President and the Governors, by agreeing to the need for national education goals and agreeing on a strategy for developing those goals, had agreed upon a framework. There WOULD be a Federal role; education WOULD be a national issue, addressed with national solutions.

It meant that educational decisions would no longer be settled solely at the local level. It meant that legislative deliberations at the State and Federal levels would become relatively less important, and executive decision and vision relatively more important. That's what happens when results are required; when speeches, money and programs are just not enough.

This all seems like conventional wisdom today, but we can easily forget it was not always so. The 1989 Summit had a real impact, far beyond the imagining of those of us privileged enough to have participated. It fundamentally changed the balance of political power on education issues, and it nationalized education policy in a way few would have conceived just a few years earlier.

CONCLUSION

When the President called for a Summit with the Nation's Governors to discuss education, many observers may not have known what to expect. I don't recall any of the Governors believing beforehand that, while we agreed on the need for national goals, we would settle the argument over Federal involvement in education, or that we would shift the Federal focus on education from one end of Pennsylvania Avenue to the other.

I do recall a great deal of skepticism and criticism from outside observers, especially Congress and the press. But I do not recall anything but the most constructive attitude being expressed by any of the principal participants. And, by the way, this was a meeting of principals, very few staff aides were permitted much of a role at all.

It is worth noting, by the way, that the participants—despite all of the good will and convergence of thinking on the value of setting national goals—did not settle on specific goals at the Summit. We agreed on the need for goals, and, in general, what those goals should address. The actual goals themselves, however, were not developed until several months later.

But, for the first time, the President and Governors were discussing on a national level a series of important questions. Many of these had long been discussed and debated in the States, and particularly in the Southern Regional Education Board states. These questions included, among others:

Intervention: Could we do a better job of preparing children for first grade?

Dropout rates: Could we slow the tide?

Adult literacy: Could we put a dent in it, even eliminate it?

Teacher quality: Could we motivate and inspire it?

Decentralized management: Could it produce better results?

And, parental choice: Could this be a workable technique or just the latest fad?

In the end, it was a focus on such questions that formed the basis of the goals and the national education policy that we know today.

I believe the Education Summit was, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, the ''beginning of a new beginning'' in education policy. I believe the way we think, as a Nation, about the goals and objectives of education began to change in September, 1989. Unsurprisingly, we did not find all the answers at the Summit. But we were asking the right questions—and for the first time, we were asking them as a Nation.

In one sense, this should not have been all that surprising, because throughout our national history, educational reform has been a vital and characteristic part of the American impulse. We have always believed that we can, by the force of our own imagination and determination, improve tomorrow by improving ourselves and our children.

But, never has it been more important that our traditional convictions give rise to deliberate action.

If ignorance is the enemy of democracy, in an international economy, ignorance could well be an invitation to national decline. In 1989, it was clear and apparent that the time had arrived for us to put ourselves on the spot, That was the message I heard in Charlottesville,

Accountability and the measurement of student performance, we declared, must be an integral part of our educational process. Indeed, Charlottesville portended a significant shift in our approach to education: From here on, we said that we are going to be increasingly measured by more than the resources we invest. Instead, we declared that we are going to be questioned and examined on the progress our students achieve—or fail to achieve.

Frankly, I think that is how it should be—for there is too much at stake for it to be otherwise.

In 1989, the President and the governors joined efforts to ensure that America becomes a Nation resolved to using education as the best means for shaping the future. The reason we are here today is to assess our national performance since 1989. Where are the benchmarks of progress? Where are the guideposts for confronting the challenges?

Our speakers and panelists today are here to help us make those assessments. I share your interest in their opinions of how far we have come, and I am confident that they will focus our attention on the significant challenges at hand.

Today, as in 1989, we recognize that we have a lot of work to do, and we should always keep in perspective that all of our educational goals, commitments and resources come down to two fundamental points:

First, education's role as a transmitter of civilization's knowledge and values must not be diminished. It is part of the glue that binds together the fabric of our society.

Second, education is, also, increasingly, the engine that drives the American economy—our economic future depends upon our ability to compete, but our ability to compete depends upon our ability to educate. It is just that simple.

