

young people. All too often we hear and read about young people who are not responsible, who do not care about their community.

Last week, I witnessed countless occasions when young and old worked together, filling and hauling sandbags, feeding those who had lost their homes, and finding them shelter. They set a remarkable example for the rest of the Nation.

Much work has been done, but the most difficult work is yet to be accomplished, and that will be the cleanup that takes place over the next few months, after the news crews have moved on, the TV cameras have been hauled away, and the spotlight has shifted to another part of the country.

I will be working with the Governor's office and with local officials to ensure that available Federal assistance will be distributed to those counties that so desperately need it.

Mr. President, last week I witnessed neighbor helping neighbor and volunteers working side by side to help save their communities. It is this kind of determination that will lead people through these difficult times, as we deal with what one Minnesotan described as "a flood frozen in place."

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we have reserved an hour, I believe, in morning business. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, a number of my colleagues will be on the floor presently. I would like to begin the hour and will be yielding time to some of my colleagues. But I do want to follow, in the first 5 minutes or so, the remarks of the Senator from Minnesota, Senator GRAMS, on the issue of flooding.

We intend, during this hour, to talk about the chemical weapons treaty and the critical vote that will be coming up on that in the Senate next week on that issue. I will get to that.

FLOODING IN THE NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, first, let me respond to the issue of flooding. The Senator from Minnesota said it very well. I was with him as we toured part of the Red River Valley last week.

The Red River, which is one of the only rivers that I know of that flows north, flows into a watershed up north that is still frozen. The Red River often has problems with flooding. We often cope with the challenges of dealing with a flood in the Red River. But this is a flood of historic proportions, a century flood, on the heels of a winter in which we had five to seven blizzards, the last of which a week and a half ago put, in many cases, up to 20 inches of snow in our region.

A massive flood, the worst blizzard in 50 years, massive power outages all around the region, and then you understand a little about the challenges faced by people in the Northern Great Plains.

This has been very, very difficult. The Red River today has turned into a lake that is now 200 miles long. If you fly over it, it is almost inappropriate to characterize it as a river. It is a 200-mile lake that is held in by the heroic efforts of some people to fill bags with sand and stack them on top of each other and hope that that sandbagging will keep water from their homesteads, their farms or their houses.

Also, there are the heroic efforts of the Corps of Engineers, contracting with wonderful contractors to build emergency dikes. It is some effort in North Dakota, Minnesota, and South Dakota to watch the fight to stem the tide of this difficult flood.

Last weekend, I was in a shelter in Grafton, ND, where people had gone in order to seek refuge. They had been for days without any electricity in their homes. An 89-year-old woman living alone in her home had finally decided, "I must go to a shelter." I talked to her, and typical of the tough, gritty Norwegian and German stock in North Dakota, she said, well, it was not so bad, that, you know, she was getting through it—89 years old, no complaints, fighting the flood, fighting the elements, living in a shelter, but she knew that we would get through this. And that is the spirit that exists in our part of the country.

There was a woman in north Fargo named Sylvia Hove. Just before I left, to come back to the Senate here in DC for votes this week, I stopped by Sylvia's house. The amount of diking they had to do to keep the wall of water out from the back of her house and her backyard is truly extraordinary. Then, at 4 o'clock in the morning, with this very tall dike that they had built—and I helped pile some of the sandbags on that dike the week previous—the dike springs a leak.

Sylvia's son, who is there from out of State, hailed down a policeman. The policeman put out the alert on the radio. And at 4 o'clock in the morning there were four policemen there, just like that. The policemen routed their cars, stacking sandbags, dealing with the leak in the dike until others came.

It is the way that neighbors have helped neighbors, and, yes, in Minnesota, in Breckenridge, the North Dakota side, all up and down, especially the valley, the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota.

Unfortunately, this is a flood that comes and stays. Most floods we see on television are some raging river, completely out of control, taking houses with it down the middle of the stream. That is not the way the flood on the Red River occurs. It is a river that runs north; it runs very, very slow. It has a very insignificant grade, and the result is the crest comes but the flood will stay for a long, long while.

