

even five months is far too long. The Senate should expedite passage and implementation of the Green Lane bill for enhancing port security.

[From the Oregonian, Sept. 12, 2006]

TIME TO LAND TIGHTENED PORT SECURITY

A bill that addresses the vulnerability of U.S. shipping fetches up in the Senate, but still needs to be brought to shore.

The most impressive thing about the port security legislation that the Senate begins debating today isn't the bill's boldness or its thoroughness. It's the five years it took the bill to get to this point.

Talk about a slow boat from China.

Five years after what was supposed to be a new reality, after constant warnings about the vulnerability of U.S. ports that inspect only about 6 percent of incoming cargo containers, the bill raises some new barriers against a seagoing Sept. 11. Ports "were extremely vulnerable," says Sen. PATTY MURRAY, D-Wash., who has been pushing the bill, "on the fact that five years after 9/11 they've failed to address homeland security issues."

This bill may not entirely address those issues, but at least it finally raises them.

It requires the Department of Homeland Security to set minimum container security regulations, sets up an Office of Cargo Security Policy to coordinate federal and local port policy, and makes some federal money available.

Maybe most usefully, it sets up a "Green Lane" program to swiftly move cargoes already inspected at their point of departure. Most containers will still remain uninspected, but sending already-checked containers through will, in MURRAY's phrase, "reduce the size of the haystack where we're trying to find the needle."

Even after last week's carefully negotiated deal among three Senate committees, the bill faces serious hazards to navigation. The Senate has rejected the House's way of financing the programs, without completely agreeing on its own. Sen. JOHN McCAIN, R-Ariz., wants to attach to it a major rail security program, an excellent idea by itself that could send port security off the tracks.

In a Congress with minimal accomplishments and a swiftly dwindling number of days to manage any, a bill with real prospects can be a magnet to any idea that any legislator wants to slip across, even if the weight of the additions ends up sinking the bill.

Our strong feelings about getting serious about maritime security may be basic strategic thinking, or may be mostly slack-jawed astonishment at how long this process has taken. It might even be the touchy sensitivity coming from living in a city that not only includes a major port, but is named after it.

There are legitimate points to debate about this bill, and the Senate has two days to debate them.

Let's just hope Congress isn't still debating them next year, which would make it six years after action should have happened.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 12, 2006]

SAFE PORTS

The brief session of Congress that just convened is distinguished in part for what is absent from its agenda—immigration and lobbying reform, for example. A notable exception, though, is a serious bill that has just emerged from the Senate Commerce, Finance and Homeland Security committees: the Port Security Improvement Act of 2006.

The bill contains several common-sense proposals. It requires the Department of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to rapidly resume trade after an incident at one

of the nation's ports, in order to limit economic slowdown. It codifies a number of good programs in law, including the Container Security Initiative, which, if it operates properly, will target suspect cargo for inspection in foreign ports before it gets close to the United States. And it establishes deadlines for Homeland Security to complete critical infrastructure projects—including installing radiation portal monitors in the nation's 22 biggest ports by the end of next year.

Two things distinguish this moderate legislation from the irresponsible rhetoric on port security that has marred debates on the subject for years. First, it does not call for 100 percent of containers arriving at U.S. ports to be individually inspected for all dangerous materials. The "inspect all containers" mantra is a red herring that exploits Americans' fears about what might slip through in order to score political points, ignoring the fact that there are much more cost- and time-effective ways of keeping dangerous cargo out of the country.

To her credit, Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), one of the bill's key sponsors, recognizes that the time and money it would take to inspect all 11 million containers that come into the country every year would be prohibitive with the technology available today, and she has committed to vote against it if such a provision is added. Instead, the bill calls for a pilot program in which the feasibility of individually inspecting all containers leaving three overseas ports will be gauged, which should test promising next-generation technologies without significantly slowing the pace of trade to the United States.

Second, while providing five years of steady funding for port security projects, the bill does not dedicate money for port security in perpetuity. The initial costs of making essential improvements such as buying radiation detectors, putting up fencing around ports and coordinating inspection procedures with ports overseas will require a fair amount of steady start-up cash. But a half-decade of grants for improving port security ought to be enough. After that, port security should have to compete for federal money with other worthy projects.

With those sensible checks in place, the Senate should pass this bill.

Mrs. MURRAY. Again, I thank the Senate for working with us to put a funding stream in this bill and to make this a real Maritime Cargo Security Act.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to commend the Senator from Washington State for her dogged pursuit of a funding source for this bill. I agree with her that it is so important we have dedicated funding so the promise of this bill can become the reality.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor to Senator MURRAY's amendment No. 4929.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Again, I thank the Senator for her efforts. It has been a real pleasure to work with her on this important bill.

