

HONORING SOUTH DAKOTA'S SMALL BUSINESSMAN OF THE YEAR

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the values and spirit that helped early settlers thrive and prosper in the harsh conditions of life on the prairie are alive and well today in South Dakota.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to meet someone who embodies many of the values and ideals that the great state of South Dakota was built upon. Phillip Clark, owner and President of Hansen Manufacturing Corporation of Sioux Falls, is one of 53 persons honored this week by the Small Business Administration as part of its celebration of National Small Business Week. For over two decades, Phil has guided his company through a variety of complex challenges and built a thriving business. In the process, he has made an important contribution to our state, and to the city of Sioux Falls.

As a manufacturer of conveyor belt assemblies, Phil invented an enclosed belt conveyor system. Anyone who has worked in or around a grain elevator knows the importance of minimizing dust; it is one of the most important safety steps that can be taken to prevent fires and explosions. This enclosed belt system has helped a number of grain facilities improve the safety of their operations, and dramatically changed the way that grain and other bulk materials are moved.

Phil was able to develop this system because he listened to what his customers wanted, and he acted to fill that need. It is a basic lesson that every successful business owner must know: listen to your customer.

While Phil has maintained a clear focus on his company's future, he has also taken the steps necessary to position his company to deal with current business conditions. As a manufacturer of conveyor belt systems, Hansen Manufacturing derives much of its business from grain elevators, feed manufacturers, and other companies that process agricultural goods and other bulk materials. Because of the continued crisis in our agricultural markets, many of these companies have faced extremely difficult business conditions over the past few years, resulting in equally difficult times for their suppliers. Furthermore, domestic weakness has been compounded by weakness in foreign markets, which have become increasingly important for Hansen Manufacturing.

While short-term business conditions have been challenging, Phil has been able to successfully grow his business while making critical investments in new product lines. His successful stewardship of Hansen Manufacturing serves as an example to all small business people in South Dakota. I commend the Small Business Administration for recognizing his outstanding work.

In South Dakota, almost all businesses are small businesses, and that's true nationwide. But in South Dakota

small businesses are big business. I thank the Small Business Administration for its work with business owners such as Phil Clark, and I congratulate Phil for his hard work and his outstanding contributions to his community and state.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, May 26, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,602,150,880,889.93 (Five trillion, six hundred two billion, one hundred fifty million, eight hundred eighty thousand, eight hundred eighty-nine dollars and ninety-three cents).

One year ago, May 26, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,506,917,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred six billion, nine hundred seventeen million).

Five years ago, May 26, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,596,085,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred ninety-six billion, eighty-five million).

Ten years ago, May 26, 1989, the federal debt stood at \$2,779,342,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred seventy-nine billion, three hundred forty-two million) which reflects a doubling of the debt—an increase of almost \$3 trillion—\$2,822,808,880,889.93 (Two trillion, eight hundred twenty-two billion, eight hundred eight million, eight hundred eighty thousand, eight hundred eighty-nine dollars and ninety-three cents) during the past 10 years.

ESSAY ON PARENTS AND TEENS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, a young Alaskan, a freshman in Colony High School in the Matanuska Valley town of Wasilla, wrote an opinion piece in the Anchorage Daily News this week which shows thoughtfulness and wisdom well beyond his 15 years.

Travis Johnson sat down at his computer the day after the tragedy at Columbine High School, and wrote from the heart his feelings and his ideas on how to prevent further tragedies like Columbine.

He showed the essay to his parents who were moved and impressed with their youngster's effort. His mother, a physician, and his dad, an insurance executive, grew up in Anchorage. While they are not hunters themselves, they have friends and family who are gun owners and who hunt.

After Travis shared his essay with his English teacher, his dad suggested that he send it to the Anchorage Daily News.

Travis refutes the ideas that guns and violence on television and in films are responsible for incidents like Columbine.

Travis believes that parents must be more and more involved with their children. He asks the parents who read his opinion piece to "talk to your kids, even though you may not want to, and your kids may act like they don't want to talk to you." And he tells teens to talk to their parents.

Mr. President, Travis Johnson's observations and ideas are important insights into how to avoid further incidents like those in Colorado and Georgia, from a teen who understands how teens feel.

