AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 3172

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I wanted to briefly speak to this amendment, as well, and I thank my colleagues for their indulgence. I don't know ultimately how we will dispense with this. I understand there has been some change in the language from the original amendment that was brought to the floor.

By the way, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Arkansas, Senator HUTCHINSON.

In addition, I would like to say to my colleague, Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa, a colleague for whom I have a tremendous amount of respect, that there are some provisions in this amendment I just don't quite understand. The idea of most farmers right now being able to put money in IRAs just doesn't make a lot of sense. If I go to northwest Minnesota this weekend and I say, ''We have a sense-of-the-Senate resolution that talks about your being able to put all the extra money you are making into IRAs, tax free,'' they are going to look at me like I have been living on the Moon. What good does it do for farmers who are going under to have a provision talking about IRAs—that you can take all the extra money you have and put it into savings?

For the last several days we have been talking about a farm crisis. We have been talking about 20 percent of the farmers in Northwestern Minnesota in economic trouble. We have been talking about people not being able to cash-flow. Why are we talking about IRAs, tax-free savings, for people who not only can't save but can't cash-flow on the record low prices they are getting?

Second, we can talk about trade and fast track and all the rest. Our farmers can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime, if we have fair trade. But in all due respect—and my colleague from North Dakota talked about this the other day—if I was to take a look at the United States-Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which was the precursor to NAFTA, which then superseded that agreement, and asked the wheat farmers in northwest Minnesota, ''How are you doing on the basis of that trade agreement?'' they would say, ''What are you all talking about? You cut an agreement that did great for intellectual property rights, that did well for all the big grain companies, but left us completely out in the cold. Why in the world would you want to extend or expand that trade agreement that never gave us a fair shake or level playing field in the first place?''

Maybe the wording of this amendment has changed, and maybe everybody can agree, but I only saw the original version; I was down here on the floor listening to my colleague from Iowa. I have to say, maybe we hear what we want to hear. Maybe we talk to different kinds of farmers. Maybe there is something else that explains this. But I have been to a fair number of farm gatherings, now called ''farm crisis meetings.'' When you walk into a school in northwest Minnesota, there is a sign outside ''Farm Crisis Meeting.''

When people start talking about what is happening to them, there are two things that I hear: No. 1, we need some direct assistance; this is a disaster. In northwest Minnesota, that means scab disease, wet weather, and low prices.

My colleague, Senator CONRAD, I think, will have an amendment on the floor talking about indemnity payments. People are saying, ''In the here and now, please get that payment to us.'' It is like in Ada, Minnesota, I say to my colleague from North Dakota. We got hit with the flooding. It destroyed the high school. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Assistance, came in with direct grant money that enabled the communities to rebuild their school. That is what we are talking about—some direct assistance to family farmers so that they can rebuild their lives, so they at least have a chance to go on and don't go under.

The other thing that I hear farmers talking about over and over and over again is price. In all due respect, this Freedom to Farm legislation which my colleague, Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa, talks about, and I have heard other colleagues talk about staying the course, is a disaster. When prices were up, yes, people were for it—some were—when there were the transition payments. But we cut out the safety net; we took away from farmers their ability to have any leverage and get a fair price in the marketplace. Farmers can't cash-flow on less than $2 a bushel of corn and $2.58 a bushel of wheat. It is that simple. I think I am pretty good at arithmetic. If on every bushel of corn and every bushel of wheat you continue to lose a lot of money because it costs you far more to produce it than the price you get, then just producing more bushels of corn and more bushels of wheat will put you further into debt.

The way it works, colleagues, vis-a-vis trade, is we should go with the trade, go with the exports. But if you don't get the loan rate up, the family farmers have no leverage with the grain companies, and the grain companies make the money on the trade; it is not the family farmers. The loan rate is what is key to the price. We are talking about price. It is like when I was teaching in Northfield, MN, at Carleton College, I remember one evening bringing in a bunch of farmers from the community so they could teach the class. Many of the students, even though Rice County, where they lived, was very much an agricultural county, hadn't had a chance to learn that much about agriculture. I remember one farmer coming in and he came up to the blackboard and he wrote down ''price,'' and then underneath it ''price,'' and then underneath it ''price.''

I just want to say one more time, since we had this discussion on the floor here today, that if we don't do something about the loan rate and get it up to give the farmers a price, they can't cash-flow. The exports will be great for the grain companies, but the farmers aren't going to get the fair price. Do you think that farmers, when they are dealing with the big grain companies, are dealing with Adam Smith's invisible hand, some small businesses? They are dealing with a few large companies that dominate. They are facing an oligopoly. They need to have some leverage in the marketplace, so we need to get the loan rate up.

So, with all due respect, I am in profound disagreement about staying the course on Freedom to Farm. It has become freedom to fail. It is great for the grain companies and terrible for family farmers. If you don't get the price up, all the speeches and rhetoric in the world will not help, and the surest, quickest, most efficient, fairest way to get the price is to at least take the cap off of the loan rate.

We lost that amendment yesterday. We are going to come back to it because, in the fall, this situation could be even worse. In the short run, to lead up to my colleague from North Dakota speaking, who is about to lay down an amendment, I fully support this effort by my colleague from North Dakota, which at least will get some indemnity payments out there and give farmers some assistance so our families can stay on the land and they can have a chance at least to dream about a better tomorrow.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I must comment on Senator GRASSLEY's sense-of-the-Senate. While I unequivocally support many of the provisions within the amendment, I must voice my concern over the provision regarding extending most-favored-nation trading status to China.

