Senate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. If enacted, this treaty would be a useful tool in our efforts to stem proliferation. I hope the Senate will be allowed to act on this treaty when we return.

While we have made some progress in realigning our national security policies to more fully reflect the realities of the post-cold war world, we still have much more to accomplish. Perhaps the most startling and dramatic indicator of how far we have to go is the fact that, as I stand here today—8 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall—the United States and Russia still possess roughly 14,000 strategic nuclear weapons and tens of thousands more tactical nuclear weapons. And even more alarming, both sides keep the vast majority of their strategic weapons on a high level of alert.

In a recent editorial, former Senator Sam Nunn and Dr. Bruce Blair assert that each nuclear superpower maintains roughly 3,000 strategic nuclear warheads ready to launch at a moment's notice. According to Nunn and Blair, while this practice may have been necessary during the cold war, ''today [it] constitutes a dangerous anachronism.''

Mr. President, I believe we can and must do much more to address the threat posed by nuclear weapons. On September 17, I sent a letter to the Congressional Budget Office asking them to assess the budgetary and security consequences of a series of measures designed to reduce the spread of nuclear weapons and the likelihood they would ever be used.

I expect to receive preliminary results from this inquiry by early next year. In addition, I conducted a meeting earlier this week to explore one particular means of reducing the risk of unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons—removing from alert status some fraction of the strategic ballistic missile force.

As a result of this meeting and a series of discussions with Senator Nunn, Dr. Blair, and General Butler, I am convinced that it is time to seriously consider de-alerting at least a portion of our strategic ballistic missile. I say this for several reasons. First, the likelihood of a surprise, bolt-out-of-the-blue attack of our strategic nuclear forces is unimaginable if not impossible in today's world.

Keeping large numbers of weapons on high alert status fails to recognize this reality.

Second, concerns are growing about the reliability and condition of the Russian early warning and command and control systems. United States security depends on the Russians' ability to accurately assess the status of United States forces and to control their own forces. Public reports indicate their early warning sensors are aging and incomplete, their command and control system is deteriorating, and the morale of the personnel operating these systems is suffering as a result of the lack of pay and difficult working conditions.

It is in our interest to have Russian missiles taken off alert and Russian leaders given more time to interpret and respond to events.

Third, de-alerting a portion of our strategic missile force now could strengthen the hand of those in the Russian Duma who support START II and other United States-Russian security measures. De-alerting some United States strategic missiles could send an important signal at a crucial stage in Russia's consideration of the START II Treaty. In addition, when President Bush took unilateral action to de-alert a portion of our strategic forces, President Gorbachev reciprocated by removing from alert a number of Russian land- and sea-based missiles.

Finally, de-alerting a portion of our strategic missile force would not sacrifice U.S. security. The United States has already indicated a willingness to reduce its total strategic force to as few as 2,000 weapons. Even if we were to de-alert the entire MX force, the United States would retain roughly 2,500 weapons on alert status, and several thousand more could be made ready to launch. Moreover, should circumstances warrant, the United States could reverse any de-alerting measures it may take.

Mr. President, despite the fact that the Soviet Union dissolved and the cold war ended, the risks posed by nuclear weapons persist and evolve.

I plan to do what I can to explore options for reducing these risks. I believe de-alerting a portion of our missile force merits further study in this regard. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the administration in the next session of Congress to fully explore this measure as well as any other that could lessen the dangers of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I thank the minority leader, and I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I might be able to speak as if in morning business for up to 20 minutes, and I further ask unanimous consent that at the completion of my remarks Senator BOXER be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I thank the Presiding Officer.

FAST-TRACK LEGISLATION

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, there has been a lot of debate on the floor over the last several days about fast-track authority, and a lot of it has run against my grain. I don't think it has been at a very high level. What I would like to do is respond to a few of the main arguments that have been used against it that I have heard from some of my colleagues about both the nature of fast-track authority and the need for fast-track authority.

Before I begin I would like to say that West Virginia's economy depends and will continue to depend enormously on strong growth in its exports. So any vote which is taken which does not support the proposition of promoting exports from West Virginia is one that I would question. Indeed, the U.S. economy is moving very strongly forward. I don't believe myself that the growth will continue in West Virginia as strongly as it might have if fast track does not pass this Congress, if we do not give that authority to the President. West Virginia had $1.3 billion in exports in 1996. That's about a 35-percent increase in exports since 1992. That is quite remarkable. West Virginia's specific exports to Japan, which is our second-largest export market, went up 128 percent in 3 years. Just think about that, Mr. President—a 128 percent in 3 years; increasing exports increases West Virginia—and that dramatic increase has been with just one country—Japan. And, in fact, that means West Virginia exports to Japan totaled about $116 million in 1996, which is not a lot in some States, but it is a lot in West Virginia. U.S. exports increased by $125 billion last year alone—a lot of this because of trade arrangements.

