P.S. to the NEWS
by PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY

Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
Phone: 618-462-5415

RELEASE: August 13

WELFARE

Everybody knows that our welfare system is horribly costly. The question we must now ask ourselves is, is it immoral, too? A welfare system becomes immoral when it provides financial incentives to the recipient to avoid getting a job, when it promotes violations of the moral law, and when it is a social injustice to the hardworking taxpayers.

A new Congressional Subcommittee study indicates that our present welfare system has crossed the line on all three counts. This study shows that the welfare program provides financial incentives for low income families to break up, for couples NOT to marry, for a woman without a husband to have a baby, and for those on welfare to avoid getting jobs.

Although welfare benefits vary from state to state, the Congressional study shows that the "average amount potentially available to the fatherless welfare family begins to compare favorably with what people earn." If an unemployed father deserts, his family increases its annual income (counting both cash and food benefits) by about one-third, plus housing benefits and free health care. This monetary gain ranges from $1,004 for a one-child family to $1,318 for a three-child family. Housing benefits could add as much as $400.

An unemployed childless woman can almost double her benefits by having her first child. The unemployed welfare mother of three can gross 10 percent more than the average wage for all women workers.

(more)

An unemployed welfare mother of three (receiving cash, food, and housing benefits) could receive an average of $4,759, which is equal to about $5,006 in taxable income. This is more than is earned by 30 percent of all women working fulltime.

Such a system is unfair to the taxpayers who are forced to provide a better standard of living to the welfare recipients than the taxpayers have themselves. It is also unjust to put welfare recipients in a predicament where they find it financially profitable to persist in a life of dependency or sin, rather than taking the hard road of getting a job and becoming self-supporting.

One answer to the welfare problem is to take the profit out of welfare benefits so that there is a real incentive to find some kind of job. Another answer is to eliminate fraud.

A third answer is to enforce the state laws which make it the obligation of a father to support his minor children. It is a simple matter to locate the father who has allegedly deserted. A quick check through his Social Security number will reveal where he is working, anywhere in the country.

Sometimes these fathers have good jobs and are even claiming their deserted children as tax deductions. Sometimes these fathers are actually in the homes they are alleged to have deserted. It is encouraging to note that this year, for the first time, HEW has adopted a policy of going after the deserting fathers, instead of just doling out the benefits without asking any questions.

The best welfare reform would be to eliminate fraud and criminal neglect by a strict enforcement of the laws now in existence.

(end)