

classroom—one teacher trying to keep track of 35 children and trying to provide some kind of individual educational opportunity. It is impossible with 35 children. We know it. You have to reduce class size to be more effective in educating children.

I have been in classrooms where the students' desks are an inch apart and where the building is 95 years old and was long ago condemned, where children can't have access to computers or the Internet because they do not have the capability of wiring those classrooms, and where you have 150 students and one water fountain and two bathrooms.

I have been in those schools. We know that is not an optimum way to teach children. So we ought to provide some assistance for the renovation of crumbling schools, for the renovation of those schools that are in disrepair.

Over half a century ago, those brave soldiers who fought and won the Second World War came back to this country and they fell in love. They got married and had children. They built schools all across this Nation. Those schools are now 50 and 60 years old. Those schools are in disrepair in many cases and need to be modernized. We need to do something to help make sure we remedy that.

Education is not some mysterious machine in which we pull some levers and turn some dials and we get it just right. Education has the element of three things, in my judgment, to work well: One, you have to have a teacher who knows how to teach; two, you have to have a student who really wants to learn; and, three, you have to have a parent involved in that student's education. If you do not have all three, it just does not work in almost all cases.

We need to do things to try to encourage the retention of good teachers and the development of new teachers. Some States are woefully inadequate when it comes to compensating teachers, and it is a shame. Teachers spend all day with our children. I have children in sixth grade and eighth grade classes today. My children go to public schools, but I want them to go to good schools. Their public schools are good schools. They have wonderful, committed teachers. I want that to be the case in every part of our country.

One of the specific interests I have in the bill that we are going to be debating is the issuance of school report cards. I am joining a number of my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats—to work on a school report card that will go to parents, so that parents know which schools are failing and which are succeeding.

The fact is, we all get report cards on our kids. We know how our kids are doing in math, in science, civics. We know that because they go to school, they come back home, and then they get a report card every 6 weeks to 9

weeks. And that report card says: Here is how your son or daughter did in mathematics. And it is an A, B, C, D or, God forbid, an F, but it is an assessment of how that child is doing.

There is no similar uniform requirement for American parents or taxpayers to get a grade on how well their school is doing.

How is my school doing versus a school in the next county or another school in the same city, or how are the schools doing in my State versus school systems in another State. Don't we deserve the opportunity to see how well we are doing? Shouldn't we have an assessment of how well the schools are doing? How about a report card for schools? Some States have report cards, but their contents are wildly diverse. There is no consistency at all, and there is no capability for parents to get a good measurement.

School report cards ought to include graduation and retention rates. That has something to do with evaluating whether schools are serving our kids well. Qualifications of teachers, average class size, school safety, parental involvement, those are some of the pieces of information we can give parents and taxpayers to provide them an understanding of what we are getting from this school system of ours. Are we getting what we want from the school system? Are children getting what they need from the school system?

Our rural schools face some unique challenges that we need to help them address. Many of my colleagues come from areas where the need to reduce class size is crucial because there are so many children coming into the school system they can't handle them, but many rural schools have the opposite problem. Last week, I mentioned that my hometown is closing its high school. My hometown high school is closing. They had the last high school prom on April 7.

When I graduated many years ago, I was in a high school class of nine. Now, of course, there are not enough students in those four grades in that high school to continue the school. Those kids will be going to neighboring towns to high school. They held their last prom and will hold those memories for many years, but the Regent High School will no longer exist.

In rural counties, the issue is: how do you pay for a school in which you have nine students in a grade or in some cases two or three students in a grade. That is a separate issue, one we should be concerned about as well.

There are many challenges. But in this debate, unlike some others, everyone will come to the floor wanting the same thing. We share exactly the same goal. We want to do well by our children and to have the finest school system in the world. Some will say: You can't throw money at it. I agree with that. But we can't expect to do what

we want for our children without being willing to fund some of the needs as well. That is the other side of the coin.

