

I do not for the life of me understand that. It makes no sense that this country does not any longer understand that international trade is a significant foundation for this country's economic future. That foundation is either a foundation of cement with strength or quicksand that washes away quickly.

I have a chart which I believe shows a graph of where we have been with all these trade agreements. One after another of these trade agreements has traded away this country's economic interests. You can see the line. It describes when the Tokyo round of GATT was approved. It describes the Uruguay round of GATT. It describes where we are with WTO, and with NAFTA.

It seems to me when something isn't working, you ought to change it. Yet we see no proposal here for change at all. It is just let's have a couple more helpings from the same menu, and the menu isn't working for our country.

There are so many issues related to this. I talked about jobs because, in my judgment, that is central to this. First, you have currency issues and the fact that China, for example, dramatically undervalues its currency against the U.S. dollar. They have a terrific advantage in our marketplace in trade.

There are so many different facets of trade that it is almost hard to describe. You have the political issues. Some countries as a matter of governance decide here is the way we will compete. For example, I have mentioned on a couple of occasions today that some countries will prohibit workers from organizing. We are proud that our country protects those rights. We understand it has strengthened this country and it is good for our country. In fact, the way we have developed a strong middle class in our country is with the development of a manufacturing sector in which workers are organized and have been able through their strength to collect a reasonable share of the national income from manufacturing. But some countries say we will prohibit as a matter of political choice workers from organizing.

Then there are some others who say it doesn't matter that our manufacturing base is eroding; if that is what happens as a result of some natural function of trade, that is all right for our country. Well, it is not all right. There is no country that will long remain a world power—none—without a strong manufacturing base. You cannot be a world economic power without a strong manufacturing base. Those who think this country will remain a strong, vibrant, growing, economic superpower are dead wrong if they allow this manufacturing base to be dissipated. Too many of my colleagues seem to think it is just fine; whatever happens, happens.

It is not fine with me. All you have to do is look at where this country is headed in international trade. Look at what has happened to our manufacturing base. Look at how good jobs

have shrunk in this country. I am talking about those people who worked in the coal mines, those who worked in the steel mills, those who worked in our manufacturing plants who used to earn a good wage with good benefits and good job security, and who now discover we are racing toward the bottom to figure out how we can compete with other countries that pay a dime an hour or 20 cents an hour.

How can we compete with other countries that have no laws that prevent them from abusing the environment with chemicals going into the airshed and into the water? If you wonder about that, just travel a bit. Go to those countries—I have—and take a look at what happens. Then ask yourself, Is that the level of competition? Is there an admission price to the American marketplace that says it is almost free? That you don't have to reach any threshold? And any trade—using circumstances I have previously described—is fair trade to which we ought to subject our workers and our employers?

I have explained at great length why I intend to vote no on these two trades agreements. It is not about Chile. It is not about Singapore. It is about a process that is fundamentally bankrupt. It is about trade negotiators who ought to be ashamed of themselves. It is about past trade agreements that are incompetent, whose repercussions we are dealing with today.

I have, from time to time, threatened to offer legislation that would require all U.S. trade negotiators to wear a jersey. When you are representing the United States of America in the Olympics, you wear a jersey that says "USA." It seems to me that perhaps our trade negotiators—more than almost anyone—need to have a jersey to be able to look down at and understand who they represent.

Will Rogers used to say: The United States of America has never lost a war and never won a conference. He surely must have been thinking about trade negotiators. This country had better develop a backbone and some will and some nerve to stand up for its economy and stand up for its workers and stand up for its employers—no, not in a way that is unfair to any other country but in a way that says to any other country: We are open for business, we are ready for competition, and we will compete anywhere and with anyone in the world, but we, by God, demand that the rules be fair. And if the rules are not fair, then we intend to change them to create rules that are fair to our country.

I yield the floor.

IN APPRECIATION OF OUR KOREAN WAR VETERANS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, on July 27, 1953, our country signed an armistice agreement that ended the Korean War after 3 years of devastating combat. Yesterday marked the 50th an-

niversary of the war's end. Today I rise to honor the courage and sacrifice of the military veterans who fought this war and to proclaim that our country has not forgotten their service.

