

in my district who have made their lives a model of commitment for all of us. Those people are Tom and Irene Ward of Winston, Georgia, who celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary on Sunday, May 30th, 1999.

In a time when traditional family values are under attack across our culture, Tom and Irene's example of steadfast devotion is an inspiration. I wish them all the best on the occasion of their anniversary, and I hope they will enjoy many more years of happiness together.

GRADUATION SPEECH OF LAUREN SECATOVE ON RESPONSIBILITY

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, all Americans, including members of Congress have been saddened and frightened by the violence occurring in our schools. Just yesterday, a bomb was found in a school in rural upstate New York.

On June 6, I had the marvelous experience of hearing a graduation speech given at Apponequet Regional High School in Free-town, MA, by Lauren Secatove, my granddaughter.

Her thoughts on responsibility were so moving that I should like to share them.

SPEECH BY LAUREN SECATOVE, JUNE 6, 1999, APPONEQUET, MAINE REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Good afternoon, friends, family, teachers, and members of the class of 1999. Welcome to the last day of our childhood and the first day of the rest of our lives. Needless to say, June 6th, 1999 will forever be a turning point for each of us. It seems trite to refer to a day as a point of turning, and the mere concept evokes confusion. To where, to whom, into what do we turn? We have come to an intersection with no signs, our pasts beeping loudly at us, and a foggy road ahead. Some of us are struggling wildly to go into reverse, which in life is utterly impossible. We are hesitantly facing our future, an unnerving task for we know not what the future holds. But take comfort; the beauty of the future lies not in its planning, but in its spontaneous creation.

Do not look feverishly ahead, as if you were trying to turn to the last page of a book, for each one of us has the same ending, the same last sentence. And actually our beginnings are quite similar. Today we find ourselves all at the same point, in the same place, even wearing the same thing.

So if our endings are the same, and our beginnings similar, it must be somewhere in the middle where we form ourselves. It must be this time where we define who we truly are, and what we are going to accomplish. This is no easy task. It is also a task that we must perform alone. As we work to complete this goal, we must always be conscious of three things; the responsibilities we hold to each other, to the world and to ourselves.

First: our responsibility to each other—

To live solely for oneself is not truly living. We must each make a commitment to do for others. We have lead a somewhat sheltered life up to this point. The world is very different from our small towns. Our differences are minute compared to the diversity we will soon encounter. While our small community gives us the opportunity to form close bonds, it also secludes us from the world. There are many different ways of liv-

ing, feeling and thinking, no one better than another. Be proud of who you are, where you come from, and what you believe, but grant others that same pride. Also remember that equality is not a reality. There are millions of people who suffer daily, millions who need our help. Go through life with an open mind and outstretched arms. Learn how to tolerate and how to heal.

Next, our responsibility towards the world;

Today when we are handed our diplomas, we are also being handed the responsibility of the world. The burden and the glory of future events lie upon us. It is up to us to lead civilization forward. It is up to us to raise loving human beings. It is up to us to improve the lives of others on this earth. It is up to us to create our own individual happiness. It is up to us to encourage peace. It is up to us to prevent the students from Colorado from becoming the most infamous members of the class of 99. We can do better by doing good.

Each generation has had their own problems to solve and overcome. We are charged with carrying the world into the next millennium. Perhaps the coming millennium has given everyone an apocalyptic spirit, for many people do not believe that we are a capable or qualified generation. We are inundated with stories everyday covering the "troubled youth of America", a generation that is portrayed to be aimless and unproductive.

PROVE THEM WRONG

Every single one of us sitting here today has the ability to improve the world. Your diploma is your ticket, and your personal integrity your tool. Use them wisely and for benevolent purposes.

Face the challenge, accept it and exceed it.

Finally, regarding ourselves;

Although many people have aided us on our journeys, it is due to our self-determination that we are here today. It was of our own volition that we woke ourselves up each morning, excruciatingly early, to go to school. It was our personal fortitude that kept us up late at night to finish our English paper or to comfort our crying friend, both equally important duties. It was our own kindness that earned us the friendships that we made, and our own faults for letting go of the friendships we lost. It was our own courage that moved us to try out for the team, audition for a part, and to say those three words; I love you.

While many of our high school days seemed focused on mere survival, our goal for the future is now much higher; success. Potential means nothing in the real world. History books are not filled with people who had potential. Only the driven and determined people are remembered, only those who never compromised themselves, and those who stood up to opposition have changed the world.

Please be careful to not equate success to a paycheck. Success is not professional advancement, or the price of your car. *Success is going to bed content and waking up happy.* Success is living with your soul mate. Success is looking into the eyes of your child. Success is accepting yourself unconditionally. Success is having an ambition to become something great.

In closing, I would like to extend my congratulations to each member of the class of 1999, and wish you luck as you work to achieve success, and define yourselves.

May we all sleep contently. Sweet Dreams.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING FUNDS CLARIFICATION ACT"

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 8, 1999

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleague, BEN CARDIN, to introduce "The Nuclear Decommissioning Funds Clarification Act." The need for this legislation results from the emergence of a competitive electricity market out of a regulated environment. Because of this structural change, the tax treatment of nuclear decommissioning funds is not clear under current law.

Understanding that decommissioning a nuclear power plant represents a uniquely large and significant financial undertaking for a utility, in 1984 Congress enacted "Code section 468A" which was designed to have public service commissions authorize that certain costs could be charged by an electric utility company to its customers to dedicate to a nuclear decommissioning fund (Fund).

In 1986, the Code was further amended to allow an electric utility company with a direct ownership interest in a nuclear power plant to elect to deduct contributions made to a nuclear decommissioning fund, subject to certain limitations. The Fund must be a segregated trust used exclusively for the payment of decommissioning (shutting down) costs of nuclear power plants. Decommissioning the nation's 110 nuclear power plants represents a large financial commitment—so large that nuclear plant owners accumulate the necessary funding over the plant's 40-year operating life.

As a result of Federal and state laws enacted since 1992, 21 states have approved plans to introduce competition, and all states are considering deregulation. Fifty-four nuclear power plants are located in 15 of the states that have undergone restructuring, more than half the nation's 103 operating plants. Under current law, deductible contributions made to a nuclear decommissioning fund (Fund) are based on limitations reflected in cost-of-service ratemaking. In a competitive market, companies will no longer operate in a regulated, cost-of-service environment and will not be able to deduct contributions to decommissioning funds. Therefore, it is appropriate to clarify the deductibility of nuclear decommissioning costs under market-based rates and to codify the definition of "nuclear decommissioning costs" that limit contributions to a Fund.

In addition, restructuring has brought regulatory and market forces to bear upon continued ownership of nuclear power plants. As more companies move away from the nuclear generation—either by choice or state mandate—companies such as Illinois Power in my home state are planning transfers and sales of nuclear power plants. These new business activities have triggered unforeseen tax consequences that, if not corrected, could force the early shutdown of nuclear units that cannot be sold. Hence, a number of nuclear power plants may be forced to shut down before their licenses expire, resulting in the loss of jobs and a reduction of energy supply.

Decommissioning nuclear power plants is an important health and safety issue. It is essential that monies are available to safely decommission the plant when it is retired. It is