PS1 for 11/3/88#CHILD CARE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROFAMILY AND LIBERAL

Thanks to the 1988 presidential campaign, we all now know that the opposite of the political label ""pro-family'' is ""liberal.'' The issue of child care is the perfect illustration of why this is so.

Senator Chris Dodd and Governor Michael Dukakis were the only politicians featured in a PBS-TV network documentary on child care in April. Long before the Duke had secured his party's nomination, the television media had singled out Connecticut's Dodd and Massachusetts' Dukakis for the one-two punch in behalf of the authentically liberal day care bill called the Dodd-Kildee ABC bill.

All indicia of this bill are generically liberal. It calls for a costly new federal bureaucracy, a new network of federal regulations and regulators, and the channeling of billions of dollars into government-licensed secular institutions using government-trained personnel.

The ABC bill would attempt to dictate how preschool children are cared for by funneling all the subsidies into the type of care which is chosen by only 10 percent of American families. It would exclude from benefits all the families that choose mother care, care by other relatives, neighborhood day care mothers, and church-affiliated day care.

The child care proposal made by George Bush is as different from this as day is different from night. It is the difference between pro-family and liberal.

The Bush proposal would simply reduce taxes on families with children so that parents have more of their own money to spend for the child care of their own choice, whether it be mother care, grandmother care, neighborhood day care, church-based day care, or institutional care.

The Bush proposal would not compel parents to put their children

in government-licensed secular institutions with government-trained staff in order to receive benefits. The Bush proposal starts from the premise that how to care for your children is a decision that should be freely made by the parents without any financial coercion from the government.

Specifically, Bush proposes giving parents a $1,000 tax cut for each preschool child. For the very low income families who pay little or no income taxes, this sum would be refundable.

For starters, the Bush proposal would be available to families earning less than $20,000 per year. The same tax credit principle would be extended, probably in increments, to include higher income families as soon as federal revenues make this possible.

The Bush proposal does not create any federal bureaucracy, does not impose any federal regulations, does not discriminate against fulltime mothers who take care of their own children, and does not discriminate against employed mothers who choose day care by relatives, neighborhood day care mothers, or religious facilities. The Bush proposal puts 100 percent of the decision-making in the hands of the parents and 100% of the cash in the pockets of the parents.

Naturally, the liberals don't like this plan. It keeps their grasping fingers out of the tax-funded cookie jars.

The Bush proposal gives the lie to the liberals' claim that they want to help the poor. Bush's plan is targeted to help families below the $20,000 income level, whereas the Dodd-Kildee ABC bill is structured to help the more affluent two-earner families because of its requirement that the mother MUST be employed in order to get any benefits.

""Affordability'' of child care is, indeed, a problem for modest-income families. The reason why families are having a hard time affording children is the dramatic increase of taxes on families with

children.

When I had my children 30 years ago, the average couple with two children paid only 2 percent of its income in federal taxes. Today, the average couple with two children pay$ a whopping 24 percent in federal taxes. That explains why families feel the crunch about child care.

The pro-family solution is to cut taxes and let families spend more of their own hard-earned money any way they want to spend it. The liberal formula is to raise taxes, build a bigger bureaucracy, and exercise more government control over how our money is spent and how our children are raised.

Just suppose that the media proclaimed a ""crisis'' in children's shoes, asserting that too many children are barefoot because parents can't afford the price of shoes, and that the taxpayers should assume the obligation to make shoes more affordable, available, and of better quality. The liberal formula would be to set up a new bureaucracy under a Federal Commissioner of Shoe Care to regulate the supply and the quality, and to open a government shoe store in each community and staff it with government trained personnel.

Wouldn't it make better sense to cut taxes a bit and let parents make their own shoe selections?