

"United" back in the United States, then let's do all we can to expand the pie and provide economic opportunity for all, instead of letting the nation fragment into two separate and unequal factions of haves and have-nots.

We will only make things worse by pursuing nostrums and illusions—whether they take the form of social reaction, or the new deception of the flat tax. The flat tax is a cynical response to the income gap—offering but perhaps not even delivering a small tax cut as the only raise most workers will get—while surely providing a shameful windfall for those who already have the most. The Forbes flat tax gives new meaning to Franklin Roosevelt's indictment of the Republicans as the party of the privileged. The only family value the Forbes flat tax would enhance is the net worth of the Forbes 400.

We are coming to the close of what has been called the "American Century." It has been an extraordinary era in which we have conquered imperialism, fascism, and communism abroad. We have wrestled with racism, sexism, poverty, depression, crime and other enemies within. We have struggled, often imperfectly, yet with great success, to build a fairer and freer society. And we have wisely used some of our resources to help other nations achieve and protect their own democratic ideals. The danger is that the achievements and the vision that made this possible are fading too quickly into the forgetfulness of history, and that we are becoming a nation fragmented between rich and poor, its values diminishing as its standard of living is devalued.

We can and must end the income gap in America. It will require a new Progressive Era which will come, just as the first one did, just after the forces of reaction think they have achieved their dominance. We can and must restore true progress in America. That is our duty as progressives. That is the defining mission of the Democratic Party. And in my view, that is the only way we can win—and the only way we will deserve to win—in 1996.●

CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the National Association of Retired Federal Employees on its 75 years of service to our public servants and our communities.

NARFE has protected the rights and retirement benefits of Federal employees and their widows now for three quarters of a century. In that cause they have grown from 14 members to an organization of half a million members with 53 State federations and more than 1,740 active local chapters in the United States, Puerto Rico, Panama, the Philippines, and Guam.

In my own State of Michigan, the city of Dearborn is home to area chapter 1515, with 975 members of NARFE. These fine people contribute to the community, not only by fulfilling their official duties, but through their many acts of good citizenship, charity, and public-spirited voluntarism.

In recognition of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees' service to its members, to the public at large, and to the many communities in which its members live and participate in public life, I would invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing February 19, 1996, NARFE's 75th anniversary,

as National Association of Retired Federal Employees Day.●

THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF JOE AND EILEEN COATAR

● Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Joseph and Eileen Coatar, two long-time constituents of mine, who celebrated the truly momentous event on February 2, 1996—their golden wedding anniversary. Their 50 years of marriage, a demonstration of their strong commitment to each other and their seven children, can serve as an example to us all.

Joe Coatar and Eileen Prendergast grew up in warm, close-knit families, who lived in adjoining parishes on the South Side of Chicago. They began dating in high school: Eileen attended Mercy High School, while Joe went to Tilden Technical High School, where he is a member of the alumni hall of fame. His athletic prowess earned him all-city honors for football in 1937. He then attended Notre Dame on football and baseball scholarships, well before the Bo Jackson era. Eileen was his No. 1 fan. Joe left school in 1940 to play left field for the Chicago White Sox. He was then called to serve our country in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1945, then returned to Chicago to marry Eileen, the girl next door, on February 2, 1946, in St. Martin's Church in Chicago. They have seven loving children: Mary Jane, Bernadette, Joan, Joseph, Eileen, Dennis, and Genevieve. They also have 15 treasured grandchildren.

Joe served his city as a Chicago police officer immediately after his military service. He then did management consulting work for a number of firms, and finished his career with a 12-year stint at Blue Cross/Blue Shield. He was also civic-minded, somehow finding time to serve two terms as Park Forest South Village trustee, one term as a Monee Township trustee, and 20 years as a Democratic precinct committeeman for Will County.

In 1972, after raising seven children, Eileen continued her motherly role working with students at Marian Catholic High School in Chicago Heights. She continues to work there, at the age of 78, and will soon be inducted into their alumni hall of fame in recognition of her long-time dedication to Marian's students. She served as president of the Mothers' Club twice, and volunteered in the library, before becoming a well-loved member of the cafeteria staff almost 25 years ago.

