

the plight of those who seek safety from persecution in their homelands.

Refugees face the most difficult of circumstances. Their stories of escape from persecution are more dramatic than anything Hollywood could script and often too horrific for most of us to imagine. Stories of unspeakable brutality, long journeys, and family separation are not the exception but the rule. Often, refugees are alive only because of a faith in God and an unshakeable will to survive.

Tragically, however, the plight of a refugee does not end with escape from persecution. Refugees frequently have nothing but their lives to bring into a new country. Most refugees would love to return to their homelands, but this is often impossible. Absent a dramatic change in conditions at home, refugees have few choices.

I am proud that the United States leads the world in one of those choices: refugee resettlement. From its founding, America has been the dream destination for the world's oppressed peoples, and that dream endures today. I want to applaud the determination of the State Department to resettle as many as 50,000 refugees this year—a significant increase over recent annual totals. I look forward to working with the State Department for the rest of this year and into the next, to return our refugee resettlement program to its historical averages and preserve America's commitment to the world's most vulnerable people.

Some might say "Why should we bother?" Some might ask why the United States should play such a role. But such questions are ultimately short-sighted. America's principles are never better upheld than when we assist the oppressed. American's image is nowhere better polished than in the minds of refugees who receive our assistance. And no, the United States cannot solve every refugee problem, so it should be clear that America's interests are well-served by setting an example for the rest of the world to follow.

There is much work to be done. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are fleeing the Darfur region of Sudan. They stream into Chad bringing nothing with them and finding little across the border. Within a few months, the region has become the world's most acute humanitarian crisis. The United States has already directed millions of dollars in emergency funds to this region, and as we find additional ways to respond, I hope the international community will commit itself to assisting these refugees.

In similar fashion, I hope that the international community will not allow discussions of nuclear weapons to obscure the plight of thousands of North Koreans who have fled into northeast China. Not only are they living testimonies to the brutality of the regime of Kim Jong-il, they remind us that sometimes refugees are forced to trade one set of horrors for another.

China must stop forcibly repatriating North Koreans and should allow the international community to provide assistance to these people.

In other parts of the world, refugees find safe haven in camps where they await a change of conditions at home or some other long-term resolution of their exiled status. While camps are intended to be way stations, however, they too often become warehouses. Seven million of the world's 12 million refugees have lived in camps or segregated settlements for more than 10 years. Think of that: seven million people who have each forfeited a decade of human potential. The international community never intended that it be this way. The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol—signed by the United States—give refugees the right to be recognized before the law, to move freely, to earn a living, and to own property. But in many cases, these rights are not respected and the loss of human potential endures.

There are no easy solutions to the warehousing problem, but such treatment is unacceptable. I hope that as we respond to the Darfur situation and others around the world, the State Department and other members of the international community will take steps to ensure that refugees who receive our emergency assistance today will gain opportunities for self-sufficiency tomorrow.

Unfortunately, as long as there is conflict, there will be refugees. But strong United States responses to these humanitarian crises mean more than a dollar figure in the budget. When the United States emphasizes refugee assistance and refugees, it demonstrates a commitment for other nations to emulate. Truly global responses to refugee crises begin here with America's strong, compassionate leadership.

As we mark World Refugee Day 2004 this Sunday, I look forward to extending that leadership in the days ahead, and I hope my colleagues will join me in working on this crucial part of our foreign and humanitarian policy.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL CELEBRATION

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, this week people all across the Nation are engaging in the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery. It was in June of 1865, that the Union soldiers landed in Galveston, TX with the news that the war had ended and that slavery finally had come to an end in the United States. This was 2½ years after the Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863. This week and specifically on June 19, we celebrate what is known as "Juneteenth Independence Day." It was on this date, June 19, that slaves in the Southwest finally learned of the end of slavery. Although passage of the Thirteenth Amendment in January

1863, legally abolished slavery, many African Americans remained in servitude due to the slow dissemination of this news across the country.

