

ridiculous level of denying President Lee, in transit to another country, the ability to disembark from his aircraft during a stop-over in Hawaii.

Second, as I have previously noted on the floor, the only people to whom the United States regularly denies entry are terrorists, convicted felons, and people with certain serious communicable diseases. The Secretary of State has admitted Yasser Arafat, whom we denounced for years as a terrorist thug; he has admitted Terry Adams, the leader of the IRA's political arm Sinn Fein—a group responsible for terrorist attacks throughout the United Kingdom. Few of us in the senate can fathom how the State Department can possibly exclude President Lee—the democratically elected leader of a friendly country—when it has admitted these gentlemen, and instead add him to a list of pariahs.

Third, the refusal to admit President Lee comes at the express behest of the Government of the People's Republic of China. In the almost slavish lengths to which the State Department has gone to honor that demand, it has done nothing but strengthen the perception on Capitol Hill that it is rushing to kowtow to Beijing. State has countered that the People's Republic of China has threatened grave ramifications if Lee were to be admitted—since the People's Republic of China claims Taiwan to be a province—and admitting President Lee would be tantamount to a country admitting Gov. Pete Wilson as the head of government of a sovereign independent California, thereby threatening the authority of the central government. Yet their own actions severely undercut the Department's position. The Secretary has repeatedly admitted his Holiness the Dalai Lama to the United States. The Dalai Lama purports—rightly in my view—to represent the legitimate Government of Tibet. Chinese troops occupied Tibet in the 1950's, displaced the Government and absorbed Tibet as a province—the Xizang Zizhiqu or Xizang Autonomous Region. Despite Beijing's warnings to the contrary—warnings similar to those on Taiwan—we have admitted the Dalai Lama. We have done this despite the fact that, like President Lee, the Dalai Lama claims to represent a country which the People's Republic of China considers to be a province. Why, then, the inconsistency in the State Department's position?

Fourth, attempts by the People's Republic of China to dictate our immigration policy to us strike many as presumptuous. To put it in terms which the Government in Beijing can understand: Who we admit to this country under our immigration laws is strictly an internal affair of the United States. Mr. President, the People's Republic of China is continually telling us to butt out of issues they consider to be their internal affairs—human rights abuses, for example; they would do well to listen to their own advice.

Congress has made it abundantly clear that it disapproves of the administration's position on this issue. Votes urging the Secretary to allow the visit have passed overwhelmingly in both Houses in past years. This year, Senate Concurrent Resolution 9 and its House counterpart both enjoy wide, bipartisan support. I expect that they will both come to a vote within the next week and pass with few, if any, detractors.

There have been some signs—albeit exceedingly subtle—that the administration may be considering some reworking of its past positions. In New York City on the 17th of this month, on the occasion of the visit of the People's Republic of China's Foreign Minister Qian, a senior State Department official made certain statements which may provide a small glimmer of hope that the administration may be coming around. Mr. President, you will note from the amount of qualifying words that I have just used that I consider the likelihood of them coming around to be rather slim.

That would be unfortunate, because I think that it would reflect an underestimation of the depth of the feeling in the Congress on this issue. Just so there is no mistaking what I believe the reaction of the Senate will be to a continued denial of a private visit by President Lee—even in the face of the two resolutions—let me point out the following for our friends in the administration. I have prepared legislation to require the Secretary to admit President Lee this year for a private visit, which already has seven original cosponsors. At least two other Senators I know of are poised to introduce similar legislation. Should the Secretary fail to accommodate a private visit by President Lee in the very near future, the three of us are prepared to act. I will ensure that any such legislation moves quickly through my subcommittee, and on to the floor.

Mr. President, it is unfortunate that this simple issue has had to come to this. If the parties had simply, we could have put this behind us and gotten on with the more serious issues that concern us. The obstinance of the State Department, and the People's Republic of China, only serves to harden Members' attitudes and to turn their attention toward other, more controversial, areas such as Taiwan's participation in the United Nations and WTO. We would all do well to remember the proverbial observation that the grass that bends with the wind survives the storm, while the branch that remains stiff and obstinate does not.

