

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1119, the National Defense Authorization Act:

Trent Lott, Strom Thurmond, Wayne Allard, Pat Roberts, Judd Gregg, Robert F. Bennett, Rod Grams, Spencer Abraham, Don Nickles, John Ashcroft, Rick Santorum, Tim Hutchinson, Paul Coverdell, Bob Smith, James Inhofe, Chuck Hagel, and John Warner.

VOTE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 1119, the National Defense Authorization Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are required. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Florida [Mr. MACK] and the Senator from Arizona [Mr. MCCAIN] are necessarily absent.

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from Montana [Mr. BAUCUS], the Senator from West Virginia [Mr. ROCKEFELLER], and the Senator from Minnesota [Mr. WELLSTONE] are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota [Mr. WELLSTONE] would vote "aye."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOND). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 93, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 289 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Abraham	Enzi	Levin
Akaka	Faircloth	Lieberman
Allard	Feingold	Lott
Ashcroft	Feinstein	Lugar
Bennett	Ford	McConnell
Biden	Frist	Mikulski
Bingaman	Glenn	Moseley-Braun
Bond	Gorton	Moynihan
Boxer	Graham	Murkowski
Breaux	Gramm	Murray
Brownback	Grams	Nickles
Bryan	Grassley	Reed
Bumpers	Gregg	Reid
Burns	Hagel	Robb
Byrd	Harkin	Roberts
Campbell	Hatch	Roth
Chafee	Helms	Santorum
Cleland	Hutchinson	Sarbanes
Coats	Hutchison	Sessions
Cochran	Inhofe	Shelby
Collins	Inouye	Smith (NH)
Conrad	Jeffords	Smith (OR)
Coverdell	Johnson	Snowe
Craig	Kempthorne	Specter
D'Amato	Kennedy	Stevens
Daschle	Kerrey	Thomas
DeWine	Kerry	Thompson
Dodd	Kyl	Thurmond
Domenici	Landrieu	Torricelli
Dorgan	Lautenberg	Warner
Durbin	Leahy	Wyden

NAYS—2

Hollings

Kohl

NOT VOTING—5

Baucus
Mack

McCain
Rockefeller

Wellstone

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 93, the nays are 2. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998—CONFERENCE REPORT

MOTION TO PROCEED

The Senate continued with the consideration of the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion to proceed was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the Senators involved in the depot issue with respect to the Department of Defense authorization conference report have reached an agreement for consideration and adoption of the conference report on Thursday, November 6.

Having said that, I thank all Senators for their cooperation. We did just then agree to a motion, and the conference report is before the Senate.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1269

Mr. LOTT. I now ask unanimous consent the Senate turn to S. 1269, the fast-track legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DORGAN. I object.

RECIPROCAL TRADE AGREEMENT OF 1997—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. LOTT. In light of the objection, I now move to proceed to S. 1269, and send a cloture motion to the desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to calendar No. 198, S. 1269, the so-called fast-track legislation.

TRENT LOTT, BILL ROTH, JON KYL, PETE DOMENICI, THAD COCHRAN, ROD GRAMS, SAM BROWNBACK, RICHARD SHELBY, JOHN WARNER, SLADE GORTON, CRAIG THOMAS, LARRY E. CRAIG, MITCH MCCONNELL, WAYNE ALLARD, PAUL COVERDELL, and ROBERT F. BENNETT.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this cloture vote will occur on Tuesday, and I ask the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

Mr. LOTT. I now withdraw the motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. I ask unanimous consent there now be a period for morning business until the hour of 2 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

Mr. LOTT. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN

Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. President, I rise to speak again on an issue of, I think, paramount importance, and that is the education of our children. Mr. President, unless we bring about fundamental reform in education, we are just going to continue to nibble at the margins. We are going to have great intellectual discussions and not be able to help our children.

The needs in our schools are great. We need better textbooks. We need to update computer facilities. We need to insist on teachers teaching the basics. And we need merit pay for good teachers.

Our children deserve an oasis of calm in order to learn. We have to be able to get violent and disruptive juveniles out of the classroom, and "fast track" them out of the classroom. We hear about fast track for trade; what about fast tracking violent, disruptive students out of the classroom?

Most importantly, we need to listen to parents in the local communities. This afternoon, I am going to touch on a few examples, horrendous examples, that all too often are being repeated in the educational systems throughout this country. Time after time, we see the education system supporting administrators, school principals and teachers at the expense of our children. We have to encourage parental involvement in education. When parents speak out, they have a right to be heard. They have a right to be listened to.

One of the things that parents are clearly calling for is an end of a system of lifetime tenure, lifetime job protection regardless of whether the teacher or the school principals are doing the job. Eliminating tenure and reforming it is a desperately needed measure. The tenure system guarantees a lifetime job to teachers and school principals, regardless of their performance.

Let me give you examples of how children suffer. These are real cases, these are our children. In junior high school 275 in Brooklyn, reading school scores have plummeted 21.5 points in the past 5 years. Sadly, this is a school that is failing our children, and they are getting hurt.

So parents in the community, recognizing that problem, came together. The parents and the local school board

wanted to deny tenure to the junior high school 275 principal, Priscilla Williams. I think we ought to applaud those parents for coming together and becoming involved and speaking out, as well as the local school board.

Instead of listening to the parents, instead of listening to the school board, the local superintendent granted permanent tenure to principal Williams. While those scores were plummeting, the school's principal was rewarded with a lifetime guarantee, a lifetime job. So instead of correcting the situation and bringing in a principal who would turn that around, we now have children being held captive. That means these children will continue to suffer, and the school's leaders cannot be held accountable. The scene is repeated throughout the system, unfortunately.

