

It is the Sense of the Senate that fish taken and retained in a manner and under circumstances that are inconsistent with the recommendations of the ICCAT made pursuant to article VIII of the Convention and adopted by the Secretary of Commerce should be prohibited entry into the United States.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 942 AND 943, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that amendments Nos. 942 and 943 be modified, and I send those modifications to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The amendments (Nos. 942 and 943), as modified, are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 942, AS MODIFIED

At page 47, starting at line 18, strike all to page 48, line 1 at "Provided".

In lieu thereof, insert "troll Policy, submits a strategy to the Committees on Appropriations and Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate that includes (1) a certification, and guidelines to ensure that funds will supplement and not supplant current anti-drug community based coalitions; (2) a certification, and guidelines to ensure that none of the funds will be used for partisan political purposes; (3) a certification, and guidelines to ensure that no media campaigns to be funded pursuant to this campaign shall feature any elected officials, persons seeking elected office, cabinet-level officials, or other Federal officials employed pursuant to Schedule C of 5 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 213, absent notice to the Chairmen and ranking members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Judiciary; (4) a detailed implementation plan to be submitted to the Chairmen and ranking members of the Committees on Appropriations and Judiciary for securing private sector contributions including but not limited to in kind contributions; (5) a detailed implementation plan to be submitted to the Chairmen and ranking members of the Committees on Appropriations and Judiciary of the qualifications necessary for any organization, entity, or individual to receive funding for or otherwise provided broadcast media time.

AMENDMENT NO. 943, AS MODIFIED

At the appropriate place, insert the following new section:

SEC. . PERSONAL ALLOWANCE PARITY AMONG NAFTA PARTIES.

(A) IN GENERAL.—The United States Trade Representative and the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, shall initiate discussions with officials of the Governments of Mexico and Canada to achieve parity in the duty-free personal allowance structure of the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

(b) REPORT.—The United States Trade Representative and the Secretary of the Treasury shall report to Congress within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act on the progress that is being made to correct any disparity between the United States, Mexico, and Canada with respect to duty-free personal allowances.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS.—If parity with respect to duty-free personal allowances between the United States, Mexico, and Canada is not achieved within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the United States Trade Representative and the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit recommendations to Congress for appropriate legislation and action.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 940; 941; 942, AS MODIFIED; AND 943, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that amend-

ments Nos. 940, 941, 942, as modified and 943, as modified, be adopted, en bloc, and that the motion to reconsider the vote on the adoption of those amendments be laid upon the table.

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

The amendments (Nos. 940 and 941) and (Nos. 942 and 943), as modified, were agreed to, en bloc.

AMENDMENT NO. 940

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, we have accepted amendment No. 940, but I do want to mention that we may need to fine-tune it in conference. The reason is that, as currently drafted, the proposal is somewhat ambiguous. And for that reason, the Justice Department has told us that it has serious concerns about the amendment.

Now, I read the language to apply prospectively; that is, to people who are subsequently convicted of a crime—but not to those employees who were convicted years ago—or at any time prior to when this proposal becomes law. And I also believe that parts (a)(1) and (a)(2) should be read conjunctively; that is, to apply to government employees who are convicted of drug-related bribery—but not to employees who are convicted of either bribery or drug-related crimes alone.

We have talked to Senator COVERDELL's staff and they are willing to work on the language of the amendment to make this clear and I am optimistic that we can write it to everybody's satisfaction in conference.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. BOND. Madam President, we are now back on the VA-HUD bill.

I see my colleague from Minnesota has come in. I understand he wants to speak on another measure. But I ask my colleagues, if they have any business, if they wish to do anything, please be here before 6 o'clock. We are willing, ready, and able to do business and move forward on VA-HUD. But we do not need to hold personnel here if nobody is going to come forward.

With that invitation, or request, that all of our colleagues who may have either amendments or colloquies advise the ranking member or myself by 10 o'clock tomorrow that we will be here for votes, it will be a good opportunity for us to determine what measures are

going to come before the body so we can schedule the work on this very important bill and move forward.

I thank my colleagues for their cooperation. I hope they will let us know what amendments they have.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I have discussed the floor situation with the Democratic leadership. They are currently doing a hotline asking that all Democrat Senators who have amendments to please apprise us of them this evening so that we will be able to report to the chairman tomorrow and to our leadership what those amendments are.

Upon the completion tomorrow on Treasury, postal, it would be my hope that anyone who must offer amendments on NASA—and some amendments have been traditionally offered on NASA—that they be on the floor so we can do this before the party conference. I know there are many Senators who have given a great deal of thought on how to improve these programs. We will be anxious to hear about their amendments.

So, Madam President, we are doing our best to make progress on this particular bill, and moving this bill forward. We will be able to report to you tomorrow morning.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota [Mr. GRAMS].

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to be able to speak as if in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you very much, Madam President.

IS THERE NO SHAME IN WASHINGTON?

Mr. GRAMS. Madam President, I would like to speak a little bit tonight about taxes and the big controversy over tax cuts—and not only over tax cuts themselves but who qualifies for these tax cuts—what is fair, what is not fair. And really the basic bottom line is there is not enough money in the pot for the tax cuts that Americans need.

Madam President, as negotiators from the House and Senate meet with administration officials to hammer out a tax package, I rise today to be the voice for the millions of Americans who no longer seem to be heard here in Washington: the Nation's hard-working, overtaxed, middle-class families.

And I want to ask my colleagues, is there no shame in Washington?

Madam President, I read the comments made by the minority leader this morning, arguing that the \$77 billion tax cut bill "is not fair."

