

filibuster record by talking about Minnesota's contributions to America but I will stick to just a few of the highlights and try to finish up by sundown.

Minnesota's natural beauty has been photographed and documented time and time again. License plates may proclaim Minnesota to be "The Land of 10,000 Lakes," but in reality, our vast lakes number in excess of 12,000, and we have more than 63,000 miles of natural rivers and streams. But there is something about sitting on the shore of Mille Lacs Lake at dawn on a Saturday in July that even a two-page spread in National Geographic cannot capture.

Minnesotans have a unique relationship with their great outdoors. Many take advantage of our pristine environment through a large assortment of activities, such as taking a week to canoe through the Boundary Waters or going for a walk along the Mississippi River over a lunch hour. Minnesota is a true sportsman's paradise. Our unique habitat creates some of the best hunting and fishing in the country. We are proud of our outdoor heritage, and take seriously our commitment to maintaining the delicate balance between protecting the environment and the responsible use of our resources.

Nor are we shy about sharing our bounty with others. Minnesota welcomes more than 20 million vacationers every year, who support 170,300 tourism jobs and return \$9.1 billion to the local economy. Yet, for all those visitors, our state offers places of such solitude that a camper or canoeist can travel for a week and spot any number of deer, bears, and bald eagles, but never see another person.

The influence of agriculture on Minnesota life and traditions cannot be overstated. Even as family farms struggle in today's difficult market, the resilience and dedication of our farmers establishes the backbone of the Minnesota economy. One in every four Minnesota jobs is tied to the agriculture industry in some way. Minnesota has become a national leader in international exports, as our producers export billions of dollars worth of grains, meats, and other products every year. I am proud of my ongoing efforts to ensure that even more world markets are opened to Minnesota agriculture products—they are among the best products in the world, and they should be shared. Many of the nation's top job providers call Minnesota home. Well-known names like General Mills, Pillsbury, 3M, Target, and Cargill have deep roots within our communities. Aside from the economic impacts made by our corporate community, there is an impressive philanthropic presence in the state. For example, Cargill's generous contributions to causes such as education, environment, and youth programs total in the tens of millions of dollars.

Firms such as Medtronic and St. Jude Medical are national leaders in the bio-medical industry. Their products have given hope to those who pre-

viously faced a bleak medical outlook. Other Minnesota organizations are searching for answers to tomorrow's problems—today. The world-renowned Mayo Clinic not only treats over half a million patients a year, but is leading the charge against the mysteries of mankind's deadly diseases through its ongoing research.

Of all the successful companies, natural beauty, and bountiful resources Minnesota plays host to, the real treasures are the people of my state. Successful Minnesotans come from all walks of life. Some of the most prolific writers of the past century have hailed from the North Star State. The first American to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature was Sinclair Lewis, a native of Sauk Centre, Minnesota. F. Scott Fitzgerald, Jon Hassler, and Garrison Keillor are all writers we are proud to call our own.

Something about the fresh air in Minnesota inspires us to do bigger and better things. Charles Lindbergh must have gotten a big whiff of that air; so did Judy Garland, Kevin McHale, and Bob Dylan, just to name a few. Our state and nation recently mourned the loss of one of our most beloved natives. Charles Schulz captured the hearts of young and old alike with his long-running Peanuts comic strip, and we will miss him each and every Sunday.

There are many Minnesota celebrities who have contributed to the richness of our nation, but the people who really deserve the applause and recognition are the men and women who day in and day out strive to make their communities, state, and nation a better place to live. The farmer who harvests our nation's corn, the police-woman who patrols the streets, the stay-at-home mom who supervises a household of kids, and the volunteer who takes the time to visit a disabled veteran rarely receive the accolades they deserve. These people are as indispensable to the growing, bustling community of St. Michael-Albertville as they are to the thriving metropolis of Minneapolis-St. Paul. I applaud them and am proud to represent each of them here in the United States Senate.

The quality of life in Minnesota is outstanding for a reason. Ideals such as hard work, dedication, personal responsibility, and a true passion for life are all essential to my state's success. Growing up on a Minnesota dairy farm, I was fortunate enough to witness these qualities and their importance at a very young age.

