blood. No object of value was stolen from the house, nor was his vehicle taken (which he was getting out of when attacked), nor was any personal item touched by the assassin.

3. Forty-eight hours earlier, Monseñor Gerardi had presided at the Metropolitan Cathedral, along with other bishops from the Guatemalan Episcopal Conference, for the public presentation of the report entitled, ''Guatemala: Nunca Más.'' The report documents and analyzes tens of thousands of cases of human rights violations that occurred during the armed conflict. Mons. Gerardi was the coordinating bishop for the Interdiocesan Project ''The Recuperation of Historic Memory'' which produced the report.

4. Mons. Gerardi was Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Guatemala since 1984. From 1967 to 1976 he was bishop of Las Verapaces, where he laid the groundwork for the Indigenous Pastoral. Later he was named bishop of El Quiché, where he had to confront the time of the worst violence against the population. The assassination of various priests and catechists and the harassment of the Church by the military obliged him to close down the diocese of El Quiché in June of 1980. Weeks before that, Mons. Gerardi had escaped an ambush. When he was president of the Episcopal Conference, the authorities denied him entry into his own country and he was forced to remain in exile for two years until he was able to return in 1984.

5. The assassination of Monseñor Gerardi is a ruthless aggression against the Church of Guatemala—which for the first time has lost a bishop in a violent manner—and against the Catholic people, and represents a heavy blow to the peace process.

6. We demand that the authorities clarify this tragedy within a period of time not to exceed 72 hours, because if impunity is allowed to extend to this case it will bring grave cost to the Republic of Guatemala.

7. To the people of Guatemala and the international community we ask your resolute support and solidarity in this difficult moment for the Catholic Church. This treacherous crime has shocked everyone, but in this time of trial we should remain firm and united in order to keep the violence and terror that the Guatemala people have suffered from taking possession of Guatamala and make us lose the political space which has been won at such great sacrifice.

As Monseñor Gerardi said, in his April 24th address at the presentation of the REHMI report, ''We want to contribute to the building of a country different than the one we have now. For that reason we are recovering the memory of our people. This path has been and continues to be full of risks, but the construction of the Reign of God has risks and can only be built by those that have the strength to confront those risks.''

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 29, 1998.

Hon. DONALD PLANTY,
U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala, Embassy of the United States, Guatemala City, Guatemala.

DEAR AMBASSADOR PLANTY: I was profoundly shocked and saddened when I received the news of the murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi, Coordinator of the Human Rights Office of the Archbishop of Guatemala.

The circumstances, as I understand it, still remain unclear. However, a spokesman for the Archdiocese of Guatemala City suggested that this murder could be related to the public release of the REHMI Report on Friday, April 24th, just 48 hours before this deplorable killing.

It appears that many believe that this case does not fall into the category of ''common crime.'' Former President Ramiro de Leon Carplo, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, and others have voiced their concerns about the possible political nature of this incident and I am sure this question is on the mind of many other Guatemalans.

I urge you, Ambassador Planty, to let the officials of the Guatemalan government know that Members of Congress anticipate a full and thorough investigation of this tragic event. We hope to learn not only who the perpetrators were, but whatever other factors and motivations, if any, were involved in this terrible crime.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns.

Sincerely,

PAUL WELLSTONE,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. GRAMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. GRAMS. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 5 minutes in morning business.

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

Mr. GRAMS. I also ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Georgia, Senator CLELAND, be allowed to speak following my remarks.

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

Mr. GRAMS. Thank you very much.

(The remarks of Mr. GRAMS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2004 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. GRAMS. I yield the floor.

Mr. CLELAND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. CLELAND. I thank the Senator from Minnesota.

PROTOCOLS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OF 1949 ON ACCESSION OF POLAND, HUNGARY, AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Senate continued with the consideration of the treaty.

