and take another look at what he and his foreign policy team are trying to force the Israeli Government to do.

There cannot be peace until there is a change of heart. I returned from this trip with a newfound concern for the future of Israel. I saw examples of incitement. I heard examples of persuasion and hatred being taught throughout Palestinian society by their leaders. When the people engaged in peace talks return from the negotiating table only to disparage compromise and incite violence, there can be no progress towards peace.

Israel has come a long way since I first began following the fate of this state and the people of Israel. In so many respects, life appears and feels normal. The economy is developing, the standard of living is growing and improving. But just below the surface of this normalcy, Mr. President, Israel still faces a threat to the state's very existence. Israel's survival remains, unforeseen, imperiled and real and should concern 50 years after its independence.

Some people believe, however, that by ignoring this threat, that the peace process can succeed. Mr. President, it will fail. It is clear to me that many in the leadership today see the peace process toward the goal of eliminating the State of Israel.

I suggest today that we get back to the basics. Peace is not possible while teaching children to hate and kill. Peace is not possible while percutting those of other faiths. Peace is not possible while lionizing terrorism. We must stand up for freedom, security, and human dignity. We must stand up to ensure the security of Israel. We must stand up in the Congress, and we must insist that our President stand with us.

Today is the day to end American pressure on Israel to force a peace agreement. Today is the day to remember that the people of Israel to determine their own fate—their own security. We should pressure those who fill children with slogans of hatred and holy war; we should pressure them to change. We should pressure those who torture; we should pressure them to change. We should pressure those who encourage and support terror and murder, and those who rejoice in hatred. That is where the pressure should be.

Now is the time, Mr. President, for a return to our principled stand. The only way to truly attain peace is to support freedom, democracy and justice, and oppose the cycle of hatred. We must face tyranny and oppression where it exists, condemn it, and stand up for peace—real peace based upon security, freedom, and a change of heart.

**OCEAN SHIPPING REFORM**

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, on February 26, 1999, the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) completed its rule-making to implement the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 1998. The regulatory framework for the liner shipping industry is now in place and ready for the May 1, 1999, start date.

The 1998 Act signals a paradigm shift in the conduct of the ocean liner business and its regulation by the FMC. Where ocean carrier pricing and service options were diluted by the conference system and “me too” requirements, an unprecedented degree of flexibility and choice will result. Where agency oversight once focused on using rigid systems of tariff and contract filing to scrutinize individual transactions, the “big picture” of ensuring the existence of a competitive liner service by a healthy ocean carrier industry to facilitate fair and open maritime commerce will become the oversight priority.

Mr. President, as FMC Commissioner Ming Hsu recently told a large gathering of shippers and industry representatives, “This has been not only on a long journey, but a long journey needed. The ocean shipping reform Act and the FMC’s new regulations, I believe the maritime industry will be far less shackled by burdensome and needless regulations, and can move forward to an environment which gives you the freedom and flexibility to develop innovative solutions to your ever-changing ocean transportation needs.” I couldn’t agree more.

The FMC regulatory process bore some resemblance to the legislative process that preceded it. A few early steps started to head off in the wrong direction, but through honest dialogue among the governance parties, the course was corrected and the intent of the 1998 Act was embodied in the regulations. Now the FMC faces the challenge of implementing the new regulations in a manner consistent with Congressional intent.

Mr. President, through the 1998 Act, the Congress directed the FMC to spend less effort attempting to regulate the day-to-day business of ocean carriers and more time in countering truly market distorting activities. This shift is made possible by giving exporters and importers greater opportunities and ability to use the marketplace to satisfy their ocean shipping requirements through less government intervention.

Recent efforts by some countries to protect their domestic maritime industries by imposing restrictive trade practices in the shipping sector is this shift in emphasis well-timed. I am particularly concerned about China’s efforts to impose greater regulatory control over the ocean shipping industry as the rest of the world is heading in the opposite direction. The Administration seems to be nearing an agreement eliminating unfair practices by Brazil, continued vigilance is required. As we are seeing with Japan’s port practices, the problem can remain long after such an agreement is reached.

Mr. President, I should point out that this paradigm shift is often painful, but enlightening, for involved organizations. To its credit, the FMC met the challenge of promulgating the new regulations by the March 1, 1999 deadline. Now, I recognize that Congress issues many deadlines for the Executive to complete a process. But I want to personally congratulate the FMC for its tremendous effort and responsiveness to complete these regulations on time. Not only did the FMC deliver its rules on time, the FMC’s rules are clearly within the intent of Congress. I feel good about that.