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IN HONOR OF SOUTH DAKOTA'S  
1995 TEACHER OF THE YEAR,  
BECKY EKELAND

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to congratulate the 1995 South Dakota Teacher of the Year, Becky Ekeland. I

can attest to the fact that this is an honor she well deserves.

Being selected Teacher of the Year is a most significant accomplishment. It means you have gained the utmost respect of your colleagues and students. Becky Ekeland was nominated by her fellow teaching staff in the Brookings School District and ultimately selected by a committee of statewide officials.

Ms. Ekeland is an English teacher at Brookings High School. She has been an educator for 20 years. South Dakotans, especially the students of Brookings, are extremely fortunate to have Mrs. Ekeland in our State.

Mrs. Ekeland's dedication to her students is evidenced in a hundred different ways. One example is the grammar lessons she creates each year. Rather than relying on a textbook, she tailors her lessons to the specific needs of each class. It's her way, she said, of showing her students how the English language works and what it means in their day-to-day lives.

Schools have undergone enormous change in the 20 years since Mrs. Ekeland began her career. One of the most profound changes is the tremendous new demands placed on parents. Many children now come from single-parent families. In other families, two parents work two and even three jobs just to make ends meet.

A teacher's job is always demanding, but it become even more difficult when teachers have to fill in as parents, too.

Given the increasing pressure on our schools—and our increasing need for good schools, now is not the time to be cutting educational resources.

In coming weeks, as we debate next year's budget, let us remember what President Kennedy said: "A child miseducated is a child lost. And let us pledge to give America's students and teachers the support they need to succeed. In a real sense, they are our future."

I want to mention a few things Becky Ekeland is working to improve the teaching profession and make that future more secure.

First, she is a positive voice in the community, letting people know the good things that happen in the school.

She participates in professional organizations.

She takes seriously her responsibility to be a good example, demanding from herself what we all should be able to expect from our teachers.

she attends classes, workshops, seminars and conventions in an effort to constantly improve herself and her educational skills.

The greatest testament to Ms. Ekeland's skill comes from her fellow staffers and former students.

The counselor at Brookings High School describes her as "self-motivated, conscientious, responsible, dependable, a professional individual, always willing to give 110 percent while at work; another 110 percent worth of quality time when at home with her family."

Her principal at Brookings High School calls Mrs. Ekeland "an outstanding educator. Becky is first and foremost a caring person," he says "who places a high priority on helping others \* \* \* she establishes relationships with students that serve to increase their motivation, confidence and achievement \* \* \* Becky has always demonstrated strong classroom organizational skills and a commitment to instruction that causes students to be actively engaged in learning through ways that are meaningful to them."

A former student writes, "Rebecca Ekeland is truly one in a million. I have never come across anyone who dedicates so much energy to one task—educating the children of Brookings, South Dakota. She puts her heart and soul into the success of every single student that enters her classroom. To me this is what teaching is all about."

Mr. President, I am honored to commend such an outstanding teacher and to congratulate her on her well-deserved recognition.

At this time, I would ask that Ms. Ekeland's essays and the letters of recommendations from which I read be printed in the RECORD.

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

BECKY EKELAND

PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY

A. What were the factors that influenced you to become a teacher? Describe what you consider to be your greatest contributions and accomplishments in education.

As the daughter of a Lutheran minister and an English teacher, I grew up in a home where a career meant working with people and helping people. I could see that my parents' professions were very rewarding and that they had the love and respect of many people. I was very proud of them and wanted to be like them. They must have had the same effect on my siblings because my brother is a special education teacher and my sister is a social worker who works as a legal advocate for people with mental illness. We all feel a strong desire to serve others and in return gain great self-satisfaction.

When I was growing up, school was always a wonderful place to be, and I have fond memories of warm, caring, dedicated teachers, and so, even though I briefly entertained notions of being a missionary or a social worker, I guess I always planned on being a teacher. Someone said once that good teachers love both their students and their subject, so I guess I've got it made!

My greatest accomplishments in education have probably come from my dedication to my students. For example, for years I have written my own grammar units rather than relying on a textbook. I want my students to see the whole picture of how our language works and have them apply this knowledge to their own writing through exercises and lessons that are tailored for each class. I rewrite my grammar unit every year to meet my students' needs.

