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## Senate

The Senate met at 1 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BLANCHE L. LINCOLN, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Loving Father, You know us as we really are. You see beneath the polished surface of our projected adequacy. You know our true needs. The great need, at the core of all our needs is to truly experience Your presence. We need You, dear God. It is our most profound joy to know that the desire to know, love, and serve You today is the result of Your hand upon our shoulders. You motivate the desire to pray because You delight in us when we desire You above all else. More than anything You can give us or do for us, we long to live in communion with You. Our spirituality is what we do with our yearning. In this moment of honest prayer, we turn over to You the longings of our hearts; everything from our most personal anxieties to our relationships and responsibilities. How wonderful it is to know that You have motivated us to pray because You have solutions and resolutions for our most complex problems.

Bless the Senators today with an engaging conversation with You. Thank You that You are ready to give the guidance, wisdom, and vision that will be required in each hour. Go before them to show the way, reside in their minds to provide power, and replenish their assurance that what You have called them to do is the people's business in Government. This is the day You have made; we will rejoice and be glad in You! Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BLANCHE L. LINCOLN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, April 29, 2002.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BLANCHE L. LINCOLN, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mrs. LINCOLN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3009, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (H.R. 3009) to extend the Andean Trade Preference Act, to grant additional trade benefits under that act, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, today, as the Chair has announced, we are once again on the Andean trade legislation. We have a vote tonight at 6

o'clock on invoking cloture on the motion to proceed to this legislation. The time until 6 p.m. is equally divided between the proponents and opponents on the motion to proceed. The reports we have received are that it does not appear there will be a lot of debate prior to this vote tonight, although there are a few Members who wish to speak. There will be about 5 hours for debate, and it appears at this time that there will not be a lot of speakers.

Unless my friend from Wyoming has a statement, I suggest the absence of a quorum, and I ask that the time for the quorum call be charged equally against both sides.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam President, I wish to speak on the bill before us.

At 6 o'clock, as my friend from Nevada mentioned, we will be voting on the motion to proceed to one of the more important bills before us this year. I am glad we have some opportunity to talk about this legislation.

H.R. 3009 is the vehicle on which the Senate will be voting as to whether or not the Senate will proceed to three bills—the Trade Promotion Act, the Trade Adjustment Act, and the extension of the Generalized System of Preferences. I wish to focus on what I believe to be the more critical issue, and that is the Trade Promotion Act.

This is often called fast track. It is designed to give us a system to bargain, if you will, and negotiate treaties with other countries, hopefully to the benefit of the United States. I believe it is very critical to our economic future.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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While other nations are negotiating treaties—and have been for some time—to open markets and strengthen their economies, the United States during these negotiations has been on the sidelines. Of the 134 free trade agreements in force, the United States is only party to 3. Mexico has signed 28 agreements. One-third of the world's exports are covered by the European Union's trade and customs agreements, where ours is less than 11 percent.

Since the authority for the President expired in 1994, the rest of the world has gone forward seeking to make trade agreements that are favorable to their countries. We have not been able to do that.

The TPA bill passed the Finance Committee 18 to 3, and, of course, has passed the House. I think it provides a reasonable solution to where we ought to be and where we need to be. All of us are concerned that trade be fair, that it be equitable, that it gives us the best opportunities it can, but that there is trade. Trade is there and billions of dollars move around the world every day.

We need to make sure our trade is as favorable as it can be and we are in step with the rest of the world in terms of being able to do that fairly.

President Bush said earlier it is important for America to understand we are good at what we do. We can compete with anyone in the world. We have the most productive workforce on the face of the Earth. Therefore, let us open our markets to sell our products. He asked the Senate to give him the ability to do that.

As I mentioned, the Trade Promotion Act expired in 1994 and we have sort of stood on the sidelines ever since. In December, the House passed a bipartisan trade promotion bill. The Senate Finance Committee then moved fairly quickly. I was fortunate enough, as was the Presiding Officer, to be a part of that and listened to that debate. It passed 18 to 3 to move it on and to do the things we want to do.

Certainly, there is room for discussion about trade and trade agreements. We have different views of it, depending a little on where we are and what we do at the time, but the fact is that trade agreements are very important to us. They expand markets for U.S. goods and services. They create higher paying jobs in America for those kinds of things that are exported. They give us a chance to show our productivity and our efficiency in doing the things we do well. So it tends to invigorate our economy, and certainly now is a time when we want to do that.

The absence of trade opportunities has created sort of an invisible tax on America that we pay whenever we shop. Better trade deals and lower tariffs can boost savings even higher, and I think it is time we do that.

Trade is essential, of course, to America's economy and our growth and our prosperity. Exports accounted for more than one-fourth of all economic

growth in the 1990s. The jobs that are dependent on exports are estimated to be 13 to 18 percent higher than the national average. One-tenth of American workers, 12 million, are in jobs that depend on exports. So we need to think long and hard about the process we use.

