

RECESS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, seeing no one else in the Chamber, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now stand in recess until 2 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:59 p.m. recessed until 2 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ROBERTS).

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a continued period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour 2:30, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each. Who seeks time?

The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for as much time as I consume in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized, without objection.

THE FAST-TRACK TRADE DEBATE

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am going to visit today about the fast-track trade debate that we are expected to take up here in the U.S. Senate in the next couple of weeks. It is an interesting topic. I expect it will be a hotly contested debate as it deals with international trade.

I was in North Dakota last week, and I assume the presiding officer was in Kansas and my other colleagues from here in the Senate were in their home States. I saw an interesting editorial in the largest newspaper in North Dakota, the Fargo Forum. The editorial says: Farm Economy Is at Risk. Then it describes the problems that our family farmers are facing in North Dakota including, problems of lower production because of crop disease, the lack of moisture in some parts of our State, too much moisture in other parts of our State, and very low prices that they receive for their grain. The editorial talks about an average size farm penciling out to a \$23,000 loss in net worth this year. This is for the average size farm with average production this year.

I was thinking about this because as I travel in North Dakota I see a great many family farmers. Most of them are descendants of the homesteaders in this country, the people who moved out to build a farm, and try to make a living. For some people it has been very, very hard.

In North Dakota about 200 years ago, in fact just about 7 or 8 years less than 200 years ago, we had a visit from Louis and Clark. Thomas Jefferson, then President of the United States, bought from Napoleon Bonaparte the Louisiana Purchase, as it was called, for 3 cents an acre. He bought all that land out there for 3 cents an acre. Some

jumped up in the Senate and said, why on Earth would you buy land out there? There is nothing out there. There are Indians and sagebrush. Why would you want that land?

If you were to equate what he paid for the Louisiana Purchase and compared to our current budget, he paid the equivalent of \$3 trillion. This is as a percentage of what we spend today at the Federal Government level versus what Jefferson proposed to spend on the Louisiana Purchase. He bought for 3 cents an acre on all of that land. This is equivalent of about \$3 trillion of what we would have to pay today. Then he sent Louis and Clark to go look at what he had purchased to try to find a water route to the ocean out west.

I read, as the Presiding Officer and many others may have, the wonderful book that was just published about Louis and Clark's journey. I discovered that when Thomas Jefferson gave them the charge to go explore that new territory, he gave Mr. Louis the opportunity to sign vouchers for whatever he needed for the trip. Mr. Louis went to St. Louis, MO, and he began signing vouchers. He was buying all kinds of things in St. Louis that he felt were necessary, because he didn't know what he was going to confront on that trip or how long it would take him.

He hired a bunch of folks and signed vouchers for a lot of things. They said he bought 120 gallons of whiskey for the trip. I wonder if today the Citizens Against Government Waste would let somebody get by with that. Well, probably not. Not 120 gallons of whiskey. Apparently, the theory was he needed enough whiskey to get him up into and through Montana, because at that point it was too late to turn back. I don't know whether that was said tongue-in-cheek or not.

In any event, the chronicles of the Louis and Clark expedition are quite wonderful. It is interesting to see our part of the country through their eyes 200 years ago because they stayed the winter in North Dakota. It was kind of chilly. They got hunkered down for the winter in North Dakota. They chronicled that in their book as well.

Then, about 100 years passed, and toward the turn of this century we had something called the Homestead Act, which led people to move out to States like North Dakota and claim 160 acres of land and build a house and operate a farm and raise a family, and the land would be theirs under the Homestead Act. So my State was populated by these homesteaders about 100 years ago. It is about as difficult a life as one can imagine, trying to start a farm out in the prairies of North Dakota, facing the wind, and the uncertainty of the weather. Then there was the question of, if you plant some seeds in the ground, will you get a crop? Will you have grasshoppers? Will you have crop disease? Will a hailstorm come along? And then, if you get a crop will there be a price sufficient so you can sell the crop and make a living?

