More education dollars under parental control would promote education by encouraging parents to save, invest in, and support programs and materials that facilitate and provide the right option for child's education. Nothing would be taken away from public education resources.

The A+ accounts help working families. They encourage savings and enable families to make plans which shape a child's future. They are directed at low and middle income families, not wealthy families which currently have more education options. It seems ironic to me that some of the loudest opponents of these savings accounts are high-income, high-option individuals, who can afford to send their own children to private schools.

According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, the great majority of families expected to take advantage of the education savings accounts have incomes of $75,000 or less. These are the families who need savings options and incentives the most.

Mr. President, the A+ accounts simply provide a modest, tax-free savings plan for families. This is a commonsense approach to the serious issue of educating our children. It offers a real solution for America's working families, and I urge my colleagues to give it their support.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as if in morning business and to introduce two amendments to be considered at the time the NATO expansion issue is before the Senate for consideration.

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

The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

PROTOCOLS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON ACCESSION OF POLAND, HUNGARY, AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am going to speak for a few minutes about the issue of NATO expansion, and I want to offer these two amendments today. These amendments, I believe, will serve to bring greater accountability to the unresolved issue of the additional costs that will result with the accession of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic to the NATO alliance.

My first amendment requires all costs related to either the admission of new NATO members or their participation in NATO to be specifically authorized by law prior to the payment of these costs. I am speaking of the U.S. costs. Our U.S. costs would have to be specifically authorized by law before they could be paid.

Actually, this ought to be the proper interpretation of the Constitution. But too often we find that costs—particularly those of foreign policy objectives supported by the Department of Defense—are incurred and then we are asked to pay for them in the budget process later.

The costs related to NATO enlargement are still general estimates, but the debate is continuing as to what is actually required and what portion of these requirements should be paid by the NATO common budgets. These estimates will continue to evolve and change in the coming months, well past the completion of the NATO expansion debates here in this Chamber.

U.S. costs could increase as NATO finalizes its implementation plans and eligibility criteria for common funding, or if new member countries have problems paying for infrastructure improvements. A Congressional Budget Office study released last week confirms that the United States is likely to incur bilateral costs for expanded exercises, training, and programs to incorporate NATO compatible equipment into the central European militaries.

My amendment would ensure a more accurate accounting for, and explanation of, the actual costs related to NATO enlargement as the process continues to develop.

My second amendment will restrict the use of funds for payment of NATO costs after September 30 of this year unless the Secretaries of Defense and State certify to the Congress that the total percentage of NATO common costs paid by the United States will not exceed 20 percent during the NATO fiscal year. Historically, NATO has not systematically reviewed or renegotiated member cost shares for the common budgets. This amendment would effectively require a reduction of the U.S. percentage paid in support of NATO common budget costs from a historic average of 24 or 25 percent. And I believe it is actually higher than that, but that is the average that they use. This is a reassessment that is long overdue in light of U.S. global defense responsibilities.

We have to remember that NATO was formed at the time when we were coming out of World War II, before the United States had started really to carry out its global responsibilities. When Spain joined NATO in 1982, there were pro rata adjustments to the civil and military budget shares based upon Spain's increased contribution. No other formal renegotiations have occurred since 1955 in these two common budget areas. The NSIP—or NATO infrastructure budget—has been adjusted five times since 1960, but that was due more to the way projects were approved and funded than any actual attempt to reallocate the percentages.

With the amount included in the emergency supplemental that we will consider today, the United States will have expended over $7.5 billion for operations in and around Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia by the end of fiscal year 1998. Mr. President, it is estimated that the United States is paying over 50 percent of the costs of maintaining the peace in Bosnia—nearly $200 million a month in 1997 alone—and there is no end in sight to the U.S. presence there with the President's decision to keep deployments there indefinitely.

Our defense overseas funding in NATO countries—the cost of maintaining our forces there, including the operations and maintenance, military pay, family housing, and military construction—now averages nearly $10 billion a year. Security assistance to the NATO allies since 1950—this is the military assistance and military education and training—has totaled over $19 billion.

