

hope this time, for once, he does not prove to be prescient. But this can only happen if we attend to what he foresees.

The financial crisis has eased. We are free to think anew and act anew. There was at least one such moment in our involvement with Vietnam. We missed it.

#### SOUTH DAKOTA FLOODS

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, once again, Mother Nature's fury is challenging the spirit and perseverance of South Dakotans. For the past several weeks, persistent rains have brought flooding conditions to much of the State for the third straight year. As a result, 38 counties already have been declared disaster areas. More counties may be added in the days ahead. Just by way of comparison, in July 1993, 33 counties were disaster areas due to the heavy rainfall and flooding that made front page headlines nationwide.

Flooding has made vital roads and bridges impassable, placing the assurance of basic services at risk. Rivers and streams overflowing their banks have wreaked havoc in urban and rural areas across South Dakota—base-ments, fields, and roads are inundated with water. Damage to public and private property threatens the well-being of farmers, small business men and women, families, and individuals.

On Monday, Gov. Bill Janklow requested that the President declare the State a disaster area and provide Federal emergency assistance in excess of \$16 million. The devastation appears already to have surpassed that caused by the so-called Great Flood of 1993. Some areas of the State already are experiencing their wettest springs in history with 3 weeks remaining in the season.

An end does not appear to be in sight. National Weather Service reports indicate heavy precipitation will continue through the end of this month and maybe into this summer. If this is the case, South Dakota once again may resemble the Great Lake of the Midwest.

South Dakotans clearly are experiencing hard times. The Governor's office has informed me that the State is using all the resources it can to assist those in need. Federal help is critical. As South Dakota's senior Senator, I intend to do all I can to ensure that the President and our Federal agencies respond to South Dakota's disaster needs swiftly and diligently. The people of South Dakota deserve and should expect no less from their Government.

I already have written to the President, the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], and the Small Business Administration [SBA], and the Federal Highway Administration, alerting them of South Dakota's urgent situation and urging quick approval of the Governor's aid request.

I also invited the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Rodney Slater, to personally assess the damage of our flood-damaged roads and bridges and to give immediate consid-

eration to a request from the State for assistance. Having endured \$1.2 million of damage to roads and bridges last year, additional damage to roads and bridges makes FHWA assistance even more critical this year.

Administrator Slater for some time has planned to survey damaged roads and bridges in South Dakota. Unfortunately, he has not scheduled a visit. Now is as good a time as any for him to see just how serious the situation is.

South Dakotans have no time to waste. The Federal Government should act, and act fast. South Dakota deserves the same response other areas of the Nation receive in times of need. I intend to see that this action is taken.

What kind of action can be taken at the Federal level? Plenty. In fact, a number of initiatives can be taken without a Presidential disaster declaration—initiatives that are critical to South Dakota farmers and ranchers. First and foremost, the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation must provide far greater flexibility in the administration of the Crop Insurance Program to South Dakota farmers.

The Crop Insurance Program, which has replaced disaster payments as the central means for emergency relief, is predicated on the planting of crops. However, as we all know, the clear problem caused by the recent rain and floods for crop farmers is that they are unable to plant. Consider the percentage of crops planted, as of May 8, 1995, as compared to the 5-year average: corn—1 percent, 5-year average—19 percent; spring wheat—17 percent, 5-year average—89 percent; oats—12 percent, 5-year average—85 percent; barley—6 percent, 5-year average—84 percent.

I already have written to Agriculture Secretary Glickman, urging administrative flexibility for the Crop Insurance Program. Specifically the Secretary needs to take the following steps:

First, provide prevent planting coverage on crops that producers paid premiums on. If a producer was unable to plant the insured crop by the final planting date, crop insurance should pay the prevented planting indemnity and permit the producers to plant any subsequent crop possible and insure that crop.

Second, provide crop insurance coverage for producers who aerial seed this year's crop. With the degree of wet conditions occurring in South Dakota, aerial seeding needs to be considered a usual practice.

Third, withhold penalties against producers by permitting prevented planting coverage even if a producer enters the 0/92 program.

Fourth, release Conservation Reserve Program [CRP] acres for haying and grazing.

Fifth, extend immediately the May 15 deadline for calving on CRP acres. I am pleased that Secretary Glickman has responded to this request, and has extended the deadline.

Sixth, permit the following crops to be planted this year without the loss of

farm program benefits: millet, soybeans, buckwheat, sunflowers.

FEMA, SBA, and the FHWA also should be equally responsive, fair, and flexible to the needs of South Dakotans should the Governor request Federal assistance.

The need for equitable treatment in response to disasters is very important to me. In recent years, I have been very critical of what I believe to be the apparent discriminatory administration of Federal emergency assistance. It seems that disaster aid is always quick in coming to States and localities with major media markets and big electoral votes. However, whether you are from Humboldt, CA, or Humboldt, SD, a disaster is a disaster—a lost home, business, or income due to Mother Nature is hard for all Americans, regardless of where they live. Thus, treatment of these disasters should be fair.

Once again, the wrath of Mother Nature is challenging the people of our great State. Times are tough, but I know South Dakotans will persevere. The pioneer spirit and sense of community within all South Dakotans will rise to the occasion. In the last few days, my wife Harriet and I have talked to a number of our friends in South Dakota. We have heard the difficulties they have faced. Our hearts and our prayers are with them—the farmers, ranchers, business men and women, and the families impacted by the flooding. I intend to do all I can to ensure that the Federal Government stands side-by-side with all South Dakotans during this difficult time. The President can begin this effort by approving Governor Janklow's request and send assistance where needed. I urge him to do so without delay. Again, the people of South Dakota should expect and deserve no less.

#### CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF ED ROBERTS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, it was with profound sadness that I learned of Ed's death. On March 14, 1995, not only did the world lose one of our most dynamic and forceful advocates for the rights and empowerment of people with disabilities; on that day, I lost a friend and confidant.

Ed Roberts was a kid who lived for baseball when he contracted polio at age 14. He became severely disabled almost overnight, needing large equipment and assistance simply to breathe. Ed overheard the doctor tell his mother that it would be better if he died because he was going to be a vegetable. He decided right then that if he was going to be a vegetable, he would be an artichoke: prickly on the outside with a tender heart.

A lot of people told Ed there were a lot of things he could not do.

They told him he could not graduate from high school because he could not pass PE or driver's education, so he