

tubes that can have military and civilian applications. . . . When United Nations weapons inspectors were allowed into Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war, they compiled long lists of chemicals, missile components, and computers from American suppliers.

Mr. President, sadly, there is no new precedent in our Government using our citizens' tax dollars to finance the purchase of weaponry for antidemocratic, antihuman rights, and unstable foreign nations only to see their short-term friendship disappear and to have them become enemies to the United States and the Western World. What is truly shocking here, however, is that the very possession of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, which is the justification for a new war in Iraq and which places in jeopardy the safety of American families, American communities, and American military personnel, is, in large measure, the consequence of decisions made by the Reagan and Bush administrations.

As we speak, tens of thousands of U.S. Gulf war veterans continue to suffer from exposure to chemical agents over a decade ago. We in Congress debate whether and how to inoculate hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Americans to protect them from biological weapons that their own Government helped create in Iraq.

It is one thing that our Nation would have provided cluster bombs and conventional weaponry to Saddam Hussein—it no doubt seemed important and strategically helpful to the purpose of stabilizing the Middle East during the 1980's. But how can members of this Senate look members of our military in the eye—and I include my own son, a sergeant in the 101st Airborne and a veteran of Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan—and acknowledge that these past administrations, albeit without congressional knowledge or consent, allowed Iraq to acquire the anthrax, and bubonic plague viruses?

The circumstance our Nation now faces, from the threats of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction as well as the possibility that these weapons have or will fall into the hands of Al-Qaida or other non-state terrorist organizations, are to a great degree, circumstances of our own making. Obviously, no American administration has ever supported terrorism against our own people, though interfering with Iraq's use of these weapons against many of its own people was apparently not a matter of first concern to the U.S.

The lesson should be clear—to the extent that the U.S. arms the world, it undertakes a risk that those weapons could be used against our own citizens. While helping proven democratic allies to defend themselves will always be a legitimate role for the U.S., it is hard to imagine a lesson driven home more profoundly than we find today that arming non-democracies is a much greater risk, and arming non-democracies with weapons of chemical and biological warfare capability is an outrageous and utterly unacceptable risk

to the U.S. and the world. It may be impossible for our Nation to avoid reaping what is has sown in the past, but this administration, this Congress and the American people must be united now in committing never again to be even a unwitting instrument of chemical, biological or nuclear terror in the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until the hour of 2 p.m., with the time equally divided between the majority and minority leaders or their designees, and that Members be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

NOMINATION OF JOHN SNOW TO BE TREASURY SECRETARY

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I come to this Chamber to state my support for John Snow's nomination as the Treasury Secretary. In the 20 years I have known John, I have found him to be honest, capable, and up to the challenge of heading our Nation's Treasury Department. While John and I have not always agreed on issues, I have never found him to be disagreeable. I am confident he will be a valuable member of the President's Cabinet and will work well with Members of Congress.

As a business leader, a public servant, an academic, John has proven he has the ability to lead our Nation's economic recovery and spur economic growth. I look forward to working with John on our Nation's economic challenges, and I urge a rapid report and consideration of his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

DROUGHT "DAVID"

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, today I will address a different subject than has been addressed this morning. The Senate recently passed a disaster assistance package consisting of \$3.1 billion to aid those affected by the worst drought since the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s. Some have referred to this package as drought disaster relief. I cannot quite call it drought relief because it does not really provide drought relief. It may provide some arid condition relief and some oasis assistance, but I cannot bring myself to call it real drought relief, for two reasons: No. 1, because \$3.1 billion is inadequate. It is not enough. No. 2, it does not do enough for farmers and ranchers who are actually suffering the losses due to the devastating drought.

I decided to give the drought a name, and I gave it the name "David" to give

it an identity like other natural disasters and to show that this drought, the same as a hurricane, required immediate emergency Federal assistance.

Several of my colleagues wore Drought David ribbons that I distributed to them to remind all Senators of the severe impact of the drought, and I thank those who proudly wore them. Back home, the newspaper Journal Star in Lincoln thought my proposal to name the drought was worth asking readers to submit their suggestions, and many creative suggestions were submitted but one stood out.

