

summoned to come to the floor and defend the U.S. troop commitment to NATO. I fear that we could see a repeat of those times if we do not proceed cautiously with NATO expansion, and ensure that any expansion has the full support of the American people who will ultimately bear the burden for these added security commitments.

In a June 1997 report entitled, "NATO Expansion: A Bridge to the Nineteenth Century," Professor Michael Mandelbaum expressed these concerns in the following way:

When the American public decides that an international commitment has been extended under false pretenses, or that such a commitment is more expensive than its government has promised, or that whatever the government has promised the cost of the commitment is too high, it tends to withdraw its support, which causes the commitment in question to collapse.

That is my biggest fear with NATO expansion—that it could undermine the American public's support for NATO itself.

I believe the 3-year timeframe contained in this condition is a reasonable one. It is long enough for NATO to have made a reasonable assessment of the impact of the first round, but it is not so long as to remove hope from future aspirants to NATO membership. Many have advocated a longer moratorium. My good friend and former colleague Sam Nunn, when he was still in the Senate, recommended a 10-year pause between rounds.

Senator Nunn recently joined with Senator Baker, General Scowcroft, and Alton Frye in an excellent op-ed regarding NATO expansion entitled, "NATO: A Debate Recast." They join me in a call for caution on any further rounds of expansion. According to this article, "NATO should be the cornerstone of an evolving security order in Europe . . . But a cornerstone is not a sponge. The function of a cornerstone is to protect its own integrity to support a wider security structure, not to dissipate its cohesion by absorbing burdens and responsibilities beyond prudent limits." They recommend a "definite, if not permanent, pause" in the process of expansion.

Former Secretaries Perry and Christopher also recently joined the ranks of those urging caution regarding further expansion of the alliance. I do not want to misrepresent their position—they clearly state that the door should remain open to membership for all Partnership for Peace nations. However, they argue that "no additional nations should be designated for admission until the three countries now in the NATO queue (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) are fully prepared to bear the responsibilities of membership and have been fully integrated into the alliance military and political structures." While they do not endorse the idea of a mandated pause, they clearly believe that the process should be slowed down. I agree.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this endeavor to inject an element of

caution into U.S. policy on this important issue.

I also want to add that in the course of my trip to Europe two weeks ago with the Secretary of Defense, we visited Russia. We visited with the Defense Minister, Marshall Sergeyev, and the Foreign Minister, and we had a very valuable session with about eight members of the Russian Duma. NATO expansion was their No. 1 area of concern regarding the relationship between the United States and Russia today. That relationship, in the minds of many, is deteriorating—deteriorating at the very time when we are making a number of collaborative efforts to try to lessen not only tensions that still remain between our two nations but in furtherance of the recognition that the world can become a more peaceful and a more secure place if Russia and the United States join in many areas to provide that peaceful security.

For example, Bosnia. Today there is a contingent of professional Russian military serving alongside U.S. forces and those of our allied nations. That is a most historic first.

While in Russia with the Secretary of Defense, we went to visit facilities which are utilizing moneys authorized and appropriated by the U.S. Senate, and Congress as a whole, again directed towards lessening the tensions between these two nations in the area of nuclear weapons.

We saw, for example, where American taxpayer dollars paid for equipment which the Russians are now using to dismantle, in accordance with framework of treaties, nuclear weapons in a safe manner using technology which originated here in the United States and supplemented by technology in Russia. There is only really one major threat to the security of this country that always hangs above all others; that is, that Russia still possesses, and for the foreseeable future will possess, a nuclear arsenal that could devastate our Nation. I am not suggesting in any way that we are not making progress toward the lessening of tensions, but it remains there. Of course, beneath that is the threat of spreading knowledge relating to weapons of mass destruction. Much of that knowledge is leaking out of the former Soviet Union, today Russia, as to how to manufacture those weapons.

I think that we should address in the context of the expansion argument the concerns of the Russian Duma, or the Russian leadership, regarding this expansion and how it might affect our relationship with Russia at this critical point in time.

This valuable NATO alliance has been with us for over a half a century. I don't suggest that we spend the next half century considering this expansion issue, but certainly the several months that we need can be allocated to the important debate that will take place in this Chamber, maybe a time less than several months, but certainly not

this rush of schedule that we are on now.

So I raise these issues today because the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, I understand, intends to have a markup next week. I think, in fairness to him and to the colleagues on that committee and to other Senators, I and others should express these concerns in a timely fashion today.

Mr. President, that concludes my remarks.

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. LIEBERMAN. 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. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes, prior to adjournment. Understanding, therefore, that I am all that stands between the Chamber and adjournment, I will try to speak less than 10 minutes.

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

NYKESHA SALES

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, one of the great opportunities that comes with having been elected a Member of the U.S. Senate is to participate in deliberations on this great floor. Not just, may I say, the discussions and debates and votes on specific legislation, but to participate in what we call here morning business, which I have always seen as the people's forum, an opportunity to speak on events of the day, both public and, in some senses, those that are more personal. I would like to do that this morning.

The subject involves athletics, but it also involves, I think, values. This will not be the first time that any Member of the Senate has spoken on the floor about athletics, particularly about a team in his or her own home State. But the circumstances that lead me to stand today are somewhat different. In my own home State of Connecticut, and it seems in many places across the Nation, there are discussions in newspapers, in diners, on the radio, probably around the water cooler at the office, about what happened on the UCONN women's basketball team this week. Our great coach, Geno Auriemma, coach of our No. 2 ranked University of Connecticut women's basketball team—and, I may say with some honesty and a certain amount of envy, the occupant of the chair happens to come from the State where the No. 1 team is, Tennessee. But Coach Auriemma gave a most unusual gift, as it was put, to his All-America forward, Nykesha Sales, who is also a native of the State of Connecticut.

