partner. Some children born to cohabiting parents see their parents break up. Others see their parents marry, but 56 percent of them (as compared with 31 percent of the children born to married parents) later see their parents' marriages fall apart. All told, about three quarters of children born to cohabiting couples will live in a single-parent home at least briefly. One of every four children growing up in the 1990s will eventually enter a stepfamily. According to one survey, nearly half of all children in stepparent families will see their parents divorce again by the time they reach their late teens. Since 80 percent of divorced fathers remarry, things get even more complicated when the romantic or marital history of the noncustodial parent, usually the father, is taken into account. Consequently, as it affects a significant number of children, family disruption is best understood not as a single event but as a string of disruptive events: separation, divorce, life in a single-parent family, life with a parent and live-in lover, the remarriage of one or both parents, life in one stepparent family combined with visits to another stepparent family; the breakup of one or both stepparent families. And so on. This is one reason why public schools have a hard time knowing whom to call in an emergency.

Given its dramatic impact on children's lives, one might reasonably expect that this historic level of family disruption would be viewed with alarm, even regarded as a national crisis. Yet this has not been the case. In recent years some people have argued that these trends pose a serious threat to children and to the nation as a whole, but they are dismissed as declinists, pessimists, or nostalgists, unwilling or unable to accept the new facts of life. The dominant view is that the changes in family structure are, on balance, positive.

A Shift in the Social Metric

THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS WHY THIS IS SO, but the fundamental reason is that at some point in the 1970s Americans changed their minds about the meaning of these disruptive behaviors. What had once been regarded as hostile to children's best interests was now considered essential to adults' happiness. In the 1950s most Americans believed that parents should stay in an unhappy marriage for the sake of the children. The assumption was that a divorce would damage the children, and the prospect of such damage gave divorce its meaning. By the mid-1970s a majority of Americans rejected that view. Popular advice literature reflected the shift. A book on divorce published in the mid-1940s tersely asserted: "Children are entitled to the affection and association of two parents, not one." Thirty years later another popular divorce book proclaimed just the opposite: "A two-parent home is not the only emotional structure within which a child can be happy and healthy. . . . The parents who take care of themselves will be best able to take care of their children." At about the same time, the long-standing taboo against out-of-wedlock childbirth also collapsed. By the mid-1970s three fourths of Americans said that it was not morally wrong for a woman to have a child outside marriage.

Once the social metric shifts from child well-being to adult well-being, it is hard to see divorce and nonmarital birth in anything but a positive light. However distressing and difficult they may be, both of these behaviors can hold out the promise of greater adult choice, freedom, and happiness. For unhappy spouses, divorce offers a way to escape a troubled or even abusive relationship and make a fresh start. For single parents, remarriage is a second try at marital happiness as well as a chance for relief from the stress, loneliness, and economic hardship of raising a child alone. For some unmarried women, nonmarital birth is a way to beat the biological clock, avoid marrying the wrong man, and experience the pleasures of motherhood. Moreover, divorce and out-of-wedlock birth involve a measure of agency and choice; they are man- and woman-made events. To be sure, not everyone exercises choice in divorce or nonmarital birth. Men leave wives for younger women, teenage girls get pregnant accidentally—yet even these unhappy events reflect the expansion of the boundaries of freedom and choice.

This cultural shift helps explain what otherwise would be inexplicable: the failure to see the rise in family disruption as a severe and troubling national problem. It explains why there is virtually no widespread public sentiment for restigmatizing either of these classically disruptive behaviors and no sense—no public consensus—that they can or should be avoided in the future. On the contrary, the prevailing opinion is that we should accept the changes in family structure as inevitable and devise new forms of public and private support for single-parent families.

The View From Hollywood

WITH ITS AFFIRMATION OF THE LIBERATING effects of divorce and nonmarital childbirth, this opinion is a fixture of American popular culture today. Madison Avenue and Hollywood did not invent these behaviors, as their highly paid publicists are quick to point out, but they have played an influential role in defending and even celebrating divorce and unwed motherhood. More precisely, they have taken the raw material of demography and fashioned it into a powerful fantasy of individual renewal and rebirth. Consider, for example, the teaser for *People* magazine's cover story on Joan Lunden's divorce: "After the painful end of her 13-year marriage, the *Good Morning America* cohost is discovering a new life as a single mother—and as her own woman." *People* does not dwell on the anguish Lunden and her children might have experienced over the breakup of their family, or the difficulties of single motherhood, even for celebrity mothers. Instead, it celebrates Joan Lunden's steps toward independence and a better life. *People*, characteristically, focuses on her shopping: in the first weeks after her breakup Lunden leased "a brand-new six-bedroom, 8,000 square foot" house and then went to Bloomingdale's, where she scooped up sheets, pillows, a toaster, dishes, seven televisions, and roomfuls of fun furniture that was "totally unlike the serious traditional pieces she was giving up."

This is not just the view taken in supermarket magazines. Even the conservative bastion of the greeting-card industry, Hallmark, offers a line of cards commemorating divorce as liberation. "Think of your former marriage as a record album," says one Contemporary card. "It was full of music—both happy and sad. But what's important now is . . . YOU! the recently released HOT, NEW, SINGLE! You're going to be at the TOP OF THE CHARTS!" Another card reads: "Getting divorced can be very healthy! Watch how it improves your circulation! Best of luck! . . ." Hallmark's hip Shoebox Greetings division depicts two female praying mantises. Mantis One: "It's tough being a single parent." Mantis Two: "Yeah . . . Maybe we shouldn't have eaten our husbands."

Divorce is a tired convention in Hollywood, but unwed parenthood is very much in fashion: in the past year or so babies were born to Warren Beatty and Annette Bening, Jack Nicholson and Rebecca Broussard, and Eddie Murphy and Nicole Mitchell. *Vanity Fair* celebrated Jack Nicholson's fatherhood with a cover story (April, 1992) called "Happy Jack." What made Jack happy, it turned out, was no-fault fatherhood. He and Broussard, the twenty-nine-year-old mother of his children, lived in separate houses. Nicholson said, "It's an unusual arrangement, but the last twenty-five years or so have shown me that I'm not good at cohabitation. . . . I see Rebecca as much as any other person who is cohabiting. And she prefers it. I think

most people would in a more honest and truthful world." As for more-permanent commitments, the man who is not good at cohabitation said: "I don't discuss marriage much with Rebecca. Those discussions are the very thing I'm trying to avoid. I'm after this immediate real thing. That's all I believe in." (Perhaps Nicholson should have had the discussion. Not long after the story appeared, Broussard broke off the relationship.)

As this story shows, unwed parenthood is thought of not only as a way to find happiness but also as a way to exhibit such virtues as honesty and courage. A similar argument was offered in defense of Murphy Brown's unwed motherhood. Many of Murphy's fans were quick to point out that Murphy suffered over her decision to bear a child out of wedlock. Faced with an accidental pregnancy and a faithless lover, she agonized over her plight and, after much mental anguish, bravely decided to go ahead. In short, having a baby without a husband represented a higher level of maternal devotion and sacrifice than having a baby with a husband. Murphy was not just exercising her rights as a woman; she was exhibiting true moral heroism.

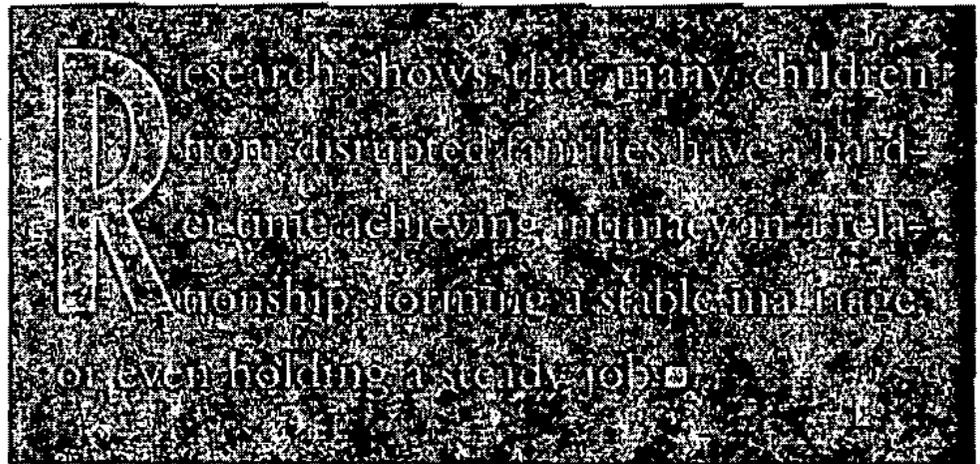
On the night Murphy Brown became an unwed mother, 34 million Americans tuned in, and CBS posted a 35 percent share of the audience. The show did not stir significant protest at the grass roots and lost none of its advertisers. The actress Candice Bergen subsequently appeared on the cover of nearly every women's and news magazine in the country and received an honorary degree at the University of Pennsylvania as well as an Emmy award. The show's creator, Diane English, popped up in Hanes stocking ads. Judged by conventional measures of approval, Murphy Brown's motherhood was a hit at the box office.

Increasingly, the media depicts the married two-parent family as a source of pathology. According to a spate of celebrity memoirs and interviews, the married-parent family harbors terrible secrets of abuse, violence, and incest. A bumper sticker I saw in Amherst, Massachusetts, read UNSPOKEN TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES: ABUSE, ALCOHOLISM, INCEST. The pop therapist John Bradshaw explains away this generation's problems with the dictum that 96 percent of families are dysfunctional, made that way by the addicted society we live in. David Lynch creates a new aesthetic of creepiness by juxtaposing scenes of traditional family life with images of seduction and perversion. A Boston-area museum puts on an exhibit called "Goodbye to Apple Pie," featuring several artists'

visions of child abuse, including one mixed-media piece with knives poking through a little girl's skirt. The piece is titled *Father Knows Best*.

No one would claim that two-parent families are free from conflict, violence, or abuse. However, the attempt to discredit the two-parent family can be understood as part of what Daniel Patrick Moynihan has described as a larger effort to accommodate higher levels of social deviance. "The amount of deviant behavior in American society has increased beyond the levels the community can afford to recognize," Moynihan argues. One response has been to normalize what was once considered deviant behavior, such as out-of-wedlock birth. An accompanying response has been to detect deviance in what once stood as a social norm, such as the married-couple family. Together these responses reduce the acknowledged levels of deviance by eroding earlier distinctions between the normal and the deviant.

Several recent studies describe family life in its postwar heyday as the seedbed of alcoholism and abuse. Ac-



ording to Stephanie Coontz, the author of the book *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*, family life for married mothers in the 1950s consisted of "booze, bowling, bridge, and boredom." Coontz writes: "Few would have guessed that radiant Marilyn Van Derbur, crowned Miss America in 1958, had been sexually violated by her wealthy, respectable father from the time she was five until she was eighteen, when she moved away to college." Even the budget-stretching casserole comes under attack as a sign of culinary dysfunction. According to one food writer, this homely staple of postwar family life brings back images of "the good mother of the 50's . . . locked in Ozzie and Harriet land, unable to move past the canvas of a Corning Ware dish, the palette of a can of Campbell's soup, the mushy dominion of which she was queen."

Nevertheless, the popular portrait of family life does not simply reflect the views of a cultural elite, as some have argued. There is strong support at the grass roots for much of this view of family change. Survey after survey

shows that Americans are less inclined than they were a generation ago to value sexual fidelity, lifelong marriage, and parenthood as worthwhile personal goals. Motherhood no longer defines adult womanhood, as everyone knows; equally important is the fact that fatherhood has declined as a norm for men. In 1976 less than half as many fathers as in 1957 said that providing for children was a life goal. The proportion of working men who found marriage and children burdensome and restrictive more than doubled in the same period. Fewer than half of all adult Americans today regard the idea of sacrifice for others as a positive moral virtue.

Dinosaurs Divorce

IT IS TRUE THAT MANY ADULTS BENEFIT FROM DIVORCE or remarriage. According to one study, nearly 80 percent of divorced women and 50 percent of divorced men say they are better off out of the marriage. Half of divorced adults in the same study report greater happiness. A competent self-help book called *Divorce and New Beginnings* notes the advantages of single parenthood: single parents can "develop their own interests, fulfill their own needs, choose their own friends and engage in social activities of their choice. Money, even if limited, can be spent as they see fit." Apparently, some women appreciate the opportunity to have children out of wedlock. "The real world, however, does not always allow women who are dedicated to their careers to devote the time and energy it takes to find—or be found by—the perfect husband and father wanna-be," one woman said in a letter to *The Washington Post*. A mother and chiropractor from Avon, Connecticut, explained her unwed maternity to an interviewer this way: "It is selfish, but this was something I needed to do for me."

There is very little in contemporary popular culture to contradict this optimistic view. But in a few small places another perspective may be found. Several racks down from its divorce cards, Hallmark offers a line of cards for children—*To Kids With Love*. These cards come six to a pack. Each card in the pack has a slightly different message. According to the package, the "thinking of you" messages will let a special kid "know how much you care." Though Hallmark doesn't quite say so, it's clear these cards are aimed at divorced parents. "I'm sorry I'm not always there when you need me but I hope you know I'm always just a phone call away." Another card reads: "Even though your dad and I don't live together anymore, I know he's still a very special part of your life. And as much as I miss you when you're not with me, I'm still happy that you two can spend time together."