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I am honored to have the opportunity to engage in this debate over the proposed expansion of the NATO treaty. It is an important occasion for this body, for our country, and for the shape of the post-cold war world. To quote Emerson, who had in turn been quoted by the great American statesman Dean Acheson about the dawning of the post-World War II era, ''we are present at the sowing of the seed of creation.''

It is a debate which has properly engaged the best minds in American foreign and national security policy. George Kennan, the architect of the successful ''containment'' strategy with which NATO won the cold war, has said,

> Expanding NATO would be the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-Cold War era. Such a decision may be expected to inflame the nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian opinion; to have an adverse effect on the development of Russian democracy; to restore the atmosphere of the Cold War to East-West relations; and to impel Russian foreign policy in directions decidedly not to our liking.

That is the quote of Mr. Kennan. My predecessor, and someone whose views on national security matters I most value, former Senator Sam Nunn, has said, ''NATO expansion makes our security problems more difficult,'' and Senator Nunn cowrote a recent magazine article with former Senator Howard Baker, Alton Frye and Brent Scowcroft which states that, ''by premature action on new members, the Senate could condemn a vital alliance to creeping impotence.''

On the other hand, the architect of America's detente strategy, Henry Kissinger, testified to our Senate Armed Services Committee that,

> Failure to expand NATO is likely to prove irrevocable. Russian opposition is bound to grow as its economy gains strength; the nations of Central Europe may drift out of their association with Europe. The end result would be the vacuum between Germany and Russia that has tempted so many previous conflicts. When NATO recoils from defining the only limits that make strategic sense, it is opting for progressive irrelevance.

And Zbigniew Brzezinski, with whom I served in the Carter Administration, has testified that,

> NATO enlargement has global significance—it is central to the step-by-step construction of a secure international system in which the Euroatlantic alliance plays the major role in ensuring that a peaceful and democratic Europe is America's principal partner.

Mr. President, these are strong and important words from some of our country's premier experts on international relations, and of course they point the Senate in diametrically opposite directions in the current debate. However, and I will return to this point later, in my view they all raise the right questions and ultimately can help point us in the right direction as we take up the critical questions of whether NATO and whether Europe will remain with us regardless of what we do on the pending resolution of ratification. Though I certainly acknowledge the importance of the impending decision, I would counsel that we not engage in exaggeration or hyperbole about the consequences of this single choice. It is but the first, and in my opinion probably not the most important, question we must answer as we feel our way in this unknown ''new world order,'' and no one, and certainly not this Senator, knows for certain how the future will unfold in Russia, or in the rest of Europe, for that matter.

So I welcome and I appreciate the thoughtful commentary which has been submitted on both sides of this issue. I have benefited from it, and I certainly believe that neither side has a corner on wisdom or concern for our future security. In this same spirit, I would like to thank the distinguished Majority Leader for responding to two requests I made, one in a letter I cosigned with a number of other Senators on March 3, and the other in a personal

note I sent to him on March 25, that he delay final Senate action on the resolution of ratification to allow for more debate, and for more information to be obtained on several important policy questions. While I thought, and think, that for a variety of reasons, it would be better to delay this vote until the beginning of June, I appreciate the postponement he did arrange because it allowed me to make my own ''inspection tour'' of Europe to assess the situation there in person on the ground.

I have just completed a twelve day, 12,000 mile tour of Europe. My travels took me to London, Camp Robertson, V Corps Headquarters and Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany, and NATO Headquarters in Belgium. They also took me to Eagle Base in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On my trip, I tried to get a realistic look at our Western alliance as we approach the end of the 20th Century. Our relations with our European allies, particularly through NATO, are of special importance to the United States. As I have already indicated, the issue of NATO expansion to nations formerly a part of the Warsaw Pact, especially the pending proposal to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO, is of paramount importance as we consider the crucial matter of the future of the Western alliance in this body.

During my journey, I also attempted to get a feel for the disposition and readiness of our military forces in Europe, and the attitude and morale of our troops deployed on our expeditionary mission to Bosnia.