Another example is how I have developed my yearbook class. When I started 10 years ago I had no experience and no staff! I took some workshops and recruited great students. Yearbook has evolved from a Monday night extracurricular activity into an accredited class with the students and the book consistently winning top awards in

yearbook journalism. I am especially of this class because my role as a mentor and an adviser. The book is completely student produced. I love to see how the confidence and creativity blossom when kids are in charge of something they are proud of.

I am trying to use the lessons I have learned in this yearbook class in my English 9 class. By giving students some control in what they study and in how they tackle a task they have more success. One unit that has worked especially well is the I-Search paper. Students must pick their own topic, one that has personal value and meaning to them, and then research it, with their primary source of information being other people. The students conducted interviews and write letters to gain their information.

One thing that brings me great satisfaction is the relationships I have with many of my students. I encourage my students to come in and see me when they need someone to talk to. I think I'm someone they trust and find easy to talk to because many kids do come in. This is a very important part of my job—to be a compassionate, caring, good listener. I treat my students with respect and they, in turn, treat me with respect. I rarely have discipline problems because of this. I start every school year by explaining that the only behavior rule in my classroom is the Golden Rule. I tell the students that I want my classroom to be a friendly and safe place for everyone, including me, and that I want everyone to feel good about coming to English class. It generally works, and my classroom is truly a fun place to be!

One thing I'm proud of is that I have been employed for 20 years! I have moved five times to different states and communities following my husband's career. Competition for teaching positions has always been keen, but in each of these places I have been able to secure a teaching position. I am especially pleased to be teaching in Brookings.

My greatest professional joy is when graduates come back to tell me about their accomplishments and to thank me for whatever role I may have played. One of them recently wrote, "You are my favorite teacher, I'll remember you always for being willing to listen to my problems and helping me out and putting up with me . . . I can not tell you how much better you have made my life." I work very hard to do the right things for my students—taking classes, writing units, experimenting with different styles, taking time to get to know them, etc.—but it's messages like that that make it all worthwhile. I am a very lucky person to have such a wonderful job.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. Describe your commitment to your community through service-oriented activities such as volunteer work, civic and other group activities.

Community and church activities are important because of the services they often provide and because they help me to grow as a person, but it is very important to me to have balance in my life. I have very strong feelings about maintaining quality family time in the evenings. When I'm at school I give 100% to my students and my job, but during evenings and weekends my family comes first. This is obviously important for my children, but I think it is also important for me and ultimately reflects on all aspects of my life. I am healthier and more energetic in the classroom because I am not spread too thin. I refuse to join too many organizations at one time because they take me away from my job and my family, so I pick and choose thoughtfully and say no when I have to. The organizations that I'm involved in are ones that I feel are important. I also hope to demonstrate to my children the worth of these organizations and role model for them the

importance of getting involved in things that can make a difference.

Right now my outside activities are mostly in my church. I am a member of Ascension Lutheran where I am a Sunday School teacher and a member of the Rebekah Circle. I have also served as a Church Council member, a member of various boards, and as a choir member. In my former church I also served as a Confirmation teacher and as a Luther League adviser.

In the past I have been a college sorority adviser, a member of Alpha Delta Kappa (an honorary teachers' sorority), a United Fund committee member, and I have worked on various political campaigns for candidates who share the same views on education that I do. My goal for this coming year is to become involved in Habitat for Humanity here in Brookings.

PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

A. Describe your personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including your own ideas of what makes you an outstanding teacher. Describe the rewards you find in teaching.

B. How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in your personal teaching style?

As a teacher, it is my goal to promote intellectual and character development in my students. I want each student to have a good understanding of the material in my curriculum, of course, but it is equally important to me that they enjoy the learning process so that it will continue long after they leave my classroom. It is my desire to help my students reach their highest goals and become productive citizens. I try very hard to be a role model, a mentor, a good listener, and a friend.

I start each school year with only one conduct rule—the Golden Rule. I discuss with the students what it means to treat others the way they would like to be treated and how important this attitude is. I want my students to feel comfortable in my room, to know that this is a caring, warm place where they can feel good about themselves and the subject. Generally that rule takes care of any discipline problems before they ever arise. A gentle reminder to "be nice" is usually all that is needed! This rule helps provide an atmosphere that encourages learning, and it also helps students achieve self-control.

