

I also feel, however, that the values and beliefs that the American flag represents are more important than the cloth from which the symbol is made. Prominent among these beliefs are the right to voice views that are unpopular and the right to protest. It is these fundamental values, reflected in our Constitution, that have distinguished our Nation for more than 200 years. It is these beliefs that give our flag its great symbolic power.

Flag burning is despicable. However, the issue before us is whether our great charter document, the Constitution, should be amended so that the Federal Government can prosecute the handful of Americans who show contempt for the flag. To quote James Madison, is this a "great and extraordinary occasion" justifying the use of a constitutional amendment?

I would argue no, this is not such an occasion. This is an answer in search of a problem. According to Professor Robert Justin Goldstein, a noted author on this topic, there have been only 200 reported incidents of flag burning during the entire history of our country—that is less than one a year. There is no epidemic of flag burnings plaguing our nation.

Others have said that flag burning is representative of a general decay of American values and patriotism, and something needs to be done about it before it is too late. I would argue the way to encourage patriotism is through encouraging civic involvement, not constitutional amendments. It almost goes without saying that people who are proud of their country will be proud of their flag.

I am still moved by the statement made by James Warner, a decorated Marine flyer who was a prisoner of the North Vietnamese from 1967 to 1973, about flag burning:

I remember one interrogation where I was shown a photograph of some Americans protesting the war by burning a flag. "There" the officer said. "People in your country protest against your cause. That proves that you are wrong."

"No," I said, "that proves that I am right. In my country we are not afraid of freedom, even if it means that people disagree with us."

And I think that is the essence of this debate for me. We live in a democracy, not a dictatorship. The flag symbolizes a political system that allows its people, through their actions and words, to express what they think and feel, even when the government or a vast majority of others disagree with them. I oppose this amendment because I believe that while attempting to preserve the symbol of the freedoms we enjoy in this country, it actually would harm the substance of these freedoms.

Finally, this amendment to the Constitution is technically problematic. The language of the amendment is vague and fails to offer a clear statement of just what conduct the supporters of the amendment propose to prohibit, or to advise the American

people of the actions for which they may be imprisoned. There is no definition of what a "flag" is for purposes of this amendment, or any consensus regarding the meaning of "desecration." This leaves the Supreme Court to clarify these meanings, the same court that supporters believe erred in protecting flag burning as freedom of speech in the first place.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, April 24, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,711,905,996,688.11 (Five trillion, seven hundred eleven billion, nine hundred five million, nine hundred ninety-six thousand, six hundred eighty-eight dollars and eleven cents).

Five years ago, April 24, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,839,548,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred thirty-nine billion, five hundred forty-eight million).

Ten years ago, April 24, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,066,631,000,000 (Three trillion, sixty-six billion, six hundred thirty-one million).

Fifteen years ago, April 24, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,731,710,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred thirty-one billion, seven hundred ten million).

Twenty-five years ago, April 24, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$514,446,000,000 (Five hundred fourteen billion, four hundred forty-six million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,197,459,996,688.11 (Five trillion, one hundred ninety-seven billion, four hundred fifty-nine million, nine hundred ninety-six thousand, six hundred eighty-eight dollars and eleven cents) during the past 25 years.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TUFTS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF CITIZENSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today I applaud Tufts University for furthering the values of leadership, citizenship, and public service, by founding a University College of Citizenship and Public Service. By creating this new college, Tufts' President, Dr. John DiBiaggio, is fostering an attitude of "giving back" to supplement the University's vision that "active citizen participation" is essential to freedom and democracy.

Tufts has a history of commitment to civic education, having founded the Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs over 50 years ago. The largest student organization on the Medford campus is the Leonard Carmichael Society, a community service group, which boasts about 1,000 members. Recently, Tufts has hatched the "United Leaders for a Better Tomorrow," a new student organization that aims to encourage young people to

pursue careers in public service. With chapters starting across the country, this group of young leaders seeks to re-enlist those Americans interested in public service in using public office as a vehicle for change.

Tufts University is now renewing its commitment to public service with an entrepreneurial spirit. Tufts is not adding a stand-alone college, composed of its own buildings and faculty. Instead, the university is creating a "virtual college," one "without walls;" challenging itself to infuse all classroom instruction with the ideas of citizenship and public service.

According to Tufts' President Dr. John DiBiaggio, the tangible impact will mean that a major in child development who is mentoring kindergarten kids in a poor community could also participate in legislative advocacy to improve conditions in that community or, a Tufts student who wants to be a chemist will have an opportunity to measure pollution in nearby waterways, determine the sources of this pollution and then create a local team to clean them up.

The need for a college of public service has never been greater. While Tufts students, Massachusetts residents, and citizens nationwide are volunteering at record rates, voter participation rates continue to fall. Just two stops away on the T's red line, the "Vanishing Voter Project" at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government measures the depth of the public's cynicism and apathy towards public service. Last week, according to the Vanishing Voter Project's Voter Involvement Index, only 19% of the American public paid any attention to the Presidential race. In fact, at no time during the Presidential Primaries—one of the most hotly contested races in years—did the number of Americans paying attention to the race rise above 46%. In the world's leading democracy, in an age where limitless information is available at our fingertips, we can do better.

More than ever, it is critical that we restore and maintain civil society. We need voters that are educated and engaged. Tapping the cutting edge of the New Economy's budding e-commerce, Tufts is partnering with eBay founder, Pierre Omidyar. eBay, is now the world's leading person-to-person online trading community. Omidyar's ten million dollar investment in the College of Public Service includes financial aid packages for 24 undergraduates every year, enhanced public and private sector internship opportunities, citizenship-based career workshops, and a senior honors program in civic activism. Mr. President, Tufts University's College of Citizenship and Public Service and its partnership with eBay's Pierre Omidyar illustrates the possibilities provided by technological innovation. The promise of a technology based digital democracy is that billions of people will engage in business, receive their news, and even vote, directly and