No other member of NATO has the global defense role of the United States, nor does any other member have the forward-deployed presence in potential flash point areas such as the Middle East or the Korean peninsula.

There is just no alternative but to take the two steps that I am going to ask the Senate to propose to the House and to the President by these two amendments.

I would like to introduce the amendments.

The first is an amendment that I mentioned to require prior specific authorization of funds before U.S. funds may be used to pay NATO enlargement costs. It is cosponsored by Senators BYRD, CAMPBELL, ROBERTS, THURMOND, and WARNER.

The second amendment is the amendment to require that certification of payments to NATO will not cause the U.S. share of NATO common budget accounts or activities to exceed 20 percent, and that is cosponsored by Senators BYRD, CAMPBELL, ROBERTS and WARNER.

I thank the Chair. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I know that we are debating very important issues on the supplemental appropriations bill. But I would like to take a few moments this afternoon to address another important issue, the Coverdell bill. There is a very important question we must all ask. Will Congress support public education or

abandon it? I believe the vote tomorrow, and the debate going through next week on the Budget Resolution, may very well be the most important days that we will have to talk about the issue of education in this Congress. I would like to outline the challenges we face in the nation's public schools. May I yield myself 5 minutes? Can I do that; if the chair will let me know?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, we ought to understand exactly where we are as a nation and measure the proposal that we will be voting on tomorrow against our particular national needs. I think that is a fair way of making the decision whether we ought to eliminate any opportunity for additional debate and discussion on the question of support for public education across the country. No one is questioning whether the Coverdell bill will make a substantial contribution to private education. But if you are going to spend $1.6 billion, which is the amount of money that will be lost from the Federal budget under the Coverdell bill, we ought to know whether the money we spend will benefit the majority of the children in this country? Does this proposal abandon our support for public education, where about 48 million—90 percent—of our children are educated?

This year, K–12 enrollment has reached an all-time high and will grow by 4 million students over the next 7 years across this country. Second, 6,000 new public schools will be needed by the year 2006 just to maintain the current class size—6,000 new schools by the year 2006. Due to overcrowding, schools are using trailers for classrooms, teaching students in former hallways, closets and bathrooms. Overcrowded classrooms undermine discipline and decrease the students' morale. America's children are learning in overcrowded classrooms. These are the undisputed facts on the condition of education in the United States of America.

This chart is called ''America's Children Are Learning In Crumbling Schools.'' Madam President, 14 million children learn in substandard schools; 7 million children attend schools with asbestos, lead paint or radon in the ceilings or walls; 12 million children go to school under leaky roofs; one-third of American children study in classrooms without enough panel outlets and electrical wiring to accommodate computers and for multimedia equipment.

These are the conditions today and these are the expectations of tomorrow. We are going to be faced with a Republican education program that says we will answer this national challenge with a $1.6 billion tax break for wealthy individuals. I call it an entitlement. I want to hear our friends who are always talking about entitlements address that issue, because this is an entitlement. Once the proposal goes into effect, anyone who is qualified is going to get a tax break every year—that's an entitlement in my book. It's an entitlement for the wealthy who send their children to private school.

Should we have a good chance to debate different public policy alternatives to the Coverdell bill that is offered on behalf of the Republicans? We would welcome that debate. We do not fear that debate; we welcome it. We think the country would welcome it. We have our ideas. The President has his ideas. The President, in his State of the Union and in his speech on education, has outlined some very important measures—school construction and modernization, smaller class size, better trained teachers, increase in the number of qualified teachers, after-school programs, and expansion of the Head Start programs. Those are out there. These crucial programs are paid for in the President's budget.

How did the Budget Committee address these issues? Thumbs down on all of those programs. Not only thumbs down on those programs, but reducing aid for education by $1.6 billion on existing programs below the President's level. We have not had that debate here. And we are being asked now to provide a new entitlement for the wealthier individuals who are sending their children to the private schools—not the public schools; to the private schools. That is what we are being asked to do.