In class discussions I try to draw responses from all students, encouraging higher-order thinking skills. I like to give compliments and positive feedback because I think this encourages students to participate. Everybody likes to be praised, and most kids like to talk if they don't feel threatened. I have also started using the portfolio as a means of assessment. It is a true indicator of a student's accomplishments and provides a means for each student to see his or her growth through the year.

I know all students can learn, so I try to provide for different learning styles. I also work very closely with the special education teachers to meet the needs of students on IEPs. For example, one year I had a blind student. Following guidance from the special education teachers, I had his worksheets Brailled, had him tape lectures, and provided a typewriter for him to use in the classroom. The special education teachers and I also work together on inclusion. These teachers help me not only with students on IEPs, but also with any students who are struggling or need some extra help.

I am constantly trying to improve my teaching through many different methods. I choose workshops and classes based on what I think my needs and my students' needs are.

I share ideas with fellow teachers and incorporate new ideas from them. I have worked on several curriculum committees and have often written my own units to meet my students' needs. I generally draw from many sources to organize and present an original approach to the subject matter.

Many of my students become my friends. They come to me for counseling or advice; I have been a member of Peer Natural Helpers for several years. Sometimes students need help with English or yearbook, and sometimes they need help with problems in their personal life. I don't always have the answers, but I think I'm easy to talk to, and the kids feel comfortable with me. They know I truly like them! It is from these relationships that I derive my greatest satisfaction. I also like to see "light bulbs" come on in kids' eyes as they begin to comprehend a grammar lesson or get involved in a story we are reading or solve a yearbook layout problem. I continue to work hard to establish a relationship with all my students so that I can recognize their needs and help them. I often get letters, phone calls, and visits from former students, sometimes just to talk and sometimes to thank me. They make me feel wonderful!

#### EDUCATION ISSUES AND TRENDS

A. What do you consider to be the major public education issues today? Address one, outlining possible causes, effects and resolutions.

It is an exciting time to be in education when one considers such issues as modernization and inclusion. Brookings has been involved in modernization now for two years and it is exhilarating to see the changes. Collaboration and cross-curricular classes are just two results of modernization that have excited and rejuvenated many of our staff members. I am involved in collaborating with special education teachers to include special-needs students in the regular classroom. It seems that special education is constantly evolving and the verdict is still out as to whether inclusion is the best method, but I find it very rewarding to work with a program that has such a humane philosophy toward all children. The dark ages of shunning special-needs children or sending them away is in the past to stay. It is better for all people to live in a society that accepts all people for what they are.

It is also scary to be in education when one considers the rise in violence in schools, the lack of funding, and the continual pressure by different interest groups to force their political agendas on schools.

But the issue that affects education today in the most profound way is the growth in the number of single-parent families. According to the Census Bureau, one-third of all families now are run by one parent. Right now 40 percent of all children under the age of 18 live in homes where their fathers do not live, according to David Blankenhorn of the Institute for American Values.

This change in the American family affects the classroom because it means less parental supervision over homework, fewer classroom volunteers, more latchkey kids, and more discipline problems. This makes our job more difficult, and it also changes our job because more and more the schools have to assume roles that traditionally belonged to the parents. The difficulties many schools are having now with discipline and violence are not because the school is failing but rather because the family structure is failing.

The soaring rise in single-parent families started in the 1970s when the divorce rate began to climb. The rise continued in the 1980s and 1990s with out-of-wedlock births. This is evident in many larger schools that

now provide daycare for the children of the students. Out-of-wedlock births also increases the dropout rate, further complicating the education system which now must provide alternative education for many of these young parents.

Education is left to deal with the situation, but education may also hold the key to improving the situation. Young people need to better understand the consequences of their actions. They need classes that teach them the realities of life and help them prepare for the future. They need guidance in learning how to make right choices. Of course, schools can't and shouldn't have to do it alone, but I fear for our society if this trend continues. The social consequences could be devastating.