Now, 100 years after the homesteaders, we discover fewer and fewer yard lights in rural North Dakota. More family farmers are going broke. Fewer family farmers can make a living. We continue to see the type of editorial I just described, "The Farm Economy Is at Risk," which describes the net loss of so many family farms in North Dakota this year.

Family farmers are the last of the free marketers in this country. They don't ask for much. They don't get much. And they risk virtually everything they have, based on the marketplace. Yet, one by one those tens of thousands of family farmers, as small producers, confront a marketplace of very large producers whose economic clout is enormous. If you are raising a beef cow when you go to the marketplace you confront the large beef packers, four of which control over 80 percent of the beef packing plants in this country. So you face an economic pressure that really is not particularly fair. The result is, generally speaking, lower prices than one would expect to exist in a free market.

When you try to market your wheat, you confront other economic enterprises. You confront the big millers, you confront the grocery manufacturers, you confront the folks who are involved in the grain trade, all of whom are large economic enterprises. Yet a family farmer competes in the marketplace against these larger economic interests which want lower prices. They want lower prices for family farmers, which means family farmers lose and they win.

The reason I describe all that is we come around now to this question about trade. The discussion in the Congress will be negotiating new trade agreements, because the President says, and a lot of both Republicans and Democrats say that the route to economic health is trade. That may be. The theory is the more you trade, the better off you are. If you read the doctrine of comparative advantage from the great economic thinkers going back to Adam Smith and Ricardo and others, the presumption was that every part of the world would do what it could do best and trade back and forth. This was the doctrine of comparative advantage. Of course, what they were talking about was trade from nation to nation, because there were no corporations at the advent of that kind of economic theory. But, notwithstanding that, the provision still exists, I suppose, in the minds of some, that the route to economic health is through trade. They believe that discussion should not be about what kind of trade. Instead, the question should be how much trade.

Some of us are concerned about our situation with trade. It is not because we believe we should not have aggressive trade practices or that we should not find ways to market our goods overseas in foreign markets that might need those goods. It is not because we

believe that American consumers should not be able to take advantage of goods produced elsewhere that they may want. Instead, we are concerned because we see a pattern of trade in this country that is not fair to this country and that in the long-term inevitably weakens and injures our production and manufacturing base in America. The manufacturing base is the center pole of a strong economy. If you weaken your manufacturing base, you weaken the sector that provides the good jobs that pay well and have good benefits.

We have been led into thinking, I expect, by some, that a measure of economic health in America is not what you produce but what you consume. Think to yourself, what are the economic indices that are used every month to evaluate how healthy America is? It is what we consume every month. Were sales up or down? That's the basis by which we evaluate is America doing very well. Yet there is very little discussion about what we produce.

I want to hold up a chart that describes the aggregate trade deficits in recent years. Even though we have been negotiating trade agreements and we have done a number of these trade agreements under the procedure called fast track, which I will describe in a moment, it is very hard to determine that we are moving in the right direction. This particular chart demonstrates that for 21 straight years we have run merchandise trade deficits in this country, and in most recent years we have had the largest deficits in America's history. Last year, the year before, the year before that, and, incidentally, this year, we will once again see the largest merchandise trade deficit in this country's history. It is very hard to take a look at all of this red ink and discern that somehow we are doing very, very well.

I had written a piece about trade. Then there was an article in the Washington Post recently. The writer of this article described this trade agreement in ways so that apparently I and others could understand it, suggesting that we just don't understand this. He said that we don't understand that this is not a sign of economic trouble, but that this is a sign of economic health. He reported the bigger the deficits the better off you are. Let me read the description by the writer from the Washington Post:

If someone offered to trade you \$10,000 worth of apples for \$5,000 worth of pears, you'd jump at the deal. In the same vein, we Americans can hardly be considered unfairly treated if we obtain more imports that foreigners have slaved to produce for our consumption in exchange for fewer exports that we have slaved to produce for theirs.

