

farmers, as is the President. In fact, because I was part of the budget negotiations, Senator EXON and I were involved in many of the negotiations, some at the White House.

I have seen the President's reaction weighing in on the agriculture issues. He very much wants there to be a safety net or a farm program that helps family-size farms in this country. He hired and appointed an Agriculture Secretary who believes that very strongly. I do not want the moment to go and let someone listening say, "Well, gee, they said nobody down at the White House cares." Secretary Glickman, I think, is a terrific Secretary of Agriculture, selected by this President, representing this President, to try to get a better farm program. Hopefully, all of us can work together. There will be no solution to the problem without Secretary Glickman and President Clinton's active involvement. The meeting this morning, I think, was called by Secretary Glickman. They are active, engaged, and involved, and they want to solve this problem.

I hope, along with the Senator from Idaho, that by the end of this week we will have advanced by this discussion today the interest of providing some answers to family farmers in this country, but especially providing the right answers for the long-term.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TWO HEROES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to talk just briefly about two Americans I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues—two heroes of mine.

I have never met these men. I talked to one them on the phone the other day, a fellow named Robert Naegele. Mr. Naegele started a company called Rollerblade, which some of you may know about. It is the largest in-line skate company in America. I learned about Mr. Naegele and his company in an article I read in the Minneapolis Star Tribune when I was travelling through Minneapolis the other day by plane.

Robert Naegele sold his company 2 months ago. He apparently made an enormous amount of money. He started the company from scratch, ran it, turned it into a \$250 million business and then sold it recently. Then, about a week before Christmas, 280 employees of this company began to get letters in the mail from Mr. Naegele and his wife, Ellis. It turns out that he decided to

give the people who had worked for his company—the people who worked in the factories and made the skates and made him a very wealthy man—a Christmas bonus equal to \$160 a month for every month these folks had worked for the company.

For some of them who had been there the entire 10 years he owned the company, it meant more than \$25,000. But he wasn't done. He and his wife had prepaid the income taxes on the bonuses so when these folks opened up their check, totally unexpected, from someone who no longer owned the company, they got a check that was tax free.

What this man was saying to them was: You mattered. You people who worked in the plant and factories and helped make this product, you are the ones who made me successful. You made me some money, and I want to share it with you. What a remarkable story. What a hero!

This guy is out of step with the CEOs in our country who now say the way to the future is to downsize, lay off and cut the ground out from under the feet of people who have worked for a company for 20 years. Mr. Naegele, on the other hand, says to his workers, who are weeping with joy about his unexpected benevolence: "You matter to me. You made a difference. You made this company successful, and I want to share it with you."

What a remarkable man! It seems to me if more CEOs in this country would understand what Mr. Naegele understands, this country would be a better place. Our companies could be better able to compete. You would have more loyalty and more job security for people who have spent 10 and 20 years investing their time in a company.

The day after I read the article about Mr. Naegele, I read a similar one. It was about a fellow whose company began to burn down on December 11 in a small town in Massachusetts. The man's name was Aaron Feuerstein. He was about to go to his 70th birthday party—a surprise party that was being thrown for him—when he learned that a boiler had exploded at his textile mill setting off a fire. It injured 27 people and destroyed three of the factory's century-old buildings. His plant employs 2,400 people in an economically depressed area.

The people who watched the mill burn felt that they were going to lose their jobs and lose their futures. When Feuerstein arrived to assess the damage to a business his grandfather had started 90 years ago, he kept himself from crying by thinking back to the passage from King Lear in which Lear promises not to weep even though his heart would "break into a hundred thousand flaws." Mr. Feuerstein said, "I was telling myself I have to be creative." And 3 days after the fire, he had a plan.

According to the Time magazine article:

On the night of Dec. 14, more than 1,000 employees gathered in the gym of Central

Catholic High School to learn the fate of their jobs and of the cities of Methuen and Lawrence. Feuerstein entered the gym from the back, and as he shook the snow off his coat, the murmurs turned to cheers. The factory owner, who had already given out \$275 Christmas bonuses, and pledged to rebuild, walked to the podium. "I will get right to my announcement," he said. "For the next 30 days—and it might be more—all our employees will be paid their full salaries. But over and above the money, the most important thing Malden Mills can do for our workers is to get you back to work. By Jan. 2, we will restart operations, and within 90 days we will be fully operational."

\* \* \* \* \*

True to his word, Feuerstein has continued to pay his employees in full, at a cost of some \$1.5 million a week and at an average of \$12.50 an hour—already one of the highest textile rates in the world. And even better than his word, Malden Mills was up and running last week at 80% of its Polartec capacity, thanks to round-the-clock salvage work and the purchase of 15 new machines. "I haven't really done anything," says Feuerstein. "I don't deserve credit. Corporate America has made it so that when you behave the way I did, it's abnormal."

