Mr. SPECTER. Then I ask unanimous consent that I might be recognized to speak up to 5 minutes at the conclusion of her remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. I say to my friend from Pennsylvania, I may finish sooner than that, and I will endeavor to do so.

LOOKING AHEAD

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I think the Senator from West Virginia, Senator ROCKEFELLER, made a very strong plea for giving the President fast track. I find it interesting that those who support fast track say those who do not, in this case, oppose trade. I think the truth is there are those who support fast track on any given occasion, and there are some who oppose it on every given occasion. I find myself in the middle of the road here, where I have given fast-track authority to Presidents when I felt it was in the best interests of our country, of our working people, and of our environment. That is usually when trade is being is being negotiated with countries that have decent labor standards, decent prevailing wages, and decent environmental standards.

So on that topic, I think it is simplistic to say that either you are for trade or against it. I think we are all for trade. I think the question is, is it fair to America? Will it result in good-paying jobs or will it put the squeeze on jobs? And should we give up our authority here in the Senate and the House, should we give that up regardless of whether it is a President of my own party or another party? Or should we hold on to that authority so we can, in fact, stand up for American values and American workers and American interests?

As we reach the end of this session of Congress, I would like to comment on a couple of the issues that we have taken up in the Senate and look ahead for some issues I hope we will take up when we return. As one of the two Senators from the largest State in the Union, every single thing that we do here and every single thing we fail to do here has a major impact on my State. It has 33 million people, more seniors than any other State, more young people than any other State, more workers than any other State, more women than any other State, more infants than any other State. So whatever issue we turn to here impacts my people enormously.

I share pride in knowing that I was able to work with a majority of my colleagues to bring a balanced budget, but one with a heart, to the U.S. Senate and to the President's desk for signature. The march toward fiscal responsibility in this country was actually started when President Clinton took the oath of office. I remember that day because we were filled with promise and hope that we could finally tackle some of our problems. And we did.

I might say it was a tough year for Democrats, because we didn't get any bipartisan help in that budget. But that budget in 1993 was the budget that led us to fiscal responsibility. It took us down that fiscally responsible track. I remember, because I am on the Budget Committee, hearing the comments of my Republican friends at that time that this budget was a disaster, that President Clinton's policy would lead to unemployment, recession, depression—everything bad that you could think of. We persevered and we believed in what we were doing, and I am happy to say that this year we finished the job with our Republican friends. Gone are the days of Government shutdowns, because the American people spoke out in that last shutdown and said: You were sent here to do your job. We want fiscal responsibility but we are not going to have our budget balance on the backs of our grandmothers and grandfathers, our children, the most vulnerable people. We are not going to balance the budget while hurting education and the environment. So the budget agreement took all that into consideration. I think we all have a lot to be proud of.

As we moved forward on the fiscal responsibility front, unfortunately I saw us move backward in a number of areas. I want to touch on those.

In 1973, Roe versus Wade was decided. It is the law of the land. Yet this Congress is constantly trying to roll the clock back to the days when women were in deep trouble in this country because abortion was illegal. We know that there is not the will to have a vote to outlaw abortion because the votes are not there, and the American people would be stunned if a woman's right to choose was completely denied. So what the opponents of a woman's right to choose have done is to chip away at that right. And there are many women in this Nation who have their choice imperiled. Who are these women? Women in the military, women in the Federal work force, poor women in America—all women in America, because fewer and fewer hospitals are teaching doctors how to perform safe, legal abortion.

I don't know why we have to keep turning back the clock to the days when women were in trouble in this country. Why don't we move on? I have a bill that would codify Roe versus Wade. I am looking forward to talking more about that next year. It seems like there is a group that wants to reopen that battle all the time. They want to reopen the battle over Medicare. They want to fight us on issues that already were fought in the 1950's. That's when Dwight David Eisenhower said the National Government ought to have a role in education. In the 1960's, that's when President Johnson said Medicare is important. In the 1970's, that's when President Nixon said we need an Environmental Protection Agency.