For more than 20 years, the Pacific Northwest has been unable to break China's ban on our wheat. In addition, China has consistently barred imports of our apples and other high quality commodities. With these obvious barriers to American agriculture, I question the wisdom of extending MFN to China when it refuses to open its agricultural markets to our produce.

I have serious reservations regarding extending MFN status for China, but because of the dire situation facing the family farm in America, I will support Senator GRASSLEY's sense-of-the-Senate.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, the Grassley amendment that is before us today expresses the sense of the Senate about a

wide array of issues, about nine different issues in all. I agree with some of the ideas expressed in the amendment, but I have serious reservations about others.

Mr. President, among the ideas I favor are the provisions of the amendment that express support for additional capital-gains and death-tax relief.

Although it is unclear from the language of the amendment what form that relief should take, I hope Senator GRASSLEY would agree with me that a good approach on capital gains would be something like the 70-percent exclusion that would be allowed by S. 73, the Capital Gains Reform Act, which I introduced last year. That is the same exclusion proposed by President John Kennedy some 35 years ago.

Preferably, death-tax relief would mean outright elimination of the death tax, as proposed in S. 75, the Family Heritage Preservation Act. That bill, which I introduced last year, is cosponsored by 30 other Senators.

Fast-track trade authority is something that I have voted for in the past, and I will vote for it again. Hopefully, we will have the chance to do that before the year is out.

And I have long supported legislation that would provide full deductibility for health insurance for the self-employed. There is no good reason why people who are self-employed are singled out for disparate treatment when full deductibility is allowed for all other employees. We ought to provide 100 percent deductibility, and do it now, not several years from now.

Unfortunately, there is more to the amendment than capital-gains and death-tax relief, health insurance, and fast track. There are other issues, too, and some of them are quite controversial. For example, the amendment expresses the support of the Senate for full funding for the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But what does full funding mean? Is it $3.5 billion or $18 billion—or will it be more, now that the IMF and Russia are talking about another bailout? Will the funding be conditioned on meaningful reform of the way the IMF does business?

We do not know the answers to these questions from the language of the amendment. It is not designed to answer them, because it is merely a sense of the Senate amendment. But without knowing the answers, I believe it would be imprudent to go on record in support of ''full funding for the IMF.''

In fact, many of us have serious reservations about providing more money for the IMF, particularly it if is not accompanied by meaningful reform of the way the international agency does business. Many of us question the fundamental wisdom of having taxpayers bail out bad business practices and bad investment decisions abroad. Therefore, I would have to object to the IMF-related provisions we are considering here.

There is also language in this amendment on economic sanctions. We addressed that issue yesterday when we considered the Lugar, Dodd, and Torricelli amendments, so I am not sure why we are considering it again, particularly since the amendment does not specify what kind of sanctions reform is in order.

Most Favored Nation status for China is another controversial issue, and I believe we need to focus on it separately, more deliberately. There are far too many issues at stake this year to be considering MFN status along with myriad others in this sense of the Senate amendment.

Mr. President, as I said at the outset, this is only a sense of the Senate amendment. It has no force of law, no effect, regardless of whether it passes.

But I think it does cloud the record when issues like the IMF, economic sanctions, and MFN status for China are coupled with things like capital-gains and estate-tax reform, fast track, and health insurance. I would not want support for the latter set of issues to be construed as support for the former set.

Since we will still need to act on separate legislation to accomplish the things raised by the Senator from Iowa in his amendment, and since there are some key elements of the amendment to which I object, I am going to vote against the amendment. It accomplishes nothing, and it adds confusion by suggesting that members either oppose or support everything in it. My ''no'' vote should be construed as a vote against this irrelevant and confusing procedure.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, although I have great respect for the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, and I recognize that he is one of the Senate's foremost experts on matters that affect the Nation's farmers, I nevertheless strongly oppose the pending amendment. The amendment merely expresses the ''Sense of the Senate,'' and in so doing would not, if adopted, result in any legislative action in any of the areas addressed by the amendment. Nevertheless, in my years of service in this body, I cannot recall having seen an amendment that attempted to address so many diverse issues at one time. It amounts to a virtual smorgasbord, a Dagwood sandwich, a grab bag, a hodgepodge designed to enable one to issue a zillion press releases rolled into one. It is intended to be all things to all people. It is analogous to wearing a pinstripe suit, a plaid tie, paisley trousers, and a polka-dotted shirt at the same time.

