

Byrco is owned by Janice Jennings, the former daughter-in-law of George Jennings, who founded the first in what became a cluster of Southern California gun manufacturers known collectively as the Ring of Fire.

From Byrco, the gun was shipped to B.L. Jennings, Inc., a Carson City, Nev., distributor owned by George Jennings's son and Janice's ex-husband, Bruce. No. 997126 was bought by Acua Sport Corporation, a federally licensed wholesaler in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Acua sold it, for about \$90, to Classic Pawn and Jewelry, Inc. in Chickamauga, Ga.

In August 1998, Classic resold the gun to a Georgia woman for about \$150. Investigators believe that the woman was buying the 9 millimeter gun as a straw purchaser on behalf of Charles Chapman. He was prohibited by federal law, because of a previous felony conviction, from purchasing firearms. Investigators say they believe Mr. Chapman drove the firearm to New York, where it was sold to a member of the Bloods gang. And that is how, investigators say, the gun got to Demeris Tolbert.

The police say No. 997126 was recovered when Mr. Tolbert was arrested on the roof of the Howard Houses after the shooting of a New York police officer, Tanagiot Benekos, who was looking for suspects in the killing of a pawnbroker earlier that afternoon.

Mr. Tolbert had been paroled the previous January after serving three years of a nine year sentence for drug possession. Prosecutors say that after the New York City Police Department's ballistics laboratory linked the gun to slugs recovered from the earlier shootings, Mr. Tolbert, 32, of Brownville confessed.

Investigators say he also took responsibility for a 1990 shooting of a clerk at an East New York bodega, the 1991 killing of a Crown Heights security guard, four other shootings and an attempted murder.

The Brooklyn District Attorney's office has charged him with murder, attempted murder and attempted murder of a police officer.

The ballistic information and serial number were matched against a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms database, which prompted a federal gun-smuggling investigation. Special Agent Edgar A. Domenech, who oversees the bureau's New York and New Jersey division, said the A.T.F. traced the weapon and 30 others to Charles Chapman. He is being held, along with alleged accomplices, on charges of gun trafficking and conspiracy to illegally purchase firearms and transport them for sale to criminals in New York, where more stringent laws bar the sort of wholesale purchases permitted in Georgia.

Howard Safir, the New York City police commissioner, has proposed tighter, uniform national licensing regulations, and the annual registration of firearms to hold owners accountable for the illegal sales of weapons they purchase.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to draw the attention of the Senate to an important funding issue that is pending in the Senate version of the Labor/HHS Appropriations bill. The funding level for Social Security administrative expenses doesn't receive much attention, but it is critical to the effective delivery of Social Security benefits to those who are entitled to them.

Social Security administrative expenses are actually partially funded

from the Social Security trust funds, and they ensure that the programs administered by the Social Security Administration are delivered to the American public in an efficient, timely, and professional manner. In addition, SSA maintains records of the yearly earnings of over 140 million U.S. workers and provides them with annual estimates of their future benefits. The agency will also administer the Ticket to Work Program, and the administrative workload associated with the Retirement Earnings Test.

I am concerned that the level of funding contained in the Labor/HHS Appropriations bill is not sufficient, and does not recognize the administrative challenges Social Security will be facing in the near future. Last year the Social Security Administration provided service to 48 million people. In 2010 SSA will be providing services to 62 million people, due to the retirement of many baby boomers. During this same period, the SSA will lose nearly half of its staff to retirement, including many individuals who staff the offices located in our states and who work directly with the public.

In North Dakota, there have been large staff reductions in some of my state's main SSA offices. These shortages have affected timely completion of continuing disability reviews, and service delivery has been difficult to maintain for those who live in rural areas.

The Social Security Advisory Board—a bipartisan Congressionally mandated Board—recently issued a report on "How the Social Security Administration Can Improve Its Service to the Public," which stated that "there is a serious administrative deficit now in that there is a significant gap between the level of services the public needs and that which the agency is providing. Moreover, this gap could grow to far larger proportions in the long term if it is not adequately addressed."

The Senate Labor/HHS bill includes a funding level that is \$123 million below the President's request. I hope that as the appropriations process moves forward, the Congress will work to ensure an adequate level of funding for SSA administrative expenses.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate National Dairy Month, and the wonderful history of our nation's dairy industry. During June Dairy Month we in Wisconsin take a special opportunity to celebrate Wisconsin dairy's proud tradition and heritage of quality. This month provides an opportunity for all Wisconsinites—both those on and off the farm—a special time to reflect on the historical importance, and future of America's dairy industry.