Any attempt at gaging the temperature of our NATO alliance must begin with a sense of European history. President Kennedy once said that the thing that he cherished most in the White House was ''a sense of history,'' and the thing he feared most was ''human miscalculation.'' I had the same feeling as I toured Europe. In order for us to not miscalculate in terms of our diplomatic and military policy in these areas, we must have a sense of history of the region. Winston Churchill once observed about the value of history that, ''One can not know where one is going unless one knows where one has been.'' This is certainly true in Europe.

To illustrate the lessons of history, I have in mind a trip I took to the Waterloo battlefield in Belgium made famous by Napoleon's encounter with the Duke of Wellington there in 1815. In addition to some fascinating lessons regarding battlefield tactics which created 48,000 casualties in one afternoon, I gained some other valuable insights which I think are instructive as we approach the NATO expansion debate.

One lesson that I learned was that although Napoleon had great loyalty from his band of seasoned veterans who had marched with him through the various Napoleonic wars which had plagued Europe until 1815, by the time of Waterloo he was actually outnumbered 3 to 1. Europe had finally coalesced against him. At a crucial moment in the battle, it was a Prussian commander who brought his forces from as far away as Austria and Germany to come decisively to the aid of Wellington. The Prussian commander massed his forces to help Wellington defeat Napoleon's Grand Armée and the Napoleonic Guards. The lesson for me is clear. Europe has been swept over by one conqueror or another ever since Roman Times. But, when European nations form a strong alliance, they can defeat any enemy.

I think this is an important lesson in history to apply to our present day understanding of Europe, particularly in terms of our NATO alliance. In this century from time to time, Germany, then Russia, has tried to dominate Western and Eastern Europe. Each time, alliances were formed against the hostile force. NATO, the most successful European alliance in history, will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year. It is not surprising to me that Western Europe, primarily because of NATO, has seen its longest extended peace in centuries.

Another lesson of history I learned on this trip was the importance of American leadership in helping Europe form alliances that protect it from invasion without and turmoil within. It was after all a British leader across the channel, Wellington, who acted as a catalyst to lead the disparate nations of continental Europe to defeat Napoleon. That was in the last century. This century, it has been an ally across the Atlantic, America, who has led the disparate nations of Europe in an alliance to defeat those who would conquer it. Beginning in World War I, throughout World War II, during the Berlin Airlift, and, finally, through to the conclusion of the Cold War, America has been a catalyst in bringing European nations together to defend and protect our shared interests. American leadership and American guarantees of security with commitment of our forces on the ground in Europe has provided what one French diplomat called an ''insurance policy'' that if things go wrong on the continent ''America will come.''

As America approaches the close of this century and the dawn of the next, our nation finds itself fully engaged, committed and involved in the life of Europe. Our diplomats, politicians and military forces are stretched over the continent. They provide a level of diplomatic clout and military force projection second to none. America in this part of the world is looked upon as an honest broker in dealing with age-old European factional disputes. The security and stability in Europe since WWII principally guaranteed by NATO is the prime reason Europe is the number one trading and investment partner of the United States today. Increasingly, as the European Union develops, forms its own currency and expands its influence into Eastern European countries, it will become the largest economic trader and investment block on the planet. As America enters into the 21st Century, we will have an opportunity to expand our trans-Atlantic trading and investment partnerships to an extent hitherto unknown to us.

Make no mistake about it, this opportunity for record economic growth, and the opportunity to spread the gospel of free market economics and the benefits of trade, travel and commerce, has come about because European states, and especially newly independent Eastern European nations, now perceive themselves at the dawn of a new era of peace and stability. They are, indeed, ''present at the sowing of the seed of creation.''