Some will say: The way to solve this issue is just to provide vouchers and let parents take their children to private schools if they want to do that. Of course, those who say that went to a school that taught arithmetic that was different than my arithmetic. The numbers just don't add up. If you give someone a \$1,500 voucher and that is all, can a student show up at a private school and be welcomed with open arms. Does the private school say: Welcome, we can provide a really good education for \$1,500. That just does not happen. Private schools are much more expensive than that. If we are truly going to decide to leave no child behind, how can we possibly suggest that the solution to a bad school is to take the few kids out of that school who are given a voucher and leave all the rest of the kids behind. That is not "leave no child behind." That is just leaving whole schools behind.

We can do a lot better than that. The country expects us to do better than that.

Some will search for simple answers when, in fact, the answers are not always very simple. This requires our attention.

It is time to address this issue. It is time for us to debate, offer amendments, and reach a consensus in the Senate about what direction we want the country to go with respect to the education of our children.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FITZGERALD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent there be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

RETIREMENT OF CHIEF ROBERT LANGSTON

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the dedicated service of my good friend and committed public servant, Chief Robert E. Langston, upon his retirement from the U.S. Park Police Force. After 35 years on the force, including the last 10 years as chief, Robert Langston

stepped down earlier this month a day prior to his 60th birthday, the mandatory retirement age for all Park Police officers. He leaves behind an impressive legacy of dedication, integrity, commitment, and success as the leader of one of the oldest law enforcement agencies in the country.

Robert Langston was born and raised in Washington, D.C., and joined the Park Police shortly after he graduated from Florida State University at the young age of 24 years old. Through hard work and dedication he gradually ascended to the impressive rank of U.S. Park Police Chief.

As chief, he oversaw the policing of the national park grounds in Washington, New York, and San Francisco. He worked tirelessly and sacrificed much in order to ensure the safety of the thousands who used or visited these grounds, and the agency flourished under his leadership. Chief Langston consistently went above the call of duty to make sure all Americans, and anyone visiting our Nation from abroad, would be safe while on the national park grounds.

He is to be commended for his exemplary service to the U.S. Park Police Department, and to this fine Nation. The force is stronger because of Chief Langston's dedicated leadership, and he can take great pride in all that he accomplished during his noteworthy tenure. Chief Langston has made countless contributions to the U.S. Park Police Department during his distinguished career. He has been a friend, teacher, and a model of excellence to the many fine men and women who had the honor to serve alongside Chief Langston. Bob Langston is a great man and a truly great American. He was an asset to the U.S. Park Police, and I am certain that though his presence will be missed, his influence will continue for generations to come.

BRINGING SOUTH DAKOTA'S STRENGTH TO THE WORLD'S CHALLENGES

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today I share with my colleagues a summary of the key findings from our recent official congressional delegation trip to North Africa, Turkey, Greece and Macedonia. Those findings are outlined below, and they relate to opportunities for trade and investment in North Africa as well as prospects for rapprochement between Turkey and Greece and the admirable efforts of our troops to bring peace and stability to Kosovo. I have already shared these findings with the Secretaries of Defense and State and am glad to do so now with our colleagues in Congress. We had a number of substantive discussions on this trip that I believe will contribute to U.S. policy in these two important regions of the world.

I am proud of, and grateful to, all the American personnel with whom we

worked. They facilitated the educational value of the trip and are true ambassadors for their country abroad.

I especially want to call the Senate's attention to the South Dakotans I visited on this trip. On a daily basis, South Dakotans are improving the lives of people struggling with drought in southern Morocco and picking up the pieces after ethnic conflict in Kosovo. I am impressed by the way individual South Dakotans are helping people throughout the world get another chance at a better life.

In 1999 and 2000, Morocco suffered its most severe drought in a decade. Drought in Morocco, where 20 percent of the GDP is accounted for by agriculture, and roughly half the population is employed in agriculture, extracts a steep human toll.