I ask unanimous consent that his column from the May 25 Anchorage Daily News, titled "Parents Are the Only Answer to Teens' Problems" be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:]

[From the Anchorage Daily News, May 25, 1999]

PARENTS ARE THE ONLY ANSWER TO TEENS' PROBLEMS

(By Travis Johnson)

I'm sure all of those who are reading this paper have heard of the recent Columbine High School shooting incident in which two students walked into the school and started a massacre that left 15 people dead. My heart goes out to those families and their loss. Upon hearing about this incident, I found myself very disturbed. How could two seemingly "normal" high school students (I use the term lightly because there is really no such thing as a normal high school student) be capable of doing something like this? I listened to television reports about what might be responsible for this incident. The two that seemed to be most stressed were harassment from peers and guns. It seemed as though the combination of those two automatically justified a killing spree.

First, let's think about the issue of harassment from peers. Every day I go to school, and I am judged. So is everybody else around me. I know that I've withstood my fair share of insults, and they still keep coming. And I know many people around me have it worse than I do, especially my school's own group of trench coat wearers, commonly referred to as "Goths." I'm willing to admit there are firearms in my household; I'm even proud of it. I'm not especially popular, and I could easily find out how to make bombs on the Internet. I'm sure many of the "Goths" at my school have access to the same materials. Given this information, I think that it's time I or someone else at my school went on a homicidal rampage, don't you think? I don't think so! Just because people are harassed doesn't justify a killing.

In the real world, people are harassed all the time. I think it's just life. There are mean people out there. Live with it. The killers at Columbine High School were lacking something in their personalities to do something like this. That is self-control, self-esteem and an understanding of the value of life. I think this has less to do with harassment and more with the killers themselves. If the killers had better values, this never would have happened.

Maybe firearms are to blame? I'm sure many people noticed that immediately after this incident, a series of gun-control laws were proposed, including a proposal to raise the age limit to own a handgun from 18 to 21. Do people really think that if the handgun age limit was higher, this incident would have never happened?

I hate to say it, but welcome to politics. In the world today, what people want to see is action. It has to be quick, it has to be cheap and it has to keep them from being responsible. Politicians realize this, so immediately they come up with a "solution" that fits these criteria. It doesn't have to work; the people just have to think it does. So what happens? Well, they scream, "Guns are the problem!" and we all lose more rights.

The truth is, if somebody wants to kill someone with a firearm laws banning guns aren't going to stop them. A lot of guns used in robberies and murders are stolen. Well, if we got rid of the runs in the world, then we would have a solution, right! Nope, people would use other homemade weapons, bombs, knives, etc.

A gun is a tool, not a weapon. It is a tool for hunting, recreation and protection. It can be a historical piece, it can be a keepsake, it can represent something. Guns are not to blame for the Columbine High School incident.

By now you might be asking yourself what is to blame. Unfortunately, it's a problem not many people want to face. It starts at the home. It starts with a lack of discipline, a lack of love, and a lack of values. I'm sure that if the parents of the boys involved in this shooting incident has been more involved with their kids, this incident would have never occurred.

The parents are not completely to blame. Today's violent televised society illustrates this violence as a normal everyday thing. This makes it difficult to draw the line between right and wrong. These things, added together, resulted in the final problem: The boys responsible for this shooting. In the end, it is they who are responsible.

So, what can be done to prevent another tragedy like this one? To all the parents who are reading this talk to your kid! Even though you may not want to and your kids may act like they don't want to talk to you, just their knowing you're willing to talk often helps. Spend time with them, draw them to activities that keep them busy and feeling wanted such as sports, church, even target shooting! If parents teach their kids how to use and respect a firearm, they'll be less likely to abuse it than if their parents avoid telling them about guns.

To all of the kids and teens reading this: talk to your parents. They can be a valuable source of information and can help you when you feel there is no one else to turn.

Other things you can do include complimenting people instead of insulting them, always remembering that you are important, having good friends, and reporting to authorities if anyone you know makes dangerous threats against you or anyone else. By doing this we might be able to prevent another incident like the one that occurred at Columbine High School. I hope that everyone reading this will pray for the families affected by the shooting and take my advice to heart.

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO THE SENATE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, it is with some sadness but also with some pride, that I stand before the Senate today to recognize Austin Smythe—a longstanding and highly respected member of the Senate Budget Committee staff. After nearly 15½ years of service to the Senate and the Congress, Austin will begin employment in the private sector at the end of this week.