As is known by most, with the help of the Villanova Wildcats, who UCONN

was playing on this occasion, the coaches, the referees, in fact even with the help and consent of Big East Commissioner Mike Tranghese, Coach Auriemma gave Nykesha Sales her place as an all-time leading scorer in Connecticut women's basketball history.

That seems generous enough and positive enough, but, as my colleagues probably know, the record has been called into question. Although the box score lists those two points, they were obtained through an uncontested lay-up that required the involvement and consent, if you will, of every player on the floor of that arena and of the coaches as well.

Three days prior to that match, that basketball game against Villanova, Nykesha Sales ruptured her Achilles' tendon, thus ending her season and, since this is her senior year, her career at the University of Connecticut, leaving her just two points short of the record as the all-time women's basketball scorer, a record that we all felt, who have watched this wonderful young woman with pride over these last years—we all knew she deserved. This was heartbreaking news, not just to her and her family but to the entire team, to the coach, to fans throughout the State and I would guess fans of college basketball everywhere. So Coach Auriemma reacted as a human being with a big heart, which he has; as a great coach as well. He went to the extra effort to arrange a way for his star player to get that game-time basket that she needed to establish her place in the University of Connecticut record books.

Since that moment, Tuesday night of this week, Coach Auriemma has been criticized by many who say that this gift that he gave, which a lot of us feel was not just a gift but something Nykesha Sales earned over her extraordinary career at the University of Connecticut, somehow calls into question the integrity of the game, that in some way it is another form of cheating, some have said surprisingly, and that it in some way cheapens the record.

I rise today to say to my colleagues here in the Senate that I feel quite the opposite. I think in this gesture, in this act, Coach Auriemma, the coach of the Villanova team, and all the other players on the field, have reminded us that beneath the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat with which they and we all identify, sports can provide opportunities for values to be learned and for lessons to be conveyed. Sports are a passion here in America. I yield to that passion myself. We find a way, over and over, to take personally the things that happen on courts and in stadiums around the country. The reason I think we are so attuned to these events is be-

cause of the complex web of individual dramas underneath the final score that keeps us riveted throughout the seasons and throughout the years.

Just as teams become families among themselves when they are at their best, so do our favorite teams, in fact, become our own extended families. Former Connecticut women's basketball star, current professional basketball star Rebecca Lobo perhaps said it best about the events of this week, when she said, "if the UCONN family"—and I stress the family here—"doesn't have a problem with it, why does everyone else?" In fact, this was a University of Connecticut basketball record, a school record.

There are obviously unforgettable moments in sports, moments when we are all left full of pride, sometimes full of despair, disappointment. We in Connecticut have had our share, like the extraordinary Tate George buzzer-beater in the 1990 NCAA tournament, the same NCAA championship that the same UCONN women's basketball team won in 1995. But I would say that the record that Nykesha Sales established this week joins that kind of high ranking of memorable and historic events in Connecticut sports history. It's true that Nykesha's basket may not have been the single greatest moment of her athletic prowess, nonetheless it was a remarkably profound moment of sportsmanship, of values, of team spirit, of a sense of family that these teams at their best exemplify.

For those who would condemn or criticize a caring coach and a grateful player for doing this, I really ask you to reconsider, again, beneath the box score, the final tally, the thrill of victory or the agony of defeat, what these sports, particularly at the college level, can convey to those who participate in them. I think we have a coach here, and a player, who have exemplified the very best in their careers. Coach Auriemma displayed a level of concern and, in fact, a kind of courage in doing what he did, and it exemplifies the program that athletic director Lew Perkins has set up at the University of Connecticut, and that not only Coach Auriemma and the women's team exemplify but Coach Jim Calhoun on the men's team do as well. These are families. These two coaches are, in a way, for the sake of those families, the fathers. They practice a kind of what some may call "tough love." They demand a lot of their players, but they also give a lot back to those players.

There are no two more competitive coaches, no two more competitive teams; yet, underneath that, extraordinary personal relationships have developed. I always take great pride and am moved by the stories of the UCONN basketball players, men and women,

when they leave the school, graduate and go on—and this, of course, is true throughout the country and important to remember—that they have a tendency to call the coaches for advice about personal decisions in their lives. So there are lessons learned here and values exemplified. Perhaps these don't receive as much attention as they should in the coverage of sports today. But, again, particularly at the college level, I think that this is ultimately what it is all about.

In this unusual act, Coach Auriemma, and everyone else who was involved in this decision, I think, has not only done the right thing, but have reminded us that as much as we all share in the exultation of victory and the agony of defeat when it affects our team, that something else is going on which is that individual skills are being developed, that relationships are being formed, that a kind of community is being formed, that people accept responsibility for one another, and that those values—as we have seen as these players have left the University of Connecticut and so many other college programs around the country—those values, those relationships, that trust continues on beyond and after the competitive days. It leaves us, thrilled as we all are to follow our favorite teams, with lessons that are ultimately more lasting and certainly are profoundly encouraging. So, perhaps it is only sports. Maybe we all make too much of it. But I wanted to rise to the defense of a great coach, a great player, a great program, a great team, and tell them that I am proud of them.

I would say, finally, and with all respect to the occupant of the chair, it is going to be hard for this UCONN women's basketball team to go on to the post-season competition without Nykesha Sales, who was their star. I know they are going to give it their all, and I want to say to them that no matter what happens in this NCAA post-season competition, that as far as I am concerned—and I am sure I speak for everybody in the State of Connecticut, regardless of what the results are—this team and this coach, both on the court and off, are winners.

I thank the Chair and I believe with that and yielding of the floor, the Senate will be adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
MARCH 2, 1998

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate, under the previous order, will stand adjourned until noon, Monday, March 2, 1998.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 2, 1998, at 12 noon.