

Listen to the words of George Washington when he bid farewell to his troops when the war was finally over.

Against all odds, including that bitter winter and Valley Forge, these soldiers had won their freedom and created a new Nation.

It was almost with a sense of awe that Washington said to them:

The unparalleled perseverance of the Armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, was little short of a standing miracle.

The spirit of that first American army lives on in our men and women in uniform today.

It is still little short of a standing miracle, it still inspires awe, and it commands us to do whatever we can do here at home to show our unwavering support.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

#### TRIBUTE TO SENATOR BOB DOLE

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the remarkable accomplishments of a former Member of this body, a friend of many Senators, who delivered his first speech in this Chamber 34 years ago next week.

It was April 14, 1969, when the gentleman from Kansas, Senator Bob Dole, stood not far from here to address his Senate colleagues for the first time. He spoke eloquently about a group of Americans who were very close to his heart . . . Americans who, prior to his involvement, had largely been ignored.

It was a group of Americans he had joined exactly 24 years earlier, when on April 14, 1945, he was wounded in the hills of Italy as he led his men in battle. As a result of his wounds, Bob spent 39 months in various hospitals, and doctors operated on him eight times. Eventually, he was left without the use of his right arm.

So it was that Senator Bob Dole who rose on April 14, 1969, not just to speak as a U.S. Senator, but as one of the millions of Americans who have a disability.

Mr. President, at this time, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of the April 14th speech.

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

#### HANDICAPPED AMERICANS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, my remarks today concern an exceptional group which I joined on another April 14, twenty-four years ago, during World War II.

It is a minority group whose existence affects every person in our society and the very fiber of our Nation.

It is a group which no one joins by personal choice—a group whose requirements for membership are not based on age, sex, wealth, education, skin color, religious beliefs, political party, power, or prestige.

As a minority, it has always known exclusion—maybe not exclusion from the front of the bus, but perhaps from even climbing aboard it; maybe not exclusion from pur-

suage advanced education, but perhaps from experiencing any formal education; maybe not exclusion from day-to-day life itself, but perhaps from an adequate opportunity to develop and contribute to his or her fullest capacity.

It is a minority, yet a group to which at least one out of every five Americans belongs.

Mr. President, I speak today about 42 million citizens of our Nation who are physically, mentally, or emotionally handicapped.

#### WHO ARE THE HANDICAPPED?

Who are the handicapped?

They are persons—men, women, and children—who cannot achieve full physical, mental, and social potential because of disability.

Although some live in institutions, many more live in the community. Some are so severely disabled as to be homebound, or even bed-bound. Still others are able to take part in community activities when they have access and facilities.

They include amputees, paraplegics, polio victims. Causes of disability include arthritis, cardio-vascular diseases, multiple sclerosis, and muscular dystrophy.

While you may have good vision and hearing, many persons live each day with limited eyesight or hearing, or with none at all.

While you may enjoy full muscle strength and coordination in your legs, there are those who must rely on braces or crutches, or perhaps a walker or wheel chair.

While you perform daily millions of tasks with your hands and arms, there are many who live with limited or total disability in theirs.

And in contrast to most people, thousands of adults and children suffer mental or emotional disorders which hinder their abilities to learn and apply what is learned and to cope adequately with their families, jobs, and communities.

Then there are those who are affected with combination or multiple handicaps.

#### NOT JUST THE HANDICAP

For our Nation's 42 million handicapped persons and their families, yesterday, today, and tomorrow are not filled with "everyday" kinds of problems which can be solved or soothed by "everyday" kinds of answers. Their daily challenge is: accepting and working with a disability so that the handicapped person can become as active and useful, as independent, secure, and dignified as his ability will allow.

Too many handicapped persons lead lives of loneliness and despair; too many feel and too many are cut off from our work-oriented society; too many cannot fill empty hours in a satisfying, constructive manner. The leisure most of us crave can and has become a curse to many of our Nation's handicapped.