I just want to say again that I think Robert Naegele and Aaron Feuerstein are heroes. I think they both recognize what a lot of people in this country have forgotten. A company is its workers. Yes, it is its investors, it is its innovators, it is its scientists, and it is also its workers. Workers matter, and these heroes have done what more American business leaders should do. Too many American businesses now say to those workers, "You are like a wrench. We use you, and we get rid of you when we choose to."

What Mr. Naegele and Mr. Feuerstein are saying is that workers are their business. The workers determined whether their businesses were successful. And both of them have committed themselves to their workers. And I say to Mr. Naegele and Mr. Feuerstein that they are American heroes to me, and I wish there were more employers like them in this country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the two articles I mentioned be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the articles were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Minneapolis Star Tribune]

IT WAS A SURPRISINGLY GREEN CHRISTMAS FOR ROLLERBLADE EMPLOYEES

(By Dee DePass)

Two weeks ago Rollerblade employee Ann Reader, six months pregnant with her third child, called her husband, Tim, from work sobbing. He immediately thought the worst, she said.

But it was good news for Reader and all of Rollerblade's 280 employees. Former Rollerblade co-owner Robert Naegele and his wife, Ellis, played Santa over the holidays, giving each of Rollerblade's employees thousands of dollars in tax-free money, figured at about \$160 for each month of service with the company. Sources familiar with the giveaway estimated the combined gifts to be \$1.5 million.

Reader, team programs manager, has worked there for more than 6 years—making

her check worth more than \$11,000. None of the employees contacted would confirm the amount of their checks.

"It made me cry," said Reader in a shaky voice. "I think it was so generous of them. It was an amazing gesture."

Rollerblade spokesperson Deborah Autrey said, "It was a complete surprise that came out of the blue. People were laughing and crying and hugging. I have never seen people in such a stupor."

Autrey has worked at Rollerblade for four years. More than half of the employees are warehouse workers with most receiving hourly wages.

Naegele, who was chairman during the phenomenal growth of the 15-year old firm, could not be reached for comment. Two months ago he sold his 50 percent share of Rollerblade to Nordica Inc. of Italy for an undisclosed amount. He bought 50 percent of the in-line skate company in 1985, when sales were only \$500,000. Sales in 1994 were \$265 million.

In Christmas cards to employees, Naegele wrote that he had reaped great rewards from his Rollerblade investment because of the employees' hard work and that he wanted to show his thanks, Autrey said. Enclosed in the cards were the gift checks, on which the Naegeles paid federal taxes.

"That way the employees did not get hit with a double whammy. It is a tax-free gift," said Autrey.

The checks were mailed to employees' homes the week before Christmas. The first arrived on Dec. 21 to an employee who was home on maternity leave. From there word spread among the workers, and later that day it was confirmed by the company's chief executive, John Hetterick, who had only found out the day before.

When the good news reached Matt Majka, 33, the director of product marketing, he immediately phoned his wife, Kym, and asked her to open the mail. When she did, Majka heard sobs. He has been with the company for 11 years, making his check worth an estimated \$21,120.

"It was very moving," he said.

"It was very heartfelt for us. We were extremely shocked and extremely grateful for his generosity. . . . All the words he talked about for so many years—about teamwork and that we are a family—he put his words into action."

Majka and his wife have a 4-month-old baby and a 2-year-old son, and the Naegeles' gift went to start a college fund for them, he said. The couple also had a new IBM computer under the Christmas tree.

Reader said she bought bikes for her two children (and a bike baby carrier for the newest family member) and she plans to put some of the money away in savings.

Majka marveled at what the gift meant to scores of his co-workers. "There are some people who have worked in our warehouse and have been here for a long time," he said. "For some people, they have received a very substantial check, maybe half of their year's salary. It's pretty amazing." At least two employees have been there for all of the company's 15 years.

"I happened to talk to Bob [Naegele] later that night," Majka said. "I told him, 'You can't imagine the impact you have had on everyone.' He bellowed and said, 'That is just what I wanted to hear.' He said, 'This is not mine. It is a gift I had to share.'"

[From Time Magazine, Jan. 8, 1996]

THE GLOW FROM A FIRE

(By Steve Wulf)

Methuen, Massachusetts, is a small city not unlike the Bedford Falls of *It's a Wonderful Life*. Over the years, the working-class

town on the border of New Hampshire and Massachusetts has come to rely on the good heart of one man. While Aaron Feuerstein may not look much like Jimmy Stewart, he is the protagonist of a Christmas story every bit as warming as the Frank Capra movie—or the Polartec fabric made at his Malden Mills.

