

generally the elderly and disabled. I am sure that we could go out, and I am sure the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN] has found individual cases where there is an exemption. That should not be. But to try and suggest that at a period of time where we have a new welfare reform bill which is going to throw people off of welfare, where we have a legal immigrant program which is essentially going to deny legal immigrants even SSI benefits, and then we are going to come back and now say we are going to take away your housing, I mean, what are we going to do?

Then we have also cut the homeless budget by 25 percent. So what we end up with is people on the street. Then everybody drives around in their cars and they look around at all the people on the street and think, gosh, that is terrible. My goodness, this homeless situation is terrible in America, and, boy, I wish those people down in Washington would pass some laws to take care of homelessness because this is a shame.

I mean, Mr. Chairman, ultimately it is unpopular for us to stand up here and fight on all these issues. It sounds like we are defending the status quo. But underneath the status quo is a basic fundamental judgment that we say we are going to take care of poor and vulnerable people. If they want to castigate us as looking like all we are trying to maintain is the status quo because we try to stand up for very poor and vulnerable people, so be it. But that is what the value judgment is. And I am proud to stand with it.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, we have been debating the housing bill now for quite a few days. And it seems like we spend most of our time, probably 99 percent of our time, debating two versions of government housing. For those of us who believe that more houses and better houses could be produced in a free market and in a free society, it is a bit frustrating. But the debate goes on.

I sincerely believe that everybody in the debate has the best of motivation, the desire is to be compassionate and to help poor people get homes. The tragedy is that we have been doing this for a good many years and have had very little success and this attempt now, again well motivated, to change the management of the housing program to a more local management program really leaves a lot to be desired.

On one side of the aisle we find out that the biggest complaint is that we do not have enough money, and the complaint is that the budget has been greatly reduced. But the way I read the figures, the numbers are going up over \$5 billion this year, so there is going to be a lot more money in this HUD program compared to last. It is said on the other side that we are going to save \$100 million in management at the same time we are spending a lot more money. Much has been said about how

do we protect the rights of the individuals receiving public housing, and I have recognized that this is a very serious concern. Yet when we have a government program, it is virtually impossible to really honor and respect. And straightforward protection of individual rights is very difficult.

I am concerned about the victims' rights, those people who lose their income, who lose their job because of government spending and government programs. It is said that we are trying very hard to take money from the rich and give it to the poor so the poor have houses. But quite frankly, I am convinced that most of the taxation comes from poor people. We have a regressive tax system. We have a monetary system where inflation hurts the poor more than the rich. And there is a transfer of wealth to government housing programs.

Unfortunately, everybody agrees the poor are not getting houses. And so many of the wealthy benefit from these programs. It is the rich beneficiaries, those who receive the rents and those who get to build the buildings are the most concerned that this government housing program continues.

Until we recognize the failure of government programs, I think we are going to continue to do the wrong things for a long time to come because there is no evidence on either side that we are really challenging the concept of public housing. There are two visions of one type of program on government housing. Some day somewhere along the line in this House we have to get around to debating the vision of a free society, a free society with a free market and low taxes, and a sound monetary system will provide more houses for the poor than any other system.

Much has been said about the corporate welfare and much has been recognized that corporations do benefit. But I am on the record very clearly that I would not endorse anything where a corporation or the wealthy get direct benefits from these government programs, whether it is the housing program or Eximbank or whatever.

I am also very cautious to define corporate welfare somewhat differently than others. Because when we give somebody a tax break and allow them to keep some of their own money, this is not welfare. It is when we take money from the poor people and allow it to gravitate into the hands of the wealthy, that is the welfare that has to be addressed and that is the part that we seem to fail to look at endlessly whether it is the housing program or any other program.

It is true, I think that it is very possible for all of us to have a vision which is designed to be compassionate and concerned about the injustice in the system. I do not challenge the views of anyone, but neither should my motivations be challenged because I come down on the side of saying that a free society and a constitutional gov-

ernment would not accept any of these programs because they have not worked and they continue to fail.

The real cost of this program and all programs unfairly falls on the poor people. Yet we continue endlessly to do this and we never suggest that maybe, maybe there is an alternative to what we are doing. We have so many amendments tinkering with how we protect the rights of the poor. I think that inevitably is going to fail because we are not smart enough to tinker with the work requirements.

Quite frankly, I have been supportive of a work requirement as an agreement to come into public housing, very, very reluctantly and not enthusiastically, because I am convinced that the management of a work program of 8 hours a month is going to outcost everything that we are doing.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. I would like to simply address something the gentleman from Texas said a moment ago. He said that while if we lower taxes, if we had lower interest rates, if we changed our general economics, you would do a lot for housing for the poor. Maybe and maybe not. I am not going to address that.

The fact of the matter is that whatever we do in our general policies, maybe eventually if we change them in the right direction, I tend not to agree with the gentleman as to what the right direction is, maybe eventually we would be providing, the private sector would be building more housing for the poor. It would be very nice if that were so and if that could be made so.

But the fact is that today in many, many areas of the country, maybe in the whole country, I do not know, but certainly in many areas of the country, it is simply impossible for the private sector without subsidy to produce housing affordable by low income working people, not to mention by people who may be on public assistance or on SSI or disabled or what have you.

It simply is impossible in many areas of the country today for the private sector, and they will tell you that, any builder in New York or any place, in many places, they will tell you that given the cost of building, the cost of land, the cost of money, the cost of labor, et cetera, they cannot build housing other than for upper income people and maybe the top of the middle class, certainly not for low income people.

As long as that is true, we are going to need government subsidized housing programs for low income and moderate income people. That was the basic idea of the Housing Act of 1937. That is still the basic idea of public policy today. I hope it remains so, that it is ultimately our responsibility, as a collective people represented through government, to help those who, given their best efforts, cannot help themselves.

Should we require their best efforts? Of course. But for those who may be