

first. In the end, the longer we wait to pursue more free trade opportunities in our hemisphere and around the globe, the more we stand to lose.

Take, for example, my home State of Ohio. The future of our economy is linked in part at least to our ability to send our products overseas. When given the chance, Ohio's business men and women and Ohio's farmers can and do compete effectively on the world stage. Just listen to these figures: Ohio exported more than \$28 billion worth of manufactured goods. In fact, one in every five manufacturing jobs in the State is tied to exports. In most years, one-third to one-half of Ohio's major cash crops in the agricultural field—corn, wheat, soybeans—is found in markets and meals outside our own country.

Look beyond Ohio to our entire hemisphere. With a combined gross domestic product of more than \$10 trillion, which encompasses 800 million people, trade with our hemispheric neighbors represents vast opportunities.

These are opportunities we simply must not ignore. Right now, Europe, Asia, and Canada are all securing their economic fortunes throughout Latin America by trading with the Mercosur, a powerful trading block consisting of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. As of now, the Mercosur countries are the EU's largest trading partners. Two-way trade between the EU and the Mercosur totaled \$43 billion in the year 2000. That is compared to \$38 billion from the United States in the Mercosur. The EU currently imports five times more from the Mercosur than the United States does. Between 1990 and 1998, the total value of trade flows between the Mercosur and the EU increased almost 125 percent.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the EU is not going to sit idle and let the United States gain much of a new market share in this region. In fact, just last Friday, in Brussels, the EU was working to finalize a free trade agreement with Chile. Earlier this month, the EU set out its strategy for negotiating new economic partnerships with Africa, the Caribbean, and Pacific countries. And as we speak, the EU's trade commissioner is in Mexico addressing the EU's relationship with Mexico, almost 2 years after the free trade agreement they entered into went into effect.

This is the hemisphere in which we live. Those should be our markets. To lose them through neglect would be a truly shameful outcome for our country.

The bill before us this afternoon, the Andean Trade Preference Act, would renew but also enhance our commitment to helping the Andean region: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. It would help them, but it also would help us. It would help them to develop economic alternatives, for example, to drug crop production. The Andean Preference Act expired on December 4,

2001. The law provides preferential, mostly duty-free treatment on selected U.S. imports from the region.

The countries of the Andean region certainly need our help, and we need their help. For the past 10 years, the Andean Trade Preference Act has helped the United States and these four countries develop legitimate, strong, and expanding commercial ties. Between 1991 and 1999, total two-way trade nearly doubled between our countries.

During this same time period, U.S. exports grew 65 percent, and U.S. imports from these countries increased by 98 percent.

In 1999, a severe economic recession in the region did, in fact, curb U.S. exports, but U.S. imports continued to grow by 17 percent. U.S. imports to Colombia during this same time increased 155 percent since ATPA was enacted. The Colombian flower industry is a prime example of how U.S. trade policy can support important economic benefits both in Colombia and here at home and at the same time provide jobs and income to people so they do not feel the necessity to become involved in the drug trade.

In 1965, Colombia exported just \$20,000 worth of flowers to the United States. Today, these exports total nearly \$600 million. The flower industry generates 75,000 direct jobs in Colombia, jobs that offer year-round stability and health and retirement benefits, not to mention a legitimate economic alternative to illicit drug production.

The Colombian industry also directly generates 7,000 U.S. jobs. Indirectly, even more jobs are created, with U.S. supermarkets employing more than 24,000 people in their flower departments, and U.S. flower shops employing nearly 125,000 people.

We also have substantially increased our exports to the Andean region. Under ATPA, our exports have gone up by 84 percent, to \$6.6 billion in the year 2000.

Despite these gains, ATPA must be expanded. NAFTA and the Caribbean Basin Initiative have changed the playing field and have created a competitive disadvantage for Andean countries. For example, most Caribbean apparel enters the United States duty free, while Andean apparel enters with a 14-percent duty. We also must remember that ATPA is about more than just trade. This is an issue of national security.

The stability of the Western Hemisphere is at stake. Open markets are absolutely vital for developing nations to overcome poverty and create opportunity. Fragile economies place peace and democracy at risk.

With aid, with trade, and with democracy, we can foster peace among our neighbors. It is in our national interest to pursue an aggressive trade agenda in the Western Hemisphere, to combat growing threats and promote prosperity. Free markets and open

trade are the best weapons against poverty, against disease, against tyranny and, yes, against the drug dealers.

For example, if Africa, Asia, and Latin America were each to increase their share of world exports by just 1 percent, it would lift 128 million people out of poverty, with all the consequences that would have. Tariff barriers on products from the Third World are more than four times higher than those encountered by richer nations. Such barriers cost poor countries approximately \$100 billion a year. That is twice as much as these nations receive in foreign aid. Tariff barriers on products from the Third World are more than four times higher than those encountered by richer nations.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of renewing and expanding the Andean Trade Preference Expansion Act. It is the right thing to do for our neighbors and for our businesses at home. It is the right thing for our country.

HIV/AIDS IN OUR HEMISPHERE

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to discuss a critically important issue in our hemisphere—the growing problem of HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Today, there are an estimated 420,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean, and another 1.4 million living with the disease in Latin America. In Haiti alone, roughly 1 out of every 10 people has HIV/AIDS.

Yet despite these staggering numbers and despite the fact the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS—outside of Sub-Saharan Africa—exists right in our own backyard, this region of the world is often forgotten, and the people who suffer there because of AIDS are often forgotten. While, understandably, much attention has been focused on the great tragedy caused by the disease in Sub-Saharan Africa—and we should never forget it—I think it is also important that we also focus our efforts on combating this disease in our own hemisphere.

That is why I want to call attention to a historic, day-long meeting held just last week in Georgetown, Guyana. While it received very little attention in the media, on April 20, senior U.S. and Caribbean health officials, including Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, met in Guyana to sign a new Pan-Caribbean agreement against HIV/AIDS.

I commend Secretary Thompson, Secretary Powell, and President Bush for their leadership and follow through in making this vision a reality. Last week's meeting and subsequent agreement represents an unprecedented new partnership to fight the disease in the region. As part of this new agreement, the U.S. and Caribbean nations have pledged to improve collaborative efforts to make sure people living with HIV/AIDS, and those at risk, have good

access to prevention and treatment services. As Secretary Thompson said:

This will be an equal partnership—a sharing of technical know-how and experiences.

As part of this partnership, Secretary Thompson has pledged greater in-country collaboration with officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Health Resources and Services Administration. These efforts will complement recently announced initiatives by the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide almost \$162 million in new funding over the next 5 years to help countries in the Americas and worldwide expand HIV/AIDS prevention, patient care, and HIV/AIDS mitigation programs. This is in addition to the \$20 million the United States is currently providing in HIV/AIDS funding to Latin America and the Caribbean under the Bush administration's Third Border Initiative. These are all important steps in the right direction toward developing an integrated approach to combat this devastating disease.

I urge my colleagues to share my support for these initiatives and to work with me to secure greater U.S. contributions for these international efforts in the future—through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, as well as other bilateral assistance programs.

To borrow Secretary Colin Powell's words:

Our response to this crisis must be no less comprehensive, and no less relentless, than the AIDS pandemic itself.

Mr. President, this is something that we need to work harder on in the United States, in Africa, in the Caribbean, and throughout the world—wherever people suffer from AIDS. I thank the Chair, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARPER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ANDEAN TRADE PREFERENCE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to speak about fast-track trade authority, which is now known by the euphemism "trade promotion authority."

Before I do that, I want to talk for a moment about what is happening with respect to trade with Cuba. Since we are on the subject of trade, there is something happening with Cuba about which I believe I must alert the Senate.

As you know, a wide majority in both the U.S. Senate and the House has agreed that we should not use food as a weapon and that the 40-year embargo with Cuba—at least with respect to food and medicine—should be loosened. So by a vote of the House and of the Senate, we are now able to sell food to Cuba.

Yet under current law, the Cubans are not allowed to purchase food from

the United States on credit. They cannot borrow from a private lender. They must pay cash. Following the hurricane in Cuba, Cuba is buying American grain and agricultural products to the tune of \$70 million, but they have to pay cash and run the transaction through a French bank in order to buy commodities from American farmers. This is just bizarre.

The head of a group called Alimport, which is the organization in Cuba that purchases food for the Cuban Government, was invited to this country by farm leaders. His name is Pedro Alvarez. He was intending to come here—including to my State of North Dakota—and asked for a visa to do that. He was intending to purchase additional food from our country—and to pay cash. A visa was granted, but then the State Department abruptly reversed course and decided to revoke the visa. The State Department said: No, we don't want somebody from Cuba coming in to buy food or commodities from American farmers. When we called the State Department to ask them why they decided to revoke the visa to have the head of Cuban imports come into this country, they said: It is not our policy to encourage the sale of food to Cuba.

Now, I find it just byzantine that our State Department would say: No, we don't want the head of the Cuban agency that purchases agricultural commodities to come to our country to purchase those commodities and, therefore, we will revoke his visa.

When will those who take that position wake up and understand that using food as a weapon is merely shooting ourselves in the foot?

I have now written a letter to Pedro Alvarez in Alimport and said: I am inviting you to this country; a U.S. Senator is inviting you to this country. I would like you to come to America; I would like you to come to North Dakota; come to North Dakota and buy wheat from our wheat farmers and buy dried beans from those who plant dried beans.

I wrote a letter to the State Department saying: You have a responsibility to give these people visas to come here.

I do not know what on Earth the State Department is thinking. I have talked to someone at the State Department who indicated that the matter is being reviewed. I said: Can you tell me who decided to revoke the visas? Who decided that farmers in America should be the victims of this foreign policy nonsense? Who was it? Who made the phone calls? I want to know who said that this is political, this isn't trade policy, and the politics persuade us we ought to revoke visas from someone from Cuba who wants to come to this county and buy wheat, dried beans, apples, and other commodities from the United States.

I just do not understand why we have people in this country who still think that way. We ought never use food and medicine as a weapon. We have done it for 40 years with respect to Cuba. We can sell food to China. That is a Communist country. We can sell food to

Vietnam. That is a Communist country. But for 40 years we have said no, you cannot sell food to Cuba.

We loosened that restriction. Cubans can now buy our food, and now we have the spectacle of the State Department deciding to revoke visas they already approved for people from Cuba who want to come to this country and buy from American farmers. That is unfair to our farmers. It is another embargo.

Cuba bought \$1 billion worth of food last year. The Europeans are selling food to them, and the Canadians are selling food to them. We have sold them some now, but judging by the behavior of the State Department, it appears they do not want us to sell food to Cuba, despite the fact the Congress has already made the judgment that such sales should be lawful.

I intend tomorrow to press this case once again at the State Department, and I hope they will change their mind and make a rational decision, one that is in concert with what the Congress has already decided, both the House and the Senate.

Let me turn to the trade issue of fast track for a few moments. I see some colleagues in the Chamber who wish to speak. I will not speak as long as I had intended. They will want the opportunity to have a portion of this time as well.

Let me quickly put up a chart showing an excerpt from "Inside U.S. Trade," a publication on international trade. It quotes U.S. Trade Representative Zoellick speaking to a business group in Chicago. Mr. Zoellick described lawmakers and lobbyists who oppose a trade promotion authority bill sponsored by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman BILL THOMAS as "xenophobes and isolationists."

The Trade Ambassador says those who oppose fast track are xenophobes and isolationists. This really fits the way this thoughtless debate always plays out on trade. Instead of it being a thoughtful debate about what America's real trade policy ought to be to benefit this country, it turns quickly into a thoughtless debate by those who say there are only two sides: Those who support free trade, globalization, expanded trade, and have a world view that will allow them to see well over the horizon and understand the world much better than others, and those who are just xenophobic, isolationist stooges. That is how this debate is characterized: Those who think and those who do not.

There is an old saying: You ought not ever buy anything from somebody who is out of breath. There is a kind of breathless quality to this debate about fast track: It just has to be fast track; if it is not fast track, we cannot pursue international trade agreements.

That, of course, is total nonsense. We did not give Bill Clinton fast track