On the night of Dec. 11, just as Feuerstein was being thrown a surprise 70th birthday party, a boiler at Malden Mills exploded, setting off a fire that injured 27 people and destroyed three of the factory's century-old buildings. Because Malden Mills employs 2,400 people in an economically depressed area, the news was as devastating as the fire, according to Paul Coorey, the president of Local 311 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. "I was standing there seeing the mill burn with my son, who also works there, and he looked at me and said, 'Dad, we just lost our jobs.' Years of our lives seemed gone."

When Feuerstein arrived to assess the damage to a business his grandfather had started 90 years ago, he kept himself from crying by thinking back to the passage from King Lear in which Lear promises not to weep even though his heart would "break into a hundred thousand flaws." "I was telling myself I have to be creative," Feuerstein later told the New York Times. "Maybe there's some way to get out of it." Feuerstein, who reads from both his beloved Shakespeare and the Talmud almost every night, has never been one to run away. When many other textile manufacturers in New England fled to the South and to foreign countries, Malden Mills stayed put. When a reliance on fake fur bankrupted the company for a brief period in the early '80s, Feuerstein sought out alternatives.

What brought Malden Mills out of bankruptcy was its research and development team, which came up with a revolutionary fabric that was extremely warm, extremely light, quick to dry and easy to dye. Polartec is also ecologically correct because it is made from recycled plastic bottles. Clothing made with Polartec or a fraternal brand name, Synchronia, is sold by such major outdoors clothiers as L.L. Bean, Patagonia, Eastern Mountain Sports and Eddie Bauer, and it accounts for half of Malden's \$400 million-plus in 1995 sales.

Even though the stock of a rival textile manufacturer in Tennessee, the Dyersburg Corp., rose sharply the day after the fire, L.L. Bean and many of Malden's other customers pledged their support. Another apparel company, Dakotah, sent Feuerstein a \$30,000 check. The Bank of Boston sent \$50,000, the union \$100,000, the Chamber of Commerce in the surrounding Merrimack Valley \$150,000. "The money is not for Malden Mills," says Feuerstein. "It is for the Malden Mills employees. It makes me feel wonderful. I have hundreds of letters at home from ordinary people, beautiful letters with dollar bills, \$10 bills."

The money was nothing to the workers compared to what Feuerstein gave them three days later. On the night of Dec. 14, more than 1,000 employees gathered in the gym of Central Catholic High School to learn the fate of their jobs and of the cities of Methuen and Lawrence. Feuerstein entered the gym from the back, and as he shook the snow off his coat, the murmurs turned to cheers. The factory owner, who had already given out \$275 Christmas bonuses and pledged to rebuild, walked to the podium. "I will get right to my announcement," he said. "For the next 30 days—and it might be more—all our employees will be paid their full salaries. But over and above the money, the most important thing Malden Mills can do for our workers is to get you back to

work. By Jan. 2, we will restart operations, and within 90 days we will be fully operational." What followed, after a moment of awe, was a scene of hugging and cheering that would have trumped the cinematic celebration for *Wonderful Life's* George Bailey.

True to his word, Feuerstein has continued to pay his employees in full, at a cost of some \$1.5 million a week and at an average of \$12.50 an hour—already one of the highest textile wages in the world. And even better than his word, Malden Mills was up and running last week at 80 percent of its Polartec capacity, thanks to round-the-clock salvage work and the purchase of 15 new machines. "I haven't really done anything," says Feuerstein. "I don't deserve credit. Corporate America has made it so that when you behave the way I did, it's abnormal."

Union chief Coorey begs to differ. Says he: "Thank God we got Aaron."

#### THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, almost 4 years ago I commenced these daily reports to the Senate to make a matter of record the exact Federal debt as of close of business the previous day. +

In that report of February 27, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,825,891,293,066.80, as of close of business the previous day. The point is, the Federal debt has increased by more than \$1.1 trillion—\$1,162,159,313,063.99—since February 26, 1992.

As of the close of business yesterday, Monday, January 22, the Federal debt stood at exactly \$4,988,050,606,130.79. On a per capita basis, every man, woman and child in America owes \$18,933.07 as his or her share of the Federal debt.

#### REPORT OF THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 111

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to lie on the table:

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of the 104th Congress, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans all across our land.

I want to begin by saying to our men and women in uniform around the world, and especially those helping peace take root in Bosnia, and to their families. Thank you. America is very proud of you.

My duty tonight is to report on the State of the Union, not the state of our government but of our American community, and to set forth our responsibilities—in the words of our Founders—to "form a more perfect union."

The State of the Union is strong.

Our economy is the healthiest it has been in three decades. We have the lowest combined rate of unemployment and inflation in 27 years.

We have created nearly 8 million new jobs, over a million of them in basic industries like construction and automobiles. America is selling more cars than Japan for the first time since the 1970's, and for 3 years in a row, we have