

employer-sponsored health coverage if available. The option to buy in to Medicaid would be used as a supplement to existing private insurance or as stand alone coverage if employer-based coverage were not an option.

In addition to creating Medicaid buy-in options for families, the Family Opportunity Act proposes the establishment of Family to Family Health Information Centers. These Centers, staffed by both parents and professionals would be available to help families identify and access appropriate health care for their children with special needs, as well as answer questions on filling out the necessary paperwork to establish health care coverage.

The Family Opportunity Act promises to promote early intervention, ensures medically necessary services, offers support, and will help restore family stability. I applaud my colleagues for proposing this important legislation, but even more important, I give a standing ovation to the dedicated families who give so greatly of themselves to care for their children.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, June 15, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,644,606,868,488.81 (Five trillion, six hundred forty-four billion, six hundred and six million, eight hundred and sixty-eight thousand, four hundred eighty-eight dollars and eighty-one cents).

Last year, June 16, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,579,687,718,133.89 (Five trillion, five hundred seventy-nine billion, six hundred eighty-seven million, seven hundred eighteen thousand, one hundred and thirty-three dollars and eighty-nine cents).

Five years ago, June 16, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,893,073,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred ninety-three billion, seventy-three million, seven hundred eighteen thousand, one hundred and thirty-three dollars and eighty-nine cents).

Ten years ago, June 16, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,121,688,000,000 (Three trillion, one hundred twenty-one billion, six hundred eighty-eight million).

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORS FOR AN ARKANSAS STUDENT

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and to recognize a fellow Arkansan, Blake Rutherford, for his accomplishments at Middlebury College in Vermont. Blake is a native of Little Rock, attended Little Rock Central High School, and will be graduating from Middlebury College with a degree in Political Science in August

2000. This fine young man is the first student ever chosen at Middlebury College to give the Student Commencement Address. This is a well deserved honor for Blake Rutherford and I wholeheartedly congratulate him on his achievements. I ask that the text of his speech be included following my remarks.

BLAKE RUTHERFORD'S COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

Today, we are fortunate to experience one of the great accomplishments in life. Like thousands throughout America, we are gathered at the beginning of a new millennium, a unique time in our nation and in our world. But unlike thousands we have come together in a very special place—nestled between the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains—a place where we worked hard, played hard, made lifelong friends, and have spent some of the best years of our lives. Paraphrasing the legendary Bob Hope, "Middlebury: Thanks for the Memories."

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Class of 2000—individually and collectively—for your achievements. I also want to thank the Board of Trustees, the administration, faculty, and staff for providing us the very best. And I especially want to thank our parents and families for paying for it.

At our centennial celebration one hundred years ago, the Middlebury Register characterized it as the "day of days for the undergraduate." Today, a century later, is most certainly our day of days and one that we will celebrate and remember forever with great pride, for as Emerson noted, "The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it."

Middlebury College began in 1800 under the direction of President Jeremiah Atwater in a small building with only seven students. As we see almost 200 hundred years later, more than 2000 students larger, under the direction of President John McCardell, much has changed.

Built for only \$8,000, Painter Hall, constructed between 1814 and 1816, is currently the oldest building on campus. Although it stands the same today, the environment and the atmosphere around it do not.

Admittance into Middlebury in 1815 used to consist of a forty-minute oral examination in Latin, Greek and arithmetic. Remembering back four years ago, I could only wish the process was as simple.

But today, thanks to the efforts of many, Middlebury is blessed with a stronger, more diverse student body than it has ever had.

We have seen the number of applicants to Middlebury grow steadily over the past four years.

We have seen the number of minorities on campus grow over the past four years.

Most importantly, we have seen Middlebury's reputation grow and spread all over the United States and to dozens of countries across the world.

Our accomplishment and our experiences have taught us a lot about ourselves and about Middlebury College. As we strive to promote a more diverse environment, we find ourselves struggling to come to terms with many difficult questions and issues. In answering these, let us turn to the lessons taught to us by three prominent Middlebury graduates.

Roswell Field graduated from Middlebury College in 1822. Upon his departure from the College, he became a lawyer, and is most famous for arguing to the Supreme Court on behalf of a slave named Dred Scott. Al-

though the Court did not rule in his favor, his case has taught us that intolerance and bigotry cannot and should not be permitted against any group, at any level.