This month is especially important to my home state of Wisconsin, America's Dairyland. What many of my colleagues may not know is that Wisconsin became a leader in the dairy industry well before the 1930's when it

was officially nicknamed America's Dairyland. It was soon after the first dairy cow came to Wisconsin in the 1800's that we began to take the dairy industry by storm.

In fact, before Wisconsin was even a state, Ms. Anne Pickett established Wisconsin's first cheese factory when she combined milk from her cows with milk from her neighbor's cows and made it into cheese.

Over the past month, Wisconsinites have recognized this proud tradition by holding over 100 dairy celebrations across our state, including dairy breakfasts, ice cream socials, cooking demonstrations, festivals and other events.

These functions help to reinforce the consumer's awareness of the quality variety and great taste of Wisconsin's dairy products and to honor the producers who make it possible.

Unfortunately, the picture for producers has not been that bright. Dairy prices for this year's National Dairy Month, along with most of the first half of this year, have reached all time lows.

Low milk prices—the lowest since 1978—are wreaking havoc on Wisconsin's rural communities. In addition to these low prices, dairy farmers are also facing month to month price fluctuations of up to 40 percent.

What is so troublesome is that farmers are experiencing these low prices while the retail price continues to increase. In fact, thanks to a 20 percent jump last year in the retail price, the farm retail price spread for dairy products has more than doubled since the early 1980s.

Because of this concern, earlier this year, Senator LEAHY and I asked the General Accounting Office to conduct a thorough investigation into the increasing disparity between the prices dairy farmers receive for their milk, and the price retail stores charge for milk.

In the study, GAO will focus its attention on the impact of market concentration in the retail, milk processing, procurement and handling industries and describe the potential risks of any such concentration for dairy farmers and federal nutrition programs.

Specifically, we asked the GAO to identify the factors that are depressing the price farmers receive for their milk, and why this trend has persisted while retail prices continue to rise. After all, this trend defies economic expectations, and frustrates the aspirations of hardworking farmers, with no apparent benefit to consumers.

During June Dairy Month, the dairy industry also called for mandatory price reporting for manufactured products. In early June, the sudden discovery of 24 million pounds of butter shined the spotlight on the need for an effective reporting system for storable dairy products.

The Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), which tracks domestic butter stocks, discovered a new warehouse

that hadn't been reporting its butter inventory. When this huge quantity of butter was finally reported, prices went down sharply, and so did the dairy industry's faith in the reporting system for storable dairy products.

Wall Street would never put up with this kind of reporting errors in its markets, and neither should the agriculture industry.

Regardless of where the dairy industry chooses to get its information, through the National Agricultural Statistics Service or the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, that information must be accurate. These costly mistakes happen because the current reporting system is voluntary, leaving room for serious errors.

To address this growing concern, Senator CRAIG and I introduced the Dairy Market Enhancement Act of 2000, which takes the next step toward fair and accurate reporting. It would mandate reporting by dairy product manufacturing plants, would subject that reporting to independent verification, and would require the USDA to ensure compliance with the mandatory reporting and verification requirements.

Our bill also would direct the Commodities Futures Trading Commission to conduct a study on the reporting practices at the CME and report its findings to Congress.

We must also ensure that America's dairy farmers are put on a level playing field in the world economy. As I travel to each county in Wisconsin, I hear a growing concern over efforts to change the natural cheese standard to allow dry ultra-filtered milk in natural cheese.

Our dairy farmers have invested heavily in processes that make the best quality cheese ingredients, and I am concerned about recent efforts to change the law that would penalize them for those efforts by allowing lower quality ingredients to flood the U.S. market.

Senator JEFFORDS and I introduced the Quality Cheese Act of 2000 to respond to the call of our nation's dairy farmers.

Our legislation would disallow the use of so called "dry" ultra-filtered milk—milk protein concentrate and casein—in natural cheese products, and require USDA to consider the impact on the producer before any other changes may be made to the natural cheese standard.

I recognize that these efforts are only a step in the right direction.

In addition to addressing the increased market concentration, enacting mandatory price reporting, and protecting the natural cheese standard, Congress must also provide America's dairy farmers with a fair and truly national dairy policy and one that puts them all on a level playing field, from coast to coast.

