The market share of the top four soybean crushers has jumped from 54 percent to 80 percent.

The top four turkey processors now control 42 percent of production.

Forty-nine percent of all chicken broilers are now slaughtered by the four largest firms. The top four firms control 67 percent of ethanol production.

The top four sheep, poultry, wet corn, and dry corn processors now control 73 percent, 55 percent, 74 percent, and 57 percent of the market, respectively.

The four largest grain buyers control nearly 40 percent of elevator facilities.

By conventional measures, none of these markets are really competitive. According to the economic literature, markets are no longer competitive if the top four firms control over 40 percent. In all the markets I just listed, the market share of the top four firms is 40 percent or more. So there really is no effective competition in these processing markets.

But now, with this explosion of mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, marketing agreements, and anticompetitive behavior by the largest firms, these and other commodity markets are becoming more and more concentrated by the day.

Last week, the Senate passed a resolution 99–1, expressing our feelings on the 1996 Farm bill. It read,

> Congress is committed to giving this crisis in agriculture . . . its full attention by reforming rural policies to alleviate the farm price crisis, [and] ensuring competitive markets . . .

We are committed to having the debate about what kind of changes we could make that would provide some real help for family farmers, that would enable family farmers to get a decent price, that would provide some income for families, what kind of steps we could take that will put some free enterprise back into the food industry and deal with all the concentration of power.

Other Senators may have different ideas. I just want us to address this crisis. I don't want us to turn our gaze away from our family farmers. And I say to my colleagues, on this anniversary of the Freedom of Fail Bill, we need a new farm bill—and I will come to the floor, every opportunity I have to speak about the economic convulsion this legislation has caused in our rural communities.

I say to all of my colleagues who talked about how we were going to get the Government off the farm, we were going to lower the loan rate, and do this through deregulation and exports, that we have an honest to goodness depression in agriculture. We have the best people in the world working 20 hours a day who are being spit out of the economy. We have record low income, record low prices, broken dreams and lives, and broken families.

We had close to 3,000 farmers who came here last week. It was riveting. It was pouring rain, but they were down on The Mall. We had 500 farmers from Minnesota. Most all of them came by bus. They don't have money to come by jet. Many of them are older. They came with their children and grandchildren. They did not come here for the fun of it. They came here because the reality is, this will be their last bus trip. They are not going to be able to come to Washington to talk about agriculture. They are not going to be farming any longer. These family farmers are not going to be farming any longer unless we deal with the price crisis.

Right now, the price of what they get is way below the cost of production. Only if you have huge amounts of capital can you go on. People eating at the dinner table are doing fine. The IVVs, and the Con-Agras and big grain companies are doing fine. But our dairy and crop farmers and livestock producers are going under.

This is, unfortunately, again the anniversary, and we have to write a new farm bill.

That is my cry as a Senator from Minnesota from the heartland of America.

COMMITMENT TO THE CAPITOL HILL POLICE

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I had a chance before the last break to talk about a commitment we made to Capitol Hill police.

We lost two fine officers. They were slain. We went to their service. We made it clear that we thanked them for the ways in which they protect the public, for the ways in which they protect us. We said we never want this to happen again.

We have posts where there is 1 officer with 20 and 30 and 40 people streaming in. We made the commitment that we were going to have at least two officers at every post.

I know there are Senators, such as Senator BENNETT, who are in key positions and who care deeply about this. Senator REID was a Capitol Hill policeman. There are others as well.

We have to get this appropriations bill right. We need to hire more officers. We need to make sure the money is there for overtime so we don't have one officer at each post.

This can't go on and on because if we don't do this, there will come a day when, unfortunately, someone will show up—someone who may be insane, someone who will take a life, or lives. One officer at a post and not two officers at a post is an untenable security situation.

My plea to colleagues is, we need to get this right for the public and for the Capitol Hill police. We made this commitment. I think Democrats and Republicans alike care about this.

I thank my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. L. CHAFEE). The Senator from Massachusetts.