In recognition of Juneteenth, I would like to call my colleagues' attention the Juneteenth Creative Cultural Center and Museum founded in Saginaw, MI by Lula Briggs Galloway on June 19, 2003. The Juneteenth Creative Cultural Center & Museum will be celebrating its first year anniversary with the Juneteenth Independence Day Celebration on Saturday, June 19, 2004, hosted by its founder and volunteers. They are proud to present the "Tuskegee Airmen" and the "Triple Nickles" who will be performing as part of the Juneteenth Independence Day Celebration.

Many years before "black pride" became a popular slogan, a small group of black soldiers gave life and meaning to those words. This is their story. Born within an army that had traditionally relegated blacks to menial jobs and programmed them for failure, the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, or "Triple Nickles" Succeeded in becoming the Nation's first all-black parachute infantry test platoon, company, and battalion.

The Tuskegee Airmen, a black Army Air Force unit, were dedicated, determined young men who enlisted to become America's first black military airmen, at a time when there were many people who thought that black men lacked intelligence, skill, and courage to become pilots. Although the Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,000 combat missions, once home, they had to give up their seats on the bus to Nazi prisoners of war who were being transferred to holding camps.

Since that time, men like Chuck Simms Sr., John Weldon, and Toney Muzon, have continued the legacy for the Triple Nickles and the Tuskegee Airmen. This celebration will honor them, and their fellow soldiers and airmen, who have since passed away.

The Triple Nickles' and the Tuskegee Airmen's families can be proud of their dedication to their country, and their great commitment to honor the values and principles of democracy and freedom. We as a nation have benefitted from the extraordinary contributions—and sacrifices—of these veterans who bravely went off to war, despite turmoil and racism at home.

I am sure that my Senate colleagues join me in recognizing and honoring the Juneteenth Creative Cultural Center and Museum's first year anniversary, and the Juneteenth Independence Day Celebration honoring the Triple Nickles and Tuskegee Airmen veterans.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement

Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

On January 14, 1999, in El Dorado, CA, Thomas Gary, 38, died after being run over by a truck and shot with a shot gun. The assailant claimed that Gary had made a pass at him.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

NATIONAL DAIRY EQUITY ACT

Ms. SNOWE. Madam President, I support the legislation introduced by my colleagues Senator SPECTER and Senator SCHUMER, the National Dairy Equity Act. I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this bill. This introduction is well timed as this month we are celebrating National Dairy Month and the positive aspects that eating dairy products have on our health. From calcium to potassium, dairy products contain essential nutrients that help to manage weight, reduce the risk for high blood pressure, osteoporosis and certain cancers, among other health benefits.

In fact, each year 7 billion gallons of fluid milk are marketed in the United States, yielding about \$22 billion in annual sales. However, the growing price spread between what the farmer receives and what the retail price is don't equal out. This is a concern to me.

I applaud the sponsors of this legislation, Senators SPECTER and SCHUMER, for their hard work and commitment to the cause of bringing equity into the dairy industry. It should be noted that MILC replaced the very successful Northeast Dairy Compact during the reauthorization of the 2002 Farm bill. I fought very hard to reauthorize the Northeast Dairy Compact at that time because the Northeast Dairy Compact was not structured around payments from the government like the new MILC program. I ultimately voted for MILC because it was the best alternative to the Northeast Dairy Compact. I commend the resolve of Senators SPECTER and SCHUMER to craft a solution that is fair to farmers in all regions of the United States as their efforts have been nothing short of extraordinary.

The National Dairy Equity Act is a win-win proposal that lends dairy farmers a hand, without tapping into the federal treasury. Price volatility in the milk market, coupled with growing production costs, has made it difficult for family dairy farmers to stay in business. The National Dairy Equity Act will work for both the people and the dairy farmers of New England as well as other parts of the United States by providing dairy farmers with a safe-

ty net and by helping to maintain a stable price for fluid milk. This legislation will also help to preserve a New England way of life. The legislation gives states the ability to work closely together to price milk in their own areas, giving states the power to determine fair prices. Of the milk sold in New England, a vast majority—more than 85 percent—is produced from herds in the New England area.