The amendment raises ten very important matters and expresses the Sense of the Senate that each of these ten matters should be enacted or undertaken by the President and Congress in short order. I will not take the time of the Senate to address in detail each of the areas contained in the amendment. But, for the interest of the viewers who may be following this debate, it urges the President and Congress to pass fast track trading authority—which authority, in my view, would grossly undermine the constitutional prerogatives of the Legislative Branch to oversee trade agreements; it states that Congress should pass and the President sign S. 2178, the Farm and Ranch Risk Management Act; it calls for full funding of the International Monetary Fund—some $18 billion—over which there is substantial controversy at this time as to how much funding should be given to IMF and what reforms should be undertaken by that organization in order to be able to access any appropriations that may be provided to them; it states that Congress should pass and the President should sign sanctions reform legislation so that the agricultural economy is not harmed by sanctioned foreign trade; it urges Congress to uphold the Presidential waiver of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act relating to normalizing trade relation status to China; it calls on the House and Senate to pursue a package of capital gains and estate tax reforms; it calls on the President to pursue stronger oversight on all international trade agreements affecting agriculture; it then shifts to the question of providing full deductibility of health care insurance for self-employed individuals—urging the President to sign such legislation; it then calls on Congress and the Administration to pursue efforts to reduce regulations on farmers—never mind what regulations, it just says to reduce regulations on farmers; and finally the tenth matter in the amendment calls on the President to use administrative tools available to him to use Commodity Credit Corporation and unused Export Enhancement funds for humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President, this is an amendment which is ill-conceived and should not be attached to this Agriculture Appropriation Bill. It is a very far-reaching resolution, basically outlining an ambitious agenda for the Senate on a number of very contentious issues. I do not want to prematurely endorse action on all the items on this list, particularly before I have had a chance to study the actual language on which he proposes we act. I remind my colleagues of the old adage, ''Act in haste, repent at leisure.'' Each of these matters in the amendment is very important and deserves extensive consideration and debate by the Senate. We should not attempt to address them in this manner at this time.

I urge Senators to oppose this amendment.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me briefly rise in opposition to the sense-of-the-Senate amendment that has been offered. While I think there is much in that amendment to commend—and I support some parts of it—the first provision in that amendment is to suggest that Congress should bring up and pass fast-track trade authority. I could not disagree more with

that recommendation. I cannot support a sense-of-the-Senate resolution that includes it.

I want to just demonstrate for my colleagues with some numbers where we have been with fast-track trade authority. I know some people don't want to talk about the details; they want to talk about the theory. The theory is that if you have expanded trade around the world, that is good for everybody. I am all for expanded trade. Put me down as a ''yes'' checkmark on the line for expanded trade. Yes, this country ought to be a leader in expanding trade. But this country also ought to be a leader in saying that we demand and insist on fair trade agreements with our trading partners. And when we have trading partners that don't treat us fairly, this country ought to say, stop, wait, we won't allow that to continue to happen. We ought to say to the Chinese, Japanese, Canadians, Europeans and, yes, others that I could mention but have not, when we have a relationship with you, it must be different than the relationship we used to have just after the Second World War.

Just after the Second World War, almost all of our trade relationships were foreign policy issues. How do you treat this country? Well, this country is weak and rebuilding, so let's give them concessions here and concessions there, and we will open our market up to their products, and they can close their market to ours, because we are bigger and better and stronger and tougher and we can beat anybody with one hand tied behind our back, and that is fine. For a quarter of a century after World War II, that is the way we thought and behaved, and it didn't matter because we succeeded anyway. Income in this country had increased, economic growth was substantial, and we were just fine.

The second 25 years, post-Second World War, have been different. Our trading partners are now stronger, better, shrewder. We still have the softheaded notion that our trade policy ought to be foreign policy. We say to the Chinese, you can ratchet up in one decade a $50 billion or $60 billion trade surplus with the United States, or put the United States in a trade deficit position with China, and it is OK. Let the United States be your cash cow for your hard currency needs. That is OK. We are willing to do that. With Japanese trade, as far as the eye can see, there are $40 billion, $50 billion and $60 billion deficits every single year that we experience.

We are urged to pass fast track authority. Now, fast track—which is the reason I am objecting to this amendment—is a specific, unusual procedure that says, let's have the American trade negotiators go somewhere and negotiate a trade agreement. Almost always, it will be in a closed room, and almost always, behind a closed door. They negotiate the agreement and then bring it back. Here is the catch: Fast track means that when it is brought back to the floor of the House and the Senate, there are no amendments—no democracy here—just up or down. There are no suggestions for improvement, no objections, no amendments. You must vote up or down, yes or no, and that is fast-track authority.

Mr. President, let me just review a couple of the fast-track agreements we have had. Well, our folks went off and negotiated with Canada a fast-track trade agreement. At the time, we had about an $11 billion trade deficit with Canada. So our negotiators got involved and got behind those doors. I don't know whose ''jerseys'' they were wearing. I kind of wish we could buy them jerseys and they would say ''U.S.A.,'' indicating that they represent the good old U.S.A., that they are on our team, that they are negotiating for us. I kind of wish we could put jerseys on them and send them into the room. I expect that the people wear white shirts, and they have all the theories in mind, and they talk back and forth about trade theory.

In any event, when they did it with Canada, here is what happened. We had an $11 billion trade deficit with Canada. They went in and talked about their theories and did their little deal behind closed doors, and they brought it back to the Congress and said, OK, there's no chance for amendments. So the Congress passed it—not with my vote; I voted against it—Congress passed it, and guess what? The trade deficit with Canada doubles. It doubles. And the people that negotiated the agreement say, gee, didn't we do a good job? This is really working well. Well, what school did they go to? They do a trade agreement and our deficit doubles, and they think we are making progress? I don't know of any schools that teach that.

So they say, well, that is not enough. Now let's do a deal that includes Canada and Mexico and call it NAFTA, and we will do it under fast track. So we get them all at the table, close the room, bring more chairs to the table and negotiate some more. Still no jerseys, I expect. But they negotiate and negotiate, and they come back. Now, we had a $2 billion trade surplus with Mexico as we started negotiating.

