

While the problem has certainly been very serious, at least the areas which contained these mines in both countries were reasonably well known. Until Hurricane Mitch, that is. Mudslides and the tremendous volume of water that accompanied the hurricane have carried mines into areas not previously contaminated. Two Nicaraguan civilians were killed last fall by a mine in an area never thought to hold them previously. A U.S. Army study confirmed the new threat in many areas of Nicaragua.

Imagine, Mr. President, the impact on reconstruction efforts in these devastated countries if an American or other foreign national working to rebuild the infrastructure should be injured or killed by a mine.

Other Senators may be surprised to hear that one of the most effective ways to demine these areas is the use of man-dog teams. The explosive material in mines emit a gas, which dogs can be trained to detect. Once a mine is detected, the dog is trained to immediately stop and sit, and conventional demining can begin. Conventional demining amounts to metal detection, a painstakingly slow process which may detect thousands of discarded metal items for every mine found. Most surface area scanned for mines never had any to begin with. But the fear of mines keeps native populations from utilizing the land. Dogs can radically speed the process, and focus the efforts of human deminers into areas which actually contain mines.

The Marshall Legacy Institute, responding to a request from the Inter-American Defense Board, has proposed putting additional man-dog teams into Central America to speed the reconstruction process. The proposal has the support of the Humane Society, and I hope the Administration will give serious consideration to supporting this proposal with these supplemental funds.●

TRIBUTE TO A UTAH NATIVE

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I rise today to note a significant event in the life of a native son of Utah and for those of us here in Washington. After working for over thirty years in government and private service, Anthony T. Cluff is leaving the leadership role he has held at one of the preeminent trade groups in Washington, The Bankers Roundtable.

Few individuals have contributed so much to this city.

Tony worked as an economist at the Treasury Department and later with the American Bankers Association and the Securities Industry Association. Then he spent 8 years on Capitol Hill as a member of the Senate Banking Committee staff and served several years as Minority Staff Director under Senator John Tower of Texas. He also

served as a staff member to my father here in the Senate.

For nearly two decades he has steered the association that represents the nation's leading banks—The Bankers Roundtable and its predecessor, the Association of Reserve City Bankers. During his tenure, he has elevated the prominence of the group, enhanced its message and provided his members with important professional guidance. Under his leadership, the Roundtable expanded its range of activities and took leadership roles in interstate banking legislation, payments system regulation, environmental liability reforms and addressing the challenges of new technology for the banking industry. Most of all, Tony imparted to the association and its staff his values of hard work, doing what is right and speaking the truth; these values are reflected in the approaches that the association takes in working with government.

Tony Cluff was born in Logan, Utah, and has maintained his ties to Utah despite spending most of his time in Washington. For though he has many responsibilities here, many of his family and friends remain in Utah and the West.

With long service to his country and to the industry he has represented, Tony is leaving The Bankers Roundtable to pursue other interests that will afford him more time to write, to be with his children and grandchildren and to enjoy life a bit more. He leaves his work "on top," with an unblemished record and with the knowledge that there are many in this city and throughout the country indebted to him.

I want to wish Tony and his family the very best and express my thanks for all that he has done.●

KOSOVO RESOLUTION

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on Tuesday morning, the President made it clear that efforts to achieve a negotiated political solution to the Kosovo crisis had failed and that military action in the form of NATO conducted air strikes employing US military equipment and personnel was imminent. Although I am very disappointed that the President did not include congressional leaders much earlier in this important debate, the fact remains that the President has begun the process, under his authority as Commander-in-Chief, which will lead to air strikes and will put the men and women of our armed forces in harm's way. My vote supporting S. Con. Res. 21 was, therefore cast, for the express purpose of conveying support for our troops who, at this moment, are ready to risk their lives on this very dangerous mission. My vote should not be interpreted as an endorsement of or authorization for any escalation to more extensive in-

volvement, such as the introduction of ground troops in this conflict. Indeed, before any such escalation of our military commitment in this crisis is contemplated, I believe the President should give Congress a more significant role in the debate than we have thus far and address many critical questions regarding US military involvement. Specifically, the President must clearly explain what US national security interests are at stake, the mission objectives of our military action, the cost and duration of the deployment, and overall exit strategy. Failure to consult with Congress on these important issues in a timely fashion would significantly affect the extent of my support for any subsequent, broader US involvement.●

SEVERE DROP IN PORK PRICES

● Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I ask that two letters be printed in the RECORD. Senator BOND and I worked on an amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill that would help the plight of the hog farmers in the state of Missouri and across the nation.

The Missouri Farm Bureau, the Missouri Pork Producers, the American Farm Bureau, and National Pork Producers Council requested our assistance, and we have responded by working with the Appropriations Committee to get an amendment included in the supplemental appropriations bill that makes \$250 million available for farmers struggling to survive the severe drop in pork prices. Under the amendment, the U.S. Department of Agriculture would be provided with \$150 million new funds and would be given the authority to use another \$100 million, that the USDA already has, to help hog farmers.

It is the understanding of those of us that have offered this amendment today that the majority of the funds available to the Secretary of Agriculture will be used on behalf of our nation's pork farmers. Last year, all of the major commodity groups received disaster assistance, but the hog farmers received nothing.

The letters from the Missouri Farm Bureau, the American Farm Bureau, and the National Pork Producers Council define further the farmers' interest in our amendment.

The letters follow:

MISSOURI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION,
Jefferson City, MO, March 18, 1999.