Hallmark's messages are grounded in a substantial body of well-funded market research. Therefore it is worth reflecting on the divergence in sentiment between the divorce cards for adults and the divorce cards for kids. For grown-ups, divorce heralds new beginnings (A HOT NEW

SINGLE). For children, divorce brings separation and loss ("I'm sorry I'm not always there when you need me").

An even more telling glimpse into the meaning of family disruption can be found in the growing children's literature on family dissolution. Take, for example, the popular children's book *Dinosaurs Divorce: A Guide for Changing Families* (1986), by Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown. This is a picture book, written for very young children. The book begins with a short glossary of "divorce words" and encourages children to "see if you can find them" in the story. The words include "family counselor," "separation agreement," "alimony," and "child custody." The book is illustrated with cartoonish drawings of green dinosaur parents who fight, drink too much, and break up. One panel shows the father dinosaur, suitcase in hand, getting into a yellow car.

The dinosaur children are offered simple, straightforward advice on what to do about the divorce. *On custody decisions*: "When parents can't agree, lawyers and judges decide. Try to be honest if they ask you questions; it will help them make better decisions." *On selling the house*: "If you move, you may have to say good-bye to friends and familiar places. But soon your new home will feel like the place you really belong." *On the economic impact of divorce*: "Living with one parent almost always means there will be less money. Be prepared to give up some things." *On holidays*: "Divorce may mean twice as much celebrating at holiday times, but you may feel pulled apart." *On parents' new lovers*: "You may sometimes feel jealous and want your parent to yourself. Be polite to your parents' new friends, even if you don't like them at first." *On parents' remarriage*: "Not everyone loves his or her stepparents, but showing them respect is important."

These cards and books point to an uncomfortable and generally unacknowledged fact: what contributes to a parent's happiness may detract from a child's happiness. All too often the adult quest for freedom, independence, and choice in family relationships conflicts with a child's developmental needs for stability, constancy, harmony, and permanence in family life. In short, family disruption creates a deep division between parents' interests and the interests of children.

One of the worst consequences of these divided interests is a withdrawal of parental investment in children's well-being. As the Stanford economist Victor Fuchs has pointed out, the main source of social investment in children is private. The investment comes from the children's parents. But parents in disrupted families have less time, attention, and money to devote to their children. The single most important source of disinvestment has been the widespread withdrawal of financial support and involvement by fathers. Maternal investment, too, has declined, as women try to raise families on their own and work outside the home. Moreover, both mothers and fathers commonly respond to family breakup by investing more heavily in themselves and in their own personal and romantic lives.

Sometimes the tables are completely turned. Children are called upon to invest in the emotional well-being of their parents. Indeed, this seems to be the larger message of many of the children's books on divorce and remarriage. *Dinosaurs Divorce* asks children to be sympathetic, understanding, respectful, and polite to confused, unhappy parents. The sacrifice comes from the children: "Be prepared to give up some things." In the world of divorcing dinosaurs, the children rather than the grown-ups are the exemplars of patience, restraint, and good sense.

Three Seventies Assumptions

AS IT FIRST TOOK SHAPE IN THE 1970S, THE OPTIMISTIC view of family change rested on three bold new assumptions. At that time, because the emergence of the changes in family life was so recent, there was little hard evidence to confirm or dispute these assumptions. But this was an expansive moment in American life.

The first assumption was an economic one: that a woman could now afford to be a mother without also being a wife. There were ample grounds for believing this. Women's work-force participation had been gradually increasing in the postwar period, and by the beginning of the 1970s women were a strong presence in the workplace. What's more, even though there was still a substantial wage gap between men and women, women had made considerable progress in a relatively short time toward better-paying jobs and greater employment opportunities. More women than ever before could aspire to serious careers as business executives, doctors, lawyers, airline pilots, and politicians. This circumstance, combined with the increased availability of child care, meant that women could take on the responsibilities of a breadwinner, perhaps even a sole breadwinner. This was particularly true for middle-class women. According to a highly regarded 1977 study by the Carnegie Council on Children, "The greater availability of jobs for women means that more middle-class children today survive their parents' divorce without a catastrophic plunge into poverty."

Feminists, who had long argued that the path to greater equality for women lay in the world of work outside the home, endorsed this assumption. In fact, for many, economic independence was a stepping-stone toward freedom from both men and marriage. As women began to earn their own money, they were less dependent on men or marriage, and marriage diminished in importance. In Gloria Steinem's memorable words, "A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle."

This assumption also gained momentum as the meaning of work changed for women. Increasingly, work had an expressive as well as an economic dimension: being a working mother not only gave you an income but also made you more interesting and fulfilled than a stay-at-home mother. Consequently, the optimistic economic

scenario was driven by a cultural imperative. Women would achieve financial independence because, culturally as well as economically, it was the right thing to do.

The second assumption was that family disruption would not cause lasting harm to children and could actually enrich their lives. *Creative Divorce: A New Opportunity for Personal Growth*, a popular book of the seventies, spoke confidently to this point: "Children can survive any family crisis without permanent damage—and grow as human beings in the process. . . ." Moreover, single-parent and stepparent families created a more extensive kinship network than the nuclear family. This network would envelop children in a web of warm and supportive relationships. "Belonging to a stepfamily means there are more people in your life," a children's book published in 1982 notes. "More sisters and brothers, including the step ones. More people you think of as grandparents and aunts and uncles. More cousins. More neighbors and friends. . . Getting to know and like so many people (and having them like you) is one of the best parts of what being in a stepfamily . . . is all about."

The third assumption was that the new diversity in family structure would make America a better place. Just as the nation has been strengthened by the diversity of its ethnic and racial groups, so it would be strengthened by diverse family forms. The emergence of these brave new families was but the latest chapter in the saga of American pluralism.

Another version of the diversity argument stated that the real problem was not family disruption itself but the stigma still attached to these emergent family forms. This lingering stigma placed children at psychological risk, making them feel ashamed or different; as the ranks of single-parent and stepparent families grew, children would feel normal and good about themselves.

These assumptions continue to be appealing, because they accord with strongly held American beliefs in social progress. Americans see progress in the expansion of individual opportunities for choice, freedom, and self-expression. Moreover, Americans identify progress with growing tolerance of diversity. Over the past half century, the pollster Daniel Yankelovich writes, the United States has steadily grown more open-minded and accepting of groups that were previously perceived as alien, untrustworthy, or unsuitable for public leadership or social esteem. One such group is the burgeoning number of single-parent and stepparent families.

The Education of Sara McLanahan

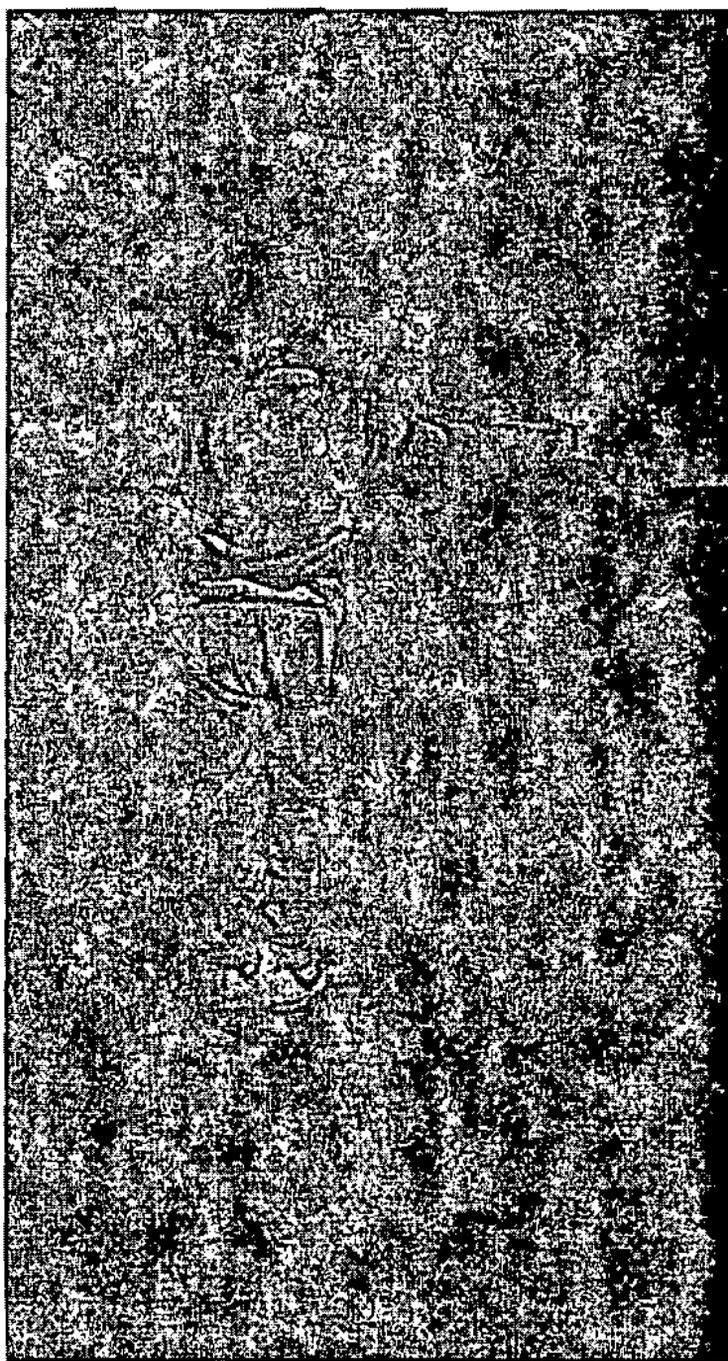
IN 1981 SARA MCLANAHAN, NOW A SOCIOLOGIST AT Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, read a three-part series by Ken Auletta in *The New Yorker*. Later published as a book titled *The Underclass*, the series presented a vivid portrait of the drug addicts, welfare mothers, and school dropouts who took part

in an education-and-training program in New York City. Many were the children of single mothers, and it was Auletta's clear implication that single-mother families were contributing to the growth of an underclass. McLanahan was taken aback by this notion. "It struck me as strange that he would be viewing single mothers at that level of pathology."

"I'd gone to graduate school in the days when the politically correct argument was that single-parent families were just another alternative family form, and it was fine," McLanahan explains, as she recalls the state of social-scientific thinking in the 1970s. Several empirical studies that were then current supported an optimistic view of family change. (They used tiny samples, however, and did not track the well-being of children over time.)

One, *All Our Kin*, by Carol Stack, was required reading for thousands of university students. It said that single mothers had strengths that had gone undetected and unappreciated by earlier researchers. The single-mother family, it suggested, is an economically resourceful and socially embedded institution. In the late 1970s McLanahan wrote a similar study that looked at a small sample of white single mothers and how they coped. "So I was very much of that tradition."

By the early 1980s, however, nearly two decades had passed since the changes in family life had begun. During the intervening years a fuller body of empirical research had emerged: studies that used large samples, or followed families through time, or did both. Moreover, several of the studies offered a child's-eye view of family disruption. The



National Survey on Children, conducted by the psychologist Nicholas Zill, had set out in 1976 to track a large sample of children aged seven to eleven. It also interviewed the children's parents and teachers. It surveyed its subjects again in 1981 and 1987. By the time of its third round of interviews the eleven-year-olds of 1976 were the twenty-two-year-olds of 1987. The California Children of Divorce Study, directed by Judith Wallerstein, a clinical psychologist, had also been going on for a decade. E. Mavis Hetherington, of the University of Virginia, was conducting a similar study of children from both intact and divorced families. For the first time it was possible to test the optimistic view against a large and longitudinal body of evidence.

It was to this body of evidence that Sara McLanahan turned. When she did, she found little to support the optimistic view of single motherhood. On the contrary. When she published her findings with

Irwin Garfinkel in a 1986 book, *Single Mothers and Their Children*, her portrait of single motherhood proved to be as troubling in its own way as Auletta's.

One of the leading assumptions of the time was that single motherhood was economically viable. Even if single mothers did face economic trials, they wouldn't face them for long, it was argued, because they wouldn't remain single for long; single motherhood would be a brief phase of three to five years, followed by marriage. Single mothers would be economically resilient: if they experienced setbacks, they would recover quickly. It was also said that single mothers would be supported by informal networks of family, friends, neighbors, and other single

mothers. As McLanahan shows in her study, the evidence demolishes all these claims.

For the vast majority of single mothers, the economic spectrum turns out to be narrow, running between precarious and desperate. Half the single mothers in the United States live below the poverty line. (Currently, one out of ten married couples with children is poor.) Many others live on the edge of poverty. Even single mothers who are far from poor are likely to experience persistent economic insecurity. Divorce almost always brings a decline in the standard of living for the mother and children.

Moreover, the poverty experienced by single mothers is no more brief than it is mild. A significant number of all single mothers never marry or remarry. Those who do, do so only after spending roughly six years, on average, as single parents. For black mothers the duration is much longer. Only 33 percent of African-American mothers had remarried within ten years of separation. Consequently, single motherhood is hardly a fleeting event for the mother, and it is likely to occupy a third of the child's childhood. Even the notion that single mothers are knit together in economically supportive networks is not borne out by the evidence. On the contrary, single parenthood forces many women to be on the move, in search of cheaper housing and better jobs. This need-driven restless mobility makes it more difficult for them to sustain supportive ties to family and friends, let alone other single mothers.