So let's get out and debate this issue. But, no; we are facing a cloture motion that says we are going to be absolutely denied the opportunity for considering alternatives. That is wrong. But it is something that American parents ought to understand, that this is basically an ill-conceived program that is abandoning the public schools in order to get additional tax entitlements and tax breaks for tuition for children to go to private schools. We do not have anything against the private schools, but with the scarce resources that are available, they ought to be carefully invested in the public schools. We should not be creating more tax breaks for the wealthy individuals. We should not be abandoning the public schools of this country. We ought to be responding to their particular needs.

Mr. President, I believe my 5 minutes is up, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Madam President, let me continue what our colleague from Massachusetts has been talking about.

This issue is going to come up tomorrow and will be debated. There will be a cloture motion. There are two issues the Senator from Massachusetts and the Senator from North Dakota, who has joined us here on the floor, and I care about. The first is we would like the opportunity to be able to offer amendments to this bill. I gather there has been some agreement on a limited number of amendments. But we think, on something as important as education, this may be the only time this year that we get to talk about the educational needs of the 53 million children who attend our primary and secondary schools in this country.

First of all, the issue is about choice and giving our colleagues the choice to consider an alternative or alternatives to Senator COVERDELL's legislation. Secondly, we believe that the issue is how the American people decide how they want their tax dollars spent.

Let me first, if I can, describe what the Coverdell amendment does. The Coverdell amendment is a tax expenditure of $1.6 billion over the next 10 years that would provide, according to the Joint Taxation Committee, a $1.6 billion tax break, providing $37 a year to the families of children who attend private schools and $7 a year to the children who attend public schools.

Of the 53 million children who attend primary and secondary schools, 90 percent of those 53 million children attend public primary and secondary schools; 10 percent, 5.3 million, attend private schools. What Senator COVERDELL's legislation does is take a $37 tax break and a $7 tax break, and gives it to the 5.3 million children who attend private schools and gives the $7 tax break to children attending public schools. Madam President, 52 percent of the tax break goes to the 10 percent of children who are in private schools.

Please let me put that in context. I recently researched how much it costs to attend a private school in the Greater Washington area. On average, it is between $10,000 and $14,000 a year. Such a small tax break, Mr. President, would provide very little assistance to parents who choose these schools for their children.

The point that I make is, if you are going to spend $1.6 billion, whether you are a conservative Republican or liberal Democrat, would it not be wiser for us to try to improve the deteriorating physical structures of public schools that are falling apart in this country? Would it not be better, perhaps, to take the $1.6 billion and have it go to special education?

Mr. President, I don't know how many mayors, how many county boards of supervisors I have heard from who report to me that they are spending an exorbitant amount of money to provide the valuable needed services to children who have special needs? All of us would agree that these children often require and deserve a great deal of assistance, but local school districts and taxpayers are often in desperate need of some financial assistance in providing for the educational needs of children with disabilities. Is this not a priority? Do you perhaps think this priority more deserves our attention than a $37 tax break?

How about providing 100,000 new teachers to shrink the size of classrooms across this country? Most everyone will tell you, if a teacher is teaching 25, 30, or 35 students, those students are not learning as well as they could.

Again, most everyone agrees, if you can make classes smaller, you can greatly increase the learning potential of children. Is that not a higher priority than a $37 tax break to go to the top 70 percent of income earners in the country? Or a $7 tax break if your child attends a public school? $1.6 billion could, as I said, provide some real assistance in construction, special education, Head Start, or additional teachers. There are many other valuable ideas. I am not limiting it to these four.

As I said earlier, we have come through an era where we often spent money on many different ideas. We cannot do that any longer. We must now be very selective when we spend federal tax dollars. It seems to me it would be a wiser investment of taxpayer money to do something about special ed, something about school construction, something about classroom size, and something about early childhood education. I don't know of anyone in this country, regardless of their personal ideology or political affiliation, who would tell you they think those four ideas are less important than a $37 or $7 tax break.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. DODD. I will be glad to yield to the Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. As you know, the Budget Committee approved $30 billion in tax breaks—$30 billion. So, on the one hand, Republicans cut back education funding $1.6 billion below the President's program, and then spend $1.6 billion to create a $37 tax break for individuals that send their children to private school. Then they have the gall to come out here to say that Coverdell is the answer to the problems in education. Instead, the Coverdell bill is another Republican effort to abandon the public schools.