Often when a handicapped person is able to work full or part time, there are few jobs or inadequate training programs in his locale. Although progress is being made, many employers are hesitant to hire a handicapped person, ignoring statistics that show he is often a better and more dependent worker.

The result is that abilities of a person are overlooked because of disabilities which may bear little or no true relation to the job at hand. The result to the taxpayer may be to support one more person at a cost of as much as \$3,500 per person a year. To the handicapped person himself, it means more dependency.

#### STATISTICS

Consider these statistics: Only one-third of America's blind and less than half of the paraplegics of working age are employed, while only a handful of about 200,000 persons

with cerebral palsy who are of working age are employed.

Beyond this, far too many handicapped persons and their families bear serious economic problems—despite token Government pensions and income tax deductions for a few, and other financial aids. I recall a portion of a letter received recently from the mother of a cerebral palsy child in a Midwestern urban area: "There are the never-ending surgeries, braces, orthopedic shoes, wheelchairs, walkers, standing tables, bath tables and so on . . . we parents follow up on every hopeful lead in clinics and with specialists; we go up and down paths blindly and always expensively . . . I have talked with four major insurance companies who do not insure or infrequently insure CP children . . . although our daughter is included in her father's group hospitalization plan, many families are not as fortunate. These are just a few of the problems, compounded by the fact we must try to adequately meet the needs of our other "normal" children. In many cases, some kind of financial assistance would enable us and others like us to provide for our children in our homes, avoiding overcrowding of already overcrowded facilities and further adding to the taxpayer's burden costs for complete care."

There are other problems—availability and access of health care personnel and facilities at the time and place the individual with handicaps needs them. In my own largely rural State of Kansas, many handicapped persons travel 300 miles or more to receive the basic health services they require.

Education presents difficulties for many parents of handicapped children. Although a child may be educable, there may be few, if any, opportunities in the community for him to receive an education. Private tutoring, if available, is often too expensive. Sadly to date, the Council for Exceptional Children estimates less than one-third of the Nation's children requiring special education are receiving it.

In rehabilitation, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare said recently 25 percent of America's disabled have not received rehabilitation services and do not know where to seek such help. They estimate that at least 5 million disabled persons may be eligible for assistance.

Other problems the handicapped person faces each day include availability and access of recreation and transportation facilities, architectural barriers in residences and other buildings, and many, many more.

#### STILL A PROMISING OUTLOOK

We in America are still far from the halfway point of assuring that every handicapped person can become as active and useful as his capacities will allow. The outlook for the handicapped person in 1969, however, is not altogether bleak. Unparalleled achievements in medicine, science, education, technology as well as in public attitudes have cemented a framework in which the handicapped person today has more opportunities available to him than ever before. Consider first what government is doing.

#### THE GOVERNMENT STORY

The story of what the Federal Government, hand in hand with State governments, is doing to help meet the needs of the handicapped is not one that draws the biggest and boldest headlines. Broadly, the story is a "good" one, consisting of achievements in financial assistance, rehabilitation, research, education, and training of the handicapped—a massive effort to help many disabled Americans live as normal, as full and rich lives as possible.

It is, in part, the story of a man who, at age 21, became a paraplegic after sustaining

injuries to his spinal cord and head in an accident while on the job.

In 1968, he joined over 2,300,000 other disabled men and women who have been restored to more productive, useful lives since the State-Federal vocational rehabilitation program began 48 years ago.

In 1964, the young man—a high school dropout with a wife and child—was referred to his State's division of vocational rehabilitation where a thorough program of total rehabilitation began. In addition, he was enrolled in a training school and was graduated as a fully licensed insurance agent.

Today—4 years later—he has his own successful insurance business. He and his wife have built a new home and adopted a baby.

It is a measure of America's concern for its handicapped citizens that even 50 years ago, this story could not have been told.