Single-mother families are vulnerable not just to poverty but to a particularly debilitating form of poverty: welfare dependency. The dependency takes two forms: First, single mothers, particularly unwed mothers, stay on welfare longer than other welfare recipients. Of those never-married mothers who receive welfare benefits, almost 40 percent remain on the rolls for ten years or longer. Second, welfare dependency tends to be passed on from one generation to the next. McLanahan says, "Evidence on intergenerational poverty indicates that, indeed, offspring from [single-mother] families are far more likely to be poor and to form mother-only families than are offspring who live with two parents most of their pre-adult life." Nor is the intergenerational impact of single motherhood limited to African-Americans, as many people seem to believe. Among white families, daughters of single parents are 53 percent more likely to marry as teenagers, 111 percent more likely to have children as teenagers, 164 percent more likely to have a premarital birth, and 92 percent more likely to dissolve their own marriages. All these intergenerational consequences of single motherhood increase the likelihood of chronic welfare dependency.

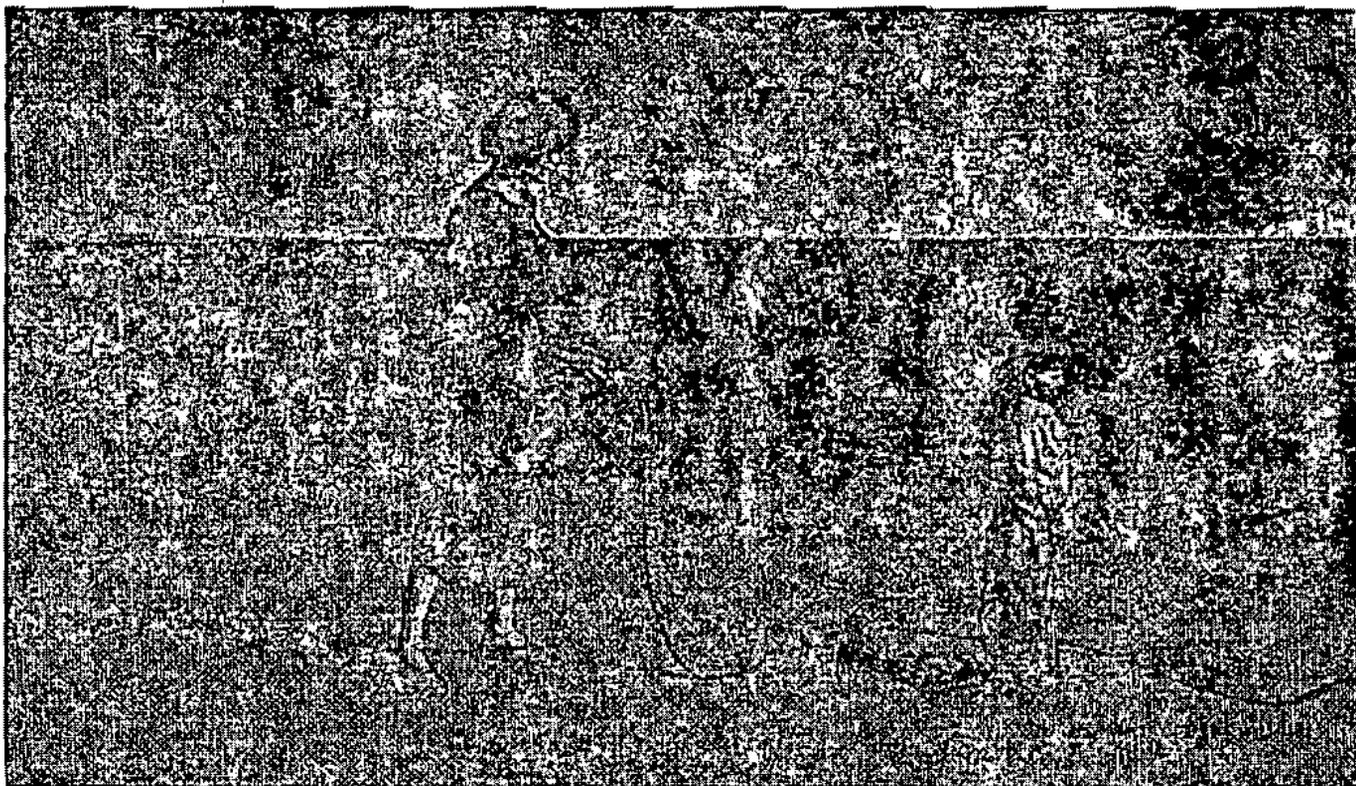
McLanahan cites three reasons why single-mother families are so vulnerable economically. For one thing, their earnings are low. Second, unless the mothers are widowed, they don't receive public subsidies large

enough to lift them out of poverty. And finally, they do not get much support from family members—especially the fathers of their children. In 1982 single white mothers received an average of \$1,246 in alimony and child support, black mothers an average of \$322. Such payments accounted for about 10 percent of the income of single white mothers and for about 3.5 percent of the income of single black mothers. These amounts were dramatically smaller than the income of the father in a two-parent family and also smaller than the income from a second earner in a two-parent family. Roughly 60 percent of single white mothers and 80 percent of single black mothers received no support at all.

Until the mid-1980s, when stricter standards were put in place, child-support awards were only about half to two-thirds what the current guidelines require. Accordingly, there is often a big difference in the living standards of divorced fathers and of divorced mothers with children. After divorce the average annual income of mothers and children is \$13,500 for whites and \$9,000 for nonwhites, as compared with \$25,000 for white nonresident fathers and \$13,600 for nonwhite nonresident fathers. Moreover, since child-support awards account for a smaller portion of the income of a high-earning father, the drop in living standards can be especially sharp for mothers who were married to upper-level managers and professionals.

Unwed mothers are unlikely to be awarded any child support at all, partly because the paternity of their children may not have been established. According to one recent study, only 20 percent of unmarried mothers receive child support.

Even if single mothers escape poverty, economic uncertainty remains a condition of life: Divorce brings a reduction in income and standard of living for the vast majority of single mothers. One study, for example, found that income for mothers and children declines on average about 30 percent, while fathers experience a 10 to 15 percent increase in income in the year following a separation. Things get even more difficult when fathers fail to meet their child-support obligations. As a result, many divorced mothers experience a wearing uncertainty about the family budget: whether the check will come in or not; whether new sneakers can be bought this month or not; whether the electric bill will be paid on time or not. Uncertainty about money triggers other kinds of uncertainty. Mothers and children often have to move to cheaper housing after a divorce. One study shows that about 38 percent of divorced mothers and their children move during the first year after a divorce. Even several years later the rate of moves for single mothers is about a third higher than the rate for two-parent families. It is also common for a mother to change her job or increase her working hours or both following a divorce. Even the composition of the household is likely to change, with other adults, such as boyfriends or babysitters, moving in and out.



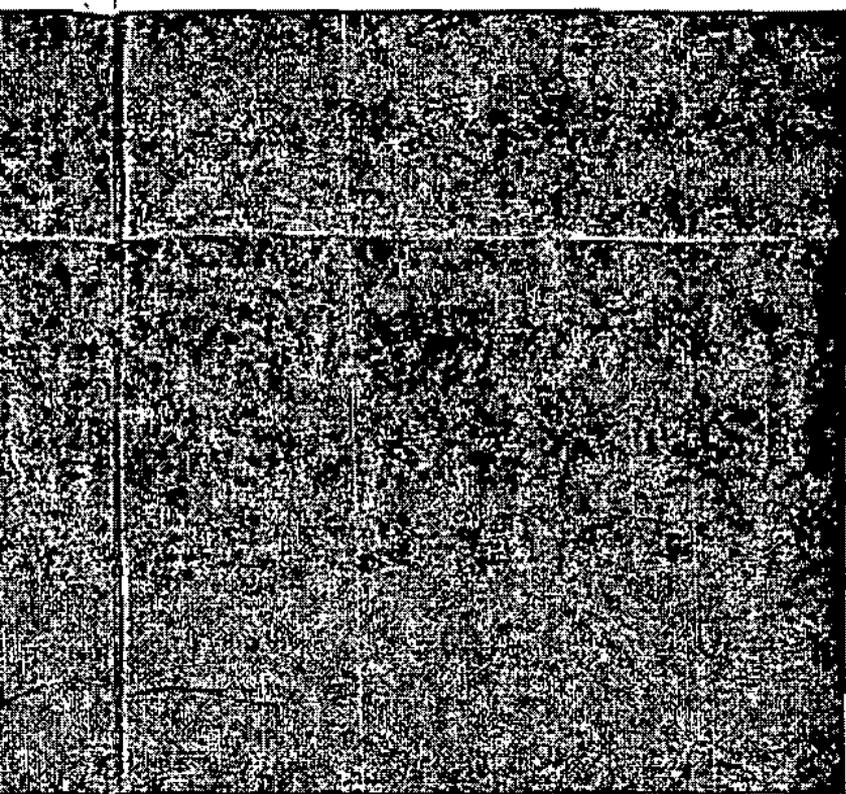
All this uncertainty can be devastating to children. Anyone who knows children knows that they are deeply conservative creatures. They like things to stay the same. So pronounced is this tendency that certain children have been known to request the same peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich for lunch for years on end. Children are particularly set in their ways when it comes to family, friends, neighborhoods, and schools. Yet when a family breaks up, all these things may change. The novelist Pat Conroy has observed that "each divorce is the death of a small civilization." No one feels this more acutely than children.

Sara McLanahan's investigation and others like it have helped to establish a broad consensus on the economic impact of family disruption on children. Most social scientists now agree that single motherhood is an important and growing cause of poverty, and that children suffer as a result. (They continue to argue, however, about the relationship between family structure and such economic factors as income inequality, the loss of jobs in the inner city, and the growth of low-wage jobs.) By the mid-1980s, however, it was clear that the problem of family disruption was not confined to the urban underclass, nor was its sole impact economic. Divorce and out-of-wedlock childbirth were affecting middle- and upper-class children, and these more privileged children were suffering negative consequences as well. It appeared that the problems associated with family breakup were far deeper and far more widespread than anyone had previously imagined.

The Missing Father

JUDITH WALLERSTEIN IS ONE OF THE PIONEERS IN RESEARCH on the long-term psychological impact of family disruption on children. The California Children of Divorce Study, which she directs, remains the most enduring study of the long-term effects of divorce on children and their parents. Moreover, it represents the best-known effort to look at the impact of divorce on middle-class children. The California children entered the study without pathological family histories. Before divorce they lived in stable, protected homes. And although some of the children did experience economic insecurity as the result of divorce, they were generally free from the most severe forms of poverty associated with family breakup. Thus the study and the resulting book (which Wallerstein wrote with Sandra Blakeslee), *Second Chances: Men, Women, and Children a Decade After Divorce* (1989), provide new insight into the consequences of divorce which are not associated with extreme forms of economic or emotional deprivation.

When, in 1971, Wallerstein and her colleagues set out to conduct clinical interviews with 131 children from the San Francisco area, they thought they were embarking on a short-term study. Most experts believed that divorce was like a bad cold. There was a phase of acute discomfort, and then a short recovery phase. According to the conventional wisdom, kids would be back on their feet in no time at all. Yet when Wallerstein met these children for a second interview more than a year later, she was



amazed to discover that there had been no miraculous recovery. In fact, the children seemed to be doing worse.

The news that children did not "get over" divorce was not particularly welcome at the time. Wallerstein recalls, "We got angry letters from therapists, parents, and lawyers saying we were undoubtedly wrong. They said children are really much better off being released from an unhappy marriage. Divorce, they said, is a liberating experience." One of the main results of the California study was to overturn this optimistic view. In Wallerstein's cautionary words, "Divorce is deceptive. Legally it is a single event, but psychologically it is a chain—sometimes a never-ending chain—of events, relocations, and radically shifting relationships strung through time, a process that forever changes the lives of the people involved."

Five years after divorce more than a third of the children experienced moderate or severe depression. At ten years a significant number of the now young men and women appeared to be troubled, drifting, and under-achieving. At fifteen years many of the thirtyish adults were struggling to establish strong love relationships of their own. In short, far from recovering from their parents' divorce, a significant percentage of these grownups were still suffering from its effects. In fact, according to Wallerstein, the long-term effects of divorce emerge at a time when young adults are trying to make their own decisions about love, marriage, and family. Not all children in the study suffered negative consequences. But Wallerstein's research presents a sobering picture of divorce.

"The child of divorce faces many additional psychological burdens in addition to the normative tasks of growing up," she says.

Divorce not only makes it more difficult for young adults to establish new relationships. It also weakens the oldest primary relationship: that between parent and child. According to Wallerstein, "Parent-child relationships are permanently altered by divorce in ways that our society has not anticipated." Not only do children experience a loss of parental attention at the onset of divorce, but they soon find that at every stage of their development their parents are not available in the same way they once were. "In a reasonably happy intact family," Wallerstein observes, "the child gravitates first to one parent and then to the other, using skills and attributes from each in climbing the developmental ladder." In a divorced family, children find it "harder to find the needed parent at needed times." This may help explain why very young children suffer the most as the result of family disruption. Their opportunities to engage in this kind of ongoing process are the most truncated and compromised.

The father-child bond is severely, often irreparably, damaged in disrupted families. In a situation without historical precedent, an astonishing and disheartening number of American fathers are failing to provide financial support to their children. Often, more than the father's support check is missing. Increasingly, children are bereft of any contact with their fathers. According to the National Survey of Children, in disrupted families only one child in six, on average, saw his or her father as often as once a week in the past year. Close to half did not see their father at all in the past year. As time goes on, contact becomes even more infrequent: "Ten years after a marriage breaks up, more than two thirds of children report not having seen their father for a year. Not surprisingly, when asked to name the "adults you look up to and admire," only 20 percent of children in single-parent families named their father, as compared with 52 percent of children in two-parent families. A favorite complaint among Baby Boom Americans is that their fathers were emotionally remote guys who worked hard, came home at night to eat supper, and didn't have much to say to or do with the kids. But the current generation has a far worse father problem: many of their fathers are vanishing entirely.