And for any of my colleagues who may be wondering, you don't have to be a native to spread the "Minnesota Nice" spirit. For example, some of the most outstanding Minnesota citizens are those from its many ethnic communities. Their devotion and contribution to Minnesota's way of life is commendable, and representative of the way our state seems to bring out the very best in its people.

I am deeply proud of my state, Mr. President, and representing her and her

citizens is a great honor. So, on this 142nd anniversary of our statehood, I encourage Minnesotans to take time to discover something new about our state and ponder some of the many treasures with which we have been blessed. Visit one of our sky-tinted lakes, the Mall of America, Split Rock Lighthouse, Fort Snelling, or even the world's largest ball of twine. Take pride in our state and continue the efforts to make Minnesota an even better place to call home.●

CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, for the eighth year in a row, the Uniform Crime Report indicates that violent crime has decreased across our country. In 1999, the number of murders, rapes, aggravated assaults, robberies, and property crimes decreased eight percent in the Midwest and seven percent overall. While crime experts will argue endlessly on the reasons behind this remarkable trend, I believe that local, state, and federal law enforcement are primarily responsible for making our streets safer than a decade before.

While I am pleased with the results of this new report, it is important to remember that behind every crime statistic, there is a child, a spouse, a relative, or a friend that has been victimized. Even one crime is too many because that crime victim has been violated in a way that forever changes their life. In our country's haste to focus on what should happen to the criminal, the victim is too often overlooked. That doesn't have to be the case, and I believe that more should be done to assist crime victims in South Dakota and around the country.

As a former prosecutor, I am well aware that victimization in and of itself is terrible to cope with, let alone the anguish of a legal proceeding and restitution recovery. The voice of the victim should be heard at every step of the criminal process, and local and state programs should have adequate resources to effectively deal with crime victims.

States have taken the lead in protecting the rights of crime victims, and it is time for the federal government to follow suit. South Dakota provides a number of specific "victim rights" including the right to restitution, notices of scheduled hearings and releases, an explanation of the criminal charges and process, and the opportunity to present a written or oral victim impact statement at trial. South Dakota also has victim/witness assistants in many of the prosecutor's offices across the state who work with crime victims on a daily basis.

I am a cosponsor of the Crime Victims Assistance Act which enhances victims' rights for federal crimes and provides several grants for state and local prosecutors, judges, prison employees, and law enforcement officials

to improve their handling of crime victims as well. However, instead of passing this important piece of legislation that would have an immediate impact on state and local efforts to improve crime victims services, some in Congress prefer to focus their attention on proposals to amend the United States Constitution. I have reservations about amending the constitution while Congress has the ability to enact legislation instead to accomplish the same goal. I am more concerned that this focus on a constitutional amendment has slowed the pace of crime victim legislation over the past several years. It is critical that Congress pass and the President sign into law the Crime Victims Assistance Act this year.

In addition to the Crime Victims Assistance Act, Congress must pass this year the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA II). Since enactment of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, the number of forcible rapes of women have declined, and the number of sexual assaults nationwide have gone down as well. South Dakota organizations have received \$6.7 million in federal funding for domestic abuse programs and \$1.6 million in federal funding for battered women's shelters.

Despite the success of the Violence Against Women Act, domestic abuse and violence against women continue to plague our communities. Consider the fact that a woman is raped every five minutes in this country and more women are injured by domestic violence each year than by automobile accidents and cancer deaths combined. Local and state officials should have access to more—not fewer—resources to address domestic violence, and it is critical that programs authorized through VAWA II receive stable levels of funding for the next five years.

Supporters of a constitutional amendment for crime victims have withdrawn their proposal from consideration on the Senate floor this year. I am hopeful that my colleagues will seize this opportunity to continue the very valuable discussion on crime victims' rights and work to pass the Crime Victims Assistance Act and VAWA II as soon as possible.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, May 10, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,664,193,479,449.87 (Five trillion, six hundred sixty-four billion, one hundred ninety-three million, four hundred seventy-nine thousand, four hundred forty-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents).

One year ago, April 26, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,571,920,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred seventy-one billion, nine hundred twenty million).

Five years ago, May 10, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,856,767,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred fifty-six billion, seven hundred sixty-seven million).

Ten years ago, May 10, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,075,637,000,000 (Three trillion, seventy-five billion, six hundred thirty-seven million).