TESTIMONY BY THE SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, this week the Committee on Rules and Administration held an oversight hearing on the Smithsonian Institution and received testimony from the new Secretary, Lawrence M. Small. Although he has only served in this capacity for a short 6 months, it is already clear that Secretary Small's vision for the Smithsonian will have a lasting impact on this uniquely American institution.

Secretary Small envisions the Smithsonian as "... the most extensive provider, anywhere in the world, of authoritative experiences that connect the American people to their history and to their cultural and scientific heritage." In other words, the Smithsonian documents who and what we are as Americans. And not surprisingly, over 90 percent of all visitors to the Smithsonian come from the United States.

Who are these visitors and what makes the Smithsonian such a draw? They are families who come to see the relics of our history, such as the Wright brothers' flyer or the Star Spangled Banner which moved Francis Scott Key to pen our national anthem. They are school children who are learning about the ancient inhabitants of this land, whether dinosaurs or insects. They are young parents retracing the pilgrimage to our nation's Capitol that they made as children. They are new immigrants and Americans of all ages who come to see the treasures that are housed in America's attic.

There are nearly 141 million objects in the Smithsonian's collections, fewer than 2 million of which can be displayed at any given time in the 16 museums that make up the Smithsonian. On average, there are nearly 39 million visitors a year to the Smithsonian's museums and the national zoo. The fact is, 3 of the most visited museums in the world are right here on the mall.

They are the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Museum of American History. And yet even with those amazing numbers, Secretary Small advised the Rules Committee this week that he believes the Smithsonian can do even better in making the Smithsonian accessible to the public, both in terms of the quality and quantity of the exhibits and the condition of the physical space.

But all of this popularity comes at a price, and that price is the physical wear and tear on the Smithsonian's buildings and exhibits. The buildings of the Smithsonian are in and of themselves historic monuments and landmarks within our nation's capital. The Smithsonian Castle, a fixture on the mall since the cornerstone was laid in 1847, receives nearly 2 million visitors a year, even though it houses no museum.

The oldest building, the Patent Office Building, houses the National Portrait

Gallery and the National Museum of American Art. Construction of this Washington landmark was begun in 1836 and was the third great public building constructed in Washington, following the Capitol and The White House.

The National Museum of Natural History, home to the Hope Diamond and the Smithsonian elephant, opened its doors in 1910. This year, nearly 1.3 million visitors toured this museum in the month of April alone. The popularity of these grand and historic buildings is taking its toll, and they are quite simply in need of significant renovation and repair.

Secretary Small is committed to preserving not only the aging buildings of the Smithsonian, but to upgrading the exhibits as well to ensure that they provide a continuing educational experience. He is in the process of developing a 10-year plan to facilitate the necessary restorations and renovation.

These buildings are part of the historic fabric of this capital city, and it would be very short-sighted of Congress not to provide for their adequate maintenance and repair. I commend Secretary Small for his vision in this regard and believe that Congress should act on his recommendations when they are received. An op-ed piece by Secretary Small appeared in Monday's Washington Post in which he described his vision of the Smithsonian and the need to preserve these historic landmarks.

I urge my colleagues to acquaint themselves with the needs of this great American institution as it faces the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

I ask unanimous consent that the article by Secretary Small be included in the RECORD following my remarks.

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

[From the Washington Post, June 26, 2000]

AMERICA'S ICONS DESERVE A GOOD HOME

(By Lawrence M. Small)

A recent report from the General Accounting Office identified 903 federal buildings around the country that are in need of some \$4 billion in repairs and renovations. The buildings are feeling the effects of age. It's a feeling we know all too well at the Smithsonian.

Construction on the Patent Office Building, the Smithsonian's oldest, began in 1836. The cornerstone of the original Smithsonian Castle on the National Mall was laid in 1847; the National Museum building adjacent to it was completed in 1881, and the National Museum of Natural History opened in 1910.

The age of these four buildings would be reason enough for concern, but there's a significant additional stress on them. The Smithsonian's museum buildings are open to the world. They exist to be visited and to be used—and they've been spectacularly successful at attracting the public.

Attendance in recent months at the Natural History Museum has made it the most-visited museum in the world, a title held previously by our National Air and Space Museum. In the years ahead, the Smithsonian will be working to open its doors wider still