Russia has imploded. The Soviet Empire is no more. Where Russia goes from here is anybody's guess. Churchill once described Russia as ''a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.'' The mystery of where Russia is headed is still with us. We in this country and our European allies wish our Russian friends well. Through the Partnership for Peace, the Founding Act and other entities, we as a matter of policy want to pursue a future based on cooperation rather than conflict. As a democracy ourselves, we in the United States wish the Democratic movements in Russia Godspeed. As a market economy, we believe our type of economic freedom, which brings with it the blessings of growth and opportunity, will sooner or later take hold in Russia as it has in other parts of the world. Democratic notions such as the rule of law, civilian control of the military and human rights now penetrate the thickest of barriers and the strongest of curtains. We know, too, it will take time for these principles to grow naturally in Russia. Many of us feel strongly that Russia will sooner or later make it through this very difficult transitional period. No one knows, however, how long that will take.

Whatever the future of Russia, the future of Eastern Europe is more and more clear. One of the most powerful messages I received on my trip is that there is a new era of hope and opportunity dawning in Eastern Europe. Long denied by the Cold War, a host of Eastern European countries now see an opportunity for their moment in the sun. This is particularly the case for the states who have been invited to join NATO—Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. A short time ago, the Parliament in the Czech Republic overwhelmingly voted to join NATO. As the vote was declared, the entire body stood up and applauded. As the great 19th Century French writer Victor Hugo observed, ''An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come.'' The nations of Eastern Europe are emerging into the light after fifty years of the Cold War. The notion that they and their people can enjoy the stability and prosperity experienced by Western Europe is an idea whose time has come.

Certainly, one of the great challenges currently facing NATO is the issue of

Bosnia. On my recent trip, I had the marvelous opportunity to fly on a helicopter to an American outpost—Camp Bedrock—in Bosnia on Easter Sunday.

It was near Tuzla in Northeast Bosnia. While flying over the countryside, it seemed I was watching a colorized version of a World War II documentary about war-torn Europe. I saw portions of villages burned to the ground. I had not seen such devastation since I was in Vietnam thirty years ago. On my visit, I got a chance to visit American forces in Bosnia. I found them surprisingly cheerful and confident in their mission of peace-keeping in that war-weary countryside. I'm very proud of our forces. They are paying a personal price every day in risking their lives on our behalf.

When I returned from my trip, I received an e-mail from one of the servicemen I spent Easter Sunday with in Bosnia. He wrote:

> My name is First Lieutenant Brian Brandt. We met today and shook hands in the mess hall here on Eagle Base, Bosnia. I would like to thank you for visiting and sharing in our Easter Mass . . . The greatest burden on today's soldiers is being asked to do more with less and our frequent deployments away from home. I am an OCS graduate and have 14 years of service. In this time I have seen many good and bad things within our services. As we move into the next century I hope we don't find ourselves short. No amount of peace or technology can make up for an Army of over tasked and under trained soldiers. Please carry this message with you to Congress.

A few days after I visited Camp Bedrock, I was in Brussels. An American businessman approached me and asked me if I had ''hope'' about Bosnia. I had to reply, ''Yes.'' I have hope because I believe Europe has learned some painful lessons over the last two centuries. One of those lessons is that alliances—whether against Napoleon, Hitler or Stalin—can win. Secondly, I have hope because Americans have learned some lessons about European history as well. Particularly, I think we've learned one of the lessons about American involvement on the European continent. The lesson is this: ''Pay me now, or pay me later.'' In other words, we as a nation are involved in Europe—militarily, economically, culturally. Better to get in on the takeoff before it turns into a ''crash landing!'' Better to work through the European Alliance, in particular through NATO, to prevent a conflict than to risk that conflict turning into a greater confrontation or, even worse, war itself.

The European community proved incapable of reaching the necessary consensus to act decisively in Bosnia. The U.N. tried to control the tensions but was neither trained nor equipped for the task, even though a limited number of European nations were supportive. Finally, under American leadership NATO stepped in. With its command and control systems well established, with its alliance relationships previously worked out over the years, it was able to field a stabilization force which has succeeded beyond the wildest expectations for it. In Bosnia, the NATO alliance now works with non NATO members, including Russia for a combined alliance of 37 nations.