Fast track sounds as if we are giving all the authority to the President to make these decisions, but that is not the case. What we are doing is setting up a system which allows the President and his people to do the negotiations within guidelines that are set in the bill, and then bring the results of those negotiations back to the Congress. The Constitution provides that the Congress deal with those Federal trade issues.

So as I mentioned before, a lot of these have been going on while we have not been able to do much about it, and the impact is fairly simple. One example is a \$187,000 Caterpillar tractor made in America and shipped to Chile is slapped with a \$13,000 trade tariff. The same tractor made in Brazil and sold to Chile is \$3,000. The same tractor made in Canada and shipped to Chile, there is no tariff. So in terms of being able to compete, in terms of being able to be part of world trade, without an agreement and a system to bring in these kinds of things, we are left on the sidelines to some extent.

Trade is good for American farmers and ranchers. We have had several meetings and a couple of news conferences on agriculture. One in every three acres in this country is planted for exports. American farmers exported about \$55 billion in agricultural products last year. Almost a third, nearly 40 percent, of agricultural products go into exports.

I understand different commodities are different and have different impacts, but, nevertheless, overall agriculture is certainly a valuable tool and one we have to have to have a strong economy. The same is true of small business. The same is true, of course, of all we do in the world.

Our relationships and our leadership, at least in part, have to do with the economic arrangements we have and our economy. The trade promotion authority is the one we are really looking at.

I mentioned it passed the House. It was a very close vote, as a matter of fact, but it was passed on and the committee has dealt with that. It would renew the trade agreement authority that expired in 1994.

Basically, it falls in two categories: the President's authority to proclaim changes in tariffs resulting from negotiations of reciprocal trade agreements and, two, procedures for implementing the provisions of these agreements which entail changes in U.S. law.

These procedures are commonly known as fast track, and they require an up-or-down vote of the Congress. It seems to me that is a reasonable thing. I cannot imagine 535 individuals trying to come up with some kind of trade ne-

gotiation. That does not work. So we have to delegate that and then have the overview of it in the Congress. That is basically what this does.

The key provisions include establishing the objectives of negotiations. Obviously, when we negotiate for the United States and the U.S. representatives, the purpose is to get as good a deal as we can possibly get for our country. There are congressional guidelines to the President. It requires Presidential consultation with the Congress before, during, and after trade negotiations. So, again, it is not something that is apart from but is done in a particular way. It creates a congressional oversight group, a broad-based bipartisan organization, that has oversight of what is going on and can report and give information to the Congress. It is designed to do that.

So the Congress is very much involved. That is the key now. The way this is happening is what is called the Trade Adjustment Act. That is the bill that is before us with these other two that will be coming a part of that. One of them is Andean trade, which is a specific trade agreement set forth to work with States in South America. We, again, do not have agreements with them. One of them is Colombia where we are seeking to try to make some changes, of course. Another is Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. So this is one of the bills addressing that.

Then the trade adjustment authority is the one that has been in effect before. It has expired. It provides programs for employees who have felt the impact of trade agreements, such as the loss of jobs and the loss of their businesses. Financial trading and assistance has been available to firms and companies, and for displaced workers who face significant adjustments.

I always think about agriculture. Years ago, farmers and ranchers lived on the ranch and provided almost everything for themselves: clothing and food. They built their own houses. They did all of those things. Then as things changed we sought to do the things we do best and make our profits there and then buy from other people what they do best. That is sort of what happens in trade.

The new provision, however, is designed to go much further than what it did in the past, and I suspect this will be the controversial aspect of this negotiation in which there is a tendency on the part of particularly the folks on the other side of the aisle to bring forth a program that will be permanent, such as financing COBRA, where the insurance can be extended that one had with their company, paying for 75 percent of it from Government funds, and developing a permanent program where we are really looking for some rather short-term assistance until these folks can readjust or perhaps get rehired.

So that is kind of where we are. Certainly this is one of the issues the President has talked about a great deal

in terms of our economy and in terms of all the many things that affect us. This has been one of his highest priorities.

I have to say, despite some of the conversation that goes on, the President's priorities have done rather well in terms of taxes, in terms of energy, and I think this is another one that must necessarily be handled and put into place.

Trade promotion is critical to our economic future. The President needs the authority to extend and expand our international trade capacities. Trade negotiators need legislation to ensure they are afforded a seat at the negotiation table.

I have already mentioned that many of these negotiations have gone on without us. This bill provides a reasonable and effective procedure for congressional consultation and involvement. It avoids establishing unwarranted mandates that would adversely affect the negotiating authority of the President. It ensures that the laws of the United States are maintained and protected.