#### THE TEACHING PROFESSION

A. What can you do to strengthen and improve the teaching profession?

B. What is and/or what should be the basis for accountability in the teaching profession?

This is the question I struggled with the most. What can I do to strengthen and improve the teaching profession? This can be a very frustrating question because the profession is so big and I'm only one person. What can one person do? But upon reflection I realized that that is all anyone is—one person—and each of us can do things to strengthen the profession. The following are things I am doing to improve the teaching profession.

First of all, I am a positive voice in the community. Every chance I get, I speak up for education. I let my friends and neighbors know about the great things happening in our schools. I work in the community for political candidates who are advocates for strong public education. I attend school board meetings. Rather than bemoaning the things that are wrong with the system, I try to be positive.

I also join my professional organizations. If we teachers are unified, we can make a difference.

I am just one person in just one classroom, but in that classroom I can make a difference. I strive to be an example, to be the kind of teacher I want for my own children. I am professional, well-informed, well-prepared, dedicated, and caring. That is what we should expect from all our teachers, and it's what I expect in myself.

I can improve the profession by constantly improving me. I attend classes, workshops, seminars and conventions. It's important to keep up with the latest ideas and trends. I don't want to become complacent or stagnant. These learning opportunities also serve as inspiration. I am constantly rededicating myself to my profession and my students.

One very tangible way I have strengthened the teaching profession is through the work I have done at South Dakota State University. I am part of a group of teachers working through a grant to help rewrite the student training curriculum. In collaboration with the Education College we have developed the courses called Professional Semesters I, II, and III. The student teachers coming out of SDSU are the best prepared I have ever seen, and I think that SDSU can serve as a role model for other teacher training colleges. I am very proud to be a part of this group. In my classroom I work with PS I, II, and III students and take great pride in the mentoring and teaching I do. I feel very good about helping student teachers prepare to become part of a wonderful profession.

Teachers are accountable to their students, their administrators, their peers and themselves. Members of the profession need to abide by their master contract, adhere to the rules of the district and teach what is

prescribed by the school's curriculum. It is also important to keep up with new trends and ideas. The best way to monitor a teacher's performance is through the building principal and a teacher/mentor program. The principal needs to screen carefully when hiring a teacher and then take the responsibility to document the strengths and weaknesses of that teacher. It is also part of his or her job to counsel and advise that teacher. He or she needs to do the same for veteran teachers. Some schools also assign a veteran teacher to serve as a mentor for a new teacher. That mentor can assist a new teacher to develop top-rate teaching skills.

#### NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

A. As the 1995 National Teacher of the Year, you would serve as a spokesperson and representative for the entire teaching profession. How would you communicate to your profession and to the general public the importance of education to our society? As 1995 National Teacher of the Year what would be your message?

We must all recognize that ignorance is our number one enemy. Enemies such as hunger, disease, unemployment, violence, and prejudice cannot be eliminated if we don't eliminate ignorance first.

Parents must work as partners with the schools to improve the quality of their children's lives and keep our country free and strong. Parents play a critical role in teaching their children such things as values, morals, religion, respect, manners, etc. These areas should not be pushed off on the schools, although the schools should serve as a support system. Likewise, parents should be the support system for the schools. Parents need to be involved supervising homework, joining PTA, attending conferences, volunteering, etc. They should attend school board meetings and voice their desire to provide excellent education for all children.

Not only is it important to educate our citizens to ensure quality of life, it is also important to fight ignorance to keep our democratic way of life healthy. The United States is a country governed by all the people; therefore, the people must be able to make informed, wise choices when they select leaders. The citizens must be able to express themselves intelligently and they must be able to keep an informed eye on the government to prevent corruption. Dictators can rule only in a land where the citizens are uninformed and incapable of ruling themselves. We should never allow education to be something only for the elite or "most promising."

This country must continue to ensure quality education for all its citizens if it is to survive. It must also recognize that the quality of life for those citizens can be maintained or improved only through education. Our taxpayers must realize that the money that goes to education is money well-spent. Quality education is the most valuable thing we can give our country and its citizens.

BROOKINGS HIGH SCHOOL,

Brookings, SD, July 16, 1994.

TO TEACHER OF THE YEAR SELECTION COMMITTEE:

Becky Ekeland has asked me to submit a letter in support of her Teacher of the Year nomination.