Hon. JOHN ASHCROFT,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER BOND,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS ASHCROFT AND BOND: On behalf of Missouri Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm organization, I am writing to express our strong support of your efforts to make additional funding available to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for economic disaster payments to pork producers. We believe that waiving the existing cap on

USDA Section 32 funds and appropriating an additional \$150 million to Section 32 will pave the way for the Secretary of Agriculture to provide much-needed relief to pork producers.

According to the University of Missouri, cash receipts for the U.S. pork industry are expected to average less than \$9 billion in 1998, a reduction of over \$4 billion from the 1997 level of \$13.2 billion. Although hog prices have recovered from the historic lows experienced over the October 1998–January 1999 period, they remain far below the average cost of production. Economists have now estimated the market failed to reflect normal supply and demand conditions last Fall when hog prices plummeted to 8 cents per pound. Studies indicate that under normal supply and demand conditions prices would have fallen to between \$25.87 a hundredweight and \$29.41 a hundredweight.

Funds that will be available for direct payments under Section 32 will not compensate pork producers for all the staggering losses experienced in recent months. However, these funds will enable producers to relieve some financial pressure making it easier to survive until profitability returns.

It is critical the Secretary of Agriculture understand the purpose of the pending amendment is to supplement existing Section 32 funds and provide emergency assistance to pork producers. We encourage the Secretary to work with Members of Congress and the agricultural community to develop the guidelines under which the funds will be administered. We do not support using the same parameters used for the recent Small Hog Operator Program.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. KRUSE,
President.

MARCH 18, 1999.

Hon. JOHN ASHCROFT,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR ASHCROFT: The American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Pork Producers Council commend you for your efforts to help pork producers who have suffered due to the lowest prices since the Great Depression.

We support your amendment to the FY 1999 supplemental appropriations bill, which would provide \$150 million to USDA for additional aid to hog farmers. As you well know, U.S. pork producers lost over \$2.5 billion in equity in 1998 and are expected to lose another \$1 billion in equity in 1999. The nation's pork producers are facing another difficult year due to continued depressed prices and are looking to Congress for direction with regard to the recent economic disaster faced by the U.S. pork industry.

AFBF and NPPC appreciate your efforts on behalf of the nation's pork producers and look forward to working with you on behalf of agriculture.

Sincerely,

DEAN KLECKNER,
*President, American
Farm Bureau Fed-
eration.*
JOHN MCNUTT,
*President, National
Pork Producers
Council.*●

EXTENDING THE PERIOD FOR WHICH CHAPTER 12 OF TITLE 11, UNITED STATES CODE, IS REENACTED

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of H.R. 808, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 808) to extend for 6 additional months the period for which chapter 12 of title 11, United States Code, is reenacted.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 808) was considered read the third time and passed.

AMENDING THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of H.R. 774, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 774) to amend the Small Business Act to change the conditions of participation and provide an authorization of appropriations for the women's business center program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, today we in the United States Senate have an opportunity to take an important step in strengthening the Women's Business Center Program at the Small Business Administration. The "Women's Business Center Amendment Act of 1999" authorizes SBA to make grants totaling up to \$11 million annually to Women's Business Centers throughout the United States.

During the past decade, the number of women-owned small businesses has exploded. Women-owned small businesses are the fastest growing segment of our nation's business community. Years ago, there was an advertising campaign slogan proclaiming that women "had come a long way." I find that slogan very applicable to the plateau now reached by women entrepreneurs. During this time, women business owners have established them-

selves as a key component of our small business community, which has been the engine driving our economy during the 1990's.

The research foundation arm of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) has conducted studies which show that women no longer are having more trouble than men obtaining bank loans. However, obtaining a loan does not guarantee a business' success. In fact, many small businesses that start out well capitalized end up failing. Success of a small business is usually dependent on the owner's management capabilities. Women's Business Centers offer help to women entrepreneurs who are looking to start a business or who already have a business by providing them with business and education training, including marketing, finance, and management assistance.

For the past three years, I have worked with Senator DOMENICI Senator KERRY, and members of the Committee on Small Business first to save and later to expand the Women's Business Center Program. In 1996, when the Administration sought to zero-out the budget for the program, I helped lead the effort to earmark funds for the program within the SBA FY 1997 budget. Senator DOMENICI, Senator KERRY and I sponsored the "Women's Business Centers Act of 1997," which expanded the program from \$4 million to \$8 million per year. This bill was incorporated into the "Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997" (Public Law 105-135).

Last year, I sponsored the "Year 2000 Readiness and Small Business Programs Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998," which included an increase from \$8 million to \$12 million and made other reforms in the Women's Business Center Program. This bill passed the Senate unanimously; unfortunately, the House of Representatives was not able to act on the bill before Congress adjourned. In light of the pressing demand to expand the authorization for the Women's Business Center Program, I applaud the Chairman of the House Committee on Small Business, JIM TALENT, and the Committee's ranking Democrat, NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, for their efforts to push through House-passage of the bill so quickly this year.

The "Women's Business Center Amendments Act of 1999" brings us a giant step closer to achieving our goal of having at least one Women's Business Center up and running in each of the 50 states. Under this bill, SBA will be able to continue to fund the existing 35 eligible Centers and provide seed funding to new eligible applicant Centers in states not yet served by the program.

The bill authorizes \$11 million for Fiscal Year 2000 for the Women's Business Center Program; however, the Administration has requested \$9 million.