VETERANS BENEFITS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I thank my friend, the good Senator from Minnesota, for an excellent presentation and for reminding us about the needs of our veterans, particularly those who are having some service-connected disability. The problems he has talked about that have affected his region are duplicated in my region of the country as well.

I received a call just 2 days ago from a very good friend, a person who worked here in the Senate, about his uncle who is 86 years old and who was at Pearl Harbor. He was one of those wounded at Pearl Harbor, survived, and went on. He was wounded in the Second World War and is now destitute and trying to get into a service home just outside of Boston. The waiting line there is 2½ years.

I remember very well speaking to those who came back from the war. At that time, they all believed they were fortunate to make it back, and they weren't asking very much of this country. We responded in a way in which all of us have been enormously appreciative with the GI bill. Many of these men and women took 4 or 5 years out of their lives to serve their country and risked life and death. We provided the GI bill to them so they could get an education. They got an education and went on to contribute to their country. As the Senator knows, for every $1 invested in that education program, $8 was returned to the Treasury.

But there was not a member of the Armed Forces in any of the services who didn't believe in committing this Nation to taking care of those who served this country, who suffered and were wounded in the line of battle. They believed they should live in peace, respect, and dignity during their golden years. They are not, and it is a national disgrace.

We tried to join with others in this body. And I tell my good friend I will work with him closely, not on those relevant committees, but I think we have been here long enough to know we can make some difference in this area. I look forward to working with him. This is a problem that faces us in New England.

I see my colleague from Rhode Island chairing the Senate this afternoon. I am sure he and his colleague, Senator REID, have these kinds of cases as well. It is a matter of priority. We will join with him at a later time.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague.

NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK ACT, S. 764

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I recently reviewed a video tape of some of the violence that occurred during the labor dispute between Overnite Trucking and the Teamsters. I am shocked and disturbed by the violent attacks that have been carried out against

Overnite drivers simply because they have decided to work and provide for their families.

Under a legal loophole created in federal law, union officials, who organize and coordinate campaigns of violence to ''obtain so called legitimate union objectives,'' are exempt from federal prosecution under the Hobbs Act. An update of a 1983 union violence study, released by the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School Industrial Research Unit entitled: ''Union Violence: The Record and the Response of the Courts, Legislatures, and the NLRB,'' revealed some disturbing news. While the overall number of strikes has been on the decline, union violence has increased. The study also showed the violence is now more likely to be targeted toward individuals.

Mr. President, violence is violence and extortion is extortion regardless of whether or not you are a card carrying member of a union. I am proud to be a cosponsor of S. 764, the Freedom from Union Violence Act. This legislation would plug the loopholes in the Hobbs Act and make all individuals accountable for their actions. I believe that people should be reprimanded for using violence to obstruct the law. We should not give special treatment to union violence cases or union bosses. Senator THURMOND has set out to clarify that union-related violence can be prosecuted. I commend Senator THURMOND for introducing this much-needed legislation.

During the 105th Congress, the Judiciary Committee conducted a hearing on the Freedom from Union Violence Act. After listening to and reviewing the wrenching testimony of victims of union violence at this hearing, I am now more certain of the need to eliminate these loopholes. For these reasons I respectfully urge my colleague Senator HATCH, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to schedule hearings and a markup of S. 764, the Freedom from Union Violence Act, as soon as possible. I also urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation. It is time to end federally endorsed violence. Conducting hearings on this issue would be a step in the right direction.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, March 27, 2000, the Federal debt stood at $5,731,795,924,886.02 (Five trillion, seven hundred thirty-one billion, seven hundred ninety-five million, nine hundred twenty-four thousand, eight hundred eighty-six dollars and two cents).

Five years ago, March 27, 1995, the Federal debt stood at $4,847,680,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred forty-seven billion, six hundred eighty million).

Ten years ago, March 27, 1990, the Federal debt stood at $3,022,612,000,000 (Three trillion, twenty-two billion, six hundred twelve million).

Fifteen years ago, March 27, 1985, the Federal debt stood at $1,709,535,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred nine billion, five hundred thirty-five million).