As a counselor here at Brookings High School, I have seen many of our freshmen as well as 10-12 graders have opportunities to be challenged and develop further their skills in composition interpretation of their reading. Becky is able to use a variety of techniques to successfully communicate and to TEACH. She makes learning exciting and challenging for all her students. Becky teaches a diverse

group of students and they all respect her as an educator and as a person.

Students who take Becky Ekeland's English or yearbook classes grow in many ways. I've observed students who have become more confident and able through their interviewing processes in yearbook or through the 9th grade I-search paper; many of the students also develop a knowledge and respect for discipline, creativity, and the realities of deadlines. More importantly, students know that it is ok to ask any question because every question in Becky's eyes is important and well worth the time. This attitude opens up excellent lines for communication between student and teacher. These learned qualities carry over to the other academic areas and help develop a much more successful student. She helps those who would otherwise feel uncomfortable in an English class feel ok about being there and proud of their individual progress. Becky also works with our gifted coordinator to bring in enrichment and challenges, ensuring the extra added opportunities for those students who excel in her classroom.

Becky is also the yearbook director. Here too, she is dedicated, very organized, and willing to go out of her way to help her yearbook staff be the best they can be. BHS Yearbook has taken top honors at many state competitions. This excellent record is a direct result of Becky's dedication and desire to do her best always.

As a person, Becky is self-motivated, conscientious, responsible, dependable, a professional individual, always willing to give 110% while at work; another 110% worth of quality time when at home with her family.

I believe Becky is an individual who will continually look for new ways to stimulate interest for her students. She is one who is always open to change and willing to share and become part of educational group related efforts.

In my opinion, Becky is academically and personally superior. Her interest and determination will guarantee her continued success and keep her on the cutting edge of up and coming programs for her kids.

I sincerely believe Becky Ekeland is a most worthy candidate for Teacher of the Year. Any school anywhere would be proud to have her on staff. I highly recommend Becky Ekeland for South Dakota Teacher of the Year.

Sincerely,

LINDA K.S. PUMINGTON,  
*Counselor.*

BROOKINGS HIGH SCHOOL,  
*Brookings, SD., August 10, 1994.*

DEAR SOUTH DAKOTA TEACHER OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE: It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of support for Mrs. Becky Ekeland's nomination for South Dakota Teacher of the Year. Stating it simply, she is an outstanding educator.

I first became acquainted with Becky over a decade ago when she moved to Brookings. I was the assistant principal at Brookings Middle School at the time and Becky was employed as a substitute teacher. At the time of her hiring as an English teacher at Brookings High School, my only regret was that we did not have an opening for her at Brookings Middle School where I worked. Through her substitute teaching, she had proven to us that she was a very capable teacher. One year ago when I became principal at Brookings High School, I was fortunate to again work with Becky. I have come to appreciate even more than before, the many fine qualities that Becky possesses.

Becky is first and foremost a caring person who places a high priority on helping others. As a result of this, she establishes relationships with students that serve to increase

their motivation, confidence, and achievement. Some specific examples of Becky's excellence as an educator are the outstanding results she has obtained as Brookings High Yearbook advisor, the quality of her preparation for classroom instruction, and her ability and willingness to work with special needs students.

In Becky's 10 years as yearbook advisor, she has developed an outstanding program, with our school's yearbook receiving statewide recognition on a consistent basis. Students are given much responsibility and control over the work with Becky serving a role of facilitator and advisor to them. In this capacity, Becky demonstrates the talent of bringing students to the realization of their full potential.

Becky has always demonstrated strong classroom organizational skills and a commitment to instruction that causes students to be actively engaged in learning through ways that are meaningful to them. She regularly updates her curriculum so that the particular interests and needs of each group of students are addressed.

In recent years, as we have moved in the direction of integrating special needs students into the regular education classroom, Becky has been a leader, showing both a willingness and an interest in working together with special education staff and students. Repeatedly, she has gone beyond what is expected of her to provide for the needs of students. She truly believes that all students can learn in her classroom.

Becky is, without a doubt, one of South Dakota's finest educators. It is without qualification that I recommend Becky Ekeland for South Dakota Teacher of the Year.