They will be fighting the flood in North Dakota and Minnesota yet for some weeks. It is truly a very significant challenge and a heroic effort on the part of mayors and city councils and young people and old folks and just ordinary folks who are doing extraordinary things to try to deal with this calamity.

I was at a sandbagging operation in Grand Forks. They put out a call for volunteers. I went into this giant area where they have two big sandbagging operations. There must have been 200 volunteers there ranging from 15 years old, I think, probably to 80 years old, all of them working hard piling sandbags on trucks. It really is quite an extraordinary thing to see.

There are a couple of outstanding issues. The head of the Corps of Engineers, Colonel Wonsik, called me last evening at home and gave me a description of where we are with respect to Wahpeton and Breckenridge, Fargo, Grand Forks, Grafton, Drayton, Pembina, all the way up and down the valley. He feels that they are making some progress, but it is an enormous challenge.

The mayor of Fargo called me about an hour ago. Again, it is an enormous challenge, but they are fighting a significant battle. All of the preparation they are doing is preventing the enormous damage that could have been done had we not had the diking that is now in place.

Some have asked the question about the emergency help that is going to be available on a 75 percent/25 percent ratio, 75 percent Federal, 25 percent State and local. The Governor had asked for a 90-10 ratio. I will just observe on that point the folks in FEMA and the administration have a formula: If the damage in a region goes above \$40 million, then they go to a 90-10 formula. That will almost certainly occur in our region, probably has already occurred. That will be retroactive. So it is almost certain that our region will have this 90-10 formula in which the rest of the country reaches out in a disaster to say, we are here to help you, just as we have reached out on earthquakes and tornadoes and floods in other regions of our country. So that is something that is important.

Second, the Internal Revenue Service has been very helpful. As you know, there was a traffic jam in the District of Columbia last night; people at midnight trying to post their income tax returns on time. The Internal Revenue Service extended the date for filing to May 30 in the Dakotas and Minnesota where disaster has been declared. That is going to be helpful. They indicated they did not have authority to waive the interest charge during that 45-day extension.

I introduced a piece of legislation last evening in the Senate to waive that interest charge. It seems to me if the IRS says—and I appreciate the fact they have said it—that a tax return will be timely filed if it is filed by May

30, you ought not charge the interest on something you consider timely filed. So I would like to see that interest charge waived.

But we very much appreciate the cooperation of the Internal Revenue Service. People out there trying to man dikes and fill sandbags and so on are not able to get back to find their records to file a tax return if they had not already done it. They have been working on this flood and responding to it now for several weeks, so we appreciate the cooperation of the Internal Revenue Service.

I especially, as I conclude, want to echo the words of the Senator from Minnesota. The men and women in our region of the country have had about as tough a time as you can have this winter and now this spring. I am enormously proud of what they are doing. I have been privileged to be there the last two weekends and most of the week previous to be a part of that. We will get through it. North Dakotans and Minnesotans and South Dakotans are tough people who have faced tough challenges in the past. We will get through it and rebuild and have better days ahead of us.

THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS TREATY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, next week we will have an enormously important vote in the U.S. Senate.

There are days when people come to the floor of the Senate and debate almost nothing or find almost nothing to debate about. But, of course, almost nothing can provoke a debate in the Senate. We tend to get involved in discussions back and forth and find reasons to dispute each other over the smallest word or the smallest nuance in a piece of legislation. Sometimes that is a little frustrating, especially if you came here wanting to do some important things and some big things.

Next week we will do something important and tackle a big issue. It's the chemical weapons treaty. It is an attempt by a group of countries, hopefully including our country, to ban an entire class of weapons of mass destruction.

The negotiation on a Chemical Weapons Convention to ban chemical weapons was begun by President Ronald Reagan. President Bush was active as Vice President and as President in supporting the treaty. The treaty was the great achievement of the last month of his administration. Today, he very strongly supports ratification. President Clinton back in 1993 submitted the treaty to the Senate for ratification.

This treaty is the result of decades of negotiation and leadership by our country. The treaty which came from those negotiations needs to be ratified by the U.S. Senate, and it has been hanging around for some long while. It was supposed to be voted on last year, but it got caught up in Presidential politics. We need to ratify it by April 29 if we, as a country, are to be in-

involved in the regime that sets up the monitoring and the processes by which this treaty is implemented.