One thing is undeniably true—denying the President fast-track authority will not create a single new job in West Virginia. Nobody can make that argument with a straight face. It won't save a single job either to deny the President fast-track authority. It will only hamper our ability to sell goods to new markets, which is what this is about, and hurt the growth of a critical sector of our economy, and one that I have personally been working on very hard over the last 10 to 15 years.

I think most of the arguments about the revolutionary provisions of fast track are highly overstated, and highly dramatized. Fast-track authority isn't anything new. And, because it is a procedural mechanism, I don't think there is anything to be feared about it. I recognize that others don't think so. Some have good arguments. Most have rather poor arguments, I think. Fast track is a mechanism simply that helps the United States keep up with the changing world economy and deal with our trading partners in 21st century management.

So, let me take a moment to respond to a few of the persistent arguments which are used against fast track. These are just a few of them.

Is there sufficient congressional consultation accompanying fast-track authority: Very big contentious deal. Right? We are ceding all of our authority to the President of the United

States. We will no longer be a Senate. We will just be a tool of the Presidency.

That is ridiculous. Congressional consultation is required in order for the administration to have and to retain fast-track authority and it has been significantly strengthened, I would say powerfully strengthened, from what was required under the legislation granting the last fast-track authority in 1988. New requirements for the administration are imposed under this bill which the House, and some Democrats in particular, don't seem to have the guts to be able to vote for it. It has all been passed through the Senate Finance Committee in order to ensure the administration carefully coordinates and consults with Congress at every stage of the process. Listen to me on this.

The 1988 act required that the President provide written notice to the Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee of bilateral trade agreements at least 60 days before providing notice to the Senate and the House of his intention to enter into an agreement—and, remember, this is the last fast-track authority—and to consult the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee regarding the negotiations.

The bill that we passed out of the Senate Finance Committee and which the Senate has voted by a vote of 69 to 31 to take up, the President to provide written notice to the Congress as a whole of his intention to begin multilateral and bilateral negotiations at least 90 days in advance.

That notice, Mr. President, must specify the date the President intends to begin such negotiations, the specific objectives of the negotiations, and whether the President intends to negotiate a new agreement, or, on the other hand, to modify an old or existing agreement. Any failure of the President to provide notice can result in the introduction and consideration of a ''procedural disapproval resolution'' which would deny fast track for the trade agreement, if the resolution were approved.

This bill also requires the President to consult with the Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee, and with other committees, before and after providing the notice of his intention to begin negotiations.

Already we are in advance of where we were in 1988.

The President must consult with all other committees that have any jurisdiction or participation in this matter that request consultations if a committee wants to be consulted. If it wants to be consulted, it can request consultation, and the President must consult with them in writing.

In addition, the Senate Finance Committee's fast-track bill requires the President to consult with the private sector advisory committees established under the 1974 Trade Act, as the President deems it appropriate, before beginning negotiations. This consultation takes place before the trade negotiations have even begun.

Before the President is permitted to enter into a trade agreement, the President must consult with the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, as well as other committees of jurisdiction over legislation involving subjects that would be affected by the trade agreement, in addition to the consultation requirements of the 1988 act, which includes discussions about the nature of the agreement and a detailed assessment of how the agreement meets the objectives and purposes of the act.

Now the Senate Finance Committee bill requires the President to consult the Congress on all matters related to the implementation of the agreement.

Free trade agreement negotiations must include an overview of the macroeconomic environment of the countries with which the President intends to negotiate and a discussion of effects on exchange rates—on exchange rates. It is a good idea included in response to concerns raised by certain Members—and it is in the fast-track authority.

These consultations must be continuous as negotiations of the trade bill are continuous. What additional requirements for consultation do the opponents of this want? Another new consultation requirement was added in response to Senate Members' concerns about side agreements that were entered into during previous free trade agreements, like NAFTA and the United States-Canada Free Trade Agreement. The new requirement mandates the President consult with respect to any other agreement he has entered into, or intends to enter into with the countries party to the agreement.