Even for fathers who maintain regular contact, the pattern of father-child relationships changes. The sociologists Andrew Cherlin and Frank Furstenberg, who have studied broken families, write that the fathers behave more like other relatives than like parents. Rather than helping with homework or carrying out a project with their children, nonresidential fathers are likely to take the kids shopping, to the movies, or out to dinner. Instead of providing steady advice and guidance, divorced fathers become "treat" dads.

Apparently—and paradoxically—it is the visiting relationship itself, rather than the frequency of visits, that is the real source of the problem. According to Wallerstein, the few children in the California study who reported visiting with their fathers once or twice a week over a ten-year period still felt rejected. The need to schedule a special time to be with the child, the repeated leave-takings, and the lack of connection to the child's regular, daily schedule leaves many fathers adrift, frustrated, and confused. Wallerstein calls the visiting father a parent without portfolio.

The deterioration in father-child bonds is most severe among children who experience divorce at an early age, according to a recent study. Nearly three quarters of the respondents, now young men and women, report having poor relationships with their fathers. Close to half have received psychological help, nearly a third have dropped out of high school, and about a quarter report having experienced high levels of problem behavior or emotional distress by the time they became young adults.

Survey after survey shows that Americans are less inclined than they were a generation ago to value sexual fidelity, lifelong marriage, and parenthood as worthwhile personal goals.

Long-Term Effects

SINCE MOST CHILDREN LIVE WITH THEIR MOTHERS after divorce, one might expect that the mother-child bond would remain unaltered and might even be strengthened. Yet research shows that the mother-child bond is also weakened as the result of divorce. Only half of the children who were close to their mothers before a divorce remained equally close after the divorce. Boys, particularly, had difficulties with their mothers. Moreover, mother-child relationships deteriorated over time. Whereas teenagers in disrupted families were no more likely than teenagers in intact families to report poor relationships with their mothers, 30 percent of young adults from disrupted families have poor relationships with their mothers, as compared with 16 percent of young adults from intact families. Mother-daughter relationships often deteriorate as the daughter reaches young adulthood. The only group in society that derives any benefit from these weakened parent-child ties is the

therapeutic community. Young adults from disrupted families are nearly twice as likely as those from intact families to receive psychological help.

Some social scientists have criticized Judith Wallerstein's research because her study is based on a small clinical sample and does not include a control group of children from intact families. However, other studies generally support and strengthen her findings. Nicholas Zill has found similar long-term effects on children of divorce, reporting that "effects of marital discord and family disruption are visible twelve to twenty-two years later in poor relationships with parents, high levels of problem behavior, and an increased likelihood of dropping out of high school and receiving psychological help." Moreover, Zill's research also found signs of distress in young women who seemed relatively well adjusted in middle childhood and adolescence. Girls in single-parent families are also at much greater risk for precocious sexuality, teenage marriage, teenage pregnancy, nonmarital birth, and divorce than are girls in two-parent families.

Zill's research shows that family disruption strongly affects school achievement as well. Children in disrupted families are nearly twice as likely as those in intact families to drop out of high school; among children who do drop out, those from disrupted families are less likely eventually to earn a diploma or a GED. Boys are at greater risk for dropping out than girls, and are also more likely to exhibit aggressive, acting-out behaviors.

Other research confirms these findings. According to a study by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, 33 percent of two-parent elementary school students are ranked as high achievers, as compared with 17 percent of single-parent students. The children in single-parent families are also more likely to be truant or late or to have disciplinary action taken against them. Even after controlling for race, income, and religion, scholars find significant differences in educational attainment between children who grow up in intact families and children who do not. In his 1992 study *America's Smallest School: The Family*, Paul Barton shows that the proportion of two-parent families varies widely from state to state and is related to variations in academic achievement. North Dakota, for example, scores highest on the math-proficiency test and second highest on the two-parent-family scale. The District of Columbia is second lowest on the math test and lowest in the nation on the two-parent-family scale.

Zill notes that "while coming from a disrupted family

significantly increases a young adult's risks of experiencing social, emotional or academic difficulties, it does not foreordain such difficulties. The majority of young people from disrupted families have successfully completed high school, do *not* currently display high levels of emotional distress or problem behavior, and enjoy reasonable relationships with their mothers." Nevertheless, a majority of these young adults do show maladjustment in their relationships with their fathers.

These findings underscore the importance of both a mother and a father in fostering the emotional well-being of children. Obviously, not all children in two-parent families are free from emotional turmoil, but few are burdened with the troubles that accompany family breakup. Moreover, as the sociologist Amitai Etzioni explains in a new book, *The Spirit of Community*, two parents in an intact family make up what might be called a mutually supportive education coalition. When both parents are present, they can play different, even contradictory, roles. One parent may goad the child to achieve,

while the other may encourage the child to take time out to daydream or toss a football around. One may emphasize taking intellectual risks, while the other may insist on following the teacher's guidelines. At the same time, the parents regularly exchange information about the child's school problems and achievements, and have a sense of the overall educational mission. However, Etzioni writes,

The sequence of divorce followed by a succession of boy or girlfriends, a second marriage, and frequently another divorce and another turnover of partners often means a repeatedly disrupted educational coalition. Each change in participants involves a change in the educational agenda for the child. Each new partner cannot be expected to pick up the previous one's educational post and program. . . . As a result, changes in parenting partners mean, at best, a deep disruption in a child's education, though of course several disruptions cut deeper into the effectiveness of the educational coalition than just one.

The Family and Public Policy

A NUMBER OF NEW PROPOSALS ADDRESS the problem of family disruption. Generally speaking, they have a single objective: to ensure that children have the support and commitment of both biological parents.

• The Family Support Act of 1988, which represents the culmination of a fifteen-year trend toward stricter child-support enforcement, has enabled states to impose legal child-support obligations on a greater number of absent fathers and to increase the percentage of absent fathers who actually meet their obligations.

For example, the Family Support Act contains the strongest legislation to date on paternal identification, the essential first step toward making a legally binding child-support award. In the cases of about three out of every four children born to unwed mothers, fathers have not been legally identified. Similarly, in the cases of

the great majority of mothers receiving AFDC benefits, the father is never identified or known to public agencies or officials. In the past many people reasoned that it was better to ignore the father—he was probably unable to support the child anyway, and might cause more trouble if he were around than if he remained absent. The 1988 legislation requires states to get the Social Security numbers of both parents when a birth certificate is issued. If paternity is in doubt or contested, the federal government will pay for 90 percent of the cost of genetic testing. Irwin Garfinkel, who has written a study of child support, estimates that this approach will establish paternity for half of the nation's nonmarital births by the turn of the century.

• The most comprehensive and most controversial proposal is one for a child-support-assurance program—a universal, non-means-tested entitlement plan akin to Survivors Insurance for widows. Child-support assurance would guarantee a standard level of child support—some propose \$2,500 a year for the first child in a family, and \$1,000, \$1,000, and \$500 for the second, third, and fourth children—to all single parents whose children live with them. The federal government would

serve as a collection agency for the support payments, withholding income from the nonresidential parent and mailing a monthly check to the parent with the children. In cases where the parent failed to meet the full support obligation, taxpayers would make up the difference. According to its advocates, the child-support-assurance plan would reduce the welfare burden in three ways: it would prevent some mothers from going on welfare, since they would be assured of regular support; it would reduce AFDC benefits dollar for dollar as support was collected from the father, and it would provide various incentives for mothers on welfare to get off it. For example, unlike a mother receiving AFDC, a working mother would be able to keep the full child-support benefit in addition to her working income. Consequently, child-support-assurance benefits would boost a family's income only if the mother went out and got a job. Moreover, this plan would create incentives for establishing legal paternity, since doing so would be necessary to qualify for benefits. And, the plan's advocates say, it would provide a nonstigmatizing, regularized system of guaranteed child support for all single parents. However, critics say that a plan of guar-

The Bad News About Stepparents

PERHAPS THE MOST STRIKING, AND POTENTIALLY disturbing, new research has to do with children in stepparent families. Until quite recently the optimistic assumption was that children saw their lives improve when they became part of a stepfamily. When Nicholas Zill and his colleagues began to study the effects of remarriage on children, their working hypothesis was that stepparent families would make up for the shortcomings of the single-parent family. Clearly, most children are better off economically when they are able to share in the income of two adults. When a second adult joins the household, there may be a reduction in the time and work pressures on the single parent.

The research overturns this optimistic assumption, however. In general the evidence suggests that remarriage neither reproduces nor restores the intact family structure, even when it brings more income and a second adult into the household. Quite the contrary. Indeed,

children living with stepparents appear to be even more disadvantaged than children living in a stable single-parent family. Other difficulties seem to offset the advantages of extra income and an extra pair of hands. However much our modern sympathies reject the fairy-tale portrait of stepparents, the latest research confirms that the old stories are anthropologically quite accurate. Stepfamilies disrupt established loyalties, create new uncertainties, provoke deep anxieties, and sometimes threaten a child's physical safety as well as emotional security.

Parents and children have dramatically different interests in and expectations for a new marriage. For a single parent, remarriage brings new commitments, the hope of enduring love and happiness, and relief from stress and loneliness. For a child, the same event often provokes confused feelings of sadness, anger, and rejection. Nearly half the children in Wallerstein's study said they felt left out in their stepfamilies. The National Commission on Children, a bipartisan group headed by Senator John D. Rockefeller, of West Virginia, reported that children

need child support would do nothing to reduce nonmarital births or to reinforce the principle of ultimate parental responsibility.

- In the meantime, several states have revived stigma as part of a larger effort to improve child-support collection. Massachusetts, a state with some experience in the public shaming of criminals, has replaced stocks on the common with posters of "deadbeat dads" on the six o'clock news.

- Changes in divorce law, too, can help children. Mary Ann Glendon, a professor at Harvard Law School, has proposed a "children first" principle in divorce proceedings. Under this rule, judges in litigated divorce cases would determine the best possible package of benefits, income, and services for the children. Only then would the judge turn to other issues, such as the division of remaining marital assets.

- Policy experts offer several proposals to reduce the likelihood of divorce for parents in low-conflict situations. One is to introduce a two-tier system of divorce law. Marriages between adults without minor children would be easy to dissolve, but marriages between adults with children would not. Another idea is to reintroduce some measure of fault in divorce, or to allow no-fault

divorce but establish marital fault in awarding alimony or dividing marital property.

- Economic forces significantly affect marriage-related behavior. With the loss of high-paying jobs for high school graduates and the disappearance of good jobs from many inner-city neighborhoods, the ability of young men to provide for a family has been declining. Improving job opportunities for young men would enhance their ability and presumably their willingness to form lasting marriages. Expanding the earned-income tax credit would also strengthen many families economically. According to one recent estimate, an expanded tax credit would lift a million full-time working families out of poverty. Still other proposals include raising the personal exemption for young children in lower- and middle-income families and increasing the value of the marriage deduction in the tax code by allowing married couples to split their incomes.

- Changing the welfare system to eliminate its disincentives to marry would help reduce out-of-wedlock motherhood, many experts suggest. New Jersey, for example, has proposed a plan to encourage marriage by continuing AFDC benefits to children if

their natural parents marry and live together in the home, as long as their income does not exceed state eligibility standards. Another idea, not yet tried in any state, is to provide a large one-time bonus to any woman who marries, leaves the AFDC rolls, and stays off for an extended period. Many people, including President Clinton, have called for the imposition of strict two-year time limits for AFDC.

- At least as important as changes in the law and public policy are efforts to change the cultural climate, particularly the media's messages about divorce and nonmarital childbirth. Parents consistently cite television, with its increasing use of sex, violence, or the two combined, as one of their strongest adversaries. One way to improve television programming would be to fully implement the provisions of the 1990 Children's Television Act, including the establishment of the National Endowment for Children's Educational Television. It would also be valuable to enlist the support of leaders in the entertainment industry—particularly sports and movie stars—in conveying to children that making babies out of wedlock is as stupid as doing drugs or dropping out of school. This might, of course, await more exemplary behavior by some of those stars.

from stepfamilies were more likely to say they often felt lonely or blue than children from either single-parent or intact families. Children in stepfamilies were the most likely to report that they wanted more time with their mothers. When mothers remarry, daughters tend to have a harder time adjusting than sons. Evidently, boys often respond positively to a male presence in the household, while girls who have established close ties to their mother in a single-parent family often see the stepfather as a rival and an intruder. According to one study, boys in remarried families are less likely to drop out of school than boys in single-parent families, while the opposite is true for girls.

A large percentage of children do not even consider stepparents to be part of their families, according to the National Survey on Children. The NSC asked children, "When you think of your family, who do you include?" Only 10 percent of the children failed to mention a biological parent, but a third left out a stepparent. Even children who rarely saw their noncustodial parents almost always named them as family members. The weak sense of attachment is mutual. When parents were asked the same question, only one percent failed to mention a biological child, while 15 percent left out a stepchild. In the same study stepparents with both natural children and stepchildren said that it was harder for them to love their stepchildren than their biological children and that their children would have been better off if they had grown up with two biological parents.

