

that modernizing the tanker force is a vital national security priority.

While some members and some committees differ on the amount of funding that they believe is required to carry out this program fiscal year 2008, I believe that the Senate can agree that carrying out this program is a vital national security priority. I appreciate my colleagues' support for this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, is there any objection if we proceed to morning business?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, there is no objection on this side. We will resume the bill tomorrow morning, I presume, around 10 o'clock.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

Would that be enough, I ask Senator BROWN? Ten minutes? You can ask unanimous consent to extend it.

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

The Senator from Ohio.

PRIVATIZATION

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, although we are in morning business, I wish to add some comments to what Senator MIKULSKI said about privatization because what we have seen throughout our Government—whether it is Medicare, the efforts to privatize, which, unfortunately, have been partially successful at privatizing but not so successful in serving the public, serving seniors, and the totally unsuccessful effort to privatize Social Security—what we have seen in public education, what we have seen in the prison system in my State of Ohio, what we seen in several kinds of efforts to privatize have often resulted in more taxpayer dollars being spent, a reduction in service, to be sure, less efficiency, and less accountability.

So her amendment is right on the mark. Her efforts in privatization generally are very important. I thank the senior Senator from Maryland on that.

TRADE POLICY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, our Nation's haphazard trade policy has done plenty of damage to Ohio's economy, to our workers—from Steubenville to Cambridge, from Portsmouth to Wauseon—to our manufacturers—in Bryan and Cleveland and Akron, and Lorain—and to our small businesses in Dayton, Cincinnati, and Springfield.

Recent news reports of tainted foods and toxic toys reveal another hazard of ill-conceived and unenforced trade rules. They subject American families, American children, to products that can harm them—that in some cases can actually kill them.

Our trade rules encourage unsafe imports. Our gap-ridden food and product inspection system lets those imports into our country. Our lax requirements for importers let those products stay on the shelves. And our foot dragging on requiring country-of-origin labeling leaves consumers in the dark. It is a lethal—all too lethal, all too often—combination.

With a total lack of protections in our trade policy, we do not just import goods from another country, we import the lax safety standards of other countries. If we relax basic health and safety rules to accommodate Bush-style, NAFTA-modeled trade deals, of course, we are going to find lead paint on our toys and toxins in our toothpaste.

Just think of it this way: When we trade with a country, when we buy \$288 billion of products from China, for instance—a country that puts little emphasis on safe drinking water, on clean air, on protections for their own workers, on consumer protection, and then they sell those products to the United States, why would they care about products, consumer products, toys that are safe or food products that are safe, when they do not care about that in their own country for their own workers and for their own consumers?

Add to the fact that U.S. companies put tremendous pressure on their Chinese subcontractors to cut the cost of production to cut their own costs, and the Chinese are going to use lead paint because it is cheaper. They are going to cut corners on safety because it is cheaper.

At the same time, the Bush administration has weakened our Food and Drug Administration, Department of Agriculture, and Consumer Product Safety Commission rules, and that is compounded even further because they have cut the number of inspectors. So why should we be surprised when we see toys in our children's bedrooms that are dangerous, or when we see vitamins in our drugstores and food in our grocery stores that are contaminated?

Due to trade agreements, there are now more than 230 countries and more than 200,000 foreign manufacturers exporting FDA-related goods—FDA-regulated goods—to American consumers.

Before NAFTA, we imported 1 million lines of food. Now we import 18 million lines of food. One million lines of food in 1993; today it is 18 million lines of food.

Unfortunately, trade deals put limits on the safety standards we can require for imports and even how much we can inspect imports. I will say that again. We pass a trade agreement with another country. It puts limits on our own safety standards, and it puts limits on how much we can inspect those imports.

Our trade policy should prevent these problems—not bring them on.