That's why the killing has stopped.

That's why troops and tanks have been disarmed.

That's why minefields are being dismantled.

That's why refugees are returning.

That's why elections are being held.

That's why war criminals are being identified and hauled before an international tribunal. That's why further excesses of any warring party—as in Kosovo—bring immediate international outrage.

That's why those who perpetrated war are now hunted down and discredited.

That's why political moderates are coming to the fore and condemning the extremists.

The effort in Bosnia involves the largest alliance of nations ever to coalesce against a common enemy on the continent of Europe. Maybe we've learned and acquired a sense of history after all.

I applaud all the members of the alliance for their contributions to peace and stability in Bosnia, particularly the NATO members, and especially the Russians, for coming together in a unified effort to prevent further bloodshed, enhance stability and pave a pathway for peace. I hope it is a harbinger of good things to come in the next century in terms of enhanced cooperation and communications among our countries for the betterment of mankind.

I especially want to applaud our American servicemen and women and their American military commanders who are working to bring peace and stability in Bosnia. They are working in a tasking and demanding environment filled with diplomatic and military minefields. Special thanks go to General Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who came with his wife and joined me for Easter Sunday services with the troops in Tuzla. He joined me and Congressman PATRICK KENNEDY, a respected member of the U.S. House National Security Committee, for a very special Easter Mass in a Catholic Chapel. A particular responsibility rests on the shoulders of U.S. General Wes Clark, the top NATO Commander. His diplomatic and military skills have been tested to the maximum, and have been put in full play to hold the NATO Alliance together militarily in a challenging environment in the Balkans. A dear friend and a great Georgian, LTG Jay Hendrix, commands the U.S. Army V Corps out of Germany. He faces the daunting challenge of deploying and replacing the troops in the Bosnian expedition. General Eric Shinseki is the overall commander of all military forces on the ground in Bosnia. He has a tough task in Sarajevo. Major General Larry Ellis is the ''muddy boots general'' on the ground in Tuzla who musters the morale of all of his forces, and is doing a great job in the American sector. All of the men and women involved in this effort are a credit to the United States, the European Alliance and the cause of human dignity and freedom in the Balkans. I am proud of them all. I will support continued funding of their efforts to bring peace and stability to this troubled part of our world.

A proper consideration of the issue of NATO expansion requires consideration of American, as well as European, history. As I discussed earlier, the leading voices on American foreign policy currently offer divided counsel on this issue. It is obvious that no clear consensus has yet formed as to America's post-Cold War strategy.

This lies in stark contrast to previous eras in our history when our approach to the world has generally been guided by a unifying vision. In our earliest days, we were galvanized by seeking to gain our independence. Then Manifest Destiny took hold as we boldly expanded westward into frontier country. During the same time, the Monroe Doctrine guided our relations with Europe and Latin America. This period was interrupted by the Civil War and the painful Reconstruction Era. As the United States entered the 20th Century and Americans turned toward commerce, the industrial revolution made its biggest impact on American economic development. This Gilded Age saw the rise of the Labor movement, the Depression and set the foundation for the New Deal.

Throughout all of this time, it would be fair to sum up our general philosophy on foreign policy as an attempt to continue to follow President Washington's recommended approach, contained in his Farewell Address of September 17, 1796:

> Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all . . . The Nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest . . . Steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world . . . There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation.

That approach changed when, following the two great 20th Century world wars and alternating cycles of isolationism and engagement, America emerged as the major global economic and military power. We then became united around the fight against Communism which, in the form of the Soviet Union, posed the only grave threat to our physical survival we have ever faced. The Cold War guided our thinking, and NATO was the main military expression of that strategic vision.