Sincerely,

DOUG BESTE,  
*Principal.*

BROOKINGS, SD.

*To whom it may concern:*

It is with great pleasure that I begin this letter, because as I think back upon the six years I have known Rebecca Ekeland I realize how much she has given me, and I am thrilled that she is finally being recognized. She is an amazing individual, and she has touched my life in a very important way. She is my hero, my mentor, my role model, and my friend. I have a feeling that Mrs. Ekeland has touched many other lives in the same way, and I like to think that I speak for many people when I say that you will be hard pressed to find anyone more worthy of the title "Teacher of the Year" than Mrs. Ekeland.

Mrs. Ekeland was my freshman English teacher. I have always liked English, but the year I spent in her classroom was different from any other class I have ever taken. Right away it was obvious that she cared about her students and took a personal interest in the success of each of us. She was diplomatic and fair, and she respected her students. I remember leaving class the first day feeling about a foot taller and finally feeling like I was a "grown-up". What was more impressive was that at all times students respected Mrs. Ekeland and her authority. Rarely are there discipline problems in her classroom, and never have I heard students badmouthing her or complaining about her outside the classroom. Everyone loves Mrs. Ekeland. It is as simple as that.

For the next three years I was on the yearbook staff, and as Mrs. Ekeland was the adviser, I not only got the chance to learn from her again, but I became good friends with her. I think that I owe much of who I am today to the confidence that Mrs. Ekeland bestowed on me those in the course of those three years. She chose me to be the Editor-in-Chief for my senior year, and I learned so

many valuable skills. I learned to be a good leader, a good writer, and a good mediator. I learned to be patient and fair. Essentially, I was attempting to mirror the one individual I admire more than any other person: Mrs. Ekeland.

Before I entered high school, I was without sense of direction. My greatest dream was to become a stewardess or a librarian. After the first week or so of my freshman year, I realized with 100% certainty that I wanted to be a high school teacher—just like Mrs. Ekeland. I am now entering my junior year in college, and in my education courses and in the classrooms in which I student teach, I constantly find myself making an example of Mrs. Ekeland's classroom. Whenever I find myself in a tough situation, the first thing I do is ask myself, "What would Mrs. Ekeland do if she were in my position?" We have remained close over the years, and I value her friendship and her advice. She has always been there for me in every capacity: teacher, counselor, mother-figure, best friend, mentor.

Finally, something needs to be said about exactly why Mrs. Ekeland qualifies for the honor of South Dakota Teacher of the Year. Besides her kindness, her fairness, and her ability to inspire, this woman is tireless. Her first priority is her students, and she is constantly working to make sure that their educational needs are met. She is always available to spend extra time on a difficult assignment. Her lectures and assignments are clear and concise and worthwhile. And most important in my mind, she is forever seeking a better way to do things. Just in the past few years she has revised and improved her curriculum, and she is working to coordinate a better curriculum throughout the English department. She is willing to try new methods and use new materials. Mrs. Ekeland will do whatever it takes to see that her students learn. She would go to the ends of the earth if it meant that even one student would catch on to grammar rules. She makes every student feel important. It takes a special person to be able to do that, and Mrs. Ekeland can.

Rebecca Ekeland truly is one in a million. I have never come across anyone who dedicates so much energy to one task—educating the children of Brookings, South Dakota. She puts her heart and soul into the success of every single student that enters her classroom. To me this is what teaching is all about. She exemplifies the "Ideal Educator" and is more deserving of this honor than any other person my imagination could conjure up. Nevertheless, I believe that Mrs. Ekeland's reward is watching students grow up to be successful, happy individuals. She does not need a fancy plaque or trophy to hang on her wall. In my mind and in the minds of many others, she is and always will be the "Teacher of the Year" this year and for many years to come.

JENNIFER LACHER.

#### MEMORIES OF EXPERIENCES "BACK WHEN"

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, April's Commerce Department magazine contains an article entitled "Commerce Officials Knew Two Congressmen 'Back When'." As it happens, I am one of the Congressmen.

"Back then" was Vietnam during the war when Paul London, now Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Department of Commerce, was in charge of a State Department unit involved with economic affairs and I