I think America does better when we move forward. So I am hoping when we get back here we will complete some unfinished business. First of all, we should fill up all the judgeships that are languishing. Justice delayed is justice denied. We have very fine people waiting to be confirmed by this U.S. Senate. I am very pleased that we did pass a number through, but there are a number left to go. I am very pleased Senator LOTT has worked with Senator DASCHLE and we will have a vote on Margaret Morrow. But we need to do it. We must also confirm the nomination of Bill Lann Lee to be Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. We cannot allow this important position to remain unfilled while such a superb nominee is ready, willing, and able to assume to the job.

We also need the IRS reform that Senator BOB KERREY spoke about so eloquently. And we need passage of campaign finance reform, the McCain-Feingold bill.

Let's place some national standards on our HMO's and ensure that all Americans enrolled in managed care plans receive quality treatment and are always treated fairly by insurance companies.

We need to pass the transportation bill, not just for 6 months, but for 6 years. Our people need highways built. They need transportation systems that work. We owe it to them.

We must make stopping gun violence a national priority. Junk guns have no place on our streets. And we must ensure that all handguns in America are sold with a safety lock. Taking this step would save hundreds of lives every year.

Let's make a national priority of health research. That is what the people want. They want a cure for Alzheimer's, AIDS, breast cancer, prostate cancer, scleroderma, ovarian cancer—these are the things they so worry about with their families today. Let's make a priority of health research.

He is our leader on doubling the National Institutes of Health. He has teamed up with Senator CONNIE MACK on this. It is time that we do this. The American people need it.

We need some minimum standards for day care. Senator DURBIN was on the floor today eloquently speaking about the needs of those infants and those toddlers and how the brain develops. By age 3, 90 percent of the brain is developed. Yet, we have no national standards for child care in this Nation.

So I think it is time that we looked at certain issues. We say children are our priority. Let's pass the Children's Environmental Protection Act and protect them from pollution. We have seen a 30-percent increase in brain tumors among our young children in the last 10 years.

We need national standards for education. We had a good compromise in the U.S. Senate, and the House would not accept it. What are we afraid of? Why wouldn't we want our parents to have a chance to see whether their children are reading at the proper

level, doing math at the proper level? If we really care about our children, let's put some responsibility on the teachers, and this is one way I think we ought to do it.

Superfund reform. We have toxic waste dumps all over this country. We need to clean them up. The law needs to be refined. Too much money goes to attorneys and not enough to clean up the mess. The polluter has to pay. We can't allow the taxpayers to pick up the tab. We need to move forward.

In closing, I want to say this. We are going to be celebrating Veterans Day on November 11. It is a special, special day. It also happens to be my birthday, and I am very proud to share it with the veterans.

Year in and year out, we hear about how many of the homeless in our streets are veterans. Mr. President, how can we, as the United States of America, celebrate Veterans Day knowing that so many of our vets have been turned aside?

I hope we will move on that and on the gulf war syndrome. We cannot turn our back on veterans who served our Nation in wartime and came back sick.

We did it in Vietnam when our veterans were exposed to agent orange. We did it again with gulf war syndrome. We ought to hold our heads up as a nation this Veterans Day.

I really look forward to coming back here and righting some of these wrongs. Senator ROCKEFELLER has a great bill. It says if you are a gulf war veteran and suffer from a disease, you don't have to prove anything except you were in that war theater and you are now disabled in order to qualify for disability benefits. It seems to me if we stand for anything around here, it ought to be standing by our veterans when they are sick and when they are homeless.

So I leave here with a good feeling about a lot of what we did and a little bit of regret about some other things I didn't agree with. But I am excited as I think about coming back here, because I think you heard me describe that there are a number of issues we ought to address that will make life better for all of our people in the context of a balanced budget that has a heart.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair. I have sought recognition to discuss briefly two matters: First, the pending fast-track issue and, second, the pendency of our judicial confirmations.