Now we are in a new era. No one has quite coined the term for it. Some call it the ''New World Order,'' but I prefer to call it The Age of Democracy. What I find different and indeed magical

about this new era is the fact that while it brings with it the spread of democracy and democratic principles around the world to places that have been burdened by tyranny, it is doing so not through the threat of force, but through the promise of peace. However, thus far we are not in consensus on how we shape our national security policies to meet the challenges of the new era.

I believe the critics of the proposed expansion of NATO are right when they focus on the need for policies which draw Russia into cooperation rather than confrontation with the United States and the West. From the control of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons proliferation to containment of Saddam Hussein, to the termination of the Cold War legacy of Mutual and Assured Destruction, the participation and cooperation of Russia is of vital importance in securing this peaceful Age of Democracy which we are entering.

I also believe the critics are right that we are going to have to be extremely careful in when and how we approach consideration of inclusion of the Baltic states and former Soviet Republics in NATO or any other unified military command structure.

And, over the long-term, I believe the critics are right that it is the expansion of the European Union, and its ultimate promise of what Churchill called a ''United States of Europe,'' which offers the strongest foundation for Eastern European economic and political development, and for Europe at long last being able to be fully responsible for its own security.

However, after much reflection and after having seen the ''ground truth'' on my recent trip, I have concluded that supporters of NATO expansion are absolutely correct that other than NATO there is no entity at present which is able to step up to the plate and fill the security void that currently exists in Central Europe. The European Union is currently considering the proposed admission of six nations, including Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, plus Slovenia, Cyprus and Estonia, but that process is likely to take until 2003, at the earliest. Furthermore, the Union has a number of important questions, such as its decision-making process and the division of sovereignty between it and its component nations, which must be worked out before it can offer an effective voice on foreign and defense policies.

As for Russia, I believe we must make every effort to seek cooperative and mutually beneficial relations. Regardless of how the Senate votes with respect to the pending treaty, I believe supporters of NATO enlargement are correct that we and the Russians will have the same set of mutual interests to work for; namely, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and stability around Russia's borders in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. We should see what the future brings in Russia, with the European Union, and with all of the former members of the Warsaw Pact before we decide the next steps with respect to NATO, including both its membership and mission.

It is in this context that I as a member of this body consider the issue before the Senate of expanding the NATO treaty to include the nations of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. For a long time I have asked myself the question, ''Can we afford it?'' As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I've heard witness after witness question the wisdom of expanding NATO, particularly at this time and especially in terms of the painful transition going on in Russia today. I have also heard NATO enlargement questioned from a budgetary point of view in terms of its cost to American taxpayers. In the wake of what I've learned on my trip, however, I now ask myself, ''Can we afford not to do it?''

I've concluded that Russia will do whatever it is going to do. We can encourage cooperation. We can support democratic principles and human rights. We can move forward with arms control agreements, especially Start II and move on to Start III. These are critical items on the American agenda, and critical items on the Russian agenda as well. We must move forcefully in expanding consultation and cooperation on all these fronts.

But, we in this country must heed the call of the Eastern European nations for help in fulfilling their destiny. Their destiny is with the West, as is Russia's destiny one day. In my view, the expansion into the Eastern European community by the Western European community through the expansion of NATO, and a gesture of cooperation to the Russians through the Partnership for Peace and the Founding Act is a plus, not a minus, for our national security. The good news is that so many people in Eastern Europe and Russia want to identify with the West. They want the peace and prosperity offered by Western European ideas and values and Western European organizations. It is for this reason that I intend to vote for NATO expansion. I believe, as Prime Minister Tony Blair said in going to Northern Ireland after I had a brief meeting with him, ''I feel the hand of history on my shoulders. I have hope. I have faith. I don't know how it will work out, but I must try.''

No one can know for certain how NATO expansion will work out, and I certainly believe we must make our future decisions based on what experience teaches, but in this current decision I think the hand of history is on our shoulders. I think we must work in faith and hope. I think we must try. I don't know how the future of Russia will unfold, but I think it is important for the Western community of nations led by the United States, in the spirit of friendship and cooperation, to reach out in faith and hope to the Eastern European nations, and try to help them create a new future for themselves.