Those of us from the middle of the country would have missed this entire economic theory had he not written this. In fact, I have an uncle, Uncle Harold, who would love to get involved in some of this pear and apple trade. If

someone offered to pay you \$10,000 worth of apples for \$5,000 worth of pears would you jump at the deal? Yes, I suppose you would, unless you didn't need the apples and you didn't have the money to go in debt for the balance. That is the problem. This is always the thoughtlessness we get on trade debate. It is that somehow America is getting something for free. The fact is, America is inheriting the largest trade deficits in its history and no one seems to care very much. This writer says the economists make the point that this is very healthy, it is a wonderful thing.

In fact, in this same article they were talking about why we have a trade deficit. There is kind of an incestuous relationship between all the sources. The same people go to the same sources for the same quotes. This uses these same sources. The source, an economist, says the reason we had a trade deficit is because America doesn't save enough. There is an interesting thought. Companies close their American plant and move it to Mexico because somebody in Detroit doesn't save enough or somebody in Russell, KS, doesn't save enough? I'm sorry, I studied economics and I taught economics and that's not a theory with which I find credible. Maybe it's another theory that those of us in the middle of the country don't understand.

This same source that said our problem is that we don't save enough and that's why we have huge trade deficits said many months ago that we have a huge trade deficit because we have mounting budget deficits. He said that when the budget deficit goes down the trade deficit will go down.

Well, guess what? The budget deficit has gone down 4 years in a row. What has happened to the trade deficit? The trade deficit has continued to increase to new record levels. So much for that theory. The same source says, and some others say, that we have a trade deficit because of our currency valuation. They say that we have a strong dollar and that causes the trade deficit. But, the dollar goes up and the dollar goes down, we still have the trade deficit, and the trade deficit continues to grow. So much for that theory.

My point is, those who give us this malarkey about the trade deficit somehow don't understand that these deficits, the largest deficits in this country's history, mean that we are buying from abroad much more than we are selling overseas, and the result is an outflow of American jobs.

That may not mean much to people who write in the newspapers. It probably doesn't mean very much to economists, and it probably doesn't mean much to politicians. Because I don't know of any journalist, politician, or economist who has ever lost a job because of a bad trade agreement. In fact, I want someone to come to the floor of the Senate and advise me, as we have this debate in the next couple of weeks. Give me one name. Tell me the name of

one economist, one politician, or one journalist who has ever lost his or her job because their plant moved overseas. It didn't happen. That is why to them this is all theory, and when their theories are wrong, they just wake up with a new theory. It doesn't matter.

Will Rogers used to say when there is no place left to spit, you either have to swallow the tobacco juice or change with the times. I say to all these economists who have delivered all this nonsense in recent years, there's no place left to spit on these issues. You have given us eight reasons for the trade deficit, and all of them have been disproved. All of them have been wrong, and maybe it is time for some new sources. Maybe it is time for some new discussion about what this deficit means to our country.

Let me talk just for a moment about so-called free markets. The free-market system is a wonderful system. I am not suggesting that we get involved in managing the economy. We have a free-market system that works pretty well. Inside our country, it is interesting, the free-market system says, for example, that those farmers out there who get up and do chores at 6 in the morning and do evening chores at 6 in the evening, risk all their money and wonder what is going to happen, they can lose \$23,000 a year. At the same time the three supporting characters on "Seinfeld," a leading television program, can get \$600,000 a week. That is \$600,000 a week for each of the three supporting characters; \$13 million a year in salaries. That is our market system. That is fine.

If you are 7-foot tall and can dunk a basketball, and you are 21 years old and play for a certain team in the Midwest, you can get a \$121 million contract for 6 years playing basketball. Pay somebody to play basketball or hire 1,000 teachers. It is the same price. One 7-foot basketball player or 1,000 teachers; one 7-foot basketball player, or a thousand family farmers making a profit. The market system determines what is what, and the market system is a wonderful system, but it produces some aberrations from time to time.

One of the problems, as we describe a market system in the context of trade, is this: People say, "Well, what we need to have is a market system in which when we trade back and forth, it would be absolutely free and unfettered." That leads to another question. If it is free and unfettered trade between us and Canada, us and Mexico, us and Japan, or us and China, why is it then that they can get their goods into this country so much easier than we can get our goods into their country? Why?