Mr. President, 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. FRIST. 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. FRIST. Mr. President, we began consideration of the very important port security bill on Thursday of last week, and earlier in the week we addressed the Department of Defense appropriations bill. We generally agreed as a body that we would address the security issues first and foremost over the course of these 3 to 4 weeks, and this is the second step in that process. We made reasonable progress on the bill, but at this point it is not certain when we will finish the bill, and the fact is, we have really a little over 2½ weeks left. We have a lot to do, and therefore we need to keep business moving along.

We have been talking about a filing deadline and an amendment list, but we have been unable to reach agreement on either of those.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will file a cloture motion tonight to ensure that we do get a vote this week. We will continue to consult with the managers on both sides, and if we can reach a reasonable agreement to bring the bill to a finish on Thursday, then I believe we should vitiate this particular vote. But since it is still uncertain and we do have a lot of business to do, at this time I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 432, H.R. 4954, a bill to improve maritime and cargo security through enhanced layered defenses, and for other purposes.

Bill Frist, Susan M. Collins, David Vitter, Jon Kyl, James Inhofe, Tom Coburn, Jim DeMint, Richard Burr, Wayne Allard, Ted Stevens, Craig Thomas, Richard C. Shelby, R.F. Bennett, Mike Crapo, Sam Brownback, Rick Santorum, Larry E. Craig.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO ERSKINE RUSSELL

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, in 1 last minute on this day, I want to pause to pay tribute to a great Georgian and a great American, an individual we all lost last Friday morning in Statesboro, GA.

On Friday morning of last week, 80-year-old Erskine Russell, former assistant head coach at the University of Georgia and later head coach at Georgia Southern University, died of a stroke leaving the 7-11 near his home on the way to his beloved Snooky's Restaurant in Statesboro, GA. Erskine Russell was a football coach, but he was far more than a football coach. He changed the lives of countless young men in Georgia and changed the attitude of the people of our State about higher education.

Erskine Russell was a man who led the University of Georgia and its defense in 1980 to the national championship. Then, a few years later, he got the opportunity at a fledgling Georgia college—Georgia Southern—to establish a football team. He went there and went to the local sporting goods store and bought a football. He took a drainage ditch that ran by the field and named it the "wonderful, beautiful Eagle Creek," and slowly but surely he recruited young men to come to Georgia Southern to play football.

Within a few years, Georgia Southern went from just having a program to being a national champion. And he repeated that national championship again. But more importantly, all through his life, Erskine Russell did what only he could do: he led by example, not by lecture, what was right about America, what was right about living by the rules, what was right about playing by the rules, and what was right about moral character.

Two thousand people appeared at Paulson Stadium last Sunday to pay their last respects to Erskine Russell—a man who will be missed not just for a short period of time but for the lifetime of all those whose lives he touched.

In conclusion, talking about the lives he touched, when my son Kevin was in the 11th grade at Walton High School in Marietta, GA, he was tragically injured in an automobile accident. He was a junior football player there. Erk Russell took the time to write him a personal note when it was questionable as to whether he might ever play football again or even walk normally again. It was Erk Russell's inspiration and his caring, his challenging someone to overcome adversity, that led to Kevin's complete recovery and a year later his competition on the football field once again.

That is just one vignette. It is just one cameo in a lifetime of service to young people.

I pay tribute tonight to Erk Russell, to his family, and to all those who knew him, all those who loved him, and to all of us who will always treasure the fact that he was our friend.

TRIBUTE TO MR. MORTON J. HOLBROOK, JR.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a distinguished Kentuckian, Mr. Morton J. Holbrook, Jr., for his dedicated service to the Commonwealth and his commitment to the practice of law and higher education.

Last month, Mr. Holbrook, a resident of Owensboro, passed away. He was a pre-eminent attorney in Kentucky and will be remembered for the permanent impression he left on Kentucky's legal system. He helped modernize the courts' rules of procedure and was instrumental in pushing for sweeping changes to the State's judicial system.

On August 30, 2006, the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer published an editorial highlighting Mr. Holbrook's legal brilliance, his contributions to the judicial system, and his duty to public service. I ask unanimous consent that the full editorial be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that the entire Senate join me in paying respect to this beloved Kentuckian.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, Aug. 30, 2006]

STATE BETTER PLACE BECAUSