

Even though these trade agreements differ widely in scope and in content, they have one feature in common. Their aim is opening markets for American exports. Who is in the best position to monitor whether or not they achieve that purpose? I submit, Mr. President, that the companies who are supposed to benefit from the agreements are in the best position, along with their trade associations.

We have about 1,000 people from the private sector in the advisory committee system. They are all volunteers, working free of charge. They do an excellent job on their first task, advising the government on the negotiating end of trade policy. We should get them working on their second task, monitoring existing trade agreements. And they should do their monitoring out in the open.

Every new trade agreement should be assigned to at least one advisory committee. That committee should be responsible for monitoring compliance with the agreement. That committee should report regularly on implementation. It should recommend specific action when it finds examples of non-compliance. Complicated agreements, such as NAFTA and the Uruguay Round, should be parceled out among several committees.

Prospective members of trade advisory committees should all meet the following test: do they represent an organization willing and able to help monitor compliance with trade agreements? Only those who answer yes should be put on a committee.

Mr. President, let me turn now to the second issue we should examine: public participation.

I come from a state with a strong tradition of open government. A Montanan has the right to attend any meeting that a State official holds. No exceptions. The federal government has a tradition of openness too, especially with respect to advisory committees. Congress made openness a statutory requirement with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972. When we passed the Trade Act, we specified openness by requiring that all of these trade advisory committees follow FACA procedures.

We left one exception. Meetings could be closed to the public if they covered matters which would seriously compromise U.S. Government trade negotiations. That's a quote from the law. "Seriously compromise." And only with respect to ongoing active negotiations.

Today there aren't many active trade negotiations underway. So there is not much to be seriously compromised. Nevertheless, too many advisory committees are still closed to interested observers. That's unacceptable. It's illogical. It's illegal.

What are the advisory committees talking about in these meetings? I've heard from people who attend them that almost all of the information discussed is pretty straightforward. Nothing very secret.

People who are barred from the meetings don't know that. They begin to suspect that something's going on in those rooms. Maybe somebody is trying to hide something from them. Closing off these meetings just feeds that feeling of mistrust. It's bad government.

In the past, the Administration used to close all ISAC and IFAC meetings, until they lost a 1996 court challenge. It was a blanket closure policy. In arguing this case before the court, the Trade Representative's office said that Congress agreed with the blanket closure policy, because we never did anything about it.

Let's do something about it. The Constitution gives Congress, not the Executive Branch, authority over international trade. I intend to introduce legislation designed to clear up any confusion about what Congress expects with regard to public participation in ISAC's and IFAC's.

Finally, Mr. President, I have found one other feature of advisory committee that we should change. There is a "consensus" mentality. Some committees feel that they can only give advice if they reach a consensus. They say that this is why committees can't have members who come at issues in different ways. They'll never get consensus. I see nothing wrong with committees sending forward recommendations along with minority viewpoints. We're a democracy. We do this all the time.

I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues and with the trade agencies of the Executive Branch to get the advisory committee system back on track.

Mr. President, I have written to Secretary Daley and Ambassador Barshefsky outlining my thoughts on this issue. I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 4, 2000.

Hon. WILLIAM M. DALEY,
Secretary of Commerce, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLENE BARSHEFSKY,
U.S. Trade Representative, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DALEY AND AMBASSADOR BARSHEFSKY: Your recent initiative to take a close look at the trade advisory process is right on target. As you know, I am concerned by the resignations by prominent labor leaders and environmentalists from TEPAC and ACTPN, and by the Administration's appeal of the court ruling on NGO participation in ISAC's. It is time to re-examine the process, balancing sometimes conflicting goals.

For example, we seek influential leaders on ACTPN and TEPAC who understand trade policy. It is not always easy to find both qualities in one person. As a result, the ability of ACTPN and TEPAC members to contribute to trade policy formulation varies widely.

The desire for the ISAC's and IFAC's to foster consensus recommendations leads to excluding certain interested parties. I have heard from business groups and NGO's on this point. Moreover, because the advisory

process can be rigid and slow, it is tempting to circumvent the ISAC's or IFAC's, and instead use informal groups of trade advisors.