It takes place now because the Congress and the Federal Government initiated and guided a vital, vigorous program of vocational rehabilitation.

Mr. President, vocational rehabilitation is one of many ways of the Federal Government works to aid the handicapped. But none of the Federal programs necessarily reaches or helps every handicapped person.

Nevertheless, the role of the Government has been basically successful in terms of numbers assisted, basic research performed, and the movement of increasingly large numbers of persons into more productive, satisfying channels. It demonstrates what Congress and Federal and State governments are doing to help America's handicapped better participate and achieve.

Mr. President, at this point, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Record, at the close of my remarks, a brief summary of Federal programs for the handicapped.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

#### THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, it is in the American tradition and spirit that parallel to Government effort there has developed the vital and growing effort for the handicapped by individuals, business and industry, churches and private, voluntary organizations. It is a herculean task to properly assess the many, far-reaching effects of the private sector—in health care, education, employment; in research, rehabilitation, by fundraising drives and through professional organizations and groups for the handicapped themselves. But it is here in the private sector—with its emphasis on the creativity, concern, and energies of our people—that America has become the envy of the world. Our private economy and the resources of our people have combined to improve the quality of life in America in ways and for persons the Government could not begin to match or reach.

For the handicapped, their achievements have been no less. I shall not today, detail or single out the achievements of the voluntary groups and private enterprise involved in aiding the handicapped. But let the record show that without the sincerity, scope, and success of their efforts—in public information, employment and training, in upgrading health care and education personnel and facilities, in fundraising and in supporting research to conquer or at least minimize the effects of handicapping conditions—the prospects for the handicapped individuals would not be as hopeful as they are today.

#### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Mr. President, as new public and private programs are developed, as old ones are strengthened and some, perhaps eliminated, as we in Congress allocate comparatively limited funds to help the handicapped, the

responsibilities and opportunities loom large before us.

We must insure our efforts and money are not misplaced or misdirected—that they do not just promise, but really do the job.

Are we all doing our best to see that all the knowledge, information, money, and other help is consolidated and available to the handicapped person in the form he can use and at the time and place he most needs it?

Is there sufficient coordination and planning between and among the private groups and the Government agencies to avoid multiplicity and duplication so that we best serve America's handicapped?

Are we sometimes engaged in a numbers race—attending to cases that respond more quickly in order to show results to donors, members, and taxpayers, thus sacrificing some attention which should be focused on the really tough problems?

Many handicapped persons of our Nation are no longer helpless or hopeless because of private and public efforts which have helped them to better help and be themselves.

But the fact remains that some of our Nation's handicapped and their families are attacking the very programs and projects created to help them.

Some are disillusioned and disaffected by the programs.

Too often, the information, the services, the human help and encouragement are not reaching the person for whom they were intended and at the time and place he needs them.

Some sincerely believe there may be better ways we can demonstrate our concern and thereby better achieve for the person with handicaps the independence, security, and dignity to which he is entitled.

I am reminded of a statement given recently by the 1968 president of the National Rehabilitation Association: "It is the person, not the program that is of overwhelming importance. It is not the disability that claims our attention, it is the person with handicaps. It is not the maintenance of prestige of a particular profession that matters. It is the contribution of the profession to solving the complex problems of the individual who has handicaps."

When more of this emphasis on the individual better influence the agencies and professions dealing with the handicapped, I believe we can begin to open new, more meaningful vistas for more persons with handicaps.

We have been involved in efforts which have been creditable to date. Of this, there is no doubt.

But are we doing our best?

A highly respected official of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare summed up the problem this way: "I do not feel we are spending our dollars—public or voluntarily—as effectively as we could. We need to take a whole new look at what is going on, where the service is given. We need to try to design new methods and clearer purposes for our efforts. We need to relate our efforts more closely to the needs of a community, to the needs of its individuals. And we need to try to measure, as concretely and specifically as possible what is actually achieved by our expenditures."

