

will continue to work. There has got to be a better way. There are also a lot of ideas around here on how to make a better way. I can only hope some of these ideas are translated into law in the very near future.

So, Mr. President, I wish my colleagues well. I will miss the institution dearly. I will miss the daily interaction with my colleagues, many of whom have become such dear friends to me. Let me thank you for your friendship. And lastly, let me thank staff. My personal office staff, both here and in the state offices, have been like family to me. I have tried to treat them that way, and it has been mutual. The committee staff and floor staff I have been privileged to work with over the years have all been great to me as well—they make this place run and make us all look good from time to time. I thank them all for their support and service to our country. This country would not be nearly what it is without office, committee and floor staff. As I leave the Senate, please know that I will keep you all in my thoughts and prayers, and wish all of you good luck and happiness in the years to come.

Mr. President, for perhaps the last time, I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator from Kentucky yield for a moment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, if the Senator from North Dakota wants to be recognized, very shortly I have to take the Chair and I want to make my statement.

Mr. DORGAN. I wonder if I might ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute.

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

#### SENATOR WENDELL FORD

Mr. DORGAN. I did want to say, having listened to the Senator from Kentucky, my expectation is that virtually every Member of this Senate, Republican and Democrat alike, shares my feelings about the Senator from Kentucky. He is tough, he is honest, he gets things done in the Senate, and we are going to miss him a great deal.

I know the Senator from Montana feels that way, as does the Senator from Texas. Some of our other colleagues are not here. But one of the privileges of serving in this body is serving with some of the best men and women I have ever had the opportunity to work with in my life, and I count among that group the Senator from Kentucky, Senator FORD.

I would like to say, as he leaves the Senate, I thank him for his public service to our country. He, because he served in this body, has contributed to the well-being of America. We are going to miss him a great deal. I expect he will not be going far. I know he is going fishing, and I know he is going to be involved in public service in his own

way, dealing with educating young people about civic responsibilities and about government. I just want to say he has contributed a substantial amount of service to his country and we are deeply indebted to him for it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I associate myself with those words. We hate to see Senator FORD go.

I ask unanimous consent, after I make a short statement, that my colleague from Texas may follow me because he picks up on the same idea. I have to assume the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURNS. I thank the Chair and I thank my colleague on the other side.

#### EDUCATION

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, as we started to hear this debate this morning, and talking about different ways of accomplishing things here on a non-partisan basis, it started off a little on the partisan side. Education is very dear to the hearts of all of us because all of us, probably, have had a connection with kids and so have been involved in education. I still have one going to school. But to hear the other side talk, we have done nothing about that.

You know, we have increased the funds for special education since the Republicans took over in 1994.

We passed education savings accounts that would empower parents to make choices for their own children with regard to books and computers and this type stuff. That was a bad idea to the President. He vetoed it. I guess he wants to empower bureaucracy rather than empower parents.

We passed the opportunity scholarships, a highly popular program here in Washington, DC, that would allow parents more choice of where to send their kids to school. That was vetoed.

We passed a \$2.74 billion education bill for classrooms, and we guaranteed that 95 percent of it would get to kids. That met with stiff opposition from the President.

Encouraging States to implement teacher testing and merit pay, what is wrong with that? That got vetoed by the President.

Strengthening safe schools, the antigun program—that was vetoed.

Tax relief to employers who provide workers education assistance, folks we are retraining in this rapidly changing world of technology? Vetoed by the President.

I have to look and say all at once: 2 plus 2 is not making 5, when we start talking about education and who wants to do what for whom.

I just noticed here, earlier this year my good friend from Massachusetts said we have "a relationship with Federal, State, and local community levels in terms of education; it is a partner-

ship." Tell me how good this partnership is. The Federal Government only provides 7 percent of the money but 50 percent of the paperwork. That should not surprise you a lot if you have been around government at any time.

In 1969, our expenditure was \$68 billion; in 1996, it was \$564 billion; and yet even by their own admission, education continues to struggle and go down. That is the point I wanted to make here. I would say whenever we start looking at education, the answer lies in the realization that you cannot kill or do away with an idea. Ideas rule the world. The only way you get rid of a bad idea is with a better one. I think we have come up with some awfully good ideas.

I yield to my friend from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I wanted to give our colleague who has to preside an opportunity to speak first. I thank him for arranging for me to be recognized.

#### SENATOR WENDELL FORD

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I am sorry our colleague from Kentucky has left the floor. I would like to add my voice to those who thanked him for his service. In an era where there are so many cellophane politicians, when there are so many people in public life who talk like newscasters but you can never quite tell what they are talking about when they get through speaking, I think WENDELL FORD has been a welcome relief from that. He is a politician who has texture. When he speaks you may think he is wrong—which I often do—but you never question the fact that he is sincere, and when he speaks you know what he is talking about. I find the longer I serve in this great Senate, the more respect I have for people who stand for something and who speak up for it and who say what they think.

#### EDUCATION AND THE BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I wanted, today, to come over and talk about education. I have come back to town to help in some of these negotiations to try to complete the session, but upon hearing Senator KENNEDY this morning, I felt compelled to come over and speak. I have several ideas I want to talk about. I would like to first talk about why we are talking about education. Here we are, 2 days before the session ends. In fact, as of last Friday, in the budget negotiations, no one at the White House had brought up education at all. Why suddenly do we have the focus on education?

I would like to explain why this focus has come about and what I think it is trying to hide. I would like to talk about Senator KENNEDY's education proposals. I would like to talk about the budget debate we have before us. I