For Shannon Sutherland of Lincoln, the drought summons up thoughts of the devil in hell. Among her suggestions was "The Devil's Bull's Eye" in reference to the drought maps looking like a bull's eye right over Nebraska. The Journal Star reported that on Monday.

Shannon Sutherland is absolutely right. The Drought Monitor maps do resemble a target with Nebraska in the crosshairs, but our neighboring States share the target, unfortunately.

If we go look at this chart, if that is not a bull's eye, I do not know what a bull's eye would look like. Unfortunately, that bull's eye is right over my hometown of McCook, NE. As we can see, that area has suffered the worst drought conditions in the State of Nebraska.

We are not alone. The darkest brown is where the worst conditions are being experienced, and even though this disaster assistance was passed last week and is now over in the House, the drought continues. I think we have a tendency at times to think when we have passed something, that takes care of it. Well, first, it was inadequate to take care of the past needs, and it certainly is not going to be adequate to take care of the additional needs.

Yet despite my efforts to raise awareness—and others who have attempted to raise awareness—of this drought, the Senate still could not manage to provide comprehensive drought assistance. I have come today to give my fellow Senators another opportunity to hear a message I received from one of my constituents, Bill Lueck of Arcadia, NE, in the central part of the State. His words came in over the weekend. I spoke to him yesterday. His words are a powerful reminder of how the recent drought relief bill fell short. He said:

I have some concerns over the current disaster portion of the omnibus appropriations bill. According to the information I got from the farm bureau, they're considering 42 percent of AMTA payments to farmers. In our area here we have irrigated producers who haven't suffered a loss, who are going to get an additional payment and in the western part of the State our cattle producers out here are hanging on by their fingers. I assumed when they didn't consider the \$6 billion anymore and went to the \$3.1 billion for agriculture disaster aid that would go more to livestock producers. We've got breeding stock on wholesale bull sale that are down \$1,000 average per bull around here.

To Bill Lueck, I say thank you. I could not have said it better myself. I

could not have drawn the focus more narrowly than he did. A \$3.1 billion drought package to address the devastation of a drought this extensive inevitably leaves out people who need help to make it through the disaster.

The State of Nebraska will possibly receive about 8 percent of what we need. We asked for \$6 billion; we got \$3.1 billion. The way in which it is being distributed to those who have severe needs and those who may have some needs but in a uniform manner robs those who really are most affected because they are going to be left with virtually nothing compared to what they need.

Richard and Cecelia Carnes of Marquette, NE, which is very close to Sargent, in the middle part of the State as well, also wrote to me regarding true drought assistance. These two truly represent the family farmer. They have been in the farming business for the last 40 years, with some of their land having been in the family for over 100 years.

Richard and Cecelia are afraid of losing their farm because of the drought. They are going to sell half of their cow herd to pay for the expenses they incurred during the drought last summer. The expenses are ongoing, even though the income is not forthcoming. They have even gone so far as to invest their retirement savings into keeping their farm afloat, but without significant Federal assistance they cannot prevail, either in the short term or in the long term.

In their letter, they made a particularly good point that I will express at this time:

This drought is affecting everyone in the country. Whenever there is a disaster for flooding, hurricanes, tornados, and snowstorms the Government is there helping right away. A drought is much worse since the farmer is the one producing the food for the country.

People might take issue with whether a drought is worse than other disasters, but I do not think anybody would disagree that a drought that adversely affects the output of food is a disaster that we can ill afford.

They concluded the letter by saying that everyone needs to try farming to truly understand what it is like. The Senate needs to realize the seriousness of the problem and put themselves in the shoes of family farmers and ranchers like Richard and Cecelia. Perhaps then we could provide real and substantial drought relief.

Yesterday, I spoke with my good friend and colleague TOM OSBORNE about some concerns raised by House members on the fairness of the drought package passed by the Senate. The Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee indicated that the Senate plan would provide "relief" to farmers and ranchers who suffered no losses. The package treats equally farmers and ranchers who did and did not suffer losses.