Our handicapped citizens are one of our Nation's greatest unmet responsibilities and untapped resources. We must do better.

#### PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE

With this in mind, I suggest the creation of a Presidential task force or commission to review what the public and private sectors are doing and to recommend how we can do better.

Composed of representatives of the public and private sectors, this task force or com-

mission could provide an overview of how to provide the handicapped more help and hope.

Such a task force or commission could provide valuable assistance to Congress and the administration as we develop programs and allocate comparatively limited funds for the handicapped.

It could also help private organizations and voluntary groups conduct their efforts more efficiently and effectively.

The goal of a task force or commission, to achieve maximum independence, security, and dignity for the individual with handicaps, should encompass the total needs of the handicapped, not just employment or education or any other.

Rather the task force or commission should concern itself with the whole broad spectrum of needs and services, because as I have pointed out the problems of the handicapped do not begin and end with the handicap itself.

Although there are hundreds of areas a task force or commission could review, I am hopeful, if created, it would include the following subjects:

First. Expansion of employment, transportation, and recreation opportunities for the handicapped.

Second. A directory or central clearinghouse to help inform the handicapped person and his family of available public and private assistance.

There are many helpful handbooks and information sources available. But most are not comprehensive and are more accessible to professionals in the field than to the handicapped who really need the guidance and information.

Third. Removal of architectural barriers.

Many persons cannot secure employment or fill their leisure hours because their disabilities bar use of the facilities. It is just as easy to build and equip buildings so that the handicapped and unhandicapped can use them. The Federal Government is doing this now for federally financed structures.

Fourth. More development of health care on a regional or community basis.

This is a tough, but priority matter and one which cannot be accomplished quickly or inexpensively. But we must begin to move toward more adequate health care facilities and personnel which serve each person at the time and place he needs them.

Fifth. Better serving the special educational needs of the handicapped.

Both the person and the Nation suffer when any educatable child—handicapped or unhandicapped—does not receive an education.

Sixth. Income tax deductions and/or other financial assistance to extend relief to more handicapped persons and their families.

Seventh. More attention on the family of the handicapped person.

These are the people who often need a degree of encouragement, counseling, and "rehabilitation" themselves. Are there services we should provide to family members whose own lives and resources are deeply affected by the presence of a handicapped person?

Eighth. Increased dialog and coordination between private and voluntary groups and Government agencies to avoid multiplicity and duplication.

What is at stake is not the agency, group, or program. What is at stake is the future of the handicapped person with his own abilities and potentialities.

#### CONCLUSION

This, then, Mr. President, is the sum and substance of my first speech in the Senate.

I know of no more important subject matter, not solely because of my personal interest, but because in our great country some 42 million Americans suffer from a physical,

mental, or emotional handicap. Progress has been and will continue to be made by Federal and State governments, by private agencies, and individual Americans; but nonetheless there is still much to be done, if the handicapped American: young, old, black, white, rich, or poor is to share in the joys experienced by others. The task ahead is monumental, but I am confident that there are forces in America ready and willing to meet the challenge—including, of course, many of my distinguished colleagues who by their acts and deeds have demonstrated their great interest.

Mrs. DOLE. I urge my colleagues to read it, because it is as compelling today as it was 34 years ago. It offers a comprehensive analysis of the challenges facing those with disabilities, and the steps needed to fulfill their dreams of full participation in society. Thanks to the leadership and perseverance of Bob Dole—and thanks to the work of others like Senator DOMENICI, Senator HARKIN and Senator KENNEDY—the dreams of millions of disabled Americans have become reality.

Indeed, over the course of the past three decades, Bob Dole's fingerprints can be found all over every piece of legislation that increased opportunities for the disabled, including, of course, the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act.

Bob has described July 26, 1990—the day President Bush signed the ADA into law—as one of the most rewarding days of his life. He once said, "I suppose there were some that day, who saw only a White House lawn covered with wheelchairs and guide dogs. But that just goes to show who in our society is truly limited. My own perspective was very different. As I looked around, I saw Americans with amazing gifts, who could finally contribute to a nation much in need of their skills and insights."