One of the most severe risks associated with stepparent-child ties is the risk of sexual abuse. As Judith Wallerstein explains, "The presence of a stepfather can raise the difficult issue of a thinner incest barrier." The incest taboo is strongly reinforced, Wallerstein says, by knowledge of paternity and by the experience of caring for a child since birth. A stepfather enters the family without either credential and plays a sexual role as the mother's husband. As a result, stepfathers can pose a sexual risk to the children, especially to daughters. According to a study by the Canadian researchers Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, preschool children in stepfamilies are forty times as likely as children in intact families to suffer physical or sexual abuse. (Most of the sexual abuse was committed by a third party, such as a neighbor, a stepfather's male friend, or another nonrelative.) Stepfathers discriminate in their abuse: they are far more likely to assault nonbiological children than their own natural children.

Sexual abuse represents the most extreme threat to children's well-being. Stepfamilies also seem less likely to make the kind of ordinary investments in the children that other families do. Although it is true that the stepfamily household has a higher income than the single-parent household, it does not follow that the additional income is reliably available to the children. To begin with, children's claim on stepparents' resources is shaky. Stepparents are not legally required to support stepchil-

dren, so their financial support of these children is entirely voluntary. Moreover, since stepfamilies are far more likely to break up than intact families, particularly in the first five years, there is always the risk—far greater than the risk of unemployment in an intact family—that the second income will vanish with another divorce. The financial commitment to a child's education appears weaker in stepparent families, perhaps because the stepparent believes that the responsibility for educating the child rests with the biological parent.

Similarly, studies suggest that even though they may have the time, the parents in stepfamilies do not invest as much of it in their children as the parents in intact families or even single parents do. A 1991 survey by the National Commission on Children showed that the parents in stepfamilies were less likely to be involved in a child's school life, including involvement in extracurricular activities, than either intact-family parents or single parents. They were the least likely to report being involved in such time-consuming activities as coaching a child's team, accompanying class trips, or helping with school projects. According to McLanahan's research, children in stepparent families report lower educational aspirations on the part of their parents and lower levels of parental involvement with schoolwork. In short, it appears that family income and the number of adults in the household are not the only factors affecting children's well-being.

Diminishing Investments

THESE ARE SEVERAL REASONS FOR THIS DIMINISHED interest and investment. In the law, as in the children's eyes, stepparents are shadowy figures. According to the legal scholar David Chambers, family law has pretty much ignored stepparents. Chambers writes, "In the substantial majority of states, stepparents, even when they live with a child, have no legal obligation to contribute to the child's support; nor does a stepparent's presence in the home alter the support obligations of a noncustodial parent. The stepparent also has . . . no authority to approve emergency medical treatment or even to sign a permission slip. . . ." When a marriage breaks up, the stepparent has no continuing obligation to provide for a stepchild, no matter how long or how much he or she has been contributing to the support of the child. In short, Chambers says, stepparent relationships are based wholly on consent, subject to the inclinations of the adult and the child. The only way a stepparent can acquire the legal status of a parent is through adoption. Some researchers also point to the cultural ambiguity of the stepparent's role as a source of diminished interest, while others insist that it is the absence of a blood tie that weakens the bond between stepparent and child.

Whatever its causes, the diminished investment in children in both single-parent and stepparent families has

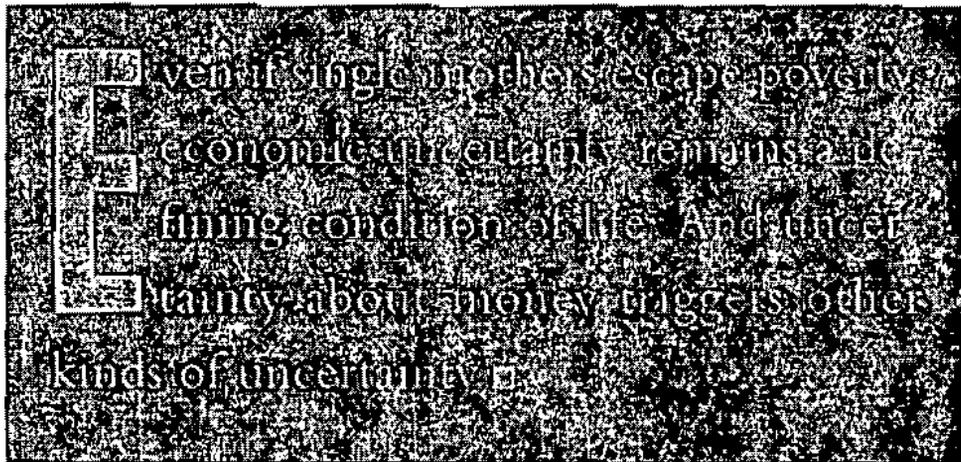
a significant impact on their life chances. Take parental help with college costs. The parents in intact families are far more likely to contribute to children's college costs than are those in disrupted families. Moreover, they are usually able to arrive at a shared understanding of which children will go to college, where they will go, how much the parents will contribute, and how much the children will contribute. But when families break up, these informal understandings can vanish. The issue of college tuition remains one of the most contested areas of parental support, especially for higher-income parents.

The law does not step in even when familial understandings break down. In the 1980s many states lowered the age covered by child-support agreements from twenty-one to eighteen, thus eliminating college as a cost associated with support for a minor child. Consequently, the question of college tuition is typically not addressed in child-custody agreements. Even in states where the courts do require parents to contribute to college costs, the requirement may be in jeopardy. In a recent decision

man, Terry, twenty-one, who had been tested as a gifted student, was doing blue-collar work irregularly.

Sixty-seven percent of the college-age students from disrupted families attended college, as compared with 85 percent of other students who attended the same high schools. Of those attending college, several had fathers who were financially capable of contributing to college costs but did not.

The withdrawal of support for college suggests that other customary forms of parental help-giving, too, may decline as the result of family breakup. For example, nearly a quarter of first-home purchases since 1980 have involved help from relatives, usually parents. The median amount of help is \$5,000. It is hard to imagine that parents who refuse to contribute to college costs will offer help in buying first homes, or help in buying cars or health insurance for young adult family members. And although it is too soon to tell, family disruption may affect the generational transmission of wealth. Baby Boomers will inherit their parents' estates, some substantial, accumulated over a lifetime



by parents who lived and saved together. To be sure, the postwar generation benefited from an expanding economy and a rising standard of living, but its ability to accumulate wealth also owed something to family stability. The lifetime assets, like the marriage itself, remained intact. It is unlikely that the children of disrupted families will be in so favorable a position.

in Pennsylvania the court overturned an earlier decision ordering divorced parents to contribute to college tuition. This decision is likely to inspire challenges in other states where courts have required parents to pay for college. Increasingly, help in paying for college is entirely voluntary.

Judith Wallerstein has been analyzing the educational decisions of the college-age men and women in her study. She reports that "a full 42 percent of these men and women from middle class families appeared to have ended their educations without attempting college or had left college before achieving a degree at either the two-year or the four-year level." A significant percentage of these young people have the ability to attend college. Typical of this group are Nick and Terry, sons of a college professor. They had been close to their father before the divorce, but their father remarried soon after the divorce and saw his sons only occasionally, even though he lived nearby. At age nineteen Nick had completed a few junior-college courses and was earning a living as a sales-

man. Terry, twenty-one, who had been tested as a gifted student, was doing blue-collar work irregularly. Moreover, children from disrupted families may be less likely to help their aging parents. The sociologist Alice Rossi, who has studied intergenerational patterns of help-giving, says that adult obligation has its roots in early-childhood experience. Children who grow up in intact families experience higher levels of obligation to kin than children from broken families. Children's sense of obligation to a nonresidential father is particularly weak. Among adults with both parents living, those separated from their father during childhood are less likely than others to see the father regularly. Half of them see their father more than once a year, as compared with nine out of ten of those whose parents are still married. Apparently a kind of bitter justice is at work here. Fathers who do not support or see their young children may not be able to count on their adult children's support when they are old and need money, love, and attention.

In short, as Andrew Cherlin and Frank Furstenburg put it, "Through divorce and remarriage, individuals are related to more and more people, to each of whom they

owe less and less." Moreover, as Nicholas Zill argues, weaker parent-child attachments leave many children more strongly exposed to influences outside the family, such as peers, boyfriends or girlfriends, and the media. Although these outside forces can sometimes be helpful, common sense and research opinion argue against putting too much faith in peer groups or the media as surrogates for Mom and Dad.

Poverty, Crime, Education

FAMILY DISRUPTION WOULD BE A SERIOUS PROBLEM even if it affected only individual children and families. But its impact is far broader. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to characterize it as a central cause of many of our most vexing social problems. Consider three problems that most Americans believe rank among the nation's pressing concerns: poverty, crime, and declining school performance.

More than half of the increase in child poverty in the 1980s is attributable to changes in family structure, according to David Eggebeen and Daniel Lichter, of Pennsylvania State University. In fact, if family structure in the United States had remained relatively constant since 1960, the rate of child poverty would be a third lower than it is today. This does not bode well for the future. With more than half of today's children likely to live in single-parent families, poverty and associated welfare costs threaten to become even heavier burdens on the nation.

Crime in American cities has increased dramatically and grown more violent over recent decades. Much of this can be attributed to the rise in disrupted families. Nationally, more than 70 percent of all juveniles in state reform institutions come from fatherless homes. A number of scholarly studies find that even after the groups of subjects are controlled for income, boys from single-mother homes are significantly more likely than others to commit crimes and to wind up in the juvenile justice, court, and penitentiary systems. One such study summarizes the relationship between crime and one-parent families in this way: "The relationship is so strong that controlling for family configuration erases the relationship between race and crime and between low income and crime. This conclusion shows up time and again in the literature." The nation's mayors, as well as police officers, social workers, probation officers, and court officials, consistently point to family breakup as the most important source of rising rates of crime.

Terrible as poverty and crime are, they tend to be concentrated in inner cities and isolated from the everyday experience of many Americans. The same cannot be said of the problem of declining school performance. Nowhere has the impact of family breakup been more profound or widespread than in the nation's public schools. There is a strong consensus that the schools are failing in their historic mission to prepare every Ameri-

can child to be a good worker and a good citizen. And nearly everyone agrees that the schools must undergo dramatic reform in order to reach that goal. In pursuit of that goal, moreover, we have suffered no shortage of bright ideas or pilot projects or bold experiments in school reform. But there is little evidence that measures such as curricular reform, school-based management, and school choice will address, let alone solve, the biggest problem schools face: the rising number of children who come from disrupted families.

The great educational tragedy of our time is that many American children are failing in school not because they are intellectually or physically impaired but because they are emotionally incapacitated. In schools across the nation principals report a dramatic rise in the aggressive, acting-out behavior characteristic of children, especially boys, who are living in single-parent families. The discipline problems in today's suburban schools—assaults on teachers, unprovoked attacks on other students, screaming outbursts in class—outstrip the problems that were evident in the toughest city schools a generation ago. Moreover, teachers find many children emotionally distracted, so upset and preoccupied by the explosive drama of their own family lives that they are unable to concentrate on such mundane matters as multiplication tables.

In response, many schools have turned to therapeutic remediation. A growing proportion of many school budgets is devoted to counseling and other psychological services. The curriculum is becoming more therapeutic: children are taking courses in self-esteem, conflict resolution, and aggression management. Parental advisory groups are conscientiously debating alternative approaches to traditional school discipline, ranging from teacher training in mediation to the introduction of metal detectors and security guards in the schools. Schools are increasingly becoming emergency rooms of the emotions, devoted not only to developing minds but also to repairing hearts. As a result, the mission of the school, along with the culture of the classroom, is slowly changing. What we are seeing, largely as a result of the new burdens of family disruption, is the psychologization of American education.

Taken together, the research presents a powerful challenge to the prevailing view of family change as social progress. Not a single one of the assumptions underlying that view can be sustained against the empirical evidence. Single-parent families are not able to do well economically on a mother's income. In fact, most teeter on the economic brink, and many fall into poverty and welfare dependency. Growing up in a disrupted family does not enrich a child's life or expand the number of adults committed to the child's well-being. In fact, disrupted families threaten the psychological well-being of children and diminish the investment of adult time and money in them. Family diversity in the form of increasing numbers of single-parent and stepparent families

does not strengthen the social fabric. It dramatically weakens and undermines society, placing new burdens on schools, courts, prisons, and the welfare system. These new families are not an improvement on the nuclear family, nor are they even just as good, whether you look at outcomes for children or outcomes for society as a whole. In short, far from representing social progress, family change represents a stunning example of social regress.

The Two-Parent Advantage

ALTHOUGH THIS EVIDENCE GIVES RISE TO AN OBVIOUS CONCLUSION: growing up in an intact two-parent family is an important source of advantage for American children. Though far from perfect as a social institution, the intact family offers children greater security and better outcomes than its fast-growing alternatives: single-parent and stepparent families. Not only does the intact family protect the child from

The debate about family structure is not simply about the social-scientific evidence, although that is important. It is also a debate over deeply held and often conflicting values.

poverty and economic insecurity; it also provides greater noneconomic investments of parental time, attention, and emotional support over the entire life course. This does not mean that all two-parent families are better for children than all single-parent families. But in the face of the evidence it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain the proposition that all family structures produce equally good outcomes for children.