In that environment, experienced farmers, who have lived through and conquered the challenges of drought, can be the key to saving a crop, not to mention lives. Imagine the good fortune for the Moroccan community just outside of Essaouira when they were assigned two Peace Corps volunteers from Brookings, South Dakota, with several decades of experience in farming. Just a few years ago, after raising their children and putting them through school, Frances and Harris Davis sold their family farm in Elkton, SD and joined the Peace Corps. They joined, in the words of Fran Harris, to give back some of the blessings they had received in their years as farmers in Elkton.

For more than two years, family by family, the Davises have been improving the lives of countless Moroccans. They have helped Moroccans with land and water management in the midst of a crippling drought. Because tools are scarce in their region, they have become a resource to cash-strapped farmers throughout southeastern Morocco. And using the experience they gained making their own farm vehicles work, they have even been mechanics for numerous vehicles, including the water truck in a thirsty town.

Not only are the people they have helped much better off. The United States, because of the goodwill that Fran and Harris have generated, is also better off.

And the same is true of the three South Dakotans, and their families, I met at Incirlik Air Base in Adana, Turkey. These individuals are key members of U.S. Operation Northern Watch, ONW, an operation that has been successful in protecting Turkey's Kurdish minority for much of the last decade.

Col. Maurice H. Forsythe, born in Brookings and a graduate of South Dakota State University, was deployed to Incirlik with his wife Tamara and their son Riley. Colonel Forsythe was Combined Forces Air Component Commander for Operation Northern Watch, coordinating all flight activity out of

Incirlik. Notwithstanding an Iraqi bounty of \$14,000 for any Iraqi who downs a ONW aircraft, the U.S., Great Britain, Turkey coalition has not yet lost an aircraft, a tribute to Col. Forsythe's leadership and hard work.

Captain Pat Castle, of Sioux Falls, was deployed to Incirlik last year. While Captain Castle fulfills his duty with the Air Force, he and his wife Angie are also raising their 1-year-old daughter Paige on the base at Incirlik. Senior Airman Krissy Sayles of Lead, SD, was also deployed to Incirlik late last year from Shaw AFB in South Carolina. Krissy Sayles provides logistical support to the U.S. and British personnel and airplanes that are enforcing the no-fly zone in Iraq and has provided the same service in assignments throughout the Middle East. Compounding her sacrifice, her husband, also in the Air Force, remains in the U.S. while Senior Airman Sayles works halfway around the world in Turkey.

Paul E. Poletes, also of Sioux Falls, is a diplomat in the U.S. Foreign Service stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Athens. Paul Poletes is responsible for making sure that U.S. personnel in Athens have the infrastructure they need to advance U.S. interests in Greece and the European Union. Paul and his wife were recently assigned to Bangladesh, where he will work to advance the interests of the United States as well as help Bangladeshis, one of the world's poorest countries.

Our delegation also visited Camp Able Sentry in Skopje, Macedonia to meet with the U.S. and NATO personnel who have done so much to stabilize Kosovo. U.S. Army Sergeant Jonnie D. Larsen, a 1989 graduate of Menno High School, was deployed to Kosovo with his battalion from Baumholder, Germany. U.S. Army Platoon Sergeant Michael Mewherter, from Bowdle, SD and a 1987 graduate of Clear Lake High School, was also deployed to Kosovo from Fort Bragg, NC.

Among the many compliments for the hard work of Americans serving in Kosovo we heard on our trip, two stand out. The first was from KFOR Commander, Italian General Cabigiosu, who said the U.S. component was the glue that kept NATO's KFOR together. And the second is from the children of Kosovo, who admire Sergeant Larsen, Staff Sergeant Mewherter and the rest of the American servicemen and women as the force that returned their stability and their future.

We ask our servicemen and women like Jonnie Larsen and Michael Mewherter to do a lot. Time and again, including this time, when both these young men were deployed to Kosovo for several months without their families, they respond.

Americans from each and every state are having a positive impact on the lives of people the world over. I was