Bob's concern for individuals with disabilities was not limited to those within America's borders. His leadership prodded the State Department to include the status of people with disabilities in its annual report on human rights.

And since leaving the Senate, he has continued his advocacy on behalf of disabled Americans. Bob strongly supported the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Act of 1999, which expanded health coverage for persons with disabilities and created a new employment program through the Social Security Administration.

And I can attest to the fact that Bob's devoted leadership to assisting disabled Americans in his public life is matched by leadership in his private life.

In 1983, Bob attended a meeting of the Kansas Bankers Association in Dodge City. Waiting for him outside the room where two severely disabled young people with their parents. The young man was named Tim, and he was in a special wheelchair, unable to move anything except his eyes. The young woman, Carla, was only slightly more mobile. Both wanted to talk to Bob

about gaining greater access to a more physically independent lifestyle.

Bob stopped to talk and to listen, and as his nervous aides looked at their watches and suggested he was running behind schedule, he stayed and talked and listened some more.

On his way back to Washington, Bob kept thinking about Tim and Carla. And when he arrived at our apartment he immediately told me how moved he was by the meeting. "I've been meaning for years to start a foundation for the disabled," he said, "and I haven't done it. This is the time."

In the years that followed, the Dole Foundation would raise over \$7 million to address issues like job training and placement for disabled workers. One of the foundation's grants helped New York City's National Theater Workshop for the handicapped teach its members advanced communication skills. In Kentucky, a grant paved the way for a fast-food restaurant that employs the mentally retarded. Disabled students in Seattle were taught campground management skills, thanks to another Dole Foundation grant. A grant to Goodwill Industries of East Central North Carolina assisted the setting up of a Bank for people with disabilities—and in Raleigh, NC. A grant to Partnerships in Assisted Technology provided Internet training and support for people with disabilities.

The focus of that foundation is now being carried on at the Robert J. Dole Human Development Center at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. And the Dole Center for Disabilities and the Law at Washburn University in Topeka, KS, is leading the way in the study and analysis of the legal rights of individuals with disabilities.

I want to take a moment to give special recognition to two groups in North Carolina who deserve accolades for working every day to help those facing special challenges.

The North Carolina Office on Disability and Health has the noble goal of increasing awareness and understanding of the health related needs of individuals with disabilities. And the North Carolina Governor's Advocacy Council for Persons with Disabilities is a group that lives its motto: "Every person is entitled to equal protection under the law." Both are changing lives in North Carolina, and I look forward to working with these agencies on issues that impact North Carolinians with disabilities.

Bob Dole is a man of great modesty, and he is only learning of this speech as I speak. Bob doesn't talk about the number of young people who write to him for inspiration, telling him he is their hero. He always writes back or calls with words of encouragement, and often a pen-pal relationship develops.

One of Bob's former staffers, the very talented Kerry Tymchuk, now with Senator GORDON SMITH, has shared with me the story of Whitney Duggan. Whitney, a young girl from Oregon, was confined to a wheelchair due to in-

juries sustained in a horse riding accident. She wrote to Bob to express her thanks for his work on behalf of persons with disabilities and to encourage him in his 1996 campaign for the presidency. Bob responded, and he and Whitney were soon trading letters back and forth. Whitney and her mother eventually made their first visit to Washington, where Bob arranged tours of all the landmarks and lunch in the Capitol. Whitney became one of Bob's most loyal campaign volunteers, and sent words of encouragement to him when they were needed most.

Two days after the presidential election in November of 1996, Bob said to Kerry Tymchuk, "I bet Whitney is feeling pretty low. Let's give her a call." And Bob called her up to make sure she wasn't taking the loss too hard. Here was a man who just 48 hours earlier had lost a Presidential election. And rather than thinking of himself, he was thinking about a young disabled girl in Medford, OR. That is Bob Dole.