Curiously, many in the research community are hesitant to say that two-parent families generally promote better outcomes for children than single-parent families. Some argue that we need finer measures of the extent of the family-structure effect. As one scholar has noted, it is possible, by disaggregating the data in certain ways, to make family structure "go away" as an independent variable. Other researchers point to studies that show that children suffer psychological effects as a result of family conflict preceding family breakup. Consequently, they reason, it is the conflict rather than the structure of the family that is responsible for many of the problems asso-

ciated with family disruption. Others, including Judith Wallerstein, caution against treating children in divorced families and children in intact families as separate populations, because doing so tends to exaggerate the differences between the two groups. "We have to take this family by family," Wallerstein says.

Some of the caution among researchers can also be attributed to ideological pressures. Privately, social scientists worry that their research may serve ideological causes that they themselves do not support, or that their work may be misinterpreted as an attempt to "tell people what to do." Some are fearful that they will be attacked by feminist colleagues, or, more generally, that their comments will be regarded as an effort to turn back the clock to the 1950s—a goal that has almost no constituency in the academy. Even more fundamental, it has become risky for anyone—scholar, politician, religious leader—to make normative statements today. This reflects not only the persistent drive toward "value neutrality" in the professions but also a deep confusion about the purposes of

public discourse. The dominant view appears to be that social criticism, like criticism of individuals, is psychologically damaging. The worst thing you can do is to make people feel guilty or bad about themselves.

When one sets aside these constraints, however, the case against the two-parent family is remarkably weak. It is true that disaggregating data can make family structure less significant as a factor, just as dis-

aggregating Hurricane Andrew into wind, rain, and tides can make it disappear as a meteorological phenomenon. Nonetheless, research opinion as well as common sense suggests that the effects of changes in family structure are great enough to cause concern. Nicholas Zill argues that many of the risk factors for children are doubled or more than doubled as the result of family disruption. "In epidemiological terms," he writes, "the doubling of a hazard is a substantial increase. . . . the increase in risk that dietary cholesterol poses for cardiovascular disease, for example, is far less than double, yet millions of Americans have altered their diets because of the perceived hazard."

The argument that family conflict, rather than the breakup of parents, is the cause of children's psychological distress is persuasive on its face. Children who grow up in high-conflict families, whether the families stay together or eventually split up, are undoubtedly at great psychological risk. And surely no one would dispute that there must be societal measures available, including divorce, to remove children from families where they are in

danger. Yet only a minority of divorces grow out of pathological situations; much more common are divorces in families unscarred by physical assault. Moreover, an equally compelling hypothesis is that family breakup generates its own conflict. Certainly, many families exhibit more conflictual and even violent behavior as a consequence of divorce than they did before divorce.

Finally, it is important to note that clinical insights are different from sociological findings. Clinicians work with individual families, who cannot and should not be defined by statistical aggregates. Appropriate to a clinical approach, moreover, is a focus on the internal dynamics of family functioning and on the immense variability in human behavior. Nevertheless, there is enough empirical evidence to justify sociological statements about the causes of declining child well-being and to demonstrate that despite the plasticity of human response, there are some useful rules of thumb to guide our thinking about and policies affecting the family.

For example, Sara McLanahan says, three structural constants are commonly associated with intact families, even intact families who would not win any "Family of the Year" awards. The first is economic. In intact families, children share in the income of two adults. Indeed, as a number of analysts have pointed out, the two-parent family is becoming more rather than less necessary, because more and more families need two incomes to sustain a middle-class standard of living.

McLanahan believes that most intact families also provide a stable authority structure. Family breakup commonly upsets the established boundaries of authority in a family. Children are often required to make decisions or accept responsibilities once considered the province of parents. Moreover, children, even very young children, are often expected to behave like mature adults, so that the grown-ups in the family can be free to deal with the emotional fallout of the failed relationship. In some instances family disruption creates a complete vacuum in authority; everyone invents his or her own rules. With lines of authority disrupted or absent, children find it much more difficult to engage in the normal kinds of testing behavior, the trial and error, the failing and succeeding, that define the developmental pathway toward character and competence. McLanahan says, "Children need to be the ones to challenge the rules. The parents need to set the boundaries and let the kids push the boundaries. The children shouldn't have to walk the straight and narrow at all times."

Finally, McLanahan holds that children in intact families benefit from stability in what she neutrally terms "household personnel." Family disruption frequently brings new adults into the family, including stepparents, live-in boyfriends or girlfriends, and casual sexual partners. Like stepfathers, boyfriends can present a real threat to children's, particularly to daughters', security and well-being. But physical or sexual abuse represents

only the most extreme such threat. Even the very best of boyfriends can disrupt and undermine a child's sense of peace and security, McLanahan says. "It's not as though you're going from an unhappy marriage to peacefulness. There can be a constant changing until the mother finds a suitable partner."

McLanahan's argument helps explain why children of widows tend to do better than children of divorced or unmarried mothers. Widows differ from other single mothers in all three respects. They are economically more secure, because they receive more public assistance through Survivors Insurance, and possibly private insurance or other kinds of support from family members. Thus widows are less likely to leave the neighborhood in search of a new or better job and a cheaper house or apartment. Moreover, the death of a father is not likely to disrupt the authority structure radically. When a father dies, he is no longer physically present, but his death does not dethrone him as an authority figure in the child's life. On the contrary, his authority may be magnified through death. The mother can draw on the powerful memory of the departed father as a way of intensifying her parental authority: "Your father would have wanted it this way." Finally, since widows tend to be older than divorced mothers, their love life may be less distracting.

Regarding the two-parent family, the sociologist David Popenoe, who has devoted much of his career to the study of families, both in the United States and in Scandinavia, makes this straightforward assertion:

Social science research is almost never conclusive. There are always methodological difficulties and stones left unturned. Yet in three decades of work as a social scientist, I know of few other bodies of data in which the weight of evidence is so decisively on one side of the issue: on the whole, for children, two-parent families are preferable to single-parent and stepfamilies.

The Regime Effect

THE RISE IN FAMILY DISRUPTION IS NOT UNIQUE to American society. It is evident in virtually all advanced nations, including Japan, where it is also shaped by the growing participation of women in the work force. Yet the United States has made divorce easier and quicker than in any other Western nation with the sole exception of Sweden—and the trend toward solo motherhood has also been more pronounced in America. (Sweden has an equally high rate of out-of-wedlock birth, but the majority of such births are to cohabiting couples, a long-established pattern in Swedish society.) More to the point, nowhere has family breakup been greeted by a more triumphant rhetoric of renewal than in America.

What is striking about this rhetoric is how deeply it reflects classic themes in American public life. It draws its language and imagery from the nation's founding myth.

It depicts family breakup as a drama of revolution and rebirth. The nuclear family represents the corrupt past, an institution guilty of the abuse of power and the suppression of individual freedom. Breaking up the family is like breaking away from Old World tyranny. Liberated from the bonds of the family, the individual can achieve independence and experience a new beginning, a fresh start, a new birth of freedom. In short, family breakup recapitulates the American experience.

This rhetoric is an example of what the University of Maryland political philosopher William Galston has called the "regime effect." The founding of the United States set in motion a new political order based to an unprecedented degree on individual rights, personal choice, and egalitarian relationships. Since then these values have spread beyond their original domain of political relationships to define social relationships as well. During the past twenty-five years these values have had a particularly profound impact on the family.

Increasingly, political principles of individual rights and choice shape our understanding of family commitment and solidarity. Family relationships are viewed not as permanent or binding but as voluntary and easily terminable. Moreover, under the sway of the regime effect the family loses its central importance as an institution in the civil society, accomplishing certain social goals such as raising children and caring for its members, and becomes a means to achieving greater individual happiness—a lifestyle choice. Thus, Galston says, what is happening to the American family reflects the "unfolding logic of authoritative, deeply American moral-political principles."

One benefit of the regime effect is to create greater equality in adult family relationships. Husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, enjoy relationships far more egalitarian than past relationships were, and most Americans prefer it that way. But the political principles of the regime effect can threaten another kind of family relationship—that between parent and child. Owing to their biological and developmental immaturity, children are needy dependents. They are not able to express their choices according to limited, easily terminable, voluntary agreements. They are not able to act as negotiators in family decisions, even those that most affect their own interests. As one writer has put it, "a newborn does not make a good partner." Correspondingly, the parental role is antithetical to the spirit of the regime. Parental investment in children involves a diminished investment in self, a willing deference to the needs and claims of the dependent child. Perhaps more than any other family relationship, the parent-child relationship—shaped as it is

by patterns of dependency and deference—can be undermined and weakened by the principles of the regime.

More than a century and a half ago Alexis de Tocqueville made the striking observation that an individualistic society depends on a communitarian institution like the family for its continued existence. The family cannot be constituted like the liberal state, nor can it be governed entirely by that state's principles. Yet the family serves as the seedbed for the virtues required by a liberal state. The family is responsible for teaching lessons of independence, self-restraint, responsibility, and right conduct, which are essential to a free, democratic society. If the family fails in these tasks, then the entire experiment in democratic self-rule is jeopardized.

To take one example: independence is basic to successful functioning in American life. We assume that most people in America will be able to work, care for themselves and their families, think for themselves, and inculcate the same traits of independence and initiative in their children. We depend on families to teach people to do these things. The erosion of the two-parent family undermines the capacity of families to impart this knowledge; children of long-term welfare-dependent single parents are far more likely than others to be dependent themselves. Similarly, the children in disrupted families have a harder time forging bonds of trust with others and giving and getting help across the generations. This, too, may lead to greater dependency on the resources of the state.

Over the past two and a half decades Americans have been conducting what is tantamount to a vast natural experiment in family life. Many would argue that this experiment was necessary, worthwhile, and long overdue. The results of the experiment are coming in, and they are clear. Adults have benefited from the changes in family life in important ways, but the same cannot be said for children. Indeed, this is the first generation in the nation's history to do worse psychologically, socially, and economically than its parents. Most poignantly, in survey after survey the children of broken families confess deep longings for an intact family.

Nonetheless, as Galston is quick to point out, the regime effect is not an irresistible undertow that will carry away the family. It is more like a swift current, against which it is possible to swim. People learn; societies can change, particularly when it becomes apparent that certain behaviors damage the social ecology, threaten the public order, and impose new burdens on core institutions. Whether Americans will act to overcome the legacy of family disruption is a crucial but as yet unanswered question. □

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

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April 11, 1997

April 11, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Expanded Family and Medical Leave Policies

I have strongly supported meeting Federal employees' family and medical leave needs through enactment of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) and the Federal Employees Family Friendly Leave Act of 1994 (FEFFLA). However, Federal employees often have important family and medical needs that do not qualify for unpaid leave under the FMLA or sick leave under the FEFFLA. I ask you to take immediate action to assist Federal workers further in balancing the demands of work and family.

Last year I proposed to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. My legislation would allow Federal and eligible private sector workers 24 hours of unpaid leave during any 12-month period to fulfill certain family obligations. Under the legislation, employees could use unpaid leave to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of a child, including early childhood education activities; accompany children to routine medical and dental examinations; and tend to the needs of older relatives.

In furtherance of my proposed policy, I ask that you take immediate action within existing statutory authorities to ensure that Federal employees may schedule and be granted up to 24 hours of leave without pay each year for the following activities:

(1) SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES -- to allow employees to participate in school activities directly related to the educational advancement of a child. This would include parent-teacher conferences or meetings with child-care providers, interviewing for a new school or child-care facility, or participating in volunteer activities supporting the child's educational advancement. In this memorandum, "school" refers to an elementary school, secondary school, Head Start program, or a child-care facility.

(2) ROUTINE FAMILY MEDICAL PURPOSES -- to allow parents to accompany children to routine medical or dental appointments, such as annual checkups or vaccinations. Although these activities are not currently covered by the FMLA, the FEFFLA does permit employees to use up to 13 days of sick leave each year for such purposes. Agencies should assure that employees are able to use up to 24 hours of leave without pay each year for these purposes in cases when no additional sick leave is available to employees.

more

(OVER)

(3) ELDERLY RELATIVES' HEALTH OR CARE NEEDS -- to allow employees to accompany an elderly relative to routine medical or dental appointments or other professional services related to the care of the elderly relative, such as making arrangements for housing, meals, phones, banking services, and other similar activities. Although Federal employees can use unpaid leave or sick leave for certain of these activities under the FMLA or FEFLA, such as caring for a parent with a serious health condition, agencies should ensure employees can use up to 24 hours of unpaid time off each year for this broader range of activities related to elderly relatives' health or care needs.

This new policy will assure that Federal employees can schedule and receive up to 24 hours away from the job each year for these family and medical circumstances. I also urge you to accommodate these employee needs as mission requirements permit, even when it is not possible for employees to anticipate or schedule leave in advance for these purposes. In addition, I ask that you support employees' requests to schedule paid time off -- such as annual leave, compensatory time off, and credit hours under flexible work schedules -- for these family activities when such leave is available to these employees. The Office of Personnel Management shall provide guidance to you on the implementation of this memorandum.

I encourage you to use a partnership approach with your employees and their representatives in developing an effective program that balances the employees' needs to succeed both at work and at home. I ask agencies, unions, and management associations to continue to work together to assess and improve the use of family-friendly programs and to make certain that employees are aware of the expanded family and medical leave policy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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For Working Parents, Mixed News at Home

Children Praise Them but Note Stress

By KIRSTIN DOWNEY GRIMSLEY
and JACQUELINE L. SALMON
Washington Post Staff Writers

High school senior Emily Small, of Arlington, is quick to detect the signs of work pressure in her parents' lives. Her mother, Susan, 49, a part-time teacher, breaks out in hives; her father, Joe, 52, a lawyer who often works 11-hour days, turns snappish, and his sense of humor disappears.