Alexander Twilight received his Middlebury diploma in 1823, and in turn became the first African-American to receive a college degree. Today, several minority students will walk across this stage as members of the class of 2000. No doubt, Mr. Twilight would be encouraged.

Ron Brown graduated from Middlebury in 1962. Upon his arrival here, which at the time was almost all white, one campus fraternity objected, saying they only permitted "White, Christian" members, Brown and other members of his fraternity chose to fight. In time our local chapter was expelled, but because of his efforts, Middlebury, more importantly, made it college policy that no exclusionary chapters would exist on campus.

Ron Brown had an exemplary professional career serving as Secretary of Commerce until his death in a tragic plane crash in 1996. Jesse Jackson once said of him, "He learned to be a bridge between the cultures." I hope we all can remember that lesson here today. A lesson, no doubt, Ron Brown learned at Middlebury College.

We've come a long way since these individuals were here, but we still have a long way to go.

I am a son of the South. I came a far distance to go to school here. Acceptance to Middlebury was my own impossible dream.

I graduated from Little Rock Central High School where 43 years ago nine African-American students were denied admittance prompting a constitutional crisis our nation had not seen since the Civil War.

While much progress has been made, today in parts of the Mississippi Delta region of our own country—just a couple of hours from my home—there is poverty at its very worst.

Several years ago the late Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois was speaking at a ceremony at the Gettysburg Battlefield where he said, "Men died here and men are sleeping here who fought under a July sun that the nation might endure: united, free, tolerant, and devoted to equality. The task was unfinished. It is never quite finished."

He was right. It is never quite finished.

With our Middlebury foundation, we're now going to embark on a world full of many wonderful opportunities and also of many grave problems. If we can remember two important lessons, our lives and certainly our world will be a much better place. First, the future can always be better than the present. And second, we have a responsibility to ensure that that is the case. It is a responsibility we have to ourselves, to our communities, to Middlebury and most importantly to those who are not as fortunate to be here, among us, today.

This afternoon we leave Middlebury with a greater knowledge of various academic fields, the world and ourselves. We also leave Middlebury young and energetic, bound closer to one another more than we probably ever will be through our friendships, our relationships, and our experiences. And with that we now have the opportunity to help and serve others.

Robert Kennedy said, "This world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of will, a quality of the imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite of adventure over the love of ease."

Today, we make history as the first graduating class of Middlebury's third century. It is an accomplishment that I'm sure makes

our families, our friends, and those close and important to us very proud as well. So let us always remember this day, May 21, 2000 as our day of days—our historic day. And very soon will all embark on separate journeys and begin a new and exciting chapter in our lives.

In doing so, let us not forget the famous words of Tennyson who wrote, "That which we are, we are, one equal temper of heroic hearts, made weak by time and fate, but strong in will, to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

And for the class of 2000, the world now awaits and the best is yet to be.

Good Luck and Congratulations.●

TRIBUTE TO EZRA KOCH

● Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, ever since the days of the Oregon Trail, my state has been blessed with citizens dedicated to the spirit of "neighbor helping neighbor." In every community in Oregon you can find men and women who give their time, effort, and money to making that community a better place in which to live, work, and raise a family. That is precisely what Ezra Koch has done in the community of McMinnville, and I am proud to pay tribute to him today.

After over half a century of service as one of McMinnville's and Yamhill County's most respected businessmen, Ezra is retiring as President of City Sanitary and Recycling. A native Canadian, who immigrated to Oregon nearly eight years ago, Ezra and his family have truly lived the American dream.

Under Ezra's leadership, City Sanitary and Recycling, and its parent company KE Enterprises, has become one of Oregon's leading sanitary companies—leading the effort to increase recycling long before it became a national cause. Ezra was the driving force behind the creation of the Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association, and served as president of the National Solid Waste Management Association.

Ezra's love of his community can truly be seen in his volunteer and philanthropic efforts. The list of organizations and causes that have benefitted from his leadership and generosity include Linfield College, the McMinnville School District, Rotary International, the McMinnville Chamber of Commerce, and the United Way.

Ezra credits his family with inspiring the values he has lived throughout his life. And his words are ones we should all take to heart. "Even though we were a big family with poverty everywhere, we never lacked for enough to eat and share with others. A great tradition was born in our family of sharing what we have with those that are less fortunate, and that continues today."