I know my colleagues will agree with Bob in his belief that, despite all that has been accomplished, there is still much to be done. While we have eliminated many of the barriers the eye can see, there are still those we can't see and that no law can remove—barriers created by attitudes and misperceptions. Too often we overlook the talents of people with disabilities, whether they are physical or developmental.

The remarkable Helen Keller once said, "One must not consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar." To make further progress, we must insist that ignorance not be tolerated, and we must work to ensure that all Americans have a chance to soar as far, and fly as high, as their skills and talents will take them.

This mission is made all the more important by the ongoing courage and sacrifice of the men and women who wear the uniform of our country. As I traveled last week with President Bush to Camp Lejeune, in North Carolina, I was reminded of a time when Bob and I were dating, and he was visiting with my parents in Salisbury. Bob appeared one morning in the kitchen as Mother was preparing breakfast, with a towel draped over his right shoulder. "Mrs. Hanford," he told my mother, "I think you ought to see my problem."

"That's not a problem, Bob," she told him. "That's a badge of honor."

As courageous American soldiers return home, some will be doing so with their own "badge of honor." It is our duty to ensure that those who return with a disability have every opportunity to live a full and productive life.

It is very fitting that the state motto of Kansas is "Ad astra per aspera"—To the stars through difficulties. Quite simply, I can think of no American who has done more in his life and career than Bob Dole to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

In doing so, he has earned more than just the pride and admiration of a loving wife. He has earned the respect of a grateful nation and the enduring thanks of millions of individuals he will never meet, but whose lives are better and richer and more productive because of him.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. DEWINE. Madam President, I rise this morning to discuss a bill I believe the Senate will be taking up later today or possibly tomorrow. But before I do, I cannot come to the floor this morning without commenting about the magnificent work and service that our service men and women are doing in Iraq, and also the service men and women who are supporting our folks in Iraq. What an absolutely tremendous job they are doing, and how proud all Americans are of the work they are doing.

We are having an opportunity in this war, unlike any previous war in American history, to see, sometimes firsthand, the tremendous work they are doing.

As I talk to people in Ohio, talk to my colleagues, and talk to family members and friends, everyone is so proud of what they are doing.

Our hearts go out to the families of those who have lost their lives. We pray for them. We pray for those who have been injured. We pray for those who are recovering. And we think about them. We think about them every day.

#### THE CLEAN DIAMOND ACT OF 2003

Mr. DEWINE. Madam President, later today the Senate will take up a bill that the House has acted upon; that is, the Clean Diamond Act of 2003. There are many tragedies in this world, a lot of suffering. This bill deals with one of these problems. There are many atrocities that are occurring.

One area of the world where such atrocities are occurring on a daily basis is in Sierra Leone, Africa. For at least a decade, Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest nations, has been embroiled in a civil war. Rebel groups—most notably, the Revolutionary United Front—RUF—have been fighting for years to overthrow the recognized government. In the process, violence has erupted as the rebels have fought to seize control of the country's profitable diamond fields which, in turn, helps finance their terrorist regime.

Once in control of a diamond field, the rebels confiscate the diamonds and then launder them onto the very legitimate market through other nearby nations, such as Liberia. We refer to these as "conflict" or "blood" diamonds. These gems are a very lucrative business for the rebel groups. In fact, over the past decade, the rebels have smuggled out of Africa, we estimate, approximately \$10 billion in these diamonds.

It is nearly impossible, of course, to distinguish the illegally gathered diamonds from legitimate or "clean" stones. And so, Members of the Senate, regrettably and unwittingly, the United States—as the world's biggest buyer of diamonds—has contributed to the violence. Our Nation accounted for more than half of the \$57.5 billion in the global retail diamond trade last year, and some estimates suggest that illegal diamonds from Africa account for as much as 15 percent of the overall diamond trade.