More than 1.8 million Americans fought on the front lines of our battle to defend freedom and democracy on the Korean Peninsula. They joined with allies from 21 different nations to ensure that the people of South Korea would not be ruled by the tyranny and oppression of communism. More than 36,500 soldiers committed the ultimate sacrifice in this effort, and another 103,000 Americans were wounded in some of the bloodiest and most traumatic fighting the world has ever seen.

Currently, around 12,000 veterans of the conflict live in South Dakota. They are now among the elder statesmen of our country's long lineage of heroism, true role models to our youth and an inspiration to those service members now fighting around the world against terrorism and brutal dictatorship.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean dictator Kim Il-Song sent 135,000 troops to invade South Korea. The international response was immediate, and President Truman sent troops to defend the South Koreans 2 days later. For more than 3 years, these troops fought to preserve the integrity of South Korea. But this conflict was not simply about protecting the sovereignty of one nation against the designs of its invader. Rather, the Korean War represented an epic struggle of two political ideologies: the democratic values of peace, freedom, and self-determination against a communist system based on tyranny and violence.

No less than the fate of the world was at stake on the hills and plains of the Korean peninsula. With some of the century's most infamous tyrants Mao and Stalin backing the North Koreans and the world's beacon of democracy fighting alongside the South Koreans, this conflict could not have had higher stakes. Consequently, we future generations of Americans are deeply indebted to the veterans of the Korean War; it is to them we owe the preservation of our very way of life.

And yet, despite the significance of their achievement, these soldiers were never greeted with the type of homecoming befitting their heroism. A nation that, after World War II, was weary of war never fully grasped the enormity of the military's mission in Korea. Few returning troops were greeted with the ticker-tape parades and community celebrations that were common after World War II. The Korean War became the Forgotten War.

As our country honors the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, I say to America's veterans of this war, you are forgotten no more. Your legacy is our nation's prosperity, our continuing commitment to liberty and democracy. Your legacy is a thriving, democratic nation of 40 million souls on the southern half of the Korean Peninsula. With

great personal sacrifice and tremendous dedication, you secured our future. And while we sometimes take our way of life for granted, the veterans of the Korean War remind us that, as their Korean War Commemoration Flag proclaims, "Freedom is not free." Without the dedicated service and sacrifice of the soldiers we celebrate in this, the Year of the Korean Veteran, our nation would not be able to enjoy the freedom and prosperity that we too often take for granted. So, on behalf of later generations of veterans, like myself, and on behalf of all the citizens of South Dakota and all Americans, thank you for your lasting contribution to our nation's greatness. You, the veterans of the Korean War, are true American heroes, and we salute you.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President I have a poem written by my constituent Dee M. Tramontina of Buck Hill Falls, PA.

I rise today so that I might call special attention to the thoughts and observations of my constituents who would like to accord proper recognition to those brave Americans who sacrificed, fought and died in the Korean conflict.

I would like to recognize both Dee M. Tramontina and Albert Tramontina, Jr., who, on behalf of the Monroe Chapter of the Korean War Veterans Association, have shared a poem with me concerning the conflict which ended 50 years ago.

I would like to call attention to this historic anniversary by asking that Dee's poem be printed in the RECORD.

THE "FORGOTTEN WAR" NO MORE

(By Dee Tramontina)

Some have made the grave mistake
Of calling Korea the forgotten war
But you can bet that none of them
Had to storm the Inchon shore
I am also very positive it's memory
Sadly stays with all of those
That at the Chosin Reservoir
They shivered, fought and froze
Perhaps you know of someone
Who fought among the ranks
And saw the awful, bloody terror
Of "Old Baldy" or the Yalu River banks
Be assured that a foggy memory
Would be a relief to maintain
For those that charged up the hill:
"Heartbreak Ridge" it seems, in vain
We can be sure that there are some
To this very day can still
Hear the horrors of the battle
We know as "Pork Chop Hill"
Definitely an everlasting imprint
Of the 38th parallel has been burned
Into the hearts and minds of families
Of the many heroes that never returned
We are coming up on fifty years
Since Panmunjom brought peace
In honor of those that fought there
May the memory never cease

VA POLICY

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the attached article from the Gainesville Sun be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Gainesville Sun, July 19, 2003]

PERVERSE VA POLICY

There is something perverse about the Bush administration's push to cut medical services for veterans at a time when America is fighting a war in Iraq with the help of tens of thousands of reservists and guard members.