I wonder, if the Senator will yield for another moment, I would like to just mention David Rosborough and ask my colleague whether this is the kind of situation that is troubling the Senator.

Hi, my name is David Rosborough and I am a junior at Centerville High School in Clifton, Virginia. My school is extremely overcrowded, having well over 2600 students in a school that holds 2000, and whose optimal size is 1800. As a result of this, we have 32 makeshift trailers as classrooms this year and will have a total of 40 next year. Nearly 1000 students are in these trailers at any one time, and we have been forced to go to a complicated ''double master'' schedule. This new schedule which divides the school in two, is a great idea, and makes it so that class changes are staggered, however also created many new problems. Lunch periods begin at 10:00 a.m. and don't end until well after 1:00 p.m.

This bill—

He was talking about the President's bill—

will put an end to ridiculous situations, like that of my school.

The tremendous size of the school has caused inconveniences and problems, some minor, like the assembly situation. Right now, a simple music assembly will have to run three or four different times throughout the day, creating scheduling problems and keeping students out of class for unnecessarily long periods of time.

Some problems are a lot more significant. ''Hall rage'' —

I never heard of that word before; ''hall rage'' are the words that this young student, a junior, uses—

''Hall rage'' as our principal calls it, is one of them. Last year, before the new schedule was implemented, there was a huge outbreak of fights, many caused by frustration of being knocked around in the overflowing halls. Teachers found it much harder to teach with the distraction of ''hall rage,'' causing students to have difficulty focusing on class work with all the chaos outside. Teachers very rarely even get to teach in the same classroom all day, and some move between three and four classrooms.

The new schedule at our school has solved some of these problems, but many still remain, and the school's size keeps on mushrooming. The ''double master'' schedule has caused many conflicts which limit the courses available to students. Hopefully this bill will pass—

Talking about the President's bill—

and bring . . . long-term relief to my school as well as many others like it.

This is not the inner-city; this is in the suburbs. School repair, modernization, and expansion problems affect every community—urban, rural, or suburban.

I ask the Senator from Connecticut, will the Coverdell legislation do anything about the kind of problems that this student is talking about; that would shock any parent?

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I say to my colleague from Massachusetts, absolutely not. In fact, as the Senator knows, our distinguished colleague from Illinois, CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN, has offered legislation to try and do something that would allow for these schools to be repaired. The estimated cost of that, the estimated cost nationwide from Maine to California I think is $22 billion.

Mr. KENNEDY. Her program costs only $3.3 billion, but will allocate $22 billion in interest-free bonding authority for States and local communities.

Mr. DODD. What we are talking about today, when we say we would like to take this $1.6 billion and maybe apply it to the programs I have mentioned, not to suggest we will pay for all of it, but if you have limited resources, it will at least provide meaningful resources to these communities.

Senator COVERDELL's legislation is a tax break that goes to individuals, and parents who send their children to private schools get the bulk of it. Remember, 7 percent of the families in this country send their children to private schools. Ten percent of the children—93 percent of the families send their kids to public schools.

Has anyone asked the families of children attending public schools how they feel about subsidizing the children who go to private schools? With all due respect, those parents made a choice. I respect that choice, but I don't necessarily believe that we ought to subsidize it with $37 a year when that $1.6 billion might go to the very issue the Senator from Massachusetts raised.

Mr. KENNEDY. Finally, because I see other Senators on the floor, will anything in the Coverdell bill result in a reduction of class size?

Mr. DODD. I say to my colleague, absolutely nothing.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will anything help provide 100,000 new teachers as proposed by the President?

Mr. DODD. I say to my colleague, absolutely nothing.

Mr. KENNEDY. Is there anything in the Coverdell bill that will help provide after-school programs that are so important for the 13 million young people that the Senator from Connecticut, who is a champion for children in this country, speaks about? Is there anything in the Coverdell bill that will help expand and improve those after-school programs?