Since the start of the rebel's quest for control of Sierra Leone's diamond supply, half of the nation's population of 4.5 million have left their homes, and at least a half million have fled the country. But it is the children, as it usually is—it is the children—of Sierra Leone who are bearing the biggest brunt of the rebel insurgency. For over 8 years, the RUF has conscripted children—children often as young as 7 or 8 years old—to be soldiers in this make-shift army. They have ripped at least 12,000 children from their own families.

As a result of deliberate and systematic brutalization, child soldiers have become some of the most vicious—and effective—fighters within the rebel factions. The rebel army—child-soldiers included—has terrorized Sierra Leone's population—killing, abducting, raping, and hacking off the limbs of victims with their machetes. This chopping off of limbs is the RUF's trademark strategy. In Freetown, the surgeons are frantic. Scores of men, women, and children—their hands partly chopped off—have flooded the main hospital. Amputating as quickly as they can, doctors toss severed hands into a communal bucket.

The RUF frequently and forcibly injects the children with cocaine in preparation for battle. This is a picture of a little girl who, obviously, has had her arm amputated.

In many cases, the rebels force the child-soldiers at gunpoint to kill their own family members or neighbors and friends. Not only are these children traumatized by what they are forced to do, they also are afraid to be reunited with their own families because of the possibility of retribution.

Madam President and members of the Senate, I cannot understate nor can I fully describe the horrific abuses these children are suffering. The most vivid accounts come from the child-soldiers themselves. I would like to read a few of their stories—their own stories—taken from Amnesty International's

1998 report entitled: "Sierra Leone—A Year of Atrocities against Civilians." According to one child's recollection:

Civilians were rounded up, in groups or in lines, and then taken individually to a pounding block in the village where their hands, arms, or legs were cut with a machete. In some villages, after the civilians were rounded up, they were stripped naked. Men were then ordered to rape members of their own family. If they refused, their arms were cut off and the women were raped by rebel forces, often in front of their husbands . . . victims of these atrocities also reported women and children being rounded up and locked into houses which were then set [on fire].

A young man from Lunsar, describing a rebel attack, said this:

Ten people were captured by the rebels and they asked us to form a [line]. My brother was removed from the [line], and they killed him with a rifle, and they cut his head with a knife. After this, they killed his pregnant wife. There was an argument among the rebels about the sex of the baby she was carrying, so they decided to open her stomach to see the baby.

According to Komba, a teenager:

My legs were cut with blades and cocaine was rubbed in the wounds. Afterwards, I felt like a big person. I saw the other people like chickens and rats. I wanted to kill them.

Rape, sexual slavery, and other forms of sexual abuse of girls and women have been systematic, organized, and widespread. Many of those abducted have been forced to become the "wives" of combatants.

According to Isatu, an abducted teenage girl:

I did not want to go; I was forced to go. They killed a lot of women who refused to go with them.

She was forced to become the sexual partner of the combatant who captured her and is now the mother of their 3-month-old baby:

When they capture young girls, you belong to the soldier who captured you. I was "married" to him.

Look at how some of these children have depicted themselves, the violence and bloodshed in their own drawings. That is how they depict it. Children strike at the heart of what they see and, more importantly, what they feel.

We are losing these children, an entire generation of children, if the situation is not improved. These kids have no future. But as long as the rebel diamond trade remains unchallenged, nothing really will change at all. That is why. I have been working with Senator DURBIN, Senator FEINGOLD, Senator GREGG, and so many others in the Senate and the other body for over 2 years to pass legislation that would help stem this illegal trade in conflict diamonds. I thank Senator GRASSLEY for his good work. Together we have worked extensively with our House colleagues, including my good friend and former colleague from Ohio, former Congressman Tony Hall. We have also worked with a champion in this area, my good friend, FRANK WOLF from Virginia.

We have worked to develop much needed legislation to help remove the