

hundred fifty-eight million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$3 trillion, \$3,626,304,161,657.50, three trillion, six hundred twenty-six billion, three hundred four million, one hundred sixty-one thousand, six hundred fifty-seven dollars and fifty cents during the past 15 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING THE STUDENTS OF SUNNYSIDE AND TECUMSEH MIDDLE SCHOOLS OF LAFAYETTE, IN

• Mr. INOUE. Madam President, I rise to commend the students of Sunnyside and Tecumseh Middle Schools of Lafayette, IN, for their efforts to honor the Japanese American veterans of World War II.

On June 29, 2001, I was honored to help dedicate the long-awaited National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. Located just a stone's throw from this chamber, at the corner of New Jersey and Louisiana Avenues, the memorial is a beautiful evocation of Japanese American contributions to life of this great Nation.

Though small in numbers, Americans of Japanese ancestry have had a tremendous impact on our Nation in countless ways, in fields and factories, in boardrooms and classrooms, in State houses and court houses. Of course, when their Nation called, they answered, performing magnificently on the battlefield. Their success, achieved in the face of discrimination and cultural misunderstanding, is a testament to their values of hard work, self-sacrifice, and love of family, community, and country, values that have helped make our Nation strong and prosperous.

The National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism is a fitting tribute to the "patriotism, perseverance, and posterity" of this small but vigorous minority in our country. I hope that all our colleagues, and indeed Americans everywhere, will have a chance to visit this remarkable shrine and reflect on the lesson that it teaches us, that America is great because it embraces its diversity, and that freedom and opportunity can be realized only when they are available to all.

Today I would like to share with you another tribute, one less grand, perhaps, and constructed of cloth and paper rather than steel and stone, but no less meaningful. I am referring to a remarkable work of art and remembrance, a quilt that comes from the heartland of America. Crafted by the young people in Lafayette, IN, the quilt honors the thousands of Japanese Americans who answered the call of duty during the Second World War.

Through the good offices of the Japanese American Veterans Association,

the larger-than-life quilt to which I refer had its inaugural unveiling at the dedication dinner celebrating the June 29, 2001 opening of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism. It captured the hearts and imaginations of all who saw it that evening, and in so doing, appropriately highlighted the memorial's primary mission, to educate Americans about the heritage of Japanese Americans and their special place in the fabric of our Nation.

I would like to commend the 8th grade students of Sunnyside and Tecumseh Middle Schools of Lafayette, IN, who joined together to create this unique work, and to thank their teacher, Ms. Leila Meyerratken, for her inspirational support for this initiative. Five hundred students, often working after school and on weekends, contributed their time, energy, and inspiration to the school project. Mrs. Meyerratken herself gave up holidays and leave to see the project through.

The quilt is a marvelously conceived and meticulously constructed work. The structure and detail were crafted with an eye for historical accuracy, and every opportunity was taken to imbue the quilt with appropriate symbolism. For example, 120,000 tassels edge the red-white-and blue tapestry, to represent the number of Japanese Americans incarcerated in the wartime relocation camps. And the quilt's dimensions are carefully framed at 19 x 41 feet, to recall the fateful year America entered the war.

The main body of the red, white, and blue cloth quilt is interspersed with memorabilia, including dog tags and parts of uniforms, that were selected from Nisei veterans themselves. Other sections contain heartfelt poems written by some of the junior high students. The names of more than 20,000 Nisei soldiers, from the 100th Battalion, the famed 442nd Infantry Regiment, the 522nd Artillery Battalion, 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion, and the Military Intelligence Service, are painstakingly attached to the rest of the quilt's panels.

Its creators intended the quilt to honor Americans of Japanese ancestry who volunteered to fight for their country in order to prove their loyalty, in spite of the detention of their family members in internment camps. The students expressed hope that the tapestry will teach others how Japanese Americans, by making sacrifices on the field of battle, rose above the indignities they suffered. These youths felt strongly that the World War II history of the Japanese Americans soldiers, which is not generally covered in history books, was a story worth telling.

Mrs. Meyerratken, the leader of the project, says that the quilt "is meant to promote social justice by teaching others in simple ways what these veterans did and how they overcame racism."

I hope that the quilt will tour the Nation and convey to all citizens the message of tolerance and understanding that these young people from Indiana have so beautifully and inspirationally captured in this marvelous quilt. If this quilt accurately represents the sentiments of America's heartland, then I think the future is in good hands indeed.●

TRIBUTE TO WALKER JOHNSON

• Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today I rise to pay tribute to a fine man and a great Kentuckian, Mr. Walker Johnson. On July 24, 2001, Walker celebrated his 90th birthday. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing him the very best.

Walker Johnson is a loving family man and a great friend. Born to Robert and Sanny Johnson, he enjoys small-town living and is a life-long resident of Adair County, KY. Walker is the father of four children, Billy, Doris, James, and Delois. In fact, it is through Delois and her husband, Rich, that I have heard so many wonderful stories about Walker. He is a special friend to many, and is always willing to help others.

Walker is a unique individual who is known for his wit and sense of humor. Throughout his life, Walker has pursued a wide range of activities including music, horse shoeing, and dog trading. He is a talented musician and spent much time in his early years traveling and playing the fiddle with performers such as String Bean and Uncle Henry's Mountaineers. In the 1940s, he put the fiddle aside and began shoeing horses and trading dogs. Walker was one of the most skilled and hardest working farrier's in the business. In fact, at the age of 68, he managed to shoe 18 horses in one day. What a feat!

Walker has also stayed busy trading dogs, which he's done for more than 50 years. He has sold dogs all over Kentucky as well as in several other States. Today, at the age of 90, he still enjoys trading and sitting down with friends for good conversation.

On behalf of myself and my colleagues in the U.S. Senate, I want to pay tribute to Walker Johnson and sincerely wish him and his family the very best. I ask that an article which ran in the Adair Progress on Sunday August 24, 2000, appear in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Adair Progress, Aug. 24, 2000]
AN OLD-TIME FIDDLER NOW AN HONORABLE
KENTUCKY COLONEL
(By Paul B. Hayes)

For around three-quarters of a century, Walker Johnson has traveled around the countryside—playing a fiddle, shoeing horses or trading dogs and various other items.

Johnson, a life-long resident of the county who has resided in the Millerfield community for the past 50-plus years, is known far