Most of those citizen soldiers will come home to once again take up their non-military lives and careers. And those who do develop service-related illnesses and injuries (anybody remember Gulf War Syndrome?) will invariably turn to a Veterans Administration medical facility for care.

In the North Florida-South Georgia region alone, about 5,600 reservists have been called to service for the current conflict. When they come home, some may require the care available at the Lake City VA Medical Center. But even if none do, that medical center already treats about 36,000 area veterans.

And yet, a VA reassessment group—perversely called the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services, or CARES—has called for services to be eliminated or scaled back at the Lake City VA and 19 other veterans facilities around the nation.

In response to a directive from Washington, local VA officials have, albeit reluctantly, submitted recommendations that would involve turning the Lake City medical center into an outpatient clinic, transferring 230 nursing home patients to private facilities—assuming adequate facilities can even be found in the largely rural region—and/or transferring patients to Gainesville's VA.

The objective would be to save perhaps \$6 million a year by eliminating jobs and operational costs at the Lake City VA center. That seems like a false economy in light of the thousands of veterans who depend on the center for care.

Fred Malphurs, director of the North Florida-South Georgia Veterans Health System, was clearly not enthusiastic about complying with the directive to identify cuts. "The benefits would be, in my opinion, marginal at best," he told The Sun last week.

Whatever the perceived "benefits" of closing down or drastically cutting back on Lake City's services, the impact on area veterans would be negative to the extreme. It also seems a bitter pill for veterans to have to swallow at a time when thousands of area reservists and regular military personnel (read future veterans) are still risking their lives and their health fighting a war half a world away.

Nationally, the VA does have a problem with underutilized facilities. We just have a difficult time believing that Lake City's VA center is one of them.

Florida is a magnet for retirees, many of them veterans of past conflicts. We would think that if anything, the demand for veterans medical services is rising, not falling, in the Sunshine State.

As North Florida becomes a more desirable destination for retiree vets, demand for care at the Lake City VA center is only going to grow.

SALUTE TO THE 109TH ENGINEERING BATTALION

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, today South Dakotans will welcome home the 109th Engineering Battalion of the South Dakota National Guard. This unit, headquartered in Sturgis, was among more than 20 Guard and Reserve

units from my State called to active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On March 23, it became the first South Dakota unit to enter Iraq, and was the only South Dakota unit to operate in Iraq during the early days of combat.

Today, these soldiers and their achievements become a part of South Dakota's military heritage. Like those who served in the two world wars, in Korea, in Vietnam, and in numerous other places, this new generation has answered the call. They have offered to make every sacrifice, including life itself, to protect our freedom and security. We must never forget them or the honor with which they served.

The 109th Engineering Battalion is a headquarters battalion of 39 members, responsible for the management of several other units in carrying out engineering missions. The 109th was a critical part of our Nation's efforts in Iraq, completing a wide variety of missions, from force protection, to mine clearing, to construction of the Cedar II Logistical Support Area. The unit managed the activities of the 68th Engineering Company, the 95th Firefighters, the 520th Firefighters, and the 562nd Firefighters.

After being stationed in Kuwait during the month leading up to the conflict, the 109th moved to Tallil Air Base in southeastern Iraq, just outside of al Nasiriyah, where some of the war's most fierce fighting occurred. When the members of the 109th arrived at their destination, Logistical Support Area Adder on Tallil Air Base, they found an encampment that was quickly filling up with soldiers from the Army, Air Force, Marines, and from the British military. Force protection would be essential to guaranteeing these troops a swift victory over the stiffening opposition in the region.

At LSA Adder, the 109th oversaw the preparation of the battlefield for combat, preparing fighting positions, constructing guard towers, building a 3-mile protection berm around the perimeter, establishing supply routes, and building two Patriot Missile launch sites. In addition, the 109th managed the establishment of critical life support structures for the camp, including a water well, nuclear-biological-chemical (NBC) decontamination sites, a major Convoy Support Center, latrines, showers, and roadways.

I am proud to welcome home the members of the 109th Battalion and to commend them on a job well done. All of us know about the tremendous courage and commitment of the infantry soldiers and others who engage the enemy directly. But often we don't recognize the vital efforts of those units behind the scenes—units like the 109th that prepare the battlefield, provide medical care, establish life support services, and transport supplies. Their work ensures the success of our front-line troops and helps to hold casualties to a minimum. In 3 short weeks of fighting, the United States military