We are told that next week we will vote on this treaty. We also understand that it is going to be a close vote. I want to tell you why I think this is important. We will have several other Members of the Senate here in the next hour to describe why it is important from their standpoint.

What are chemical weapons? Well, simply, they are poison gases, horrible weapons of war, highly toxic gases or liquids that can be used in bombs, rockets, missiles, artillery shells, mines, or grenades. This treaty says let us ban entirely poison gases, let us outlaw this class of weapons completely.

Some do not like any treaties on arms. Some in this Senate will stand up and say we should not have arms treaties. Some have opposed START I, START II, the nuclear arms treaties. They are inappropriate, they say.

Well, I held up on the floor of the Senate about a year ago a piece of metal about the size of my fist. The piece of metal came from a missile silo, a silo that housed a missile in Pervomaisk, Ukraine, a silo that held a missile with a nuclear warhead that was aimed at the United States of America.

I held up a piece of that silo in my hand because the silo has been destroyed, the missile has been destroyed, the warhead is gone, and where a missile once sat, aimed at the United States of America, is now a patch of dirt planted with sunflowers.

Why was a missile taken out, a silo destroyed, and sunflowers planted where there once was a missile aimed at the United States? Because the arms control treaties required it—required it—required that missiles be destroyed. We are destroying missiles on nuclear weapons. So is the former Soviet Union. The Ukraine is now nuclear free. The fact is, we have had success with arms control agreements. Are they perfect? No. Do they work? Yes. We have had success with arms control agreements. This is a treaty on arms control. We need to ratify it. We will vote on that next week.

Let me describe, again, what this is about. It is a treaty to try to ban a class of weapons of mass destruction. Not many people probably know what chemical weapons are. I really don't. I have obviously not seen chemical weapons used. Very few people have.

Let me read from a poet, Wilfred Owen, a famous poet from World War I, and the lines he wrote about a gas attack. Germany was the first nation in modern times to use chemical weapons, in the World War I battle at Ypres, a town in Belgium, April 22, 1915. It is said that a hissing sound came from German trenches as 6,000 cylinders spewed chlorine gas aimed at the allied lines. That is a gas that attacks the lungs, causes severe coughing and choking and death. It had a devastating effect on the allied soldiers, who

were unprepared. Soldiers breathing that gas began to cough up blood, their faces turning purple, their bodies writhing in the trenches. There were 15,000 casualties that day, we are told. Chlorine gas, mustard gas, and blister gas caused a million casualties in World War I.

Wilfred Owen, the poet, wrote a description of a gas attack in the First World War. A company of exhausted soldiers is marching back from the front lines, when suddenly someone shouts:

"Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!"
An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and
stumbling;

And flound'ring like a man in fire or
lime. . . .

Dim, through the misty panes and thick
green light,

As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking,
drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too
could pace

Behind the wagon we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his
face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted
lungs,

Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of incurable sores on innocent
tongues. . . .

That is Wilfred Owen describing a gas attack, an attack using chemical weapons.

Modern armies have the capability of protecting themselves in many circumstances against chemical weapons with protective devices and protective gear.

But of course civilians are the most vulnerable to chemical weapons. Perhaps the example that most of us remember was the attack at the Tokyo subway by a terrorist group, a cult headquartered in Japan but active in America. They used the nerve gas sarin in a terrorist attack. The cult released the gas on March 20, 1995, during the morning rush hour at a busy Tokyo subway station. In that attack, 12 were killed, over 5,000 were injured. We are told that it was very close to a circumstance in which thousands would have been killed from that attack. We all remember the frightening television images of people staggering up out of the subway with their handkerchiefs over their mouths and collapsing on the street. Not surprisingly, the Japanese Diet, or parliament, ratified the chemical weapons treaty within a month of the Tokyo subway attack.

This raises the question of why the Senate has yet to do the same.

Why would people come to the floor of the Senate and say this is an inappropriate treaty and they intend to oppose it with every fiber of their being? Let me go through some of the myths we will hear about the chemical weapons treaty.

Myth one: by ratifying the chemical weapons treaty the United States will