Twenty-five years ago, March 27, 1975, the Federal debt stood at $507,841,000,000 (Five hundred seven billion, eight hundred forty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than $5 trillion—$5,223,954,924,886.02 (Five trillion, two hundred twenty-three billion, nine hundred fifty-four million, nine hundred twenty-four thousand, eight hundred eighty-six dollars and two cents) during the past 25 years.

ARBITRATION BILLS S. 1020 AND S. 121

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to make a brief statement on two arbitration bills that are currently pending in the Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts of the Committee on the Judiciary. These bills are S. 1020 and S. 121, both of which would create exceptions to the Federal Arbitration Act.

In general, arbitration is fair, efficient, and cost-effective means of alternative dispute resolution compared to long and costly court proceedings. The two bills before the subcommittee today raise concerns about the fairness of allowing some parties to opt out of arbitration and the wisdom of exposing certain parties to the cost and uncertainty of trial proceedings.

S. 1020, the Motor Vehicle Franchise Contract Arbitration Fairness Act would allow automobile dealers and manufacturers to opt out of binding arbitration clauses contained in their franchise contracts and pursue remedies in court. This is troubling because both parties are generally financially sophisticated and represented by attorneys when they enter into a franchise contract. S. 1020's enactment would allow these wealthy parties to opt out of arbitration, but would not allow customers of the dealers to opt out of arbitration. This position is difficult to justify. Indeed, in jurisdictions such as Alabama the allure of large jury verdicts serves as a powerful incentive for trial lawyers to use S. 1020 to argue against all arbitration. Jere Beasley, one of the Nation's most well-known trial lawyers, is making this exact argument in his firm's newsletter. While abandoning arbitration for dealers and manufacturers might increase attorneys fees, I have serious concerns as to whether such a selective abandonment for sophisticated dealers and manufacturers would increase the fairness of dispute resolution between these parties or would be fair to customers and employees of the dealers.

S. 121, the Civil Rights Procedures Protection Act, would prevent the enforcement of binding arbitration agreements in employment discrimination suits. However, when employment discrimination law suits cost between $20,000 and $50,000 to file, many employees cannot afford to litigate their claim in court. Arbitration provides a much more cost-effective means of dispute resolution for employees. Indeed, several studies have shown that in non-union employment arbitration employees prevail between 63 percent and 74 percent of their claims in arbitration, compared to 15 percent to 17 percent in court. Further, an American Bar Association study showed that consumers in general prevail in 80 percent of their claims in arbitration compared to 71 percent in court. Of course, if both employees and employers could avoid arbitration under S. 121. This would give employers the financial incentive to use the $20,000 to $50,000 cost of a trial as a barrier to employees suits. This does not appear to be good policy.

I note that the Chamber of Commerce, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, and the National Arbitration Forum support arbitration and have raised concerns concerning the bills pending before the subcommittee. Their concerns must be explored more fully.

In sum, I believe that the arbitration process must be fair. When it is fairly applied, it can be an efficient, timely, and cost-effective means of dispute resolution. S. 1020 and S. 121 would create exceptions to arbitration that could expose businesses to large jury verdicts and effectively bar employees with small claims from any dispute resolution. We must examine these bills and the policies behind them more thoroughly before acting upon any legislation.

DEPOSIT INSURANCE FAIRNESS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I rise today in support of legislation Senator Santorum and I are introducing, the ''Deposit Insurance Fairness and Economic Opportunity Act.'' This legislation would increase the amount of money that is available for banks and thrifts to lend in their communities.

Our financial services industry is incredibly strong, and the public benefits from this strength. Last year, this Senate passed comprehensive banking reform legislation that will increase consumer choice and make our financial institutions more competitive. Throughout the consideration of that measure, I steadfastly supported efforts to improve and increase credit availability to local communities. Though I believe we achieved this goal, I also said that we could and should do more. The legislation I introduce today with my colleague Senator SANTORUM does just that.

This measure would use the extra money that is in the Bank Insurance Fund (BIF) and the Savings Association Insurance Fund (SAIF), money that banks and thrifts have paid, to pay the interest on Financing Corporation (FICO) bonds. As a result, banks and thrifts will be able to use the money they would otherwise pay to