The National Dairy Equity Act allows farmers in each of the five Regional Dairy Marketing Areas, RDMA's, to establish minimum prices for Class I, fluid, milk based on the federal pricing structure. Under the bill, the Governor of each state, in consultation with producers and dairy industry representatives, nominates three members to the regional board. Participation by farmers and—importantly—participation by consumers is required. This regional approach effectively balances the needs of consumers and producers, while ensuring a healthier dairy industry in the future.

The Regional Dairy Marketing Boards also have the authority to conduct effective supply management for their region, including the use of traditional and creative development and implementation of incentive-based supply management programs. To protect against overproduction, regions in which the growth in milk production is higher than the national average will be required to reimburse the Secretary of the Treasury for the cost of government dairy surplus purchases up to the amount that the region is receiving under the NDEA. This system of checks and balances protects against any overproduction.

While the Northeast, Southern, and Upper Midwest regions are automatically considered as participating states, the National Dairy Equity Act has a mechanism for any State to opt into or out of the program. I consider this to be a strong provision in the bill precisely because it allows states to choose the option that is best for them. States that choose not to participate are eligible to participate in the current federal MILC program through September 2005. Individual farmers in states that opt for the MILC program can choose to continue receiving payments through the MILC contract until that legislation expires in September 2005. This legislation has been constructed to give flexibility and certainty to family dairy farmers.

Further, the costs of operating the Regional Dairy Marketing Boards are borne entirely by those participating in the dairy industry in each of the respective regions, at no expense to the federal government. In addition, the Regional Dairy Marketing Boards provide environmental benefits through preservation of dwindling agricultural land and open spaces that help to combat the growing problem of urban sprawl, particularly near large cities, but which is starting to affect more rural areas as well.

The National Dairy Equity Act provides farmers with the safety net they need to continue providing the resources for the myriad of dairy products we rely on to meet our health needs. I urge my colleagues to take this opportunity, during National Dairy Month to celebrate this creative policy solution presented by Senators SPECTER and SCHUMER that brings equity to dairy industry and could save the Federal treasury billions of dollars. This legislation is supported by the Maine Dairy Industry Association.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

MAINE DAIRY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,
Augusta, ME, June 15, 2004.

Senator OLYMPIA J. SNOWE,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SNOWE: On behalf of the 392 dairy farmers operating small businesses in Maine, I thank you for your support of the effort to create regionally flexibility in dairy pricing through your sponsorship of the National Dairy Equity Act. You have consistently been a strong advocate for Maine dairy and all of Maine agriculture and we are proud of your steady leadership in Congress.

Dairy farming is a difficult profession. The cows work 365 days a year regardless holidays, weekends or illness. The weather cannot be made to order. And farmers have very little to say about what they will get paid for their milk, regardless of the quality, quantity or freshness. In spite of these challenges, Maine has a strong dairy farming tradition and our farmers are proud to produce over 50 million gallons of milk (605 million pounds) every year to Maine consumers. Milk is a bulky, perishable product. When it is processed it can be made into products that have a longer shelf life. But fresh fluid milk has many more limitations.

The USDA Federal Order system was put in place in the 1930s to stabilize the price of milk and help the farmers get a fair price for their product. Over the years, this program has been tweaked and twisted in directions that no longer achieve its original aim. Over the years the national demographic profile of dairy farms has changed from small family farms with local creameries serving small geographic areas to larger farming operations concentrated by region and shipping milk to a few large corporate processors with multiple plant locations. Milk is priced on the commodity market, responding to shifting trends of supply and demand that are measured on a nationwide scale. The farmers are again the Davids in an industry of Goliaths.

Milk pricing is an incredible complex series of market calculations. Simply, when the ration between supply and demand shifts 1-2 percent one way or the other, the price the Federal order sets for the farmer to get paid can shift 20-30 percent. If you mapped out the prices for a year on a chart, it would look more like a blueprint for a roller coaster ride than government-controlled pricing structure. And dairy farmers are only told what price they will be paid for their milk AFTER they have sent it to market. Can you imagine any other business working under these conditions?

In Maine, we are fortunate that our style of dairy farming has vestiges of the old days. Most of our farms are family owned, many supporting multiple generations. The farmers live on the farm in the "homestead." Most farmers can track their milk to the