This would include all kinds of agreements: Formal side agreements, exchange of letters, and any preagreed interpretations of the provisions of a trade agreement entered into in conjunction with a trade agreement.

Advisory committee reports are required.

What provision of the extensive consultation requirements am I on? No. 7, No. 8? I have no idea what number I am on of all these new provisions which give strength to the congressional role in forging trade agreements.

Advisory committee reports are required to be submitted not more than 30 days after the President notifies Congress of his intention to enter into a trade agreement.

I know going through this amount of detail sounds arcane. But I just want to in a sense ridicule the arguments that are being used that somehow we are ceding all power to the President. Is it the U.S. Senate which is important in this, or is it jobs for workers in West Virginia and across the country which are important in this? What comes first here?

Further, the Senate Finance Committee fast-track bill requires the USTR to consult regularly, promptly, and closely with congressional advisors for trade policies and negotiations, and with the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committee whole membership, and to keep both the advisors and the committees fully informed every step of the way through the negotiations process.

Ambassador Barshefsky is over there doing negotiating, which is really done in secrecy—most of it.

No. 9. We have to be consulted on the progress of the negotiations of any trade agreement eligible for fast track so the Congress can evaluate the negotiations at each stage virtually at each hour.

I do not know what more Members might require in the form of consultation.

Because negotiations traditionally become most intense at the conclusion of the negotiation process, the Senate Finance Committee further expects that the USTR will enter into a formal agreement in the form of procedures similar to those agreed by the executive branch in 1975 that will ensure that congressional advice and committee advice will be able to be fully taken into account as in the past.

Again, this next provision must be the tenth or eleventh requirement for consultation——

As a condition of fast track authority, the U.S. Trade Representative will commit to a set of procedures that afford Members and cleared staff—not just Members but cleared staff—with necessary documents, classified, or unclassified. They will have access to things such as cables, statements of executive branch position, and formal submission from other countries. The USTR staff will work with the Senate Finance Committee to set up a system of briefings for Members during these negotiations, and appropriate staff to be included in the final rounds of the trade negotiation agreement.

And the President is required to notify Congress before initialing a trade agreement which might even be eligible for fast-track authority. He can't even put his initials on it before he consults with Congress. Once the agreement is initialed by the President, the President then has 60 days to provide the Congress with any and all changes required to U.S. law to implement the agreement.

Well, I have another two pages on that, all of them, Mr. President, simply showing that the Senate has adequate consultation—the question is how much negotiating room the President has with all these consultation requirements. No problem with the Senate.

Now, some people make this argument. Some argue fast-track authority is not needed to move trade agreements. It is absolutely true that there have been hundreds of trade-related agreements and declarations which the U.S. Trade Office has concluded during this administration. From January 1993 to just last month that has been the case.

But, let me give my colleagues some examples of these many trade deals that the opponents of this bill point to to suggest that trade agreements continue to be made and that fast-track authority is not really necessary; in other words, you don't have fast track authority to have trade agreements. Well, a lot of these agreements which have been agreed to and negotiated are very peripheral in nature. One, a bilateral investment treaty with Albania. Great. And then an agreement regarding processed chicken quotas with Canada. A memorandum of understanding on trade in bananas with Costa Rica. Wonderful. A trade and intellectual property rights agreement with Estonia. Historic. An agreement on a temporary waiver of Hungary's WTO export subsidy schedule. Wow. Harmonized chemical tariffs with Japan. All right, that's good. An agreement on trade in textiles and textile products with Lesotho. Wonderful. And it goes on and on and on.

I hope that my colleagues will agree that as important as having bilateral agreements with any given country may be—and some of the examples I listed have, in fact, real economic impact; they have real impact on important industries in my State and other States—not many of these agreements are major trade deals. That is my point. In fact, very few are major trade agreements in the sense they are not opening up new markets.

Here rests my argument. What we are talking about is opening up new markets. What the opponents are talking about is totally removed and off base.

I do not mean to say that negotiating with individual countries and establishing bilateral agreements isn't a very important part of improving the trade environment. These individual product or industry-specific agreements with different countries do help improve U.S. trade. I have no doubt about that at all. But they do not make significant expansions in our export markets that America and West Virginia need desperately in order to improve.