They come back with a trade agreement, and they say to Congress, ''Gee, you've really done a good job this time.'' And Congress votes on no amendments with no opportunity to change it. I didn't vote for it. But Congress supports it, because fast-track trade authority prevents anybody from making any adjustments or changes. And the Congress then passes NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. At the time, we had a $2 billion trade surplus with Mexico. Guess what happened. The $2 billion trade surplus evaporates, and the $2 billion trade surplus we had with Mexico now becomes a $14 billion to $15 billion trade deficit—$14 billion to $15 billion deficit—and the same people who told us we ought to do it say, ''Gee, this is working really well.'' Apparently they went to the same school and took the same classes.

Let me give you some numbers with respect to Mexico, just as an example. This is how they describe these trade agreements. They say, ''From 1993 to 1996, do you know that we increased our exports from the United States to Mexico by $14 billion?'' Why, give them a blue ribbon at the county fair—$14 billion increase in exports from the United States to Mexico. They don't read what is on the other page, do they? The other page says, ''Oh, yes, we did increase our exports to Mexico some''—$14 billion. But imports from Mexico into the United States increased nearly double, from $39 billion to $73 billion—$34 billion increase in imports from Mexico. In fact, we now import more automobiles from Mexico into the United States than the United States exports to all the rest of the world.

We were told with NAFTA, by the way, ''If you pass NAFTA, guess what will happen. The products of low-skilled labor will come into the United States. That is what will happen with Mexico.''

What are the three largest imports from Mexico? The products of high-skill labor: Automobiles, automobile parts, and electronics.

But my point is simple. With Canada, with Mexico, the two most recent examples, they are saying: Take fast track, let us negotiate it, and we will essentially shove it down your throat with no opportunity for amendment, and things will work out just fine. If history is any guide, we ought to understand things don't work out fine. The NAFTA agreement was not a good agreement for this country. It is not working. It has increased this country's trade deficit. The agreement with Canada has not worked.

My colleague from Minnesota and I know other people get tired of me saying this and referencing the Canada agreement. And I am going to say it again. The Senator from Iowa acknowledges that he either heard it before or is tired of perhaps hearing it. But there is virtually a flood of grain coming into this country from Canada. Mr. Clayton Yeutter, good enough fellow, was trade ambassador at the time. He went up to negotiate this. I was on the Ways and Means Committee in the U.S. House at the time. I have in writing from the trade ambassador a representation that the trade agreement between the United States and Canada would not result in the increase in quantity of grain being shipped across the border either way—in writing, a guarantee from the trade ambassador. That is what the two sides agreed to. It wasn't worth the paper it was written on.

The agreement was passed. The fact is, we had this flood of unfairly subsidized grain coming in. We tried to enforce our laws and get the information that we ought to get from the Canadian Wheat Board.

By the way, in the negotiations with Canada, we said, ''We will allow your state monopoly trading enterprise to ship into this country.'' It would be illegal in this country, by the way, to have a state monopoly trading enterprise like the Wheat Board. But we will allow that Canadian Wheat Board to ship into our country and unfairly compete with United States farmers and refuse to disclose information about the shipping costs and the cost of acquisition.

So we finally decided to push really hard on this, and file complaints, and so on. Then we discovered a secret deal had been made with the Canadians by the trade ambassadors, and which had not been disclosed to any of us, which said in terms of antidumping, and so on, in the United States that we agree that certain payments under the GRIP payment system by the Canadian Wheat Board to Canadian farmers will not be included as acquisition costs for their grain, which means you would never be able to prove antidumping because, by definition, they excluded part of the cost of acquisition of the grain. It just essentially sold out American farmers.

I will never go for fast track—never—under these circumstances. It is not in this country's interests.

Is it in this country's interest to increase the Federal trade deficit? If so, how? Someone explain that to me. Is it in this country's interest to do another trade agreement that increases the deficit? I don't think so. Yet, what trade agreement have we in recent years negotiated that has not resulted in a substantial increase in this country's trade debt or trade deficit? Name one. No one in this Chamber can name one trade agreement that has turned out in recent years. That is because, as I have said before, our trade policies in this country are soft-headed and weak-kneed. And, yes, that is strong language, but it describes exactly what is happening to trade.

We have negotiators that negotiate fundamentally incompetent agreements because they don't have the nerve and will, it seems to me, to stand up for this country's interests. I have even thought that maybe on an appropriations bill I would offer an amendment that says let's add at least four or five employees down at USTR, and we will name them ''Backbone,'' ''Nerve,'' and will add a couple other names, and see if we can't inject some kind of passion to stand up for this country's interests and to say that we care about America's farmers, that we care about America's jobs, and we are willing to compete with anybody in the world—anybody. But the competition must be fair with respect to farmers. It is not fair.

If a state monopoly pushes the flood of unfairly subsidized grain across our border, it drops the prices for American farmers. It is not fair. It is not fair that factory workers in this country are told: ''You compete against 14-year-olds that work 14 hours a day for 14 cents an hour somewhere on the other side of the globe.'' That is not fair competition. Yet, that is precisely what is negotiated in these trade agreements.