Let me offer a few ideas for improving the process.

We should give the advisory committees a more active role in monitoring implementation of existing agreements. Their charters include this function, but we don't emphasize compliance monitoring. We should strengthen this function. The private sector can help fill the information gaps which the GAO identified in its recent report on trade agreement compliance.

In addition, we should reexamine committee operating rules, such as procedures for choosing members and the role of the designated federal official. This may entail streamlining the system by reducing the number of standing committees. Finally, we have to clarify the relationship between the 1974 Trade Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

This 26 year-old system is ready for some fresh eyes and for a legislative remedy. I look forward to working with you to improve the process.

Sincerely,

MAX BAUCUS.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, April 4, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,758,854,640,223.41 (Five trillion, seven hundred fifty-eight billion, eight hundred fifty-four million, six hundred forty thousand, two hundred twenty-three dollars and forty-one cents).

Five years ago, April 4, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,738,207,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred seventy-six billion, two hundred seven million).

Ten years ago, April 4, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,092,193,000,000 (Three trillion, ninety-two billion, one hundred ninety-three million).

Fifteen years ago, April 4, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,738,045,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred thirty-eight billion, forty-five million).

Twenty-five years ago, April 4, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$505,481,000,000 (Five hundred five billion, four hundred eighty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,253,373,640,223.41 (Five trillion, two hundred fifty-three billion, three hundred seventy-three million, six hundred forty thousand, two hundred twenty-three dollars and forty-one cents) during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GIL HODGES

• Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Gil Hodges on his 25 year career in Major League Baseball. Gil Hodges served 18 years as a major league player and 7 years as a manager, during which he distinguished himself through exceptional performance, success, professionalism and personal achievement.

At the conclusion of his playing career in 1962, Gil Hodges was the leading

right handed home run hitter in National League history; hitting 20 or more home runs in 11 seasons, surpassing the 30 home run mark four times and the 40 mark twice. For the 11-year period between 1949 and 1959, he averaged more than 30 home runs and 100 RBIs per season. Those are some impressive statistics. A vital part of both the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Mets franchises, Gil appeared in 8 World Series, winning 1 as a player and 1 as a manager. During his tenure, Gil Hodges led the 1969 Miracle Mets to one of the most memorable and remarkable World Championships in the history of baseball, bringing pride to Mets fans all across the city.

Beyond being a great major leaguer, Gil Hodges was a great humanitarian. He played a major role in the success and acceptance of his teammate, Jackie Robinson. Jackie's eventual success was facilitated by the leadership and courage of Gil Hodges. A life long New Yorker, his memory lives on in the minds of the many Dodgers and Mets fans that got to witness his greatness. His number 14 has been retired by the Mets assuring that his legacy will be preserved for generations. In closing, I would like to say that Gil Hodges was a great baseball player, a great manager, and more importantly a great man. He was a hero to many and I am taking this time to pay tribute to his legacy. Thank you, Gil.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. FILIPPO MILONE

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Mr. Filippo Milone, a well-known community leader who was recently given the Republican Congressional Committee's Businessman of the Year Award. Filippo runs the highly successful and well regarded Pillars restaurant in Mobile, Alabama which serves some of the best cuisine not only in the state, but in the entire country. This award is truly a testament to Filippo's reputation in the Mobile business community and to the high esteem in which he is held by his peers. I want to congratulate Filippo and his wife of 27 years, Geltrude, and offer my thanks for their dedication to the city of Mobile.

Born in Italy in 1938, Filippo came to the United States after fulfilling his duties in the Italian military. After traveling to various parts of the country, Filippo chose to settle in the Mobile area to establish a business and raise a family. Calling upon his extensive culinary training, Filippo opened the Pillars restaurant in 1975 with the idea of creating a unique dining experience for customers. Today, the Pillars restaurant continues to thrive. Filippo has 40 employees and enjoys the satisfaction that comes with creating opportunities for others. He is active in the community as a member of many local organizations, including the Restaurant Association, the Chef's Association, and Lion's Club. Indeed, Filippo's many activities truly entitle

him to the recognition that comes with being named a Businessman of the Year.