Let's take a look at another district, Brooklyn's district 23. The school board pleaded—pleaded, and these are the elected representatives—to block tenure for five principals at failing elementary and junior high schools. What is their motivation? Their motivation is to give their kids a better educational opportunity. Mr. President, sadly, all five were granted tenure anyway. So what does that mean? That means thousands of children are going to be trapped in a system that is failing them.

Parents know that the tenure system rewards failures. Why don't we listen to these parents who are crying out for reform, who are crying out to give their children a better education? They know that the business-as-usual tenure system is hurting their children. Instead of granting tenure to Principal Williams at junior high school 275 where the reading scores are dropping like a rock, she should have been fired, replaced, and they should have brought in somebody who had the educational experience and the ability to raise those scores.

As tragic as the failing levels are at junior high school 275, there is something more devastating that took place more recently at another school. Again, these are real children involved. This was a school in the Bronx, PS 44, where two 9-year-old girls were brutally sexually assaulted by four boys—9-year-old children at school. The girls reported this incredibly horrendous assault to their teacher. The teacher, in turn, reported it to the school principal, Anthony Padilla. Now, what did Mr. Padilla do? Did he call the police when a teacher reports an assault on two 9-year-old children? No. Did he take any steps to assist the victim, to contact the parents? No. But he did send a letter. He sent a letter to the parents which stated, "No inappropriate behavior took place." Imagine that—doesn't call the authorities but sends a letter to the parents saying, "No inappropriate behavior took place."

Well, the police did investigate the case. Juveniles have been arrested and

charged with this horrendous act. But what was done with or to the principal as a result of his failure to confront and deal with this situation in an orderly manner, a brutal attack against two 9-year-old girls? I'll tell you what happened—he was reassigned to a different administrative position within the district.

Now, let me point out something else. Padilla didn't even have tenure. He has previously been denied tenure. Why is he being protected? Why is he being kept in such a position of such responsibility where the lives of hundreds of youngsters are under his control? You have a system that protected him when he should have been fired. It is another example of a system supporting administrators and principals instead of parents and children.

Now, Mr. President, parents know that a principal who doesn't respond to violence within a school should be fired and not just reassigned. He should have been fired. But he is reassigned. Why? Because we have a system that is more interested in protecting the rights and the perks and the privileges and has become a hiring hall. It is an employment center, as opposed to being a center of learning, of knowledge. Something is seriously wrong when they are more concerned with the perks and privileges of the union members, regardless of how they are performing.

Mr. President, let's set the record straight. I believe the vast number of our teachers are good, are dedicated, are great professionals. We should reward them and we should pay them for that and we should recognize that. But the incompetent who are receiving lifetime job security are eroding this system both at the administrative level and, yes, in the classrooms. Something is seriously wrong when parents try to get involved in their children's education—in the examples I pointed out to you, where the school boards are begging for changes—and the system refuses to respond to them.

That is exactly what has happened when school principals are granted lifetime tenure over the objections of parents and in spite of the record of the failing schools. The tenure system has kept some principals in schools for 25 years while the academic performance has continually declined. That is wrong and has to be stopped.

I want to congratulate the parents for getting involved in their children's education. Nothing is more important. We have an obligation to reform our educational system. We have to get rid of today's system that ignores parents and rewards failing principals with lifetime tenure and replace it with a new system, a system that listens to parents and rewards their involvement and thinks about the education of the children first, not the perks and privileges of those who work in the system.

I yield the floor, and I thank my colleagues for granting me this additional time.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 10 minutes in morning business.

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

FAST TRACK

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, a few moments ago the majority leader came to the floor and filed a cloture motion on what is called the motion to proceed to the fast-track trade authority legislation that we will consider beginning next week in the U.S. Senate. I want to make comment about that, on the issue of fast-track authority.

It seems to me it does not serve well the interests of this country to try to fit into a small crevice, at the end of the first session of this Congress with only days left, a debate about international trade.

What is our situation in trade in this country? Well, it is not a very pretty picture. We have the largest trade deficit in the history of this country right now. We have huge and growing trade deficits with Japan. This year, it is expected to total between \$60 billion to \$65 billion. We have a mushrooming trade deficit with China, this year expected to reach close to \$50 billion. We have an ongoing trade deficit with Mexico and Canada. We have a flood of subsidized goods coming into our country that I am convinced violates the antidumping laws of this country, undercutting our producers and undercutting our farmers. Yet, nothing is done about it.

We are not winning in world trade. First of all, I think we are losing because our trade agreements have been negotiated largely as foreign policy instruments. Secondly, the trade agreements that do exist, which could be beneficial to this country, are not enforced. You can point to trade agreement after trade agreement with Japan, for example, and discover that no matter what the agreement is, it is not complied with by the Japanese and not enforced by the United States.

The reason I take the time to mention this today is that we face very significant trade problems in this country. We have a daunting, growing trade deficit which has contributed now in the aggregate to about \$2 trillion in our current accounts deficit. This deficit will be and must be repaid at some point in the future with a lower standard of living in this country.

This is the other deficit. We have spent many months and many years talking about the budget deficit, and have wrestled that budget deficit to the ground. But this other deficit, the trade deficit, is growing. Nobody seems to care about that.

The request comes now to Congress for fast track from the President saying: Let us go out and negotiate new trade agreements. I say let's solve the trade problems that exist from the old trade agreements before we rush off to make new trade agreements.