I salute Ezra Koch for all he has done to strengthen the Oregon tradition of neighbor helping neighbor, and I wish him many more years of health and happiness.●

FOUR BEARS BRIDGE

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I commend the leadership of the Appropriations Committee, and particularly subcommittee Chairman SHELBY and Senator LAUTENBERG for their work on the Transportation appropriations bill that the Senate passed yesterday. However, I am gravely concerned about the omission of an item included in the President's budget request for Three Affiliated Tribes on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota. The President included \$5 million for the design and preliminary engineering of the Four Bears Bridge on Fort Berthold Reservation. This bill makes no reference to this funding request. I am concerned that this will provide the federal government with yet another excuse for not replacing a bridge that is clearly its responsibility to replace.

This bridge, originally constructed in 1934 on another part of the reservation, was erected at its current site by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1952 during construction of the Garrison Dam. Because the Garrison Dam project created a permanent flood in the form of Lake Sakakawea on the Fort Berthold Reservation, the bridge became necessary to connect the west and the east sides of the Reservation.

Mr. President, Senator CAMPBELL, chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, shares my concerns that the Four Bears Bridge was not included in the bill as requested by the Administration. The reason that this bridge is necessary is because the federal government created a lake bisecting the Reservation. Now there's a situation on Fort Berthold where emergency vehicles, school buses, police and general local traffic are forced to cross a bridge that is only 22 feet wide. This kind of a bridge was built for the small cars of the 1930s—not for the large vehicles common today. It is also important to note that this bridge is one of the few crossing points along the Missouri River in North Dakota, making it a vital connection for all traffic—including large truck traffic—moving across the state.

Mr. INOUE. I, too, am concerned about the situation on the Fort Berthold Reservation. In the Indian Affairs Committee, my colleagues and I struggle with how to meet the many responsibilities that the federal government has to Indian tribes across the nation. There is a mounting crisis in Indian country in a range of areas and transportation is among the critical needs of tribes. Including the Four Bears Bridge in this bill as requested by the President is vital to addressing the emergency needs on the Fort Berthold Reservation.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, this is clearly a Federal responsibility. A Federal project created Lake Sakakawea and flooded a significant portion of the reservation, thus creating the need for

this bridge. In 1992, Congress accepted the recommendations of the Joint Tribal Advisory Commission, which studied the impact of the Garrison Reservoir, created by the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Project, on the Three Affiliated Tribes. The Commission found that the Three Affiliated Tribes are entitled to replacement of infrastructure lost by the creation of the Garrison Dam and Lake Sakakawea. The Federal Government has a responsibility to the Three Affiliated Tribes to play a major role in providing for the infrastructure necessitated by the permanent flood created by this project.

Mr. President, will the Chairman of the Subcommittee also support funding this bridge as recommended by President Clinton?

Mr. SHELBY. I recognize that the Four Bears Bridge is an important priority for my colleagues and I will work with Senator DORGAN, Senator CONRAD, Indian Affairs Committee Chairman CAMPBELL and Indian Affairs Committee Vice Chairman INOUE to identify funding for the bridge in the Transportation appropriations bill when it goes to conference.●

TRIBUTE TO THE SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY BASEBALL TEAM

● Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the most successful college baseball regular season in history. This year, the Savannah State University, SSU, Tigers set a new National Collegiate Athletic Association record for the most consecutive wins—an incredible 46. Led by their coach, Jamie Rigdon, a former Savannah State graduate, the Tigers played with all their heart despite the knowledge that they would not be able to participate in NCAA Regional Playoffs because they are in the process of moving from NCAA Division II to Division I.

The historic season began with twelve straight victories over their fellow Division II rivals. In February, the Tigers defeated Florida A&M in what would become the first of many Division I opponents to meet their match in Savannah State. As the season wore on, the Tigers kept playing hard each and every day and, on March 19 they were rewarded for their efforts with an amazing 34th consecutive victory, thereby breaking the NCAA record. However, Savannah State's celebration was cut short when it learned that a Division III school in Ohio reported that it won 40 consecutive games the season before but had failed to notify the NCAA's official record keepers. While the media and officials debated which team held the record, the Tigers kept winning. In the end, the Savannah State University baseball team had won an astonishing 46 consecutive game, shattering every record in the