Let me give some examples. Canada and wheat. We have a virtual flood of wheat coming into this country from Canada. We had kind of an agreement about how much would come in. Last year, Canada sent in 21,000 semi-truckloads of wheat above the agreed-upon

level. What can we do about it? Nothing, because we don't have a trade remedy that works here. Canada sends it in through a State trading enterprise, which would be illegal in this country, and with secret prices, so no one knows at what price they are selling it in America. Nonetheless, we have a wheat trade problem with Canada.

Is that free trade? No; I don't think so. I went to the border in an orange truck, a 12-year-old 2-ton truck, with a man named Earl Jenson. We took 200 bushels of Durum wheat from the United States to try to get it into Canada. Guess what happened to us at the border? They stopped us. They said you can't take wheat into Canada. All the way from the border, we had watched semi-truckloads filled with Canadian wheat that were coming south.

Is it fair trade? I don't think so. Is it free trade? I don't think so.

I can describe chapter and verse about the Mexico situation, but let me talk about both Canada and Mexico. We had the last free-trade agreement considered under what is called fast-track procedures. First, the agreement is reached through negotiations that are not public but private negotiations. Then after they come from behind closed doors and say, "We reached an agreement," it comes to Congress, and Congress, because of fast-track procedures, is prevented from offering an amendment. The last one was called NAFTA, the North American Free-Trade Agreement.

Just prior to the NAFTA trade agreement, our country had an \$11 billion trade deficit with Canada. Now some years later, the trade deficit has doubled. We now have a \$23 billion trade deficit with Canada. Just prior to the North American Free-Trade Agreement, we had a \$2 billion trade surplus with Mexico. Now we have a \$16 billion trade deficit with Mexico. Yet, we have people crowing on the floor of Congress, the House and the Senate, that these have been wonderful agreements. What kind of adding machines do they have? What kind of logic are they using to suggest that when you find yourself in a deep hole that things are going just great? The NAFTA agreement has been a disastrous agreement.

In fact, the Economic Policy Institute just did a study that said we have lost 395,000 jobs in this country as a result of the NAFTA agreement. Those who claim, incidentally, there have been new jobs created in this country take a look at only one side of the ledger, and that is the amount of exports we send out. They do not consider the amount of imports that are sent in to displace what had previously been produced here.

For example, they would take a look at Canada and Mexico and say, "Well, gee, we sent a little more to Canada, to Mexico, things are doing just great." The problem is, we have had much, much more coming in from each of those countries, and we have gone from a positive trade balance with Mexico to

a substantial negative trade balance. We have doubled our trade deficit with Canada. Who on Earth can conclude that is a trade policy on the right path?

Let's take China just for a moment. China's trade deficit has ratcheted up, up, up and way up, and now our trade deficit with China is \$40 billion a year and moving up toward \$50 billion a year. They say, "Well, we're supposed to have free trade with all these folks." There is no free trade with China. We can't get much American pork into China. When China wants wheat, it shops elsewhere for wheat. It buys some from us. With the \$40 billion to \$50 billion trade surplus it has with us, it ought to be buying wheat from us.

When China needs airplanes and wants to buy airplanes, guess what it says? "We will buy American airplanes only if they are manufactured in China." It is another way of saying, "We want to trade with you, but we want American jobs to move to China." That is not fair trade.

Japan this year will have a trade deficit increased by 20 percent above last year. This year it is projected to reach \$65 billion in trade deficits that we will have with Japan. Year after year, every year, the trade deficit with Japan goes on ranging and from around \$50 billion to over \$60 billion.

Is our trade relationship with Japan a mutually productive relationship? We could talk chapter and verse forever today about the amount of American goods we cannot get into Japan because their markets are not open to us.

The administration says it wants fast-track authority because it wants to open foreign markets. I want to prevent fast-track authority because I am sick of having trade negotiators negotiate bad agreements on the front end and then fail to enforce them on the back end. I say, "You go out and negotiate, go right ahead, come back and let's see what you have done. If you think these are fair agreements, you will get them passed through the Congress. If not, you are going to get a resounding no." They say, "We can't negotiate under those circumstances."