I want to express my gratitude to the four FMC Commissioners, Chairman Hal Creel, Ming Hsu, John Moran, and Delmöer Won, for their leadership and wisdom during this process. This band of four challenged the staff to think “outside the box” of the previous regulatory system and develop innovative methods to monitor the industry in a less intrusive manner. Also, I want to recognize the efforts of the FMC staff members who worked long and hard to meet Congress’ deadline: George Bowers, Florence Carr, Jennifer Devine, Rachel Dickon-Matney, Bruce Dobrowolski, Robert Dow, Van Brakle, Ed Walsh, and Ted Zook. Their hard work and sweat will truly benefit this Nation by enabling industry and its customers to prepare for this new era of ocean shipping.

Mr. President, just as it took several years for the legislative process to bear fruit, I urge patience before evaluating the results of this rulemaking. I will continue to monitor the transition process for this fundamental change. The Ocean Shipping Reform Act can’t fix international economic imbalances and uncertainties, but it will give the industry and its customers much-needed flexibility to work through many difficult situations.

Mr. President, The health of our Nation’s economy depends on a healthy system of ocean carriers and commerce; therefore, a dependable ocean shipping industry. The FMC rules will provide the necessary certainty in a manner consistent with Congressional intent. Again, I salute the FMC for being responsive.

**GRASSLEY-WYDEN INITIATIVE LETTER**

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter sent to all Members to make their legislative deadlines for the 105th Congress, and encourages all Members to make their legislative deadlines for the 105th Congress. This letter is a result of our initiatives in the Senate.

Mr. President, the 105th Congress has been characterized by a sense of bipartisanship and a determination to pass legislation that is needed. It is clear to me that many in the Congress are concerned about the budget surplus that we have been able to achieve in recent years. The majority of these funds are going to be used for essential programs such as education, health care, and infrastructure. It is important that we continue to invest in these areas and improve upon them.

In the meantime, we must also address the issue of Medicare reform. The existing system is unsustainable and needs significant changes. The committee has been working diligently on this issue and I believe we are close to reaching an agreement. I urge my colleagues to support this effort and pass a bill that will provide for the long-term solvency of Medicare.

The Senate has made great progress on fiscal matters this year, and I believe we will continue to make more significant strides in the coming weeks. It is important that we address the pressing issues facing our Nation and work towards solutions that are fiscally responsible and beneficial to all Americans. Thank you.
DEPARTURE OF SANDRA STUART AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week the Senate passed a defense Authorization Bill. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, March 2, 1999, the federal debt stood at $5,649,288,631,596.74 (Five trillion, six hundred forty-nine billion, two hundred eighty-eight million, six hundred thirty-one thousand, five hundred ninety-six dollars and seventy-four cents).

One year ago, March 2, 1998, the federal debt stood at $5,514,791,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred fourteen billion, seven hundred ninety-one million)

Five years ago, March 2, 1994, the federal debt stood at $4,554,852,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred fifty-two billion, eight hundred fifty-two million)

Ten years ago, March 2, 1989, the federal debt stood at $2,743,744,000,000 (Two trillion, seven hundred forty-four billion, seven hundred forty-four million)

Fifteen years ago, March 2, 1984, the federal debt stood at $1,468,923,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred sixty-eight billion, nine hundred twenty-three million, six hundred thirty-one thousand, five hundred ninety-six dollars and seventy-four cents) during the past 15 years.

IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA

Mr. ABRAHAM. I would like to call the attention of my colleagues an article on “Improving Human Rights in China” written by Jim Dorn, vice president for academic affairs at the Cato Institute. Dorn advocates that Congress return to legislation “designed to protect the Chinese people’s right to human rights and to liberate the Chinese people from religious and political persecution.” This call is particularly timely given the most recent wave of repression against those inside China who seek to widen freedom and political discourse in that country. Higher taxes in the form of higher tariffs is not the answer, as Dorn points out. However, that does not mean America and the U.S. Congress, and, indeed, the President, should not be strongly advocation of laws to protect property rights. The uncertainty created by China’s failure to protect the United States is China’s largest export market, and U.S. investors rank third in terms of foreign direct investment in China.