Again, I would like to congratulate Filippo and his entire family on this award. I have had the pleasure of eating at the Pillars Restaurant on numerous occasions and can honestly say I have never been disappointed. Both the service and food are always first class, and being in the company of someone with such a deep sense of community is always a pleasure. His commitment to the Mobile area and to Alabama should be commended.●

IN MEMORY OF JOHN ROBERT STARR

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, just a few days ago Arkansas lost one of its boldest opinion leaders and most respected modern journalists, John Robert Starr. I rise today to pay tribute to his career and to offer my sympathies to his family, friends and colleagues.

A journalist of the "old-school," John Robert Starr was dedicated to the tradition of his craft even in this day and age of on-line papers and 24-hour news channels. He loved his work and once said of journalism: "This is the place to be—reporting, covering the day-to-day business. This is where I would like to be. This is where everybody ought to be."

Ultimately, Mr. Starr would have a dramatic impact on journalism in Arkansas. But he got his start on the college newspaper at Southwestern, now Rhodes College in Memphis. After college, Starr combined two of his loves, sports and journalism, to join the sports staff at the Memphis Commercial Appeal. He later moved to the Associated Press in Little Rock as the sports editor but soon shifted into the arena of political coverage.

Throughout his 19-year career at the AP, including as Little Rock bureau chief, Starr covered such infamous political characters as Governor Orval Faubus, as well as various political candidates. After a lengthy and successful stint, he then left the AP to teach journalism at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Starr didn't last long on the academic side of things after being recruited to run an afternoon paper, the Arkansas Democrat. The Democrat was headed into battle with a more widely-read morning paper, the Arkansas Gazette, which was the oldest newspaper west of the Mississippi.

As they say, the rest is history. John Robert Starr led the Democrat through a raucous, public battle against the Gazette for readership and power. He became known through a must-read daily column for his sharp wit and engaging writing. Ultimately, the Democrat took the Gazette head on with hard news coverage and even harder-hitting opinions. It won, taking over the Gazette in 1991 under the masthead of one combined daily paper, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. It has been said

that, despite his hand in shutting the Gazette down, Starr mourned the loss of the competition and lamented the passing of a major journalistic institution.

After the takeover, Starr stayed at the helm of the Democrat-Gazette as managing editor for just under a year, but stayed on to write his much-beloved daily column until the late 1990's when he cut back to three columns per week. During these years, Starr took on every topic from politics to travel, from professional basketball to Razorback football's recent stadium controversy. He always had an opinion and expressed it like no one else could. While his career was not without controversy, his opinions were always received with respect.

John Robert Starr also devoted much time to his wife of 51 years, the former Norma Jeanette Wilson of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and their family. They traveled extensively over the years and their adventures provided material for many touching columns. Starr is survived by two sons, a daughter, and nine grandchildren, whom he loved dearly.

Journalism in my home state is forever influenced by the life and career of John Robert Starr. He was a dedicated Arkansan, with a passionate commitment to our state and its communities. With his passing, thousands of Arkansans will find something missing as they pick up their morning papers for years to come.●

THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION

● Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to extend my congratulations to the Kosciuszko Foundation—the American Center for Polish Culture—in honor of the Foundation celebrating its 75th Anniversary.

As the oldest not-for-profit institution in the United States which maintains cultural and educational exchanges between the U.S. and Poland, the Kosciuszko Foundation organizes academic, scholarly and scientific exchanges, and fellowships and grants for Polish scholars.

The Foundation also supports efforts to further business and economic education in Poland, and it also funds valuable programs to prepare Poland's political and social leaders for the country's new democratic system.

I commend the Kosciuszko Foundation for promoting Polish education and culture, and for its years of dedicated service to the Polish and Polish-American community. Many thanks also must go to the dedicated folks at the foundation for maintaining the vital Polish culture.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.