FAST TRACK

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I will begin on the question of fast track with a statement made by the distinguished Senator from West Virginia saying that it would be disingenuous to believe that trade agreements would not be rewritten in the U.S. Senate. I say to my colleagues that I consider it unlikely that trade agreements would be rewritten in this body, considering how hard it is to get 51 votes against a committee report or against an administration position or that we might have the structure on amendments made so that it would require passage of a bill then subject to veto by the President and then subject to a two-thirds override. But if, in fact, trade agreements would be rewritten on the floor of the U.S. Senate or on the floor of the House of Representatives, then it might be something which is desirable.

I oppose fast track, although I am not opposed to free-trade agreements, because I do favor such agreements and supported NAFTA, the North American Free-Trade Agreement, and GATT, notwithstanding very considerable constituent opposition in my own State. Being elected in Pennsylvania, with 12 million constituents, it is my view that I ought to have standing as a Senator to offer amendments, and because we have had a certain amount of wisdom coming from Members of Congress on issues of trade, which are matters of very, very considerable importance.

I will analogize the activity of the Senate regarding trade agreements to what we do on treaties in general, where a two-thirds vote is required. If amendments could be offered to trade agreements, it could be of some substantial value to the President, and the executive branch in negotiating agreements with foreign powers saying, ''Well, we understand your position, but you have to understand ours, and there are certain political realities in the U.S. Congress.''

We have a variety of protocols where you have executive agreements which look very much like treaties which are not subject to ratification by the Senate. A very complicated agreement was entered into with North Korea which involved very substantial issues on nuclear power. That was the subject of a letter from the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the chairman of the Interior Committee and myself, in my capacity last year as chairman of the Intelligence Committee, asking for Senate action. So there are precedents for having the Senate exercise its judgment and I think we have some substantial judgment in the field.

I recall very well in 1984, when the International Trade Commission came down with a decision which was in favor of the American steel industry. At that time the issue arose as to whether President Reagan would overrule the decision of the International Trade Commission. Senator Heinz, my late departed colleague, a great Senator, and I went to talk to then Secretary of Commerce Mack Baldrige who thought that we were right, the American steel industry ought to have that favorable decision from the International Trade Commission. Bill Brock, the trade representative, agreed. We then talked to Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger who disagreed.

The President overruled the International Trade Commission and made the decision which was based really on foreign policy and defense policy. The American steel industry paid a very high price which should have been paid out of the general revenues. Western Pennsylvania especially, but eastern Pennsylvania, too, with Bethlehem Steel, suffered very substantially.

Right now, my distinguished colleague, Senator SANTORUM, and I are working very hard on trying to get Cigna fair access to the Japanese markets. Notwithstanding certain commitments by the executive branch and the trade representatives, we have not been able to accomplish that.

So it seems to me that there is a very good reason on principle why matters which come to the Congress on trade issues ought to be subject to amendment. We have some understanding of the trade issues, and we have some understanding of our States' stakes. I think it would be entirely appropriate for us to be able to offer those amendments and not to have to simply vote yes or no, take it all or leave it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from Pennsylvania has expired.

Mr. SPECTER. I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

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

MY GRANDDAUGHTER SILVI

Mr. SPECTER. Before commenting briefly on judges, I have a very brief personal note. Yesterday, I spoke about the appropriations bill on Labor, Health and Human Services. My 3-year-old granddaughter, Silvi, was watching the screen on C–SPAN 2, perhaps one of the few watching. She said to her father, my son, Shanin, ''Why doesn't he say hi?''

I told her I might speak this afternoon and alerted her, although the time is somewhat delayed. I do not think it is somewhat inappropriate to say hi to my granddaughter, Silvi. I know in the old days, they said you couldn't do that. But without objection, I say hi to her.

JUDGES

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I want to say a word or two about judges.

It is a very difficult matter getting judges confirmed in the Senate. I congratulate my distinguished colleague, Bruce Kauffman, a former Supreme Court Justice in Pennsylvania, for his confirmation yesterday.

I understand the distinguished Pennsylvanian from Wilkes-Barre, A. Richard Caputo, Esquire, is subject to confirmation with no objection.

I urge my colleagues to support the confirmation of Judge Frederica