

40, even 50 years ago, when we thought we had a pretty good educational system in the country.

To sit here and say all the problems in our society, all the problems with our children are because they don't have a good education or there is not a good school, whatever the case may be, sort of laying all the blame on the schools for not producing educated children, in some respects, I believe, misses the mark or certainly doesn't tell the whole story of the problems that we are confronting as a culture and as a nation.

We have a couple minutes before the vote, and I wanted to put my two cents in. For those teachers and administrators, people who work very hard in the school system, particularly the poor schools and schools that are in difficult neighborhoods, you are right; the schools are not the sole source of blame for having children who can't read coming out of them. I even argue in many cases they aren't the principal sources of blame or even a particularly big share of the blame.

When we talk about educational reform, particularly leaving no child behind—and I support that—we need to look not just within the school system; we have to look outside the school system. We have to look at our culture. We have to look at the American family, our neighborhoods, at our popular culture, and the message being sent to the young children. We have to look at neighborhoods. And whether it is crime or the breakdown of the family or the breakdown of the community, the lack of economic opportunities, whatever the case may be—in most cases, it is all of those things—we need to recognize that education is just a piece of solving this puzzle for a child growing up in these very poor neighborhoods.

I hope we don't walk away from here flexing our muscles, raising our hands, saying: We have now solved the problem; We have fixed the educational system and that alone is going to solve the problems we face in our poor and downtrodden communities. It will not, no matter how good our schools are.

I always share this story of going to a high school in north Philadelphia, a very poor high school, a very poor neighborhood, a crime ridden neighborhood. I walked through that school. First I walked through the metal detectors. And I finally got to a classroom where, of the students going to the school, less than 5 percent were going to go on to some education beyond high school. I went into the classroom where those 5 percent were, and they were being talked to about their opportunities. They were all from public housing, poor neighborhoods. They could get a free ride to any school they wanted to go to.

I remember talking to them about the opportunities they had and sort of seeing somewhat blank stares back at me. We got into a discussion. I said: What is your biggest fear? What is your biggest concern about the school you

go to and your education? And the consensus developed was this: Getting to school alive every day. When you are an achiever in a group of people who do not achieve academically, you are a target. You can throw more money at that school, you can improve the quality of the teachers, you can have smaller class size, but if your concern is getting to school alive, we are missing the boat somewhere.

I want to step back, as we hopefully will celebrate passage of this bill and say that we have done great things to help children. If we don't get to the issues outside of the school, throwing more money into the school is whistling through the graveyard at night. It isn't going to solve the problem.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I have been interested in the debate surrounding the teaching of evolution in our schools. I think that Senator SANTORUM's amendment will lead to a more thoughtful treatment of this topic in the classroom. It is important that students be exposed not only to the theory of evolution, but also to the context in which it is viewed by many in our society.

I think, too often, we limit the best of our educators by directing them to avoid controversy and to try to remain politically correct. If students cannot learn to debate different viewpoints and to explore a range of theories in the classroom, what hope have we for civil discourse beyond the schoolhouse doors?

Scientists today have numerous theories about our world and its beginnings. I, personally, have been greatly impressed by the many scientists who have probed and dissected scientific theory and concluded that some Divine force had to have played a role in the birth of our magnificent universe. These ideas align with my way of thinking. But I understand that they might not align with someone else's. That is the very point of this amendment—to support an airing of varying opinions, ideas, concepts, and theories. If education is truly a vehicle to broaden horizons and enhance thinking, varying viewpoints should be welcome as part of the school experience.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, as my friend from Pennsylvania, and perhaps every one in the free world, knows the issue he brings up with regard to how to teach scientific theory and philosophy was recently an issue in my home State of Kansas. For this reason, many of my constituents are particularly sensitive to this issue.

I would like to take the opportunity of this amendment to clear the record about the controversy in Kansas.

In August of 1999 the Kansas State School Board fired a shot heard 'round the world. Press reports began to surface that evolution would no longer be taught. The specter of a theocratic school board entering the class to ensure that no student would be taught the prevailing wisdom of biology was

envisioned. Political cartoons and editorials were drafted by the hundreds. To hear the furor, one might think that the teachers would be charged with sorting through their student's texts with an Exacto knife carving out pictures of Darwin.

However, the prevailing impression, as is often the case was not quite accurate. Here are the facts about what happened in Kansas. The school board did not ban the teaching of evolution. They did not forbid the mention of Darwin in the classroom. They didn't even remove all mention of evolution from the State assessment test. Rather, the school board voted against including questions on macro-evolution—the theory that new species can evolve from existing species over time—from the State assessment. The assessment did include questions on micro-evolution—the observed change over time within an existing species.

Why did they do this? Why go so far as to decipher between micro and macro-evolution on the State exam? How would that serve the theocratic school board's purpose that we read so much about? Well, the truth is . . . their was no theocratic end to the actions of the school board. In fact, their vote was cast based on the most basic scientific principal that science is about what we observe, not what we assume. The great and bold statement that the Kansas School Board made was that simply that we observe micro-evolution and therefore it is scientific fact; and that it is impossible to observe macro-evolution, it is scientific assumption.

The response to this relatively minor and eminently scientific move by the Kansas school board was shocking. The actions and intentions of the school board were routinely misrepresented in the global press. Many in the global scientific community, who presumably knew the facts, spread misinformation as to what happened in Kansas. College admissions boards, who most certainly knew the facts, threatened Kansas students. The State Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the State universities were threatened based on the actions of school board. All of these effects caused by a school board trying to decipher between scientific fact and scientific assumption. The response to the actions of the board, appeared to many as a response to the commission of heresy.

For this reason, I am very pleased that my friend from Pennsylvania offered this amendment. He clarifies the opinion of the Senate that the debate of scientific fact versus scientific assumption is an important debate to embrace. I plan to support the amendment and urge my colleagues to join me.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that between the two votes, prior to the second vote in order, there be 2 minutes on each side for debate.

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