Mr. DODD. Not one penny of the $1.6 billion will go for after-school programs.

Mr. KENNEDY. Is it not true that the cuts in education funding by the Budget Committee provide no increase in Pell grants?

Mr. DODD. I say to my colleague from Massachusetts, he brings up an excellent point. Not only do we have $1.6 billion here in tax breaks, but just the other day the Budget Committee cut $1.6 billion out of the budget for educational programs.

Our colleague from Illinois CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN, our colleague from the State of Washington PATTY MURRAY, Senator BOXER of California, among others, all tried, as members of that committee, to get some resources in order to help out in these areas. Not only did they lose providing some additional help for these areas, the Budget Committee cut $1.6 billion across the board in education.

Mr. DORGAN. Will my colleague yield?

Mr. DODD. I will yield to my colleague from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask the Senator from Connecticut, are we now talking about the Coverdell education proposal? Is it not the case that the Coverdell legislation is not now before the Senate —it was before the Senate but then was withdrawn—because a number of Senators, including myself, the Senator from Connecticut, the Senator from Massachusetts, and others, wanted to offer amendments to it dealing with the kinds of questions you are now asking? Isn't that the case?

Mr. DODD. It is true. We had hoped to be able to offer these amendments, and the bill was pulled down last week. We are told now it is going to come up again tomorrow, and the reason why we are here this afternoon to talk about it is because we believe it may be coming back.

Mr. DORGAN. I would like to ask the Senator an additional question relating to an issue I discussed last week when the Coverdell bill was first withdrawn

from the floor. It is not acceptable to me to have someone bring a bill to the floor that is amendable and then tell us, ''By the way, we have established a gate here, and the only people who can go through the gate are the ones we decide can go through the gate.''

The Coverdell IRA proposal, in my judgment, ought to be amended by a range of other proposals. One, for example, deals with reducing class size. I have a daughter in the third grade. Last year, that daughter was in a public school class with 30 students—30 in a class. Do I have a self-interest here as a parent? Of course I do. Do we think kids do better when they are in a smaller class? Of course they do. We know that. The studies demonstrate that.

The question before us is not just about Coverdell IRAs, but about what our priorities are going to be. One hundred years from now, all of us in the Chamber are going to be gone.

Mr. DODD. Except STROM THURMOND.

Mr. DORGAN. Except Senator THURMOND. But historians will be able to look back at what we did here and evaluate, by looking at how we decided to spend money, what our priorities were. What did we place first? What did we think was important? Kids? Education? What kind of legislation did we pass to advance these issues that are important to public education in this country?

Finally, to those who say the public education system in this country is somehow unworthy of keeping, I ask them, how did this country get to where it is? How did we get here? Is anybody going out to the airport this afternoon to get on a plane and leave? Have they found a better place to live? I don't think so.

We have had in this country a wonderful system of public education. We also have some outstanding private schools. Our obligation in this Chamber is to provide the support that we can, especially with niche financing. We don't provide the bulk of financing for elementary and secondary education, but we provide important funds to support a number of priorities in public education. That is our job. That is what we need to do.

But we were told last week that because a bill is brought to the floor dealing with education—a bill that essentially provides tax breaks for those who want to send their kids to private school—somehow we are being selfish for saying let's amend this so we invest in and strengthen public schools. It seems to me that the message from all of this is that kids are not first, education is not a priority. Isn't that how you would view it?

Mr. DODD. I thank my colleague from North Dakota. I think he said it very well. Of course, he brings some firsthand information to it, talking about his own daughter who is in the third grade and the size of her classroom. It provides a wonderful example of something we might do to help out our local school districts.

Education is very expensive, and the bulk of it is paid for by local property taxes, sales taxes; in some States by a State income tax. It is expensive. We made a commitment here years ago that we would help out with special education; we said we would contribute as much as 40 percent of the expenses to educate a child that has special needs. We have never gotten above 8 percent—never above 8 percent.

