

As we know, peacekeeping, in some people's eyes, can be considered offensive actions.

I go on to quote:

It will work closely with other nations that share our hopes and values and interests through the Partnership for Peace. It will be an alliance directed no longer against a hostile bloc of nations, but instead designed to advance the security of every democracy in Europe—NATO's old members, new members and nonmembers alike.

Mr. President, I certainly hope this doesn't mean what it sounds like it means—the end of NATO as a defensive alliance and its transformation into a regional peacekeeping organization. Will the "new NATO" exist to protect its members—or to engage in many Bosnia-like missions all over Central and Eastern Europe?

Now let me speak briefly of costs. To say the least, there is a great deal of skepticism over the question of how much this is going to cost the American taxpayer and whether the very low estimates now being given by the administration are, in any way, credible. I note that we have not even begun to discuss how much of the costs accruing to the new allies will end up being billed to the United States. For example, in May of 1997, ABC News quoted the American Ambassador to Hungary to the effect that the American share of buying new planes for the Hungarian Force "will be perhaps 20 percent to 25 percent" of the cost of that "at most."

How about 30 percent or how about 40 percent? We don't know. That hasn't been negotiated. But what this administration is saying is that we will play a substantial role in the diversity of military equipment for these new partners in NATO.

So how much is the real cost? And, again, shouldn't we know before we are asked to vote?

In closing, Mr. President, let me emphasize that I do not believe we are yet ready in this Senate to give this matter the full debate that it deserves and that we must hear on this issue. If we had to vote on NATO expansion on the basis of the information we now have, I would vote no, and I know that there are many others in this body who would vote no.

I look forward to a full, detailed and lengthy debate on the issue at the appropriate time. The appropriate time is when the Senate is fully knowledgeable on the issue of NATO expansion as they take up one of their most important constitutional responsibilities: the advice and consent on these critical issues. I yield the floor.

Mr. CHAFEE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from Idaho for his thoughtful comments. He started his

comments by saying that this is a matter to which many of the Senators have not given very thorough consideration, and I think that is accurate. I certainly fall into that category.

I am not on either of the major committees that deal with the expansion of NATO. Like all Senators, I am busy with this or that. It seems to me very wise that we all give this matter some thorough consideration. It is my understanding that the majority leader is anxious to bring up the NATO expansion legislation quite soon.

I just want to say, speaking for just this Senator, I certainly haven't concentrated on it. I look forward to reading the op-ed piece—I believe it was an op-ed piece—that Senator Baker and others worked on.

All I can say is, I am grateful for the comments that the Senator from Idaho made, because it is wise for all of us—I personally haven't made up my mind on this. I am astonished that I haven't been lobbied, not that my vote is a key vote on it, but on this matter, the former Senator from New Hampshire came by to see me. He is very concerned. I am speaking of Senator Humphrey, a former Senator from New Hampshire. He is very concerned about the expansion of NATO. I think he presented some good arguments on it. Perhaps he has also spoken with the Senator from Idaho.

Again, I thank the Senator for his thoughts.

Mr. CRAIG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CHAFEE. I certainly will.

Mr. CRAIG. I thank the chairman for those comments. One of the measurements I always use on issues of this gravity and importance, and especially if I do not know a great deal about them, is when there are men and women on both sides of the issue whom I respect, it demands that I begin to review it in great detail. That is what I am hearing from the Senator, that when you have the likes of Howard Baker, and a former Secretary of State, and you have Sam Nunn and a good many others on the other side of the issue who are certainly knowledgeable, I think it is time for the Senate to focus and for our colleagues to begin to try to deal with this issue, and that is why I am here. I thank the Senator for his comments.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Cheryle Tucker, a detailee from the Department of Transportation who is working with my staff, be given floor privileges during the ISTE A debate.

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

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Christopher Prins, a fellow with Senator LIEBERMAN's office, be granted floor privileges during the consideration of the ISTE A legislation, S. 1173.

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

Mr. CHAFEE. 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. THOMAS. 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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for about 12 minutes as in morning business.

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. THOMAS. I also ask unanimous consent that the privilege of the floor be extended to Steve Shackleton, a detailee on my staff from the U.S. Park Service, during my statement today.

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

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. THOMAS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1693 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ANNA TREBIL'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to recognize a very special constituent of mine, Anna Trebil. Today—Friday, February 27, 1998—is Anna's 100th birthday.

Born and raised in Sanborn County, South Dakota, Anna is a true South Dakotan. She is a pioneer and a valued community member. She has lived her entire life in the state and currently resides in Mitchell, South Dakota. Having never spent a day of her life in the hospital, Anna has been blessed with outstanding health which has contributed greatly to her strong and enduring spirit.