I suspect this will be somewhat controversial. Each of us will have some of our parochial feelings about it. Wyoming is very involved in agriculture. Trade is important to Wyoming agriculture. It is important to beef, wool, wheat, and lamb. We have been through this. But TPA will provide the negotiators a chance to reduce those barriers and get us a better seat at the table.

Despite our relationship with Japan, I think there is still about a 40-percent tariff on beef. That is a high tariff in Japan. We need to work at reducing those tariffs because, for agriculture, one of the best futures we have is the opportunity to expand markets beyond our domestic market.

I look forward to this debate and discussion, and, frankly, I look forward to finishing the discussion this week so we can get on with protecting our markets and making our economy even stronger.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MESSAGE ON EDUCATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, we speak frequently of Nevada's security needs. We speak frequently of the security needs of every State in the Union, especially after September 11. We speak frequently of American security needs, and understandably so. But we should also realize that the strength and security of our Nation require

more than bombs and bullets and our brave men and women in uniform.

The future of our country will also be determined by our children and our grandchildren and how they are going to be educated. I believe we have a high priority for America to educate our children, making sure that all children have the tools and opportunity to succeed.

Nevada is similar to almost every State in the Union with regard to educational needs today. However, we also have unique problems. In the Las Vegas area, the Clark County School District is the sixth largest school district in America with 240,000 kids. We have built 18 new schools in 1 year to keep up with the growth.

In other parts of the State, teachers have been laid off because the population growth was not as rapid and there are fewer people living there. Jobs have been cut back, especially in places where mining is so important. Mines have been cut back.

The things I hear about education in Nevada I think can be applied all over the country. For example, a couple of weeks ago two women came to visit with me. They are schoolteachers in Nevada, one representing Las Vegas and one representing Reno. They specialize in educating kids who are really smart. They were here to tell me of the cutbacks in programs in both the Reno and Las Vegas areas. These children have IQs of more than 130. Those programs for smart kids in Clark County are basically gone. In Reno we still have some, but not as many as they should have.

In Nevada, the high school dropout rate is very high—one of the highest in the country. Twenty-seven percent of the children who drop out of high school in Clark County have IQs of more than 130. Think about that. The smart kids have no programs for their interests. They are geniuses. Anyone with an IQ that high is really smart. With all the cutbacks in funding for IDEA—a program for kids with special needs—we do not have the ability in Nevada and other parts of the country to educate those children.

Think about that—27 percent of the kids dropping out of high school in the sixth largest school district in America. That school district is one of leaders in high school dropouts. They are geniuses.

Often, education—especially elementary and secondary education—is viewed as a local issue because most decisions are made by local leaders, school boards, principals, teachers, and parents, as it should be. But the Federal Government should and does play an important role in helping to educate America's children.

One of the high points of my congressional service was when we joined together on a bipartisan basis to pass an education bill. We agreed to work to improve the quality of education in America's public schools. We worked in a bipartisan manner to reauthorize the

ESEA. We passed a strong educational reform program that requires States to set high standards for every student, to strengthen Federal incentives to boost low-performing schools, and to significantly improve educational achievement. We even gave the legislation a catchy name—the No Child Left Behind Act.

Unfortunately, though, the President has not lived up to what I thought was the bipartisan spirit of the legislation we passed. We need to not only authorize legislation but we need to appropriate money for it.

Less than a month after signing this bill, the President proposed a budget which cuts almost \$100 million in funding for the No Child Left Behind Act. In addition to that—in effect, rubbing salt into the wound—we learned that the President wants to squeeze \$1.3 billion from the Federal student loan program that helps millions of college students, recent graduates, and their families. Actions speak louder than words. This administration should want to do more than just talk about education.

This administration can't claim to be committed to education while simultaneously making it more difficult and more expensive for students to pay for their college education.

What am I talking about? I am talking about the administration's recent pronouncement regarding Federal loan programs. Millions and millions of poor and middle-income students rely on student loans to pay for their education. Without these loans, these children and young adults would be left behind.

Currently, students and recent graduates can consolidate their loans and repay their debts with a fixed interest rate. The President's plan, however, would force students and graduates to pay thousands of dollars more by subjecting them to a variable interest rate.

What does this mean? It means you would borrow money and never know what the interest rate was going to be. You wouldn't be able to consolidate the loans. When students go to college and to graduate school, or a professional school, when they graduate and want to consolidate their loans, they should be able to do that and have one interest rate. The President is suggesting they can't do that anymore.

To be competitive in the future and remain in our leadership position with schools and colleges, America needs to encourage and support students seeking higher education.

People can quibble about public education. I am a great proponent of public education. About 95 percent of all kids in America go to public schools. There is some criticism due about the public education system—no question about that. But college education in this country is second to none.

Of the 131 top schools and colleges in the world, the United States has 124 of them. Colleges in America are the best. We have to maintain that superiority.