My only point is—I will simplify it because others want to speak. I was going to offer a second-degree amendment to strip out the first provision which would push for fast-track trade authority. But in deference to time—Senator COCHRAN and Senator BUMPERS are gallantly trying to run this bill through the Senate in a way that is thoughtful and favorable to everybody—in deference to that, I will not offer a second-degree amendment. I will just oppose the amendment that has been offered. I want to cooperate. I think other Members do as well.

I do just want to say that while there is some in this amendment to commend it—some provisions to commend it, the first provision that says let's start doing again that which has failed us so badly, let's begin anew to stimulate trade policy that has resulted in such substantial increases in our Federal trade deficits, let's try once again and see if we can't do more trade agreements that have resulted in such unfairness to American farmers, I say there is no sense in that at all.

Let me complete my statement by just showing a couple of charts. This is the trade deficit. If this isn't an avalanche of red ink, I don't know what is. Those who say this is a successful strategy, I say get me the names of the people who negotiated these trade agreements and let's make sure they do not negotiate again for this country.

Let me just provide the one that shows what is happening with China. Our trade deficit with China is $50 billion and getting worse yearly. We don't get enough wheat into China. They displaced us as a major wheat supplier to China, as you know. We don't get enough pork into China. They consume half the world's pork. Our trade agreement with China, or the agreement by which we trade with China, is fundamentally unfair with us. If we take your trousers, shoes, shorts, and shirts, you take our beef and wheat, and don't tell us when you need to buy our airplanes from us, that you will only buy our airplanes from the United States if they come and manufacture them in China.

That is not fair trade.

Let's stand up for this country's interest.

There are some who say, ''Well, when you talk like that, you are a protectionist.'' I am not a protectionist. I am for expanded trade. But I am darned sure for insisting that this country demand fair trade.

Let me just, with one final chart, describe graphically what I have talked about now for a few minutes.

In 1993, when we negotiated the trade agreements with Canada and Mexico, we had a $2 billion trade surplus with Mexico and an $11 billion trade deficit with Canada. Two years later, three years later, that trade deficit went from $11 billion to $23 billion with Canada, and it went from a surplus of $2 billion with Mexico to a nearly $16 billion deficit with Mexico.

If that is progress, you give them the names of people who call it progress, and I think they ought to be banned from further trade negotiations.

So I cannot support the amendment that is offered because it calls for fast-track trade authority and the renewal of that authority. And while I will not offer a second-degree amendment to strip that, I will simply vote against the amendment for the reasons I have stated.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. CRAIG addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMS). The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, for just a few moments I would like to agree with the Senator from North Dakota on a couple of points that he just made. But I would also like to disagree with him on a few other points.

He, like I, voted against the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, and we both voted against the North American Free Trade Agreement because we felt they were not properly negotiated. We felt both agreements had loopholes in them. The Senator from North Dakota has pointed out some of those loopholes.

What we disagree on is the sense-of-the-Senate resolution that is before us now which clearly outlines what a lot of farm and commodity groups in this country feel they need this Congress and this administration to do to improve the situation down on the farm. The Senator from North Dakota is right. The situation down on the farm is not very good right now. There are a lot of farmers losing money. But the Government should not dictate rules to farmers, and the Government should not be the total safety net. In a free enterprise system, such as ours, there should be an element of risk. In the 1996 FAIR Act, Congress have offered farmers flexibility along with that risk. Today, the Senate must decide how to shape that flexibility in a way to assure that farmers can make a safe transition to Freedom to Farm. This is where the Senator from North Dakota and I disagree.

Yesterday I talked to the Governor of North Dakota, the president of the North Dakota Farm Bureau, and representatives from the North Dakota Wheat Growers. I left that meeting with the impression that these folks from North Dakota don't agree with the Senator from North Dakota either. They told me North Dakotans don't want to see Freedom to Farm reversed. They don't want Congress to lurch back into the failed policies of the past. They don't want the Government to be the largest provider of income to American agriculture, to be the one that holds the hand of the farmer and

tells the farmer what to farm, how to farm, and when to farm. They agree that these choices ought to be made by the individual, as a free person in a free market.

Now, Government has a role. The Senator from North Dakota is right when he states that the Government has not been fulfilling that role well. However, that role is not to be a safety net. It is not to be a caretaker. The proper role of the Government is to be the force which opens the door at the border. Government is to be a facilitator.

I agree with the Senator from North Dakota on that point. Our negotiators ought to put jerseys when they go into trade talks. I want it to be Team America working for America and America's farmers. But I don't want a government check to be the sole source of income to America's farmers. Past administrations tried it and farmers became victims of an agricultural system design by Government. It did not work.

Now agriculture is in transition. Times are not easy. And all of us are trying to sort out what can be done to help agriculture through that transition. But a step back into the past is not the route to take. I believe what the resolution before us today is exactly what American agriculture is looking for.

What I want to know is why was this administration asleep at the switch for 12 long months while commodity prices slid and never used the tools Congress have given them to make a difference? Was it politics or was it simply ignorance of what was going on? Did they not know what they could do and what they should have been doing?

What we heard from the commodity groups is very simple: Keep Freedom to Farm. Give us the flexibility and trade, trade, trade. They don't want crops stored on the farm—not for 1 year, not for 2 years, not for 3. They do not need a huge surplus hanging over the market. Let's move the grain. Let's sell the product.