Those who know Austin in this Chamber, know he is a Senator's dream staffer. Austin is dedicated, loyal, intelligent, and above all else possessing integrity beyond reproach. He came to the Senate Budget Committee in December 1983, as the committee's energy budget expert. Over the years, he gradually took on more responsibilities to where today, as he leaves the Sen-

ate, he is my staff director's right-hand man on issues related to the budget act, process reform issues, and the often arcane world of budget score keeping.

He has been instrumental in the passage of many a budget resolution and reconciliation bills over these last many years. He has also taken the lead on helping to reform the process by his work on the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990, the Unfunded Mandates Control Act of 1995, and the Line Item Veto Act of 1996—that unfortunately was ruled unconstitutional. He has been my key budget committee staffer on my quest to get Congress to change its appropriation and budget process into a biennial system—that work, I promise you Austin, will continue.

Along the way, Austin was able to find the time to get married and start a family. It is his wife, Katie, and his two young girls that have borne the real burden of Austin's dedicated service to the Senate and his country.

The American public is unaware of the role staff play in helping us elected officials "to do the right thing." Sometimes even with good staff, we get it wrong, and of course, when it doesn't come out right we blame our staff. But if the legislation advances public policy in an affirmative way, we will take the credit for success. In truth, of course, it is to staff like Austin Smythe, who work under very difficult circumstances, long hours, and sleepless nights, that we—and indeed the country—all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude. For without Austin's dedication, and staff like him, the things we have gotten right would never have happened.

I wish Austin and his family the best. And on behalf of all the Budget Committee members, the committee staff, and indeed the entire Senate, thank you Austin for a job well done. We all will miss you.

KIDNAPPING OF SENATOR CORDOBA IN COLOMBIA

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise today to express my deep concern over the kidnapping of Colombian Senator Piedad Córdoba de Castro. Senator Córdoba was abducted on May 21 by paramilitary forces under the command of Carlos Castaño. I urge the Government of Colombia to take all appropriate measures to obtain her safe release and to bring those responsible for this kidnapping to justice.

Senator Córdoba, as President of the Colombian Senate's Human Rights Commission, is a strong voice in Colombia for the promotion of human rights. She has also been a leader in efforts to bring peace to Colombia after fifty years of political violence. Senator Córdoba's role as a leading advocate of human rights and peace makes this crime particularly shocking.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has also condemned the kidnapping of Senator Córdoba and has urged the Co-

lombian authorities to do everything possible to obtain her release. Secretary-General Annan called Senator Córdoba "a firm supporter of peace" who had "performed invaluable work towards the achievement of fundamental rights and freedom".

It is extremely disturbing to see that paramilitary forces and guerrilla groups involved in Colombia's internal conflict continue to resort to kidnapping as a means of political pressure. This violent action against a prominent human rights advocate emphasizes the importance of the efforts of President Pastrana to eliminate all links between the Colombian Government and the paramilitaries.

I urge the Government of Colombia to take all necessary and appropriate measures to break these links, obtain Senator Córdoba's release, and bring to justice those responsible for her kidnapping.

THE SATELLITE HOME VIEWERS ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to express my strong support for S. 303, the Satellite Home Viewers Act. This legislation will enable many more consumers in Massachusetts and across the nation to receive network signals by satellite.

The Act achieves a fairer balance between the interests of satellite TV firms, local broadcasters and cable firms. It reverses a federal court decision that has caused millions of satellite TV subscribers throughout the country, including in many rural areas of Massachusetts, to lose their access to network television stations. Consumers will be major winners with the passage of this legislation. It means greater choice, particularly to those in rural areas.

This legislation will also promote competition between the satellite and cable industries by enabling satellite providers to offer local broadcast signals in the same local market. In recent years, "must carry" rules have protected small broadcasters from being left by the wayside during the rapid growth of the cable industry. Similarly, this bill protects small broadcasters by requiring satellite carriers re-transmitting local signals to the local market to comply with the "must carry" rules by January 1, 2002.

Consumers everywhere will benefit from the passage of the Satellite Home Viewers Act. I commend Senator McCain and Senator Burns for their leadership in providing more choices and better service to consumers.

COSPONSORSHIP OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE RENTAL FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, yesterday, I introduced two bills, S. 1130, the Motor Vehicle Rental Fairness Act and S. 1125, the Telecommunications Merger Review Act of 1999. Later in the day, I asked that Senator CONNIE MACK be