It is interesting to me, there have only been five trade agreements reached under fast-track trade authority granted by the Congress ever in history. We haven't granted fast-track authority for complicated nuclear arms agreements or test ban treaties. We haven't granted fast-track authority for any of those. Only a handful of trade agreements have had fast-track trade authority, and I ask my colleagues to evaluate what has been the result of those trade agreements.

Mr. President, I am going to propose a number of things when we talk about fast track. I think that we ought to establish some principles that evaluate what is right for this country. I said when I started that I think we ought to have expanded trade. The more trade the better, as far as I am concerned,

but I demand that the trade that we have as a country be fair trade with other countries. We ought not continue to swallow huge deficits year after year only to find the countries that move their goods into our marketplace with impunity decide their marketplace is closed to us. That is not free trade, and that is not fair trade.

When we discuss fast track, what I am going to propose is a number of principles that represent the basis of our trade policy:

No. 1: A principle ought to be to end chronic, escalating trade deficits. Is that a goal of this country? If it is, we sure are not doing well. I just showed you that the trade deficits have increased every year. We ought to decide as a country that we ought to end the escalating trade deficits by increasing U.S. net exports.

No. 2: A trade agreement ought to result in real growth in the U.S. economy, provide more and better jobs and improve living standards. Incidentally, there is no such principle that guides today's trade negotiating.

No. 3: We ought to provide mandatory performance standards for trade agreements together with enforcement to ensure full reciprocity. It seems to me that when you go from a \$2 billion trade surplus with Mexico to a \$15 billion trade deficit, someplace there ought to be some snapback provision that allows Congress to look at that and say, "Oops, that's not what we meant; that's not headed in the right direction."

No. 4: No trade agreement ever ought to be negotiated that doesn't include adjustment mechanisms to prevent currency exchange rate fluctuations from distorting the trade flows. You can't have trade agreements and then have someone devalue their currency which wipes out every single gain, plus 50 percent more, in the trade agreement on lowering tariffs. That doesn't make sense. Everybody understands you must include these. These are the principles, I think, that we must consider when we evaluate whether we want to provide fast-track trade authority for new negotiations dealing with international trade.

I look forward to the debate we are going to have, because this country, I think, needs a new blueprint for trade negotiations. The old trade blueprints are tired, worn and not working. It is no longer good enough to have trade policies that allow those corporations who decide that they will personally profit by finding a place in the world to produce at very low cost and then ship the production to Pittsburgh or Los Angeles or Fargo or Topeka just because that is good for their profits. It is no longer acceptable to me that this ought to be a model for trade.

If a company which is now an international concern says, look, "My model for the future is I want to produce in Bangladesh, I want to produce in Indonesia, I want to produce in Sri Lanka, and I want to ship the

product to America," you say to them, "Why do you want to produce there?"

"I want to produce there because we can hire people for pennies an hour, a dime, 12 cents, 14 cents, a quarter, or 50 cents an hour. We don't have the problem with pollution. We can pollute the air and the water. We can hire kids. We won't have OSHA looking over our shoulder because we don't have safe workplace standards, and we can just pole vault over all those things we have negotiated and fought about for 50 to 75 years in this country. We can pole vault over all of those problems as a producer and go overseas, close the U.S. manufacturing plant, hire foreign workers, have no problems on pollution, child labor and wage standards and then produce the same garage-door opener or produce the same toothbrush or produce the same vacuum cleaner and ship it to America."

That might be good for these corporations, but it is not good for America because inevitably that means diminishing America's manufacturing base. It means moving American jobs overseas and it means injuring this country's long-term economic strength.

That is what this debate has to be about: What is in America's economic interests; what is in our country's long-term economic interest; and, what will best represent the opportunity to create new jobs and advance our country's economic interests? That is what this debate must be about.