Ensuring that U.S. goods and services can be available on a level playing field to the 96 percent of consumers in this world who are not Americans happens to be very important. Trade agreements make sure that we have access to new markets under reasonable conditions. In our increasingly global world, that means we have to have multilateral agreements like GATT and the Uruguay round, and free trade agreements with areas like Latin America and Asia are needed. Why? Because they are growing enormously, and their middle class is growing and their ability to purchase goods is growing.

An up-or-down vote on a multilateral trade agreement makes sense to me because it how we expand our markets. As the U.S. Trade Representative, Charlene Barshefsky, told the Finance Committee, in the two fastest growing regions of the world, Latin America and Asia, governments are seeking preferential trade agreements. ''They are forming relationships around us, rather than with us, and they are creating new exclusive trade alliances to the detriment of U.S. interests.''

Then Ambassador Barshefsky goes on to say, ''In Latin America and Asia alone over 20 such agreements have been negotiated since 1992, all of them without us.''

Well, I can't imagine that doesn't bother the opponents of fast track. I care about the effect of trade on jobs in my State. And there is plenty of protection for the Senate and the Congress in this fast-track authority. You cannot negotiate a trade deal with 100 Members of the Senate and a foreign country or set of countries. It cannot be done. Fast track makes sense.

Can you imagine people coming in and saying, well, we have to.

What are other countries doing on trade agreements while the U.S. debates fast track? Where is the United States at a disadvantage if we don't pass fast track, as they may not in the House? Again, primarily due mostly to my own party.

I have talked about the fact that major markets are negotiating trade agreements and the United States is not in the picture. Let's just look at the major world markets:

No. 1, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay have formed a common market called MERCOSUR. MERCOSUR has a GDP of about a $1 trillion and includes a population of 200 million people. It wants to expand its market to the rest of South America. The sheer numbers of people and dollars in this market makes it the largest economy in Latin America. MERCOSUR has agreements with Chile and Bolivia, and is talking with Colombia and Venezuela, in addition to Caribbean nations. The EU and MERCOSUR plan to complete a reciprocal agreement by 1999. We are on the outside of all that.

No. 2, Latin American nations are meeting with members of the Central American Common Market [CARICOM] to discuss free trade negotiations.

No. 3, Chile, with one of South America's leading economies has already signed agreements with Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Granada, Venezuela, and MERCOSUR countries. That means Chile has a preferential trading relationship with every major trading country in our hemisphere except the United States. How do the opponents of fast track feel about that?

There are seven members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SARC]—Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Maldives—they have set 2001 as the date they would like to create a free-trade area. Right now, SARC is only 1 percent of world trade, but it has 20 percent of the world's population which means this is another important market to the United States in the future.

I talked about Latin America earlier and want to underscore why that market is so important to our trading future. Projections are that Latin America will exceed Western Europe and Japan combined as an export market for the United States in the next decade—and that's under current conditions where tariff barriers average three to four times the average United States tariff. Put simply, Latin America is one of the largest emerging markets, of the 30 million people who join the middle class annually, three-fourths of those 309 million people are currently in emerging markets and low- and middle-income markets.

I am almost at an end. The Asian Pacific Rim is our second fastest growing export market. Meanwhile, our industrial competitors continue to make agreements that put U.S. goods at a disadvantage. Canada has a new trade agreement with Chile. The EU is in a position to take better advantage of the transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe. The EU is also working on getting a free-trade agreement with MERCOSUR.

China is zeroing in on Latin America and Japan is working on its ties to Asia and Latin America through closer commercial ties and a greater commercial presence.

Mr. President, I simply make these remarks because I think it will be such high and deep folly if the House declines to vote on—or if voting, votes down—fast-track authority. I think some of the arguments made in this body have made it easier for Members of the House to say, ''Look what so-and-so said in the U.S. Senate.''

It is a question: Do we want to expand trade? Or do we want to just keep all inside of ourselves? This has been an age-old problem with the United States. We cycle back and forth from one view to another. This is the time to cycle for an expansionist trade point of view.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I had the floor, as I understand it, following the conclusion of Senator ROCKEFELLER's remarks?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is correct. Under the previous order, the Senator from California is to be recognized.

The Senator from California.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, might I ask unanimous consent—I have been waiting here for some time to speak for up to 5 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. Following my remarks?

Mr. SPECTER. No, at the present time. I have been here on the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. I have been waiting for at least 2 hours, on and off.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The Senator from California.

Mr. SPECTER. May I inquire of the Senator from California how long she will be speaking?

Mrs. BOXER. I would say about 15 minutes, I say to my friend.

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