Fifteen years ago, May 10, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,739,232,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred thirty-nine billion, two hundred thirty-two million) which reflects a debt increase of almost \$4 trillion—\$3,924,961,479,449.87 (Three trillion, nine hundred twenty-four billion, nine hundred sixty-one million, four hundred seventy-nine thousand, four hundred forty-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents) during the past 15 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ON THE RETIREMENT OF GORDON C. KERR

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a member of my staff, an advisor, and a man I feel honored to call my friend, Gordon Kerr.

Gordon, who has served as my Chief of Staff since 1982, has retired from government service to join the National Trust for Historic Preservation as the Director of Congressional Affairs. His 17 years as my top aide made him the dean of Senate Chiefs of Staff.

Gordon has served me for these many years in a variety of ways. He has been an invaluable advisor on issues of public policy and legislative strategy, as well as on personal and political matters. He has a clear-eyed, straightforward, right-in-your-face way of evaluating issues and events, and expressing his opinion about them which makes it nearly impossible to walk a bad idea past him. At least not without his calling you on it.

And yet, the first thing that anyone who knows Gordon immediately says is, "what a wonderful human being". How does a plain-speaking, realist like Gordon, come to be so uniformly regarded with such warmth and affection? It's simple when you think about it. Gordon is so open, principled, ethical and kind-hearted in his approach to the people he comes in contact with that it is nearly impossible to take offense at his candid advice. I'm reminded of what I've read about Robert Kennedy who also was known both for his brusque, sometimes harsh candor, but also for his high principles, and thoughtful consideration of others. "My, he is unassimilated, isn't he?" poet Robert Lowell was reported to have said when he first met him.

In all, Gordon spent more than 30 years on Capitol Hill, beginning as a Legislative Assistant for former-Congressman James Scheuer of New York in 1970, joining former-Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas in 1973, and then working for former-Congressman Jonathan Bingham of New York from 1973 until 1982, when he joined my staff as Chief of Staff. Gordon is a graduate of Yale University with a B.A. degree

in Political Science and he holds a Masters degree in Public Administration with Distinction from American University, awarded in 1980. He served in the United States Navy as an Intelligence Officer for three years.

In 1990, Gordon served as my campaign manager. Former Senator Eugene McCarthy, with his wonderful irreverent sense of humor, once remarked that practicing politics is a little "like being a football coach; you have to be smart enough to understand the game, but dumb enough to think it's important." Well, Gordon is a brilliant strategist, an outstanding "coach", and although his acute sense of humor would appreciate Senator McCarthy's self-deprecating quip, nonetheless he's always known the importance of the game. He's proud of the work he's done in the Senate as a public servant, and rightly so. And, he's proud of his work in the world of campaigns and politics, doing his part on that tough battleground. He was ever-conscious of the role of politics, which we sometimes tend to forget, in the accountability which is at the heart of the democratic system.

Characteristic of Gordon is his ability to see things from a new, fresh, sometimes unique angle. In a time when even the public policy debate is increasingly driven by political polls, television sound-bites, and oversimplified sloganeering, it was particularly valuable to me to have his contributions. Even when I did not ultimately adopt his viewpoint or accept his recommendation, having the benefit of Gordon's input nearly always informed my decisions.

While Gordon has been a dedicated public servant and loyal and hard-working employee, his first priority has always been his wonderful family. His love of his wife Suzy, his son Charlie and daughter Sarah were evident in his voice whenever he spoke of them and in the special sparkle in his eyes when he was with them. I know I speak not only for myself and the Levin family, but for the entire Levin staff and many in the Senate family, when I say we will miss Gordon and the Kerr family. Fortunately, in his new role at the National Trust for Historic Preservation he won't be too far away.

Mr. President, I owe Gordon Kerr a great debt for the loyal service which he has performed; and I believe that all of us here in the Senate, in my home state of Michigan, and in the nation, owe a debt of gratitude to him and the many like him who serve us here. This tribute to Gordon Kerr, in a small way, is an effort to recognize that role.●

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD KEHOE

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to an extraordinary Vermonter and a determined leader, Edward Kehoe. Ed Kehoe was born in Rutland, my hometown, to the late James and Grace Kehoe and graduated from Rutland High School