I hope in the coming couple of weeks, on behalf of farmers and wage earners, and, yes, American businesses, we can decide we have a trade strategy that doesn't now work, that causes substantial trade deficits, and substantial amounts of American jobs leaving and moving overseas. I hope we can decide that there is a better way and a different way. My purpose is not to promote some kind of xenophobic, isolationist, protectionist strategy. It is not to put walls around our country, but to decide that the trade between us and our trading partners must be mutually productive. We must have trade between us and Japan be balanced trade. If they get their goods into our marketplace, then we have a right to demand we get our goods into theirs. The trade between us and China should be mutually beneficial; that if we have something they want, they have a responsibility to buy it from us, and not demand that we manufacture it on Chinese soil at a time when they have a \$50 to \$60 billion trade surplus with us or we a deficit with them. It seems to me now is the time for us to demand that.

One of the reasons that I am pleased that we are finally going to have a debate about trade is that we have not been able to have any discussion about it. This turns instantly to a thoughtless discussion—instantly—the minute you start turning to the issue of trade.

Finally, maybe in discussing fast track this will become a thoughtful

discussion about what is in this country's best interests. Yes, expanded trade, but, yes, especially better trade agreements that are better for this country and trade agreements that are enforced with tough, no-nonsense standards, saying we represent the economic interests of our country—not other countries but our country.

The current trade strategy, resulting in huge recurring trade deficits, hurts rather than helps our country. Those are trade deficits we can solve by requiring that we be able to sell more goods around the world and by requiring that trade agreements be fair and enforced.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BISHOP ROBERT CARLSON

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the people of our State, and certainly all Catholics of the Sioux Falls diocese, are keeping Bishop Robert Carlson in our hearts and prayers today.

Bishop Carlson has been a vibrant leader within our communities and the Catholic Church in South Dakota. His outreach and partnership with social, religious and civic leaders for the past 3 years have been responsible for significant accomplishment.

I join with all South Dakotans in wishing him success as he endures his operation for cancer this afternoon. We certainly hope that with all of the good will, our faith, and the many prayers that are with him at this very difficult time, he will fully recover and that we see him back in good health.

We have no doubt that he will continue to provide the kind of strong religious and social leadership for which he is so well known. After some rest and recuperation his voice and involvement will be welcome, once again, on an array of issues confronting our country and the church. I wish him well.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1997

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, it is my understanding we will return to the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will report the pending business.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1173) to authorize funds for construction of highways, for highway safety programs, and for mass transit programs, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Chafee/Warner Amendment No. 1312, to provide for a continuing designation of a metropolitan planning organization.

Chafee/Warner Amendment No. 1313 (to language proposed to be stricken by the committee amendment, as modified), of a perfecting nature.

Chafee/Warner Amendment No. 1314 (to Amendment No. 1313), of a perfecting nature.

Motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Environment and Public Works, with instructions.

Lott Amendment No. 1317 (to instructions of the motion to recommit), to authorize funds for construction of highways, for highway safety programs, and for mass transit programs.

Lott Amendment No. 1318 (to Amendment No. 1317), to strike the limitation on obligations for administrative expenses.

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues in the Senate, if they have statements in connection with this legislation, to come over and deliver them. Now is an excellent opportunity. I do not envision a great deal else happening this afternoon. But this is an ideal chance for those who have statements or questions that they wish to pose or to discuss the bill in some substance. Now is the opportunity.

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BAUCUS. The chairman of the committee is accurate. We all know that very often there is the tendency to wait until the last moment, and we do not get an opportunity sometimes to say what we want to say or offer amendments. Now is the opportunity to speak on the bill. Senators may have questions about the bill. This is an excellent opportunity to take advantage of that because there may not be another opportunity.

So I, first of all, encourage Senators who have an interest in one of the more important pieces of legislation, certainly one of the more expensive bills that this Congress is going to pass this year, to come on over. Tell us what you think. If you may have a problem with the bill, perhaps we can work it out. But now is the time. I urge Senators on both sides of the aisle to do so because this is an opportune time.

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. CHAFEE. It is my understanding that there would be an objection to amendments being considered. But absent that, Senators could come over