Thank you. I look forward to the rest of the Conference.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAMBLISS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded and I be recognized to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTES TO RETIRING SENATORS

TOM DASCHLE

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I rise to bid official farewell to one of my best friends and to one of the greatest Senators ever to grace this body, TOM DASCHLE of South Dakota.

Unsurprisingly, I am sure I have known TOM longer than anyone here. I vividly remember his first campaign for Congress in 1978, the same year I ran for the South Dakota House of Representatives for the first time. We were two young candidates, almost the same age, recent graduates, the same year, of South Dakota colleges. While we were running for very different offices, I felt an immediate bond with him at that time.

TOM's first race for Congress was in many ways predictive of the career that would follow. He was then, and still is, the hardest working, most focused person I have ever met in any sphere of my life. That year he knocked on more than 40,000 doors, personally asking South Dakotans for their vote. I can tell you, knocking on 40,000 doors in the middle of a South Dakota winter is a real challenge.

TOM looked so young he was once mistaken as the paperboy at one of those doors—a woman asked how much money she owed him. I have a photo I cherish to this day of TOM and me together during that first campaign, both of us looking like we were 14 years old. It makes you wonder how anyone voted for either of us at that time.

I remember watching the election returns coming in for TOM's campaign that evening and it didn't look very good, frankly. In fact, when I went to bed that night I was almost certain he had lost. It was only when I woke up that I found TOM was only behind by 50 votes with a recount certain, and as it turned out, he was certified the winner officially by 14 votes out of 130,000 votes cast. Who would have dreamed that such a close victory in South Dakota would have been the beginning of such a distinguished career?

In the intervening years, I watched with admiration while TOM's career advanced in the House of Representatives. He was a natural leader, and I do not believe that many who knew him were surprised, in 1986, when he decided to run for the Senate, taking on the same man who, 6 years previously, defeated Senator George McGovern, an institution in our State.

It was far from an easy race, but TOM prevailed in the end, and his leaving his House seat opened it for my election that year as well. It was the culmination of those two elections which led to an extremely close working relationship but also to a very close friendship.

I have spent the last 18 years working side by side with TOM DASCHLE. I cannot imagine a better partner with whom to work. He is, as I mentioned earlier, the hardest working person I have ever known. He is also the most patient person I have ever known, as well as unfailingly generous—qualities that served him very well as Senate Democratic leader, an extremely demanding job.

There have been fewer than 2,000 Senators who have served our Nation in

this body, but there never has been one who cared as much or worked as hard for his home State as TOM DASCHLE. I can list his many and varied accomplishments but I would be here for hours and that would not serve the purpose of this farewell. It was the Greek philosopher Plato who said, ''The measure of a man is what he does with power.'' And it is that test that so clearly shows the character and the humanity and the values of TOM DASCHLE. TOM never used the power that he had attained for self-aggrandizement. He used it to build a better South Dakota, and a stronger America.

He has always realized that our country works best when people have an opportunity to live up to their own potential, when our children are not shackled by poverty and lack of education, when our people who need a helping hand are given one, and when our older Americans are able to live out the balance of their lives with dignity. The truth is, if it weren't for TOM DASCHLE and his untiring work, there are children who would not be educated and families who would not be housed and vulnerable people who would be uncared for.

TOM DASCHLE's priorities and values have been the priorities and values of his strong family and his devout faith.

It was Jesus Christ who said:

> Inasmuch as ye have done unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

And no matter what level of accomplishment and power TOM DASCHLE attained, he never forgot the ''least of the people'' who Christ referenced.

While we will no longer have TOM DASCHLE to lead us in this body, we are both instructed and warmed by the example he gave us during his 26 years in his congressional career. He and his wife Linda have made an extraordinary team and will always be among the closest of friends to my wife Barbara and me. I will never serve with a man I admire more than TOM DASCHLE, and it is with very great sadness that I say goodbye to his presence in this body. But more than anyone I have ever served with, or ever will serve with, he has given glory and meaning to the term ''United States Senator.''