Those are the days, Small says, when she doesn't mention that she has had a good day because she can tell from her dad's face that he hasn't.

"Those are the times you don't go near him," said Emily, 17, adding that she wishes her father could work fewer days and not worry so much about work when he is home. "He's so stressed," she said.

Two-thirds of U.S. children share similar worries about their parents, mainly because of what they perceive as work-related stress and fatigue, according to a new study of family life by researcher Ellen Galinsky, president of the Families and Work Institute, a New York think tank that tracks workplace trends. The study, among the first to take such questions to children rather than their parents, is sparking debate on talk shows and at kitchen tables across the country, as families seek to navigate through the conflicting pressures of life.

Launched in the Washington area in 1997 and then broadened to 15 states, the new research comes at a time when other studies show Americans working harder and

longer, with many feeling intense financial pressures, in some cases because of overspending.

Galinsky's study is based on random surveys of 1,023 children in grades 3 through 12 who filled out questionnaires, as well as on in-depth interviews with 170 parents and children and telephone interviews of 605 other employed parents. The findings are published in a new book called "Ask the Children: What America's Children Really Think About Working Parents."

Galinsky, interviewed at a Washington hotel last week, said that children from the Washington area and New York City were particularly aware of their parents' stress levels, heightened, she said, by long commutes, traffic congestion, the high cost of living and raised expectations for achievement.

In general, children in the study gave their parents high marks in parenting but wished they were under less stress—even as the children indicated they worried about their families' finances.

Contrary to parents' beliefs, most youngsters didn't say they want more time with their parents. Instead, they want better communication and more "focused" time, with parents being less strained and tired. About 56 percent of employed parents thought their offspring wanted more time with them, but only 10 percent of the children wished for more time with their mother, and 15.5 percent said the same of their father.

"The major issue for kids is not that parents work," Galinsky said. "What kids are concerned about is how they work."

Children in the study didn't view employed and at-home mothers differently, or mothers who work full or part time—grading them about the same on attributes such as "making me feel important and loved," "spending time talking with me" and "knowing what is really going on in my life."

Although no one is publicly disputing Galinsky's findings, some family research organizations disagree with her interpretations.

The book is "a guilt-buster," said Janet Parshall, of the Family Research Council, a Washington-based advocacy group. "This [book says] to working mothers in particular, 'Don't worry about it; your kids love it when you work.'"

Parshall said working mothers are understandably stressed because they have to jam so many tasks into short periods, but she said it's a choice many women make freely. Galinsky's study, she said, is "trying to assuage that decision that the working mom makes to go out and self-actualize because she is living, sadly, in a culture that is devaluing the pricelessness of motherhood."

Galinsky said that she shares the Family Research Council's interest in improving family life, but that Parshall's belief that many women work out of choice is in error; in most households, Galinsky said, women work out of financial necessity.

Household income for families has remained almost flat over the last 20 years despite the mass entrance of mothers into the work force, studies have shown. "Most parents are not running to get ahead," Galinsky writes. "Essentially, they are running to stay in place, to preserve their standard of living."

Barbara Schneider, co-director of the Alfred P. Sloan Center on Parents, Children and Work at the University of Chicago, has studied 1,200 high-schoolers nationwide over the last nine years. Like Galinsky, Schneider found no long-term negative effect from having a working mother.

"There are other problems in children's lives, and it's not the fact

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The Washington Post
Monday, September 27, 1999

that their parents are working," she said. "It's the fact that their parents aren't communicating with them that they have the most problems with."

Rather than children being focused on their working mothers, the bigger issue is the work status of their fathers, Galinsky reported. Children gave nonemployed fathers and those who work part time lower grades when it comes to making them feel "important and loved." Galinsky speculated that reflects societal expectations that men should be the economic providers, or that men who are unemployed may be depressed and nonresponsive to their children.

Even though studies have shown that today's fathers do more with their children, the children still view dads more negatively than moms. About 92 percent of Galinsky's subjects gave their mothers high marks for "being there for me when I am sick," compared with less than 75 percent who said that about their fathers; about 71 percent of moms but only 62 percent of dads were described as "being involved with what is happening to me at school."

Rockville father Peter Boyce jug-

gies the demands of his, three daughters and his job as director of conservation for the Department of Defense. Boyce, 53, has been leading his daughters' Girl Scout troops for nine years and eats lunch at his desk to get home early for family time. When he and his wife adopted their third child, Boyce came to work late each morning for six months.

Galinsky and other researchers say the long work hours increasingly common in the United States appear to be taking a toll on family life. An analysis released this month by the International Labour Organization, a United Nations agency, found that Americans now surpass every other industrialized nation in time spent on the job, with U.S. workers putting in the equivalent of two weeks more per year than the Japanese.

Over the last two decades, American fathers' time at work has increased by 3.1 hours per week, according to the Families and Work Institute; for mothers, it's 5.2 hours. Employed fathers with children younger than 18 now work an average of 50.9 hours per week; working mothers, 41.4 hours.

Galinsky cites "the relentless

volley of work ... the fact that there is no safe haven," as a stress-builder. "E-mail, voice mail, cell phones and portable computers all have eroded the boundaries between work time and nonwork time. They foster expectations of an instant response, of 24-hour-a-day availability," she writes.

Indeed, many companies are demanding greater productivity from their work force, said management consultant Mary Symmes, who counsels overstressed workers: "Employees tend to feel they have to work tougher, harder, longer hours. Employers' demands have increased. Everything is speeding up, going faster."

Life is "100 percent more stressful" than it used to be, agreed Dan Lagasse, 39, an Alexandria father of three (soon to be four) who said that in his job maintaining communications systems for the defense industry, "we work 365 days a year, 24 hours a day." The price, he said, is that he sometimes feels he has "no family life at all."

About 34 percent of children in Galinsky's study wished their parents were less stressed and tired. Even young children can pick up on the tension.

Seven-year-old Emilie Svenhager, of Lake Ridge, vividly recalls what it was like when her mother, Petra, 35, a single parent, managed a retail store at Potomac Mills earlier this year. Sometimes "she came home in the middle of the night," said Emily, and "she'd yell at the cat."

Some of that parental stress is self-imposed. Symmes said she sees a steady stream of workers who are "overachievers who can't rest for a minute" and who add more and more activities to their schedules until major problems erupt.

E. Thomas Garman, professor of consumer affairs and family financial management at Virginia Tech, said parents' materialism may contribute to feelings of financial stress. In one group of upper-middle-income workers in the Midwest that Garman studied, about 40 percent reported financial stresses, particularly in comparison to neighbors they perceived as more affluent.

"Now it's not just trying to keep up with the Joneses," he said. "Now it's more like they are trying to keep up with [Bill] Gates."

Some of that can be blamed on mass consumerism, but some is

actual need. Nationally, about one in every five children lives below the poverty line (\$16,600 for a family of four). Garman's studies have found that in families that earn the nation's median income—\$37,000—about 90 percent report financial stress.

One-quarter of the children in Galinsky's study wished their parents made more money; children who reported their families have a "hard time buying the things we need" were more likely to wish their moms and dad earned more. Galinsky said these children may see more money as a way to lessen family stress.

Even though her family lives a typical middle-class life, Rockville teenager Adrienne Boyce feels nervous about the future when she sees her parents struggle to balance their lives.

"It's a lot of work," said Boyce, 17, a senior at Richard Montgomery High School. "In addition to what you do 9 to 5, you also have to do other chores like make beds, clean the house, go grocery shopping, look after the car, pay your bills. It's kind of discouraging to know that in addition to working all that time, you have to do other things, too."

Families -
Paid Leave

How Not to Help New Parents

By Jerry Jasinowski

NATURALLY government and employers want to help Americans balance their family lives and their jobs. But the Clinton administration's plan to let states use unemployment insurance money to pay employees on leave after the birth of children is shortsighted, misguided and politically motivated.

Unemployment insurance is a rainy day fund, and during periods of recession like the late 70's and early 80's, it has come perilously close to bankruptcy in some states. It's easy to forget those bad times as we enjoy an unprecedented economic expansion, but it is dangerously myopic to ignore the cyclical nature of our economy.

Jerry Jasinowski is president of the National Association of Manufacturers.

With the number of women eligible to take advantage of paid leave under the Clinton proposal as high as 1.9 million a year, the policy that Mr. Clinton recommends would seriously drain unemployment insurance

Clinton's plan
risks the safety net
for U.S. workers.

funds, even without the inevitable economic downturn. And this number does not even consider the significant number of men who could be eligible to collect these benefits as well.

Unemployment insurance is supposed to help keep the unemployed afloat while they look for new jobs. Workers taking leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act are in

a different situation altogether. They are voluntarily stepping out of the work force and are entitled to go back to their jobs after three months.

Most manufacturers have adopted programs to help their employees balance work and family life. They have found that flexible scheduling, expanded birth and adoption leave, on-site day care and other programs for parents help boost morale, productivity and retention of employees.

Undermining the unemployment safety net by dipping into what looks like a leftover pot of money during good times is the wrong way to help working parents.

By unilaterally moving forward with this proposal, despite objections from members of Congress, employers and — most importantly — state officials who administer the unemployment insurance system, President Clinton has shown that he is more interested in fulfilling old campaign promises to make the family leave law a government-run paid-leave program than in fiscally sound public policy. □

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1999

A Better Way to Test a Candidate's Mettle

By Garry Wills

EVANSTON, Ill. — The presidential character issue is back (it never seems to be gone for long). Does John McCain's terrific anger tell us something terrible about him? Does Al Gore's putative beta-ness on the Greek alphabet scale — or the attempt by Naomi Wolf, feminist and political adviser, to push him to alpha-ness — mean that he does not have the virility to rule? The questions are typical of the slippery way "character" is invoked as an indicator of electability.

In a country where the two-party system works toward compromise and the muting of issues, we lack the clear ideological clashes of multiparty contestants in a parliamentary system. Since defined views rarely keep their edge in the push of our parties toward the middle, we need some other way of gauging a candidate. "Character" has been the substitute of choice in recent times.

But character is about as mushy in sense as the two-party contenders' own rhetoric. For James David Barber, whose 1972 book, "The Presiden-

Garry Wills is the author, most recently, of "A Necessary Evil: A History of American Distrust of Government."

tial Character: Predicting Performance in the White House," set the terms of debate for a while, character was temperament. The man whose success we could predict had to be optimistic (so much for Lincoln), power-loving (so much for Washington), and confident (so much for Madison).

What Mr. Barber clearly meant is that the "good president should be Franklin Roosevelt as interpreted by

Presidential character is an overrated virtue.

Richard Neustadt. Since presidents like F.D.R. do not come along very often, the use of Mr. Barber's norms for predicting White House performance was unsuccessful, even in his own hands (he predicted greatness for Jimmy Carter).

Gail Sheehy became a self-styled character cop with her 1988 book, "Character: America's Search for Leadership." According to her psychometric schemata, Michael Dukakis was the most presidential candidate of that year.

William Bennett, the virtuecrat,

and others hold that character means that the politician should be a moral role model — someone you hope your children will emulate. But the rough-and-tumble world of politics tends to make its tested practitioners suspicious to the verge of paranoia and devious to the verge of mendacity. Saints are better sought in other lines of work — as the public recognized when it failed to share Mr. Bennett's horror over Mr. Clinton's sex life, so long as he kept the country prosperous.

The test of a leader is not temperament or virtue, but the ability to acquire followers. Some leaders do that by F.D.R.'s methods, others do it by Lincoln's methods — or in other ways. The point is that such leaders connect with others and influence them. What disqualifies a leader is the kind of flaw that would turn away followers. By that measure, Mr. McCain's anger is not what a pastor would encourage for the good of a man's soul, but it makes little difference at all in his ability to attract followers. Anger is something we all understand, something we expect or allow for in people under pressure — even in so disciplined a man as George Washington or so amiable a man as Dwight Eisenhower.

As for Mr. Gore's status as the beta male of the moment, that is probably less a matter of his innate character than his current status. A vice presi-

dent who runs for president is bound to look hobbled by his necessarily subordinate role. In 1988, George Will called George Bush (père) a "lap dog," and Garry Trudeau accused him of putting his manhood in trust while he served under Ronald Reagan. Ms. Sheehy wrote of Mr. Bush at the time: "His voice is the squeaky piccolo to Reagan's mellow cello."

Mr. Bush was the rare vice president who moved up despite the disadvantage of his office. In 1960, Richard Nixon looked feckless against John F. Kennedy when he had to defend Eisenhower policies he actually disliked. He had to leave office and build a new base for his successful run eight years later. Lyndon Johnson succeeded Kennedy by death, but even that macho Texan would have looked like Kennedy's doorman if he had been forced to run as a successor in the normal way.

Al Gore's apparent weakness is less a matter of character than of temporary duty, and it makes sense to try to overcome this structural problem all vice presidents experience when they try to move up. That he would do so with the help of a person bequeathed him by his boss's evil genius, Dick Morris, and that he would try to hide his use of Naomi Wolf is not a flaw in character but a stunning lapse in intelligence. We do not demand saints in office, but we do want our presidents to be smart. Some question George W. Bush's intelligence and wonder whether he is dumb, especially after last week, when he was unable to recall the names of foreign leaders. But there is no doubt that Mr. Gore was dumb about Ms. Wolf. Forget Mr. Barber's, Ms. Sheehy's and Mr. Bennett's theories on presidential character. Look at the real question: competence. □

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REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Family Policy

Families First

The family leave bill is mostly about enacting another set of rules handed down by Washington. But at least it gets the subject of family life in America onto the table.