That's right. In a time of budget deficits and fiscal calamity, the Senate

package squanders scarce resources and provides assistance to those who actually need it. Farmers and ranchers in my State of Nebraska are not pleased. Nebraska, perhaps, is one of the States hit hardest by Drought David. For two years, we have suffered under dry conditions and dwindling herds and crops. Some estimates say 20,000 of the remaining 55,000 Nebraska family farms are likely to go under this year because of the drought. The drought is a crisis—like a tornado, a hurricane, a flood, or a fire—and the climatologists indicate there is no relief in sight and it may be moving in an easterly direction.

Congressman OSBORNE has worked tirelessly to provide comprehensive drought assistance. He left no stone unturned in his effort to find adequate funding. He knocked on every door, he made every phone call, did everything that could be required of someone in his position. But the message he received in return was that farmers and ranchers suffering from drought needed a budgetary offset to receive Federal assistance. In the end, the Senate version found an offset, but didn't find enough.

But we are practical people in Nebraska and around the country—\$3.1 billion is better than nothing; but it is not enough. Ask the people of this country; people such as Bill Lueck and Richard and Cecelia Carnes, who have seen this drought dry up their livelihood, and they will tell you it is not enough. I hope my fellow Senator will join me in seeking to provide comprehensive drought relief in this Congress.

Nebraska State climatologists recently predicted we are about to face a perfect drought this summer, sort of an oxymoron, but I think it requires an explanation. It is the worst of all factors converging. If our family farmers and ranchers are going to survive this perfect drought, we must provide better comprehensive drought relief now to take care of the past losses and prepare them for the bump ahead they are going to face.

I have sent a letter to the House Agriculture Committee, Chairman GOODLATTE, encouraging him to revisit the drought package. I know he is looking very carefully at it. I would love to see the House pass a better drought assistance bill, devoid of special interests, set-asides, devoid of wasteful payments to those who need it least, and one that provides real and comprehensive drought assistance to farmers and ranchers who are teetering on the brink of disappearing forever, never to return. We need to provide the most assistance to those who need it most.

In the State of the Union Address on Tuesday, the President delivered a speech of 5,050 words. In that speech the word agriculture never appeared. I know he had a lot to say and he could not say everything.

He made a strong case in his remarks for the need to stimulate the economy,

both with short-term and long-term implications with tax cuts and other economic incentives. I am sure I will be supporting a number of those. How can we give a tax cut to farmers and ranchers with no income? How can we stand by and watch the agricultural sector of the economy wither under drought conditions? The best economic stimulus for a rural state such as Nebraska and many other States right now is a comprehensive rural development program coupled with real emergency drought relief. Anything short of that will be a failure to our farmers, our ranchers, and our Nation.

When it comes to making decisions, I will come down on the side of Nebraska every time. If I have to choose between the White House and the farmhouse, I choose the farmhouse. If I have to choose between the White House and the Statehouse, I choose the Statehouse. If I have to choose between the White House and the schoolhouse, I will choose the schoolhouse. If I have to choose between the White House and the average family house in Nebraska and throughout our country, I choose the house of each and every Nebraskan and each and every American every time.

My point is the Congress is here to make decisions, not just accept what is dictated as appropriate from the administration. The case of agriculture could not be a better example. Every Member in the Senate knows very well, better than any bureaucrat in the Office of Management and Budget, what is right for our States, our communities, and our constituents.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

COMMEMORATING DAVE HOPPE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today marks the last day in Congress of one of the most remarkable people I have had the pleasure of meeting in my entire life, one of the most decent, clearly one of the most outstanding individuals, and that is Dave Hoppe, who will be leaving Congress to go on to some other line of work after today.

We all got to know Dave as chief of staff of Senator LOTT. He has labored in the vineyards of the Senate and the House for 27 years. Without ego, without a desire to go out and seek public office, like many of us have done, Dave Hoppe devoted himself to improving America and to advancing the causes in which he believed by working through elected officials.

Dave is originally from Wisconsin. He graduated from Notre Dame in 1973. By the way, his birthplace was Baraboo, Wisconsin, which also happens to be the place where the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey circus began.

Dave came to Washington after graduating from Notre Dame to have an impact on his country. As he ends his public service today, there is no question that he has had an enormous impact on the lives of all Americans