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING FOR MEATS AND VEGETABLES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, in recent days there have been news reports about our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol Building deciding that they would like to get rid of something called country-of-origin labeling for meats and vegetables. This is a law that has been previously enacted by the Congress saying that consumers have a right to know where their meat and vegetables come from. So a Member of the House and the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the House have indicated they would like to find a way, in these waning days, perhaps in the Omnibus appropriations bill, to repeal the requirement to establish country-of-origin labeling for meat and vegetables.

Country-of-origin labeling is now the law of the land. The Secretary of Agriculture has been dragging her feet for some long while in implementing it. While she was dragging her feet, the Congress decided to extend the time for implementation, so that time was extended over the objection of many of us. My colleagues, Senator DASCHLE, Senator JOHNSON, and many others here in the Chamber objected to that. But, nonetheless, it was done last year in one of these omnibus bills.

If those who are making decisions about what to put in omnibus bills these days decide they want to repeal the country-of-origin labeling law in an omnibus bill this year, they will do a great disservice to American consumers. They will pull the rug out from under farmers and ranchers in our country. Why? Because the fact is, we produce the highest quality food in the world.

Consumers want to know where their food comes from. Almost any consumer in this country can take a look at his or her T-shirt or their shoes, and on the label it will say: Made in the U.S.A. Made in China. You will find out exactly where it was made. We know where shirts come from, and we know where shoes come from because it is all labeled. But meat is not labeled. The law requires it to be, but it is not at this point. So the question is, Will this law remain, and will it, in fact, be implemented, or will it not?

We had a U.S. Department of Agriculture report about the condition of meat that has been imported into this country. And I would like to just show a couple of comments from that report. The report was talking about conditions inside a meatpacking plant in Hermosillo, Mexico. That plant in Mexico supplied raw beef to the American consumers. It had never been inspected and was finally inspected once. Here is what they found. They found:

> ''Shanks and briskets were contaminated with feces.''

A U.S. Department of Agriculture official wrote of his tour of the plant:

> ''In the refrigerator a disease-condemned carcass was observed ready for boning and distribution in commerce . . . Paint and condensation from dirty surfaces were dripping on the meat.''

The official found that workers were literally walking on the beef that was going to be approved for export to the United States. They found that a side of beef approved for processing was infected with bacterial blood infection.

The problem is not limited to the Mexican plants. This is one plant in Mexico. Incidentally, this plant was shut down, then reopened under another name, and to my knowledge has never again been inspected.

Mr. President, by unanimous consent let me ask to show this piece of beef from a supermarket.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, no one knows where this comes from. No Member of the Senate will know where this originated. Did this come from the Mexican plant I just described? Does it come from a French plant that was also inspected and contaminated? Does this come from one of those plants, or does it come from a domestic source in this country in which inspection, we know, is rigorous? Does it come from a domestic source where we have farmers and ranchers who produce the best supply of meat available in the world? Where does this piece of beef originate? No one knows. Consumers deserve to know. They have a right to know.

The country-of-origin labeling requirement passed by the Congress will give them the opportunity to know, but some of our colleagues around here, hailing the call of the big packing plants and others, decide now they want to try to repeal that. Maybe, just once, this place can stand up on the side of farmers and ranchers and consumers, just once, and ignore the call of the bigger economic interests who say: Let's not do this. We clearly should do this.

Labeling is important. Labeling empowers consumers. Labeling protects American producers who are producing the best quality food at the lowest disposable income of any country in the world. So my message to those who are now sauntering around the Chambers watching this Omnibus appropriations bill be put together is this: It would be a very foolish mistake to believe that the Omnibus appropriations bill should, without any debate, carry a provision that would repeal something Congress has already done that will give people the right to understand where their meat and vegetables come from, where the origination point is for the vegetables and the meat that is being consumed by the American people.

If, in fact, the majority party decides to do this—as I indicated, one Member of the U.S. House especially is proposing it. It has been, it is reported, supported by the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the House. If they move in this direction, it will be a very serious mistake, in my judgment.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE DEFICITS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to, on another subject, speak for just a moment about the area of international trade.