Joe and Eileen renewed their vows at their parish church in Flossmoor, Infant Jesus of Prague, this Saturday, surrounded by friends and family. We talk a lot about family values here in Washington. Joe and Eileen don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk. Their lives epitomize the values that make this country such a special place. I congratulate the Coatars on their 50th anniversary, and I wish them many more years of happiness together.●

TRIBUTE TO PETER WOJCIECHOWSKI

● Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Peter Wojciechowski, from Anoka, MN for his dedication and service as president of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association over the past 10 years.

Peter has been a pillar of the community. As the long-time owner of Thurston's Furniture in Anoka, to his service on a variety of civic boards, including the Anoka County library board and the Ham Lake Planning Commission, Peter has been a model Minnesota citizen. However, it is his work on behalf of Minnesota's electric cooperatives which I would like to recognize today.

This month, Peter completes his term as president of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, which represents 54 member-owned electric cooperatives in Minnesota. During his tenure, Minnesota's electric cooperatives led the Nation in creating jobs in rural areas. Under Peter's stewardship, electric co-ops have met the unserved needs of its rural members in telecommunications, water and waste water infrastructure and other services not readily available in the far reaches of greater Minnesota.

Peter also represents Minnesota as a national director on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and serves on the International Foundation Board which assists developing countries in establishing electric cooperatives.

I want to commend Peter for his efforts and for the leadership he provided over the past 10 years on behalf of Minnesota's electric cooperatives. His contributions toward ensuring that the lights of rural Minnesota, rural America, and rural areas throughout the world burn bright are truly commendable and worthy of recognition.

Mr. President, it is a privilege for me to insert Peter's accomplishments here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.●

UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE AT NDSU

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today I rise to commend the work of North Dakota State University's Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute. The institute is a great asset to North Dakota and other States in the surrounding region and an invaluable resource and leader in transportation research.

In early January the Transportation Research Board of the National Research Council held its 75th annual meeting in Washington. This meeting brought together more than 3,000 participants from Federal and State Governments, universities, and the private sector. The participants discussed scientific, engineering, and technological

questions related to highways and bridges. The 5-day conference was a success, in part because of a telecommunications system operated by North Dakota State University.

Eleven conference sessions with almost 150 panelists were delivered by videoconference to the State departments of transportation in 6 States: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The teleconference was accomplished through the use of the TEL8 Center at North Dakota State University, in cooperation with the West Virginia Teleconferencing Network.

TEL8 is a digital, 2-way, interactive, satellite-based telecommunications system. It links 10 sites in 6 States, and is dedicated to meeting transportation needs in the region. The system is operated by the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute at North Dakota State University. The system was made possible as a result of the University Transportation Centers Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

More than 300 people located more than 1,000 miles from Washington were able to participate in the conference through the telecommunications system. Not only were they able to hear the presentations, but they had the opportunity to make comments and engage in question-and-answer periods.

Robert E. Skinner, Executive Director of the Transportation Research Board, said recently:

Because of busy schedules and limited travel funds, many transportation professionals are unable to participate at TRB's annual meeting. TEL8 showed that technology can help overcome these barriers and provide a means for real-time participation at remote locations.

We hear much these days about the promise of telecommunications and how technology is changing our lives. We hear discussions about the speed of transmissions, interactions, savings of time and travel costs, and convenience. North Dakota State University is doing more than talking about the promise of telecommunications, Mr. President. Through the TEL8 system, NDSU is making the promise of telecommunications a reality today.

Telecommunications activities are increasingly important throughout our Nation, particularly in rural States such as mine. The TEL8 system is also used for professional training and support and for the delivery of courses relevant to transportation. NDSU is exploring additional ways to use the system for distance learning and service-related activities.

I am proud of North Dakota State University's involvement and foresight in this important field. I appreciate this opportunity to bring it to the attention of my colleagues.●

THE FARM BILL

S. 1541, the Agricultural Market Transition Act of 1996, passed the Sen-

ate on Wednesday, February 7. The text of the bill follows:

S. 1541

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Agricultural Reform and Improvement Act of 1996".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AGRICULTURAL MARKET TRANSITION PROGRAM

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Production flexibility contracts.

Sec. 104. Nonrecourse marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments.

Sec. 105. Payment limitations.

Sec. 106. Peanut program.

Sec. 107. Sugar program.

Sec. 108. Administration.

Sec. 109. Suspension and repeal of permanent authorities.

Sec. 110. Effect of amendments.

TITLE II—AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Subtitle A—Amendments to Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 and Related Statutes

Sec. 201. Food aid to developing countries.

Sec. 202. Trade and development assistance.