Yet, what has this administration done? They haven't used one tool to make a difference, and they don't know how to do it. That is what is frustrating to me.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CRAIG. I can't yield. We have a time limitation. Let me close, and then the Senator from North Dakota can speak if he wishes, because there is a lot that we agree on but there is also a lot that we disagree on.

I do not want to look into the past. I want to look into the future. I want American agriculture to modernize and develop the flexibility that it ought to have. I want to help them when they need help. That is what we are on the floor discussing.

The Senator from North Dakota talks about trade deficit. Trade deficits have occurred, and I do not like it either. But I have also watched our ability to trade expand with every agreement that we have struck. We know that in American agriculture today, if you don't sell 40 percent of the crop you raise in a foreign market, you are in trouble financially. That is why they are in trouble financially today—because this Government, this administration, this USDA, didn't help them sell the product at a time when markets were collapsing and other governments were aggressively pursuing those markets.

So there are things we can do, but I hope this Senate will not step backwards into a dark age of government programs, farming controlled by Government, forcing farmers to live with a government check arriving in the mailbox as their only source of income. My farmers don't want that. Most farm groups don't want that.

That is what this resolution is about—to craft a sense of the Senate in the area of trade, in the area that deals with taxes, to offer farmers the flexibility so that they won't be injured like they where when a Democrat controlled Congress in 1986 rolled back the ability of farmers to use income averaging. Congress ought not make those same mistakes again. I don't think we will.

So let me conclude by saying this. There is a lot that the Senator from North Dakota and I agree on. We agree on the Government's inability to negotiate good trade agreements. Our trade negotiators need to be out there, working for agriculture.

I voted yesterday and I will vote today and probably again next week for programs to help American agriculture out during this transition, but they have to be compatible with Freedom to Farm. We can't go back to all kinds of on-farm programs that store the wheat and store it and store it and store it for another year. Let's sell it, move it through the market, so we can get on with the business of transition. That is what I think this resolution represents. I hope the Senate will support it.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. I will take just a couple minutes, but I must respond to the Senator from Idaho. There is no time agreement here. I wish the Senator would have allowed me to ask a question and he had responded to it.

Mr. CRAIG. I would be happy to respond to a question.

Mr. DORGAN. I would like us to have a debate. In fact, the Senator from Idaho was winning a debate we weren't having a few minutes ago. So that is the easiest debate to win. We weren't having a debate a couple minutes ago about price supports. We were having a debate about this amendment. But we did have a discussion yesterday about price supports, and the Senator from Idaho described the Democratic Congress previously that did so and so, and the President, and USDA.

This is not about which party has forsaken farmers. This is about, after all, what can be done to help farmers survive in the future. I am all for this nation to say to farmers, ''Get your money from the marketplace.'' I would love for a farmer to load up a truck and drive that truck to the country elevator and raise that hoist and drop that grain and sell it and get a decent price for it. But I will you this: that farmer loses money on every load of grain and loses big money, not because of something they have done but because of a whole range of other reasons—because, first of all, we have bad trade agreements, we have unfair grain coming in undercutting their markets, we have trade sanctions that mean 10 percent of the international wheat market is outside of their ability to sell, when they market up into the neck of a bottle against grain trade firms that hold an iron fist around the neck of that bottle when they buy farm machinery and equipment—guess what. They pay for it. They pay through the nose because those prices are going up.

When they try to get their grain to a flour miller, four milling firms own over 60 percent of the milling capacity in this country. The same thing with wet corn milling. The same thing with meatpackers.

If the Senator from Idaho can tell me that a family farmer driving on that lonely road in an old truck, in most cases a 10- or 12- or 15-year-old truck, trying to get those few bushels of grain to market, hoping above hope that they will be able to get something for that grain that meets their cost of living and meets their cost of production—if the Senator from Idaho can tell me that the deck isn't stacked against those farmers, that we don't have virtual monopolies in every area they turn around, that they don't show up at a railroad track and find that there are not two or three railroads ready to serve them, there is one (and in my State they will double-charge because there is no competition)—if the Senator from Idaho can tell me that that farmer driving that truck is driving down the road towards free and open and fair competition, then I say that is just fine, then we ought to butt out.

But if the Senator can't say that—and I do not think he can say that in a million years—then somebody, somebody, had better say that family farmers matter and the future of this country will be benefited and enhanced if we decide that family farming has value and merit.

I said it yesterday, and I am going to say it again. There is something so fundamentally wrong with what is happening in this country with respect to agriculture. We have people starving on the other side of the world, people trying to eat leaves on trees because they don't have food, and we have people driving their trucks to the elevator, sweating all year and risking everything they have in life to plant a crop

and harvest it, and they are told when they get to the elevator that their grain doesn't have value, their crop doesn't have value. That is a situation we must find a way to correct and change.

So, while we agree on some things, the Senator from Idaho and I, one thing we don't agree on is suggesting, as he has suggested, that, ''Gee, it is the Democrats here, Democrats there.'' All of us, Republicans and Democrats, have a stake in whether there are family farmers in the future.

I wish very much that we never again have to have a farm program that provides support prices. But I will say this, when grain prices collapse and crops are ravaged by disease, if someone is not available to step in to say to family farmers, ''We are here to help; you matter,'' if someone isn't around to say, ''We are not going to pull the safety net out from under you because we want you in our future,'' then they are not going to survive and we will have corporate agrifactories farming America from the west coast to the east coast. And some might be fat and happy about that, thinking it is good for the country, but it won't be me, because we will have lost something very important in rural areas of our country.