The bill has been hurtling through Congress this week as fast as a reckless kid on roller blades. The full Senate may vote on it today and it could reach the House as early as next week. President Clinton, who asked Congress for the quick action, vows to sign the bill, which is nearly identical to the one President Bush vetoed twice. The bill would require all employers with more than 50 workers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for employees to care for newborns, newly adopted children or sick relatives.

Many employers have discovered for themselves that family-leave policies make good business sense; they can help attract and keep workers. But it's not self-evident that saddling business with mandatory extra expenses is the best way to help the family. How does it help kids if Mom or Dad gets laid off, or more likely isn't hired, because the boss is diverting what would have been their salary into another mandated benefit cost? American families are indeed in distress, but the problem isn't lack of new benefits; it's lack of respect.

This is the message of "Families First," a report issued earlier this month by the National Commission on America's Urban Families. "The family trend of our time," it says, "is the deinstitutionalization of marriage and the steady disintegration of the mother-father child-raising unit." All too often government policies undermine the authority of the family, it found. To reverse that trend, the commission outlines a detailed strategy for strengthening the family as our central social institution.

Its recommendations are aimed at encouraging marriage and increasing the proportion of children who live in intact, two-parent homes. Unless we fix the family, it says, we can't solve the problems of education, crime or poverty. This is not a new idea. As demographers have demonstrated again and again, children from single-parent homes are far more likely to be poor, have trouble in school and turn to crime.

The commission, appointed by President Bush, was bipartisan, and many of its recommendations are similar to those of the Progressive Policy Institute, the think tank of the Democratic Leadership Council, of which President Clinton was a founding member. Among the commission's recommendations:

- Ease the tax burden on families.

Increase the tax differential between single earners and married couples. Either significantly increase the tax exemption for children or introduce a child tax credit.

- Increase parental authority in education. Establish school choice and seek parents' guidance in sex education curricula. When sex education is taught, stress abstinence as the best protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Do not distribute condoms in schools unless parents approve.

- Reform state laws on divorce. Reconsider the no-fault divorce laws, now the norm in 40 states.

- Identify the father of every child. All states should ensure that a document exists at birth to identify the name and Social Security number of

Family Strength Index

Indicator	1977	1980	1982
Married adults	71.7%	65.5%	61.9%
First marriages intact	73.3	67.7	62.5
Births to married parents	89.3	82.2	72.9
Children living with their married parents	66.7	64.0	60.8
Children living with two married parents	85.2	76.7	72.5
Index	78	71	66

Sources: Census Bureau, National Commission on America's Urban Families

both parents. If a mother applies for welfare, failure to identify the father should result in lower benefits.

- Improve efforts to collect child-support payments. Require parents to report child-support obligations to the IRS, which will deduct delinquent payments from tax refunds. Speed up efforts to create a nationwide child-support computer network, expanding it to include IRS information to help in locating absent parents.

Ideas like this are likely to be unpopular among liberal sophisticates, who maintain that "family values" is code for racism, sexism and homophobia. That is hyperbolic; there are simply far too many people who feel families are under undue pressure these days.

The Administration will soon be drafting its social legislation. We suspect that both the Clintons and Gores are well aware of what has a lot of people worried about family life today. The national commission has come to some very sensible conclusions about how we've gone off the track and how to get back on it. We will have to see if any of it finds its way into the Clinton proposals.

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Imagine What Candidate Clinton Might Have Said

President Clinton's puzzling, stumbling start begins to make sense only if you imagine that there was a secret campaign speech that he never got around to delivering last year.

The speech must have been drafted last May, when Ross Perot was at his peak in the polls and the Clinton campaign was searching for a dramatic message to break out of third place. Among baby boom staffers, it might have been called the "Paul Is Dead" speech, after the Beatles' record that could be played backward. Every campaign pollster would have gone into cardiac arrest while reading it. Here are some excerpts:

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to talk today about the future. For 12 years we have been governed by the something-for-nothing crowd. I promise you today that I will be the something-for-everybody president. No group, no constituency will go unrepresented in a Clinton administration. I have a vision of diversity, of a cabinet as diverse as the Harvard faculty. My attorney general will be a woman whose household alone is a beautiful mosaic. . . .

To prove I'm serious today, I promise that my first priority as president will be to lift the ban on gays in the military. Ahead of health care, ahead of welfare reform, ahead even of economic growth — I will spend precious political capital to achieve this cultural change that is so critical to our future.

Yes, the mastodons of reaction will resist, but I will insist. Sam Nunn and Congress will resist, but I will stand firm. The black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will resist, but I will say this is no different from integrating blacks in the armed forces during the Korean War. . . .

I also have a vision of diversity for the office of the presidency. It can be a lonely office. That is why I plan to share it with my closest political adviser, my partner Hillary Rodham Clinton.

If I'm elected I will put Hillary in charge of health care — indeed of virtually all

Potomac Watch

By Paul A. Gigot

domestic policy in my administration. Her allies, including many from her Rose law firm in Little Rock, will dominate the White House and Justice Department.

Now, some of my advisers tell me that Hillary should "soften" her image by doing such traditional things as baking cookies in a contest with Barbara Bush. I reject that advice. That is not Hillary. That would be dishonest. . . .

My fellow Americans, we also need to stop criticizing Congress. The cause of Washington gridlock is the Bush White House, not the Democratic Congress. There is nothing wrong with Congress that cannot be cured by what is right with Congress.

That is why when Jack Brooks tells me to reauthorize the special prosecutor law, I will oblige. That is also why I want to share center stage at our New York convention in July with George Mitchell, Tom Foley, Bob Byrd. . . .

With Congress in mind, I also plan to transfer the House Budget Committee — lock, stock and tax-the-rich tables — into my own White House budget office. Such astute and dedicated revenue enhancers as Leon Panetta will warn me when I'll need to abandon my promise of a line-item veto for the sake of good relations with Congress.

Which brings me to the economy — and especially to the deficit created by 12 years of greed and Republican misrule. Ladies and gentlemen, I have decided that Paul Tsongas was right about the middle-class tax cut. It is pandering. The deficit forces us to confront difficult choices and I will make those choices.

So as president I promise to raise taxes on the middle class — perhaps with a gas tax, perhaps an energy tax, but some kind of tax. The word that I hope will become the watchword of my administration — other than "diversity," of course — is "sacrifice." Not just for the rich, but for every American. . . .

We must also have the courage to change, to go back to the future, in foreign policy. I respect what President Bush has accomplished on Haiti, on China and even on Iraq. (Speechwriter's note: Compare this section to speech that Al Gore's staff is writing on Iraq-gate.) The problem is that these policies have been run by Cold War thinkers.

My goal will be to return the foreign policy of this country to the experts in the foreign-service elite. My secretary of state will be someone like Warren Christopher, a man who can reassemble the same establishment talent that performed so ably in the Carter years. Mort Halperin and the Pentagon Papers. Ashton Carter's opposition to SDI, Jock Covey and subsidies to Iraq — these are old fights for old, dead eras. In this new era we must think anew. . . .

My fellow Americans, for too long we have had a trade policy that valued consumers over American producers. I plan to change that. My administration will be a revolving door for businesses harmed by unfair foreign competition.

Because Washington is a city of intrigue and calculation, I will appoint people who can help Big Business calculate its way through the intrigue. I will appoint Ron Brown as my commerce secretary to make sure that every business trade request is honored — starting, in my first weeks as president, with higher tariffs on such industries of the future as steel and autos. As a New Democrat, I want to state proudly that I represent the forgotten Fortune 500. . . .

One footnote: A clue to the speech's fate may lie in a comment scribbled in the margins of the draft. The comment is signed with the initials "J.C.," probably for campaign strategist James Carville. It reads, "It's suicide, stupid."

Worker Benefit Options Ride In on Final Wave of Legislation

By STEPHEN BARR
Washington Post Staff Writer

As Congress finished work for the year, the House and Senate approved several federal employee measures but showed little interest in pursuing proposals to overhaul basic civil service laws or fix the bureaucracy's white-collar pay system.

Most of the measures had little in common, but some clearly sought to improve federal employee benefits or provide agencies with options to increase efficiency and save taxpayer dollars.

The government's senior executives, for example, will no longer receive one of two standard cash awards but will have their bonuses calculated according to a formula. The merit bonuses, part of the massive budget deal approved by Congress as it left town, will be based on a percentage of the executive's pay, essentially doubling the \$10,000 and \$20,000 awards now offered.

One of the approved policy changes—involving birth control—almost sank the entire omnibus budget bill and was decided by the budget negotiators only after contentious House and Senate debates. Under the agreement, all health insurance plans in the federal employee program will be instructed to provide coverage for prescription contraceptives.

In separate legislation, federal retirees received a benefit option. The Federal Employees' Life Insurance Improvement Act, sent to President Clinton, would change the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance program by allowing retirees who carry additional option life insurance to continue paying premiums after turning 65 and avoid having coverage phased out.

The measure also would require the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to study whether universal group life insurance and group variable policies should be added to the coverage options.

In another significant action, Congress strengthened the set of laws known as veterans' preference, designed to give preferential treatment to military veterans when they are hired and promoted in federal jobs.

The Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act would expand veterans' preference beyond the executive branch so that it includes most career jobs in the legislative and judicial branches.

The veterans legislation would create a new appeals system for veterans who believed they had been wrongfully treated in the hiring process. Under the bill, veterans could appeal hiring and layoff decisions to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) and then to a federal district court. The appeals would come after veterans had filed

their initial complaint with the Labor Department.

Under the measure, veterans who win their cases would receive reimbursement for reasonable litigation expenses and would be eligible to receive back pay and benefits. In cases where a violation was deemed willful, the law would require the court of the MSPB to also award damages.

The life insurance and veterans bills began in the House civil service subcommittee, with Rep. John L. Mica (R-Fla.) as the chairman and Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (Md.) as the ranking Democrat, and were modified in the Senate. The life insurance bill was reshaped by Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), chairman of the Senate federal services subcommittee, while the veterans preference bill was pushed by Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.).

The Washington area congressional delegation also sponsored a variety of measures or provisions in appropriations bills. The budget deal, for example, includes \$2.1 million to continue operation of 15 federal telecommuting centers—seven in Northern Virginia and eight in Maryland—for another year. Reps. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.) and Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va.) worked to make the money available for the suburban satellite offices that designated workers use on a part-time basis.

Hoyer, joined by Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D-Md.), also succeeded in changing the pay systems for about 10,000 federal firefighters. They will receive an across-the-board 9 percent pay raise and have their pay calculated by a simpler method in the future, Hoyer's office said.

Rep. Constance A. Morella (R-Md.) sponsored the Federal Physicians Comparability Allowance Act, signed by Clinton, which gives agencies increased pay flexibility when they need to recruit and retain doctors. Davis successfully sponsored a bill to improve benefits for State Department diplomatic security agents.

Wolf pushed federal agencies to take advantage of job-sharing, leave-sharing, flexitime and flexiplace policies as ways to reduce traffic congestion in this area and give employees more options for meeting family responsibilities.

One provision in a House appropriations report, sponsored by Wolf, directs OPM to set up a "Family-Friendly Workplace Advocacy Office" that would handle employee complaints and report back to Congress on ways to improve workplace conditions.

Virtually every member of the delegation lobbied inside the Clinton administration and halls of Congress to boost white-collar federal pay next year. Clinton proposed a 3.1 percent raise, which Congress

subsequently raised to 3.6 percent. While the issue was being debated in June, Sens. Sarbanes, Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Charles S. Robb (D-Va.) and John W. Warner (R-Va.), for example, sent a letter to Clinton urging him to double the original percentage proposal.

Hoyer, meanwhile, included a provision in the OPM appropriations bill that requires the administration to provide the House with a report by May 1 on why it balks at following the pay formulas set out in the 1990 Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act. Since 1993, the administration has complained that

the pay formulas have been based on "flawed methodology."

Numerous other provisions or bills that made slight changes in existing systems also were approved. One measure, for example, strengthened OPM's ability to bar or sanction unethical health care providers in the federal employee program. Other proposals, however, were stopped by members of the local delegation, such as a GOP plan to introduce medical savings accounts, a controversial approach to financing individual health coverage, into the federal employee insurance program.

But members of Congress also suffered some setbacks. Mica and Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) pushed for legislation that would correct erroneous pensions for about 20,000 employees and retirees, but their measures stalled over concerns about potential costs to taxpayers and differences over reimbursement methods.

Morella won House approval of a bill that would allow federal agencies to subsidize child care expenses for their low-income workers, but the bill was blocked in the Senate. Cummings won House approval for legislation to give extra paid leave time to federal employees recovering from surgery because they donated organs, but the bill did not clear the Senate.

The House and Senate also bypassed opportunities for debate on how to overhaul civil service laws, despite warnings from experts that the government's personnel and management systems need to be updated.

Mica proposed a package of civil service changes aimed at allowing more pilot projects to test varied personnel systems and at consolidating the appeals process for employee grievances. But Democrats, led by Hoyer and Cummings, blocked the legislation.

Congress, however, continued to vote for civil service changes on an agency-by-agency basis. This year, for example, the Internal Revenue Service was given new freedom in deciding salaries for top management officials and received approval to pursue a broad-based internal reorganization.

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1998

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What's this?
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