On my recent trip, I visited an American battlefield cemetery. The place was the famous Flanders Fields Cemetery in Belgium. It was a Canadian, Colonel John McCrae, who wrote the famous poem about World War I, ''In Flanders Fields.'' Colonel McCrae was later killed in that War. But he challenged all of us for the rest of this century to live up to the hope that the soldiers in that war had that their sacrifice in bringing peace and stability in Europe would not be in vain. As I laid a wreath at the cemetery, I thought of all those in this century since World War I who have given their lives for peace and prosperity in Europe. I support the pending NATO enlargement as a further expansion of a peace process that began with American involvement in World War I at Flanders Fields, and continues until this day. Surely we have learned some lessons of history this century that will keep us from miscalculating. Surely we do not want to repeat the mistakes of this century in the next.

Mr. President, I learned many lessons on this trip. The most important lesson I learned, however, is that American men and women deployed in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Balkans are making a positive difference in the lives of millions of people in those parts of the world. Our American diplomats, soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, guardsmen are our greatest asset. They spread American values and ideals wherever they go because they treat people with dignity. They talk the talk. They also walk the walk.

More than anything I learned on my trip, Mr. President, is that the legacy of American involvement in Western and Eastern Europe in this century has been a courageous and positive one. It is because of our people who have given their lives and risked their reputations this century in the cause of peace, stability, freedom, human rights, the rule of law, civilian control of the military, economic justice and democratic ideals that America plays such a strong hand in diplomatic and military missions throughout Europe. That story is not lost on nations further East, including Russia and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union.

I returned from my trip to Europe and Bosnia even more proud of my country and our ideals than when I left. As a new century dawns, I'm sure Americans will learn from history and not miscalculate. At this moment in history, we are the key players in the progress of a European Alliance, especially NATO, and we should be a key player when the Alliance expands into Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. While I believe we must constantly seek emerging answers on such key questions as the security situation in the Baltic States, the evolution of the European Union, the political situation in Russia, and the impact on the readiness of American military forces, and should be prepared to guide our future policy choices based on those answers,

I support the proposed first round of NATO expansion. As the only currently available alternative, I also support funding for a follow-on-force in Bosnia. As our troops and diplomats do their duty, they can count on support from this Senator.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized as in morning business.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, first let me thank my colleague from Georgia, Senator CLELAND, for that excellent statement. I have listened to a lot of the debate on NATO enlargement. He gave a tour de force by covering not only the nations of Europe but the history of Europe. I congratulate him on an excellent statement. I fully endorse his conclusion.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I come to speak in morning business on an issue that I believe is of great importance to many families across the United States. It is the question of health care.

Many people watch the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives and wonder what this debate in the operations of this body have to do with their lives. They look at the bills and wonder who has written them and how it can affect them, and many times just write it all off as politics. But the issue I am about to speak to and the issue which I believe should be part of our legislative agenda is the issue of health care.

Mr. President, we are in a state of crisis in this country, a crisis of confidence over America's health care system. A majority of the American people no longer believe their insurance companies are providing them with the quality of service or choice of doctors they were promised when they paid their premiums. Eighty percent of American consumers believe that insurance plans often compromise the quality of care to save money. Ninety percent of Americans say a patient protection act to regulate health insurance plans is needed. Such an act has been introduced, and we are hoping that we can bring it to the floor for consideration before we adjourn, because we have precious few days left this year to consider important legislation.

Unfortunately in America some health insurers have put cost savings before life savings. Such cost-cutting practices are only inviting tragedy.

I brought to the floor today a photograph of a couple from the Chicago area, the Garvey family. I would like to tell you the story of this typical American family and what happened to Mrs. Garvey on a vacation to Hawaii. Barbara Garvey, a wife and mother of seven from Chicago, suffered from severe arthritis. During a once-in-a-lifetime vacation with friends to Hawaii, Mrs. Garvey discovered some bruises on her body. She was worried. She was immediately sent to the hospital and examined. After examination, there was a diagnosis that she was suffering from aplastic anemia.