I have communities in my State of Connecticut that spend $100,000 on a child in a small town. Now, these towns surely want to help these children with disabilities, but it seems to me that is a national issue, giving children an opportunity to maximize their potential. We promised 40 percent; we have never provided more than 8.

What if we gave $1.6 billion to the States across this country that are trying to provide the education for these special needs children? I assure you, people will say thank you.

I don't think anyone would believe that a $37 tax break for children attending private schools and a $7 tax break for children attending public schools is of a higher priority than almost any other issue you can mention when it comes to the educational needs of America's children. On the close of the 20th century, when we are going to have to have the best prepared and the best educated generation we have ever produced to compete in the global resources with limited, scarce resources, we provide $1.6 billion tax cut that could be better applied to our Nation's schools. I don't think it is right, and I am hopeful the American people will be heard over the next 24 hours and say to their Members, ''Don't vote for this. Don't vote for this. Use my money wisely and well.''

Madam President, I thank our distinguished colleague from Alaska for yielding us some time to be heard on this issue.

Mr. STEVENS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR NATURAL DISASTERS AND OVERSEAS PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, I have a list at the desk. I ask unanimous consent these members of the staff of the Appropriations Committee be admitted to the floor during the consideration of the supplemental.

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

The list is as follows:

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE STAFF

Carolyn E. Apostolou, Sid Ashworth, Liz Blevins, Wally Burnett, Andrew R. Cavnar, Jennifer Chartrand, Liz Connell, Christine Ciccone, Robin Cleveland, John J. Conway, Steve Cortese, Gregory Daines, Dick D'Amato, Rebecca Davies, Mary Dewald, Emelie East, Lula Edwards, James H. English, Bruce Evans, Alex Flint, and Galen Fountain.

Carole Geagley, Andrew Givens, Rachelle Graves, Scott Gudes, David Gwaltney, Tom Hawkins, Susan Hogan, Charlie Houy, Ginny James, Kevin Johnson, Jon Kamark, Jay Kimmitt, Lashawnda Leftwich, Paddy Link, Kevin Linsky, Mary Marshall, Sue Masica, Mazie Mattson, Anne McInerney, and Jim Morhard.

Mary Beth Nethercutt, Joseph Norrell, Dona Pate, Tammy Perrin, Martha Scott Poindexter, Robert W. Putnam, Dana Quam, John Raffetto, Michelle Randolph, Pat Raymond, Gary Reese, Barbara Ann Retzlaff, Tim Reiser, Peter Rogoff, Joyce Rose, Terry Sauvain, Marsha Simon, Jennifer Stiefel, Lisa Sutherland, Betty Lou Taylor, Scott Thomasson, Justin Weddle, Paul Weinberger, and John Young.

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, on page 18 of our committee report, it stated that $10 million is provided for the national forest system account within the Forest Service. This does not accurately reflect the action taken in the committee markup. We added $2 million for payments to States, pursuant to section 405 of the bill. The total in the bill for the national forest system should be $12 million. I ask that the bill be corrected accordingly.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, the Senator from Georgia is here and wishes to have time while we are on the defense bill to respond to the Senators from Massachusetts and Connecticut.

I announce to the Senate, as soon as the Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, arrives he will present an amendment and that amendment will be voted on at 5:30 today. It would be my hope that we also would be able to take a series of amendments prior to that time, amendments that we have been working on with individual Senators. It should take us 20 to 30 minutes to deal with four or five amendments that will be accepted.

I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Georgia be allowed a time now not to exceed the time taken by the Senators from Massachusetts and Connecticut and that time take place as soon as possible.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. WELLSTONE. Reserving the right to object, and I shall not, I wonder whether or not, before the Senator from Arizona comes to the floor, I might have 10 minutes to speak on education following Senator COVERDELL, if there is time.

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, I am a little reluctant. What we are getting into is an equal time situation. Every time one Senator speaks the other side wants to answer. If we can find some way to add the Senator's time to what has already been used on your side of the aisle on the education matter and agree now how long that will be—the leader wants some time, too. The Senator is entitled, as I understand, to about 25 or 26 minutes already because of the statements made