I know the majority leader wishes to be recognized. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this is a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. I know the issue is very important. I know Senators had wanted to be heard on it. But we have now been in session for 1½ hours and we have been on a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. I wonder if the Senate is not prepared to vote here momentarily. I know Senator COCHRAN has been working on that. Senator HARKIN will use just a couple of minutes, and Senator DASCHLE—did the Senator want to comment on this?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I agree with the majority leader. There is no reason why we can't bring this to closure. I think there is going to be a strong vote for it. We ought to just get on with it.

I will be prepared to go to a vote immediately. I know Senator HARKIN had a couple of minutes he wanted to speak. Then we can hold it open, if we have to accommodate a Senator. So we can get on with the vote.

Mr. LOTT. I would like to do that, because someone else will come in and say, ''Could you delay it a little longer?'' Or, ''Do it quicker?'' I would like to accomplish it quickly, but it is impossible to accommodate everybody.

I want to make this point. We have had some good debate on this. I know there are some important issues out there. But we need to get on with it and we need to complete this bill this afternoon. I would say to my colleagues, we are going to have to finish it today because we have other votes.

I hope everybody would recognize that this afternoon at some point we should just start, on both sides of the aisle, moving to table all amendments. If we had a vote right now on this bill, it would get over 90 votes. So I hope the Senate would cooperate. I know Senator DASCHLE and the managers on both sides are trying to do that. But I am a little nervous that the tempo is not there yet to get this completed so we could go on to other appropriations bills and so Senator DASCHLE and I can continue to work to try to get agreement on other important issues.

So please let's cooperate. Let's bring this to a conclusion by the middle of the afternoon. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I agree with the majority leader. We have had a good debate. We have had some very important issues debated. We were on the Lugar amendment most of the day yesterday, for good reason. It was a very controversial issue that I think was important. We had a good opportunity to discuss it. We have had some good amendments on this side.

But there comes a time when we have to bring this matter to a close. I hope my Democratic colleagues can work with the leadership here in an effort to come to a finite list that is narrower than the one that currently exists, in an effort to accommodate our schedule. I am hopeful we can do that in the next couple of hours so we have a very definitive list of what needs to be done and we can finish this bill sometime tonight or this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I make a point of order a quorum is not present.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have been listening, of course, to the last couple of days of debate. I sympathize with the majority leader and minority leader on the issue of moving ahead with the legislation. I think we should. There are some very important issues here on agriculture. We have a crisis looming for our farmers, ranchers, and our rural economies all over America.

Maybe it has not hit with full force and effect yet, as it has in North Dakota, and maybe a couple of other places, but we are on the cusp of it in Iowa. I had an Iowa farmer call me yesterday. The corn price in northwest Iowa is down to $1.89 a bushel, and it is dropping every day. It doesn't look like it is going to get any better. There is nothing out there, nothing out there that is going to do anything between now and harvesttime.

I was checking the figures a little bit, with what we had in the 1980s. We had corn priced in the 1980s—about 1985, it was down to $1.50 a bushel, and after that we had a whole wave of foreclosures and farm bankruptcies. Those of us who have been around remember that in the 1980s. The corn price in Iowa is getting down to that same level again, when you consider the increase in the cost of inputs and everything like that. So we are back where we were, right before the wave of foreclosures and bankruptcies in 1985, 1986, 1987, and 1988.

You would think we would learn from history not to repeat that, not to wait too long before we respond to this crisis. But that looks like what we are going to do here. We are just going to jaw it around and talk about it and not do anything.

I had a sense-of-the-Senate resolution a couple of days ago that basically said there is a crisis out there. There are problems out there. There is a sense of the Senate that the President and the Congress should immediately respond to this farm crisis out there. Mr. President, 99 Senators voted for it.

Yesterday, we really had a chance to do something about it by lifting the caps on the loan rates, at least for 1 year, and giving farmers more flexibility in being able to market their crops, and giving them 15 months rather than 9 months to pay it back in a marketing loan procedure—which would not leave grain hanging over the market. I heard that debate around here. Obviously, people don't understand marketing loans if they say that. So we had a good debate on that. And we lost, 56 to 43. Not one Member of the Republican side voted for it—not one. Not a single one. Yet the day before they said there was a crisis there and we have to do something about it.

Now we have another sense-of-the-Senate resolution by my colleague from Iowa. It has a lot of good language in there. There are a lot of good things we ought to do. Funding IMF, I am all for that; China; capital gains and estate tax reforms, I am all for that. That is good. Oh, yes, the Farm and Ranch Risk Management Act, which allows farmers to have IRAs. That is fine, too. But before you can have an IRA, you have to have some money. They don't have any money.

So, while my colleague's sense-of-the-Senate resolution sounds very nice, it doesn't do anything. So, once again, I guess the Senate is going to be the greatest deliberative body in the world. We will deliberate it but we won't do anything. So that is basically what we have here in this resolution.

I must say that I have one serious reservation about this amendment the Senator from Iowa offers. It says:

> Congress should pass and the President should sign S. 1269, which would reauthorize fast-track trading authority for the President; . . .