There she was in Hawaii, thousands of miles from home, with a friend, with this terrible diagnosis. Doctors in Hawaii decided the only option was to perform an emergency bone-marrow transplant. Both Mrs. Garvey's HMO doctor in Chicago and the attending physician in Hawaii agreed that with no immune system and no ability to clot, a commercial flight back home to Chicago to receive treatment would put her at great risk for infection and stroke.

Imagine, there you are, thousands of miles away from home, told that you have to face this emergency bone-marrow transplant and you can't move; you have to do it now. And if you do not, you could have serious consequences.

They advised Mrs. Garvey to receive this emergency treatment as quickly as possible in Hawaii. Her insurance policy covered it. It wasn't a matter of debating that. But when she called the HMO that managed the policy, they refused to accept any treatment in Hawaii. The clerk at the HMO said to Mrs. Garvey she had to travel back from Hawaii to Illinois for this treatment. They wouldn't pay for it unless she did. And it is very expensive. She didn't have the ability to pay for the expensive treatment.

So she made the only decision she could. She got back on the airplane to come back to Chicago. On the plane, as predicted by her treating physician, Mrs. Garvey suffered a stroke that left her paralyzed on her right side, robbing her of her ability to speak. She was left too weak and unstable to even undergo the bone-marrow transplant. She developed an infection and after 9 days at a Chicago Hospital, Barbara Garvey died of a cerebral hemorrhage and complications.

She was 55 years old, on a Hawaiian vacation, in need of emergency medical treatment, but the decision by an HMO clerk cost her her life. She left behind her husband Dave, seven children, and numerous grandchildren.

I might say to my colleagues in the Senate and those listening, this should not happen in America. Health insurers should not make decisions that are best left to doctors and trained health professionals.

Mr. President, we should take up and pass meaningful patient protection this year in Congress. We have a bill, S. 1890, the patient's bill of rights, that would prevent tragedies like this from happening. The bill would allow for both an independent appeals process and for legal accountability for medical decisions made by health insurers. Without such accountability, insurers have no incentive to provide necessary and timely care to people such as Barbara Garvey when they need it the most.

It may surprise some people to learn that many HMO plans across the country, if your doctor says he wants you to receive treatment, require you to call the insurance company. If the insurance company says no, no, we don't cover that treatment or we won't give it the way the doctor wants it, and you go ahead and follow the insurance company's lead and something bad occurs, guess who is held accountable. Guess who is liable in court. The insurance company? In many instances, no. The doctor, the doctor who really wanted to do it differently, who thought it was best for you and your family to receive a different treatment, ends up the person holding the bag.

That is not fair. We should each be accountable for our conduct, and in this situation no doctor should be held accountable for a decision that was made by the insurance company. The insurance company should stand on its own feet.

Now, we only have a few days remaining in the session. It is hard to believe that in April we are talking about leaving, but it is going to be an abbreviated session for reasons that are beyond me. The political leaders have decided it is time for us to get out of town. They think we have about 60 days to act and don't have much time to consider many issues. I hope that we don't leave town without thinking a little bit about this issue, an issue which most Americans are seriously concerned about, the quality of health care and the accountability of HMO's. Whatever we are going to do will not alleviate the pain the Garveys have endured, but we can fix the system. We can save families the pain of losing a loved one because some insurance companies put business before wellness.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I commend our colleague from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, for standing up for the rights of patients in health maintenance organizations. This is an issue of enormous importance, and I think it is clear the Senate ought to be spending time talking about how real patients are suffering as they try to make their way through the health care system. I wish to tell the Senator that I very much appreciate his addressing this issue today.

SECRET WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION DECISIONS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President and colleagues, the poster that is next to me today is a photograph of one of the most important doors in the world. It