I have to say that I agree with the Senator from South Dakota. Any bill that cuts taxes by just \$77 billion is not only unfair—it's an outrage.

Let me remind my colleagues what happened in 1993.

In 1993, after campaigning on middle-class tax relief, President Clinton turned around and raised taxes on working Americans by \$263 billion—making his the largest tax increase in the history of this Nation. Everybody paid more, including: \$114.8 billion in new income taxes, \$24 billion in additional gas taxes, \$34.9 billion in business taxes, \$29 billion in payroll taxes, and \$24.6 billion in new Social Security taxes.

In other words, if you worked, were retired, drove a car, owned a business, or paid income taxes, you paid for the President's 1993 tax increase.

Although it was billed as nothing more than a tax increase only on the rich, but using this funny calculation called FEI—or family economic income—the President was able to say only those who worked were rich and, therefore, needed to pay more in taxes.

So today President Clinton—again, the same President who in 1993 raised taxes on the American people by \$263 billion, and also, by the way, Madam President, vetoed two Republican bills to cut taxes for Americans—now considers himself to be a champion of the middle class because he now wants to cut taxes by a measly \$77 billion, and only allowing the majority of those tax reductions if Americans—this is like your children—if Americans, the people who get up every day, go to work to earn this money, now, if they only will do what they are told. And that is to “be seen, not heard.” That seems to be the philosophy that we use out of Washington today. And, what is worse, both the House and the Senate are ready to go along with it.

Again, the question has to be: Is there no shame in Washington?

It doesn't take a math wizard to calculate that if the taxpayers had their taxes hiked by \$263 billion 4 years ago, and will only get back \$77 billion in so-called “tax relief” under the plan being crafted as we speak—the American taxpayers are still \$186 billion in the hole to the Federal Government in new taxes in just the last 4 years.

And the men and women—the working families who have paid dearly for that tax increase every day since—are supposed to thank Congress and the President for this mere pittance of a tax cut?

Is there no shame in Washington?

Madam President, since the last meaningful tax cuts were signed into law by President Reagan in 1981, Washington has raised taxes on 10 occasions—10 different times tax increases have been imposed on Americans, and always with the caveat if we can only raise taxes again one more time we are going to be able to get our budget under control.

Every time the Washington politicians have wanted to spend more money, so they could brag to the folks back home, Look what I did for you. But I need to raise your taxes in order for you to pat me on the back for all those projects that I am going to do for

you back home. But they have raised taxes on working families 10 times. They have done that.

You hear this complaint on the floor many times, “Oh, that tax cut that we had back in 1981 led to all these deficits that we have today.” If you put that in real technical economic terms, you could say that is a bunch of hokey. It has not raised the deficit. It has been Congress not controlling the spending that has raised the deficit.

The \$77 billion now slated for tax relief amounts to barely one-tenth of the amount that taxes were raised in the great tax hikes of 1990 and 1993.

You know, this little tax cut that we are talking about—\$77 billion over 5 years in a \$7-plus trillion annual economy in this country—this little tax cut would actually be like a car dealer taking one penny off the price of a new car and bragging to the buyer that, Boy, I am giving you a great deal. That is what Congress is doing. They are saying, We are going to knock a penny off the price of this new car for you, and you had better come out to Washington and thank us for allowing you to keep some of the money that you have worked for.

With a track record like that, I am afraid the Congress and the President have a long way to go before they can claim true victory on behalf of the American taxpayer.

Again, they said that the 1981 tax cut led to all of these deficits. If that was the problem, wouldn't you think that the 10 tax increases over the last 16 years would have solved that problem? No. No, that hasn't done it.

I have seen enough of the way Washington works to know that if we eliminated the tax cuts from this budget entirely—if we could take the advice of some on the floor here and say, We don't need any tax cuts at all, we can't afford any tax cuts, we have to save this \$77 billion, we can't let Americans keep any more of the money they make—that \$77 billion would never be dedicated to deficit reduction. The politicians would spend it faster than you can say reelection, and they would spend it on more Government programs and more pork. It certainly would not go toward reducing the deficit and giving our children and grandchildren a debt-free future. If you want evidence, you can just ask yourself: What happened to that \$225 billion that was miraculously found just before the budget deal was put together a couple of months ago? It all went to spending. Nothing went to tax relief. Nothing went to deficit reduction.

So to say that if we could give up this tax package now of tax relief that somehow it would go to deficit reduction, the record doesn't show that. I guarantee you that the more we allow Washington to keep, the more Washington will spend. And that is what makes the entire debate over what is fair and what is equitable in this tax relief package so ridiculous. Washington is not willing to give up dollars,

and it is not willing to give up the power that those dollars represent to the taxpayers. Therefore, a \$77 billion tax cut will never be fair, and it will never be equitable because the pie can never be cut into enough pieces to give a fair slice to everyone. The pie is just simply too small. And once it is divvied up, working families will be left with little more than crumbs.

Clearly, Madam President, there is no shame in Washington. It is absurd to expect the American taxpayers to fall on their knees to Washington in thanks for a tax relief plan that offers them dollars that were rightfully theirs to begin with.

Again, giving \$10 and getting \$1 back I do not think is fair. It is not equity. If my colleagues want to talk about tax fairness, we can do it. Let us repeal the 1993 tax increase on our senior citizens—\$24.6 billion. If my colleagues want to talk about tax fairness, repeal the 1993 tax increase on motorists—that is \$25 billion. If my colleagues want to talk about tax fairness, repeal the 1993 tax increase on working families. If we could do even a part of that, only then will this Congress and this President have the credibility to discuss meaningful tax relief for America's working families. Until then, Madam President, it has been just a lot of empty talk.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOND. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)