

take responsibility for the situation and commit to turning things around, history will once again tragically repeat itself.

Unless Aristide makes concrete changes, we will once again be seeing makeshift boats and rafts overflowing with Haitians who want a better life trying to get to Florida. We will begin to see that again—people risking their lives as they float towards Miami for a chance of freedom and democracy and food for their children.

But should Aristide begin to demonstrate a legitimate commitment to change, the United States and the international community stand ready to resume our efforts to help the Government of Haiti. But it will take action, and it will take action from the President, President Aristide, and from the Haitians. Until then, until we see that kind of commitment, U.S. commitment will remain limited to directly helping the children of Haiti, the people of Haiti, and not the Government.

The United States, irrespective of what Aristide does, must remain involved in humanitarian efforts—efforts such as Public Law 480, the Food Assistance Program, a food assistance program that is helping tens of thousands of Haitian children every day, giving them the one meal a day they have, and for many of them giving them an incentive to go to school and become educated. We must continue to do that.

One of the bright spots of what has been going on in Haiti, and one of the things of which I think this country should be very proud, is how many Americans are in Haiti every single day working to make a difference. Many of them are religious. Many of

them belong to church groups. Many of them belong to other nonprofit organizations or groups. Some go for a week, some go for 2 weeks, and some have gone to live and stay. But there are thousands and thousands of Americans every day who are making a difference in Haiti.

We must continue as a U.S. Government to assist them as they try to assist the children of Haiti because it is the children who are the true casualties in Haiti. It is the children who have suffered the most from the lack of progress over the last 6 years. It is the children who have suffered the most from the inability and the unwillingness of the Haitian Government to move to make real changes in Haiti.

So the real victims have been the children. They are the victims of the turmoil. They are the victims of the instability. They are the victims of a lack of political will. We as a country and as a people simply cannot and will not turn our back on them.

This is a country where the infant mortality rate is approximately 15 times that of the United States. It has the highest infant mortality rate in our hemisphere. Of those Haitian children under 5 years of age, 129 of every 1,000 never make it to the age of 6.

Because Haiti lacks the means to produce enough food to feed its population, the vast majority of Haitian children who survive are malnourished and rely heavily on our humanitarian food aid.

Additionally, because of the lack of clean water and sanitation, only 39 percent of the population has access to clean water and 26 percent has access to decent sanitation. Because of that, diseases such as measles and tuberculosis are epidemic, and children die

from the simplest thing as diarrhea. That happens every single day in Haiti.

The future of Haiti's children ultimately is in Aristide's hands. It is time for President Aristide to match his words with his deeds and uphold his recent pledge to place his country and its people on a path of significant democratic societal reform. Lip service and piecemeal efforts, actions temporarily to appease the United States and the international community, frankly, will get Haiti nowhere.

This is Aristide's second act. The curtain comes up on that act today. He and the political rulers have a simple choice: To break with recent history and create a stable political system and a free and democratic, market-driven economy, or to perpetuate the status quo and the needless bloody tragedy that confines future generations of Haitians to lives of distress, disillusionment, and despair.

It is, quite candidly and quite bluntly, up to President Aristide to make that determination. This is the second act. This is the second opportunity. History will judge whether or not he takes that opportunity for the people of Haiti or whether that opportunity is squandered.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 4:59 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 8, 2001, at 9:30 a.m.