Now the President, though, wants new trade agreements with Peru, Panama, South Korea, and Colombia—all based on the same failed trade model that brought us China, that has

brought us NAFTA, that has brought us the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

This Chamber will soon consider—maybe even next week—a trade agreement with Peru. Some may wonder why we are entering into new trade agreements right now considering we have had five straight years of record annual trade deficits.

When I first ran for Congress in 1992, on the other side of the Capitol, to be a Member of the House of Representatives, our trade deficit was \$38 billion. Today, it exceeds \$800 billion. Our trade deficit with China was barely double digits 15 years ago. Today, it exceeds \$250 billion.

The NAFTA/CAFTA trade model has driven down wages and working conditions for workers in Marion and Mansfield and Bucyrus and Canton and all across the United States and abroad.

This kind of trade has torn apart families' health care and pension benefits. It undermines our capacity even to produce equipment vital to our national security.

Contrary to promoting stability in Peru and the Andean region, as this trade agreement's supporters would say, these trade agreements are actually more likely to increase poverty and inequality.

This month, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development issued a report warning developing countries—poorer nations that are doing trade agreements with us—to be wary of bilateral and regional free trade deals. The U.N. Report cited the North American Free Trade Agreement as an example of a trade agreement that may have short-term benefits for poor countries but has long-term harm. We know what NAFTA did to Mexico's middle class. We know what NAFTA did to its rural farmers. Well over 1.3 million farmers were displaced since the North American Free Trade Agreement in Mexico.

Let's look at Peru for a moment. Nearly one-third of Peru's population depends on agriculture for its livelihood. The development group Oxfam estimates that 1.7 million Peruvian farmers will be immediately affected by this trade agreement. When those farmers can't get a fair price for wheat or for barley or for corn, they are forced to produce other crops—almost inevitably, including coca. That means more cocaine production, it means more illegal drugs in the United States. We have been there before. We have seen that before. We have seen the rural dislocation in Mexico, after NAFTA, and there is nothing to suggest the Peru trade agreement will be any different.

Scholars, including former World Bank Director Joseph Stiglitz, note that rural upheaval from trade deals means more violence, more U.S. money spent on drug eradication.

An archbishop in Peru said:

We are certain this trade agreement will increase the cultivation of coca, which brings drug trafficking, terrorism, and violence.

So if we are talking about combating terrorism around the world, the exactly 180-degree wrong thing to do is a trade agreement with Peru because it will mean, as the archbishop said, the increased cultivation of coca because we will put some of their corn farmers, their barley farmers, their wheat farmers out of business. More coca, more drug trafficking, more terrorism, more violence, more instability.

We need a new trade approach in our policy, one that benefits workers here and promotes sustainable development with our trading partners.

This Peru agreement has some improvements in labor and the environment. It is important to note that this change in the administration's view toward labor and environmental rules of trade agreements would not have happened without voters' demand for change last year. But the demand for change in trade policy runs deep. We have heard workers in Ohio and around the country call for big changes in trade policy, and we are hearing consumers in Avon Lake and in Kettering demand accountability for the unsafe imports that are on our shelves. Passing a trade agreement with Peru is not the change we need. We want trade. We want more trade. We want trade under different rules and, most importantly, our responsibility is to protect our family's health and protect our children.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING MR. WILLIAM W. WIRTZ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to commemorate the life of William W. Wirtz, a truly outstanding Illinoisan who passed away this week.

Bill Wirtz was a businessman, sports fan, and philanthropist. He took over operation of Judge & Dolph in Illinois in 1950 and expanded that business into the Wirtz Beverage Group, comprised of five distributorships in four States. He also served as president of Wirtz Corporation, Director of First Security Trust and Savings Bank, and chairman of the South Miami Bank Corporation. But most Chicagoans will remember him as the owner and president of the Chicago Blackhawks hockey team.

