

This is something that I raised with Secretary of State Colin Powell yesterday in an appropriations hearing. It also has to do with trade.

I fought for over 3 years on the floor of the Senate and was finally successful last year to make it legal again to sell food to Cuba. For 40 years we have had an embargo; we couldn't sell a thing to Cuba. We could not even sell food or medicine. My contention is that is basically immoral for us to use food as a weapon. We sell food to Communist China. We sell food to Communist Vietnam. But for 40 years we couldn't sell food to Cuba.

So I kicked and scratched for a long while with some of my colleagues. I was able to get that aspect of the embargo changed. Just last year, we were able to get it changed so we can actually sell food to Cuba.

Cuba had a hurricane recently that caused a great deal of damage, and they need food. They are offering to buy it, and to pay cash. Cuba has now purchased \$70 million worth of food from the United States in recent months.

A fellow named Pedro Alvarez heads a group called Alimport, which is the Cuban agency that buys food. He was going to come to this country and inspect some facilities, visit a number of agricultural states, including coming to my State of North Dakota. They were prepared to buy wheat and dried beans, I understand.

The State Department issued him a visa. He applied for and was given a visa by our interest section for Cuba to come to the United States. Yet abruptly, the visa was revoked.

I am trying to find out why the visa was revoked. My staff called the State Department. The State Department said: Well, it is our policy not to encourage food sales to Cuba.

Yesterday, I asked the Secretary of State: Is that your policy?

The Secretary of State said: It is news to me. I have no such policy.

Someone deep in the bowels of the State Department apparently defined for himself the State Department's policy, and did not bother to check with Secretary Powell.

I asked for an investigation. Why do you revoke the visa issued to someone who wants to come to our country to buy wheat, dried beans, corn and eggs? Who decided that somehow that threatens our country? Where does that kind of thinking come from?

I expect I will probably hear from Secretary Powell in the next day or two. I hope so. I wrote a rather lengthy letter last week. I had the opportunity to question him before an Appropriations Committee hearing yesterday.

At a time when agricultural prices have collapsed and our family farmers are hanging on by their fingertips trying to make a go of it, we have some folks somewhere behind the drapes inside the State Department deciding they really don't want to sell food to Cuba and they don't want someone

coming up here from Cuba to buy dried beans. If there is some perceived threat about that, I wish someone would inform me and the Senate.

That is one more example of the strange approach that people take to international trade. We ought never, under any circumstance, use food as a weapon. It is immoral. Does anyone think Fidel Castro has ever missed a meal because this country had an embargo for 40 years on the shipment of food to Cuba? Does anyone think he has ever missed breakfast, lunch, or dinner? No. Those sorts of things hurt poor people, sick people, and hungry people. They don't hurt Fidel Castro.

I have personally written to Mr. Alvarez saying: I am inviting you to this country. I have written to the Secretary of State saying: I want you to provide visas to the people who want to come up and buy food from our family farmers.

That is just one more piece in a long, sorry saga of international trade that doesn't represent our country's interests.

I am very interested in having robust, strong expanded, trade. I am very interested in finding ways by which we can force open foreign markets. But the record is abysmal. We agreed to NAFTA, GATT, and we do United States-Canada agreements.

The fact is that very little has changed in the behavior of China, Europe, Japan, and other countries. Our country leads the way in unilateral behavior in international trade that says our market is open. Our country ought to use its leverage to say we are going to hold up a mirror. If your market isn't open to us, you go sell your trinkets, trousers, and cars somewhere else. And, as soon as you understand that other marketplaces don't offer you what our market does, you come back and agree to open up your marketplace to American businesses and American workers. Then we will have reciprocal trade that is fair to both sides, that is multilateral, and that is beneficial to us, and the countries with whom we do trade agreements.

I believe we are about ready to have the chairman and ranking member come.

I am very happy to offer an amendment as soon as they are interested in coming. I think they have lengthy opening statements. I will also have an opening statement at some point to amplify these remarks. But I am anxious to offer an amendment this afternoon. I am anxious to have a vote on an amendment, for that matter. If they come and offer their managers' package, give their opening statements, and then let me be recognized to offer an amendment, we could debate the amendment for an hour and then we could have a vote today. I would be happy to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The deputy majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senator from North Dakota has been very pa-

tient and persuasive, as he always is. He has been in the Chamber on several different occasions wishing to speak. He has a lot to say about this legislation. He has indicated he has a number of amendments. I have spoken to him about some of the amendments. They sound pretty good to me.

The manager, Senator BAUCUS, the chairman of the Finance Committee, should be in the Chamber soon to lay down that managers' package. I was in touch with him just a few minutes ago. But he is not here now.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business until 3 o'clock this afternoon with Senators allowed to speak for a period of up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, are we now in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in a period of morning business with each Senator allocated up to 10 minutes to speak.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized, then, to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, to this point, I have not come over and spoken on the issue before us; which is trade promotion authority, and then all of the little cars that have been attached to this big, powerful, important engine. So while we are in the midst of doing these negotiations, I want to simply make a few points.

Let me, first, say that I take a back seat to no Member of the Senate and to no one in public life in supporting trade. I am a free trader. I support trade. I think it is the most powerful engine for economic development in history. I would support a free trade policy worldwide. I am for trade promotion authority.

When Bill Clinton was President, I said it was an outrage that we did not give him trade promotion authority. And I think it is an outrage that we have not yet given it to President Bush. I am very hopeful we are going to give it to him. In fact, I am confident we are going to give it to him. But I am a little bit concerned because what we have is sort of a gamesmanship going on. I guess "hostage taking"