There may be a fast-track bill that I could support, but I cannot support that one. While I might vote for this amendment, I want to be clear on the

Record that I do not support S. 1269. I had an amendment to that bill that I thought had a good chance of being adopted if we ever got it on the floor. We never did. But I could never vote for S. 1269 as it is drafted.

Some of the other things in here are pretty good. I would say probably about 70 percent of this amendment is pretty good, and 30 percent is not too good. You have to weigh those around here.

We can all vote for it. It might make you feel good, but it doesn't do anything. This resolution doesn't do a thing to get the price up for our farmers. Why don't we just have sense-of-the Senate resolutions around here forever, then we won't have to do anything, but it will make you feel good. If you want to feel good, you can go ahead and vote for the Grassley amendment, but I don't think it is going to do one single thing to get the price up for our farmers that is going to help them get through this next year, not one single thing. I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment? If not, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3172. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. GLENN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 71, nays 28, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 206 Leg.]

YEAS—71

Abraham	Domenici	Leahy
Akaka	Durbin	Lieberman
Allard	Enzi	Lott
Baucus	Faircloth	Lugar
Bennett	Feinstein	McCain
Biden	Ford	McConnell
Bingaman	Frist	Moseley-Braun
Bond	Gorton	Moynihan
Boxer	Gramm	Murkowski
Breaux	Grams	Murray
Brownback	Grassley	Nickles
Bryan	Gregg	Robb
Bumpers	Hagel	Roberts
Burns	Harkin	Rockefeller
Chafee	Hatch	Roth
Cleland	Hutchison	Santorum
Cochran	Inouye	Shelby
Collins	Jeffords	Smith (OR)
Coverdell	Johnson	Stevens
Craig	Kempthorne	Thomas
D'Amato	Kerrey	Thurmond
Daschle	Kerry	Warner
DeWine	Kohl	Wyden
Dodd	Landrieu	

NAYS—28

Ashcroft	Feingold	Kennedy
Byrd	Graham	Kyl
Campbell	Helms	Lautenberg
Coats	Hollings	Levin
Conrad	Hutchinson	Mack
Dorgan	Inhofe	Mikulski
Reed	Smith (NH)	Torricelli
Reid	Snowe	Wellstone
Sarbanes	Specter	
Sessions	Thompson	

NOT VOTING—1

Glenn

The amendment (No. 3172) was agreed to.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. BUMPERS. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there further amendments?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, it is 12:15 and we have had one vote. We have dispensed with a sense-of-the-Senate resolution on the agriculture appropriations bill. Now the managers are having difficulty getting Senators to come to the floor and offer amendments. This is beyond ridiculous.

If we don't get going in the next 15 minutes or so, we are going to go live on a quorum. I am going to look, then, for the next serious action to take, because we should be through with this bill. If Senators are serious, they should be here offering their amendments. If they are not, then we are going so start having votes of another nature. We are not just going to stand in a quorum for the next hour, hour and a half. It is not fair to the managers. We will be here at midnight tonight, and I don't think anybody wants that.

So again, I call on Senators to come to the floor. Surely a Senator has an amendment, out of the 40 amendments we have pending, that could be offered. Let's dispose of it.

We will wait 15 minutes, or so, to get one going and then we will go to a live quorum.

Mr. BUMPERS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I am in the majority leader's corner on this. This is unforgivable. Maybe there is some forgiveness in the order because most Members on our side are in a meeting with the President right now. I am hoping that somebody will have the nerve to walk out of that meeting to come over here and offer an amendment and get this show on the road.

The other thing that is mildly encouraging is that we have been going over the list of Democratic amendments, and an awful lot of them are folding, and some are going to be accepted. I only know about three or four fairly controversial amendments that are probably going to require a rollcall vote—in the vicinity of three or four. The rest, I think, are either not going to be offered, or we are going to be able to accept them. Hopefully, we can get through here by sometime in the middle to late afternoon.

I certainly appreciate the majority leader's frustration, with all of these amendments lying around and nobody here to offer them. In all fairness, the reason nobody is over here is because they are all in a meeting with the President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as if in morning business for not to exceed 15 minutes.

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

CHINA TASK FORCE INVESTIGATION

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I was disappointed by some of the actions of the majority leader's statement the day before yesterday in which he provided an update on the Senate inquiry into U.S. policy on satellite exports to China.

In particular, some charged that the majority leader was engaging in partisan politics when he simply presented some of the things that we have learned in the 13 hearings and the numerous briefings and meetings held on that subject to date.

As a member of the task force appointed by the leader, I can state conclusively, Mr. President, that this investigation is driven by a desire to safeguard our Nation's security, and it is not motivated by partisan politics.

Let's examine the five main points that the leader raised in his remarks.

Point one: The Clinton administration's export controls for satellites are inadequate and have not protected U.S. security.

Many of us have been dismayed at the lax implementation and the irregular application of safeguards during launches of American satellites in China. For example, the Clinton administration has failed to require Defense Department monitors for every Chinese launch of U.S. satellites. Monitors are typically Air Force officers who are required to be present at all meetings with the Chinese launch service provider and the American satellite exporter. The monitor's presence is necessary because sensitive know-how can be inadvertently disclosed.

Chinese officials make no secret of their desire to obtain high-tech information, and the incentive for an American company to provide information