The Wirtz family bought the Blackhawks in 1954, and Bill was named president of the organization in 1966, a title he maintained for over 40 years. Bill was a true hockey fan. During his lifetime, he helped negotiate

the merger between the NHL and the World Hockey Association, served on the 1980 and 1984 Winter Olympic Committees, and was chairman of the Board of Governors of the National Hockey League for 18 years. In recognition of his many contributions to the sport, Bill Wirtz was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Bill Wirtz also gave a great deal back to the community and the city of Chicago. Along with Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf, he was a driving force behind the construction of the United Center to replace the old Chicago Stadium in 1994. He also established the Chicago Blackhawks Charities, which has donated over \$7.5 million to worthy causes in the Chicago area. Perhaps closest to Bill's heart was the development of the Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Sports Program at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. Named after his mother, this program is a year-round, cross-disability sports and recreation program.

Bill Wirtz is survived by his wife Alice, five children and seven grandchildren. They have my condolences and those of so many who knew him. Bill's many contributions to Chicago and Illinois will not soon be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO DONNA L. PILE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I commend Ms. Donna L. Pile of Lexington, KY, for her service to her community and her Nation as a member and leader of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents.

Ms. Pile recently served as President of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents, the first woman ever named to that position. She previously served in many positions of responsibility for the association. Ms. Pile was also president of the PIA of Kentucky in 2000 and has been Kentucky's representative on the PIA National Board of Directors since 2000. Ms. Pile is also a member of the National Association of Insurance Women.

Active in her community, Ms. Pile is managing partner of the A.G. Perry Insurance Agency of Lexington. She has served her community as a homeroom mother in grade school and as Booster Club president to the Jessamine County Boys' Soccer Program for 10 years. She has taught PIA Young Agents classes and also served on numerous strategic planning committees for Jessamine County Schools.

As president of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents, Ms. Pile's dedication to the highest standards of her profession has earned her the respect of friends, associates, business colleagues, and the insurance industry as a whole. She took seriously her role to advocate for professional insurance agents across the United States and has left behind a stronger organization for her efforts.

I want to recognize today the many successes that Donna L. Pile has ac-

complished throughout her career and to again congratulate her on the completion of her term as the president of the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents.

TEAR DOWN THE WALLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, next April, the people of Northern Ireland will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Belfast Agreement, which did so much to put Northern Ireland on the path to end the violence that had afflicted the population for three decades, and achieve the longstanding goal of peace.

On September 20, the Irish Times published a perceptive article by Trina Vargo, President of the U.S.-Ireland Alliance emphasizing that more remains to be done and urging the people of Belfast to this auspicious anniversary as an opportunity to remove the so-called "peace" walls that continue to divide the Protestant and Catholic communities in Belfast.

The walls are still serving as physical and psychological barriers between the two communities, and Ms. Vargo's article offers a timely and creative idea that could have a widespread beneficial impact in Northern Ireland. Analogizing it to the fall of the Berlin Wall, she suggests that the simple act of removing walls can be a significant gesture in breaking down barriers in a community and promoting progress and unity.

Ms. Vargo was a member of my staff and did an excellent job on the issue of Northern Ireland for many years, and I believe her article will be of interest to all of us in Congress, especially those who worked with Ms. Vargo on this issue. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Irish Times, Sept. 20, 2007]

TIME TO TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS OF DIVISION

With things settling down in Northern Ireland, isn't it time to consider taking down the so-called "peace" walls separating communities instead of erecting more, asks Trina Vargo.

Everyone of a certain age distinctly remembers the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The sight of East and West Germans joining in celebration on the wall, and the chipping away of it over the following weeks, demonstrated to the world—in a way that no other act could—that the cold war was truly over. Can the walls come down in Northern Ireland? Next April, Senator George Mitchell will return to Belfast to participate in an event marking the 10th anniversary of the Belfast Agreement. We have also invited Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, Tony Blair and Bill Clinton to join him and other negotiators of the agreement, as well as the DUP, to consider Northern Ireland's divided past and its shared future.

We hope that the people of Belfast will consider using this occasion to take down at least a part of the "peace" line and send a message to the world, and to themselves. I