Sec. 203. Agreements regarding eligible countries and private entities.

Sec. 204. Terms and conditions of sales.

Sec. 205. Use of local currency payment.

Sec. 206. Value-added foods.

Sec. 207. Eligible organizations.

Sec. 208. Generation and use of foreign currencies.

Sec. 209. General levels of assistance under Public Law 480.

Sec. 210. Food aid consultative group.

Sec. 211. Support of nongovernmental organizations.

Sec. 212. Commodity determinations.

Sec. 213. General provisions.

Sec. 214. Agreements.

Sec. 215. Use of commodity credit corporation.

Sec. 216. Administrative provisions.

Sec. 217. Expiration date.

Sec. 218. Regulations.

Sec. 219. Independent evaluation of programs.

Sec. 220. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 221. Coordination of foreign assistance programs.

Sec. 222. Micronutrient fortification pilot program.

Sec. 223. Use of certain local currency.

Sec. 224. Levels of assistance under farmer-to-farmer program.

Sec. 225. Food security commodity reserve.

Sec. 226. Protein byproducts derived from alcohol fuel production.

Sec. 227. Food for progress program.

Sec. 228. Use of foreign currency proceeds from export sales financing.

Sec. 229. Stimulation of foreign production.

Subtitle B—Amendments to Agricultural Trade Act of 1978

Sec. 241. Agricultural export promotion strategy.

Sec. 242. Export credits.

Sec. 243. Market promotion program.

Sec. 244. Export enhancement program.

Sec. 245. Arrival certification.

Sec. 246. Compliance.

Sec. 247. Regulations.

Sec. 248. Trade compensation and assistance programs.

Sec. 249. Foreign agricultural service.

Sec. 250. Reports.

Subtitle C—Miscellaneous

Sec. 251. Reporting requirements relating to tobacco.

Sec. 252. Triggered export enhancement.

Sec. 253. Disposition of commodities to prevent waste.

Sec. 254. Direct sales of dairy products.

Sec. 255. Export sales of dairy products.

Sec. 256. Debt-for-health-and-protection swap.

Sec. 257. Policy on expansion of international markets.

Sec. 258. Policy on maintenance and development of export markets.

Sec. 259. Policy on trade liberalization.

Sec. 260. Agricultural trade negotiations.

Sec. 261. Policy on unfair trade practices.

Sec. 262. Agricultural aid and trade missions.

Sec. 263. Annual reports by agricultural attaches.

Sec. 264. World livestock market price information.

Sec. 265. Orderly liquidation of stocks.

Sec. 266. Sales of extra long staple cotton.

Sec. 267. Regulations.

Sec. 268. Emerging markets.

Sec. 269. Import assistance for CBI beneficiary countries and the Philippines.

Sec. 270. Studies, reports, and other provisions.

Sec. 271. Implementation of commitments under Uruguay Round Agreements.

Sec. 272. Sense of Congress concerning multilateral disciplines on credit guarantees.

Sec. 273. Foreign market development cooperator program.

TITLE III—CONSERVATION

Subtitle A—Definitions

Sec. 301. Definitions.

Subtitle B—Environmental Conservation Acreage Reserve Program

Sec. 311. Environmental conservation acreage reserve program.

Sec. 312. Conservation reserve program.

Sec. 313. Wetlands reserve program.

Sec. 314. Environmental quality incentives program.

Subtitle C—Conservation Funding

Sec. 321. Conservation funding.

Subtitle D—National Natural Resources Conservation Foundation

Sec. 331. Short title.

Sec. 332. Definitions.

Sec. 333. National Natural Resources Conservation Foundation.

Sec. 334. Composition and operation.

Sec. 335. Officers and employees.

Sec. 336. Corporate powers and obligations of the Foundation.

Sec. 337. Administrative services and support.

Sec. 338. Audits and petition of Attorney General for equitable relief.

Sec. 339. Release from liability.

Sec. 340. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle E—Miscellaneous

Sec. 351. Flood risk reduction.

Sec. 352. Forestry.

Sec. 353. State technical committees.

Sec. 354. Conservation of private grazing land.

Sec. 355. Conforming amendments.

Sec. 356. Water bank program.

Sec. 357. Flood water retention pilot projects.

Sec. 358. Wetland conservation exemption.

Sec. 359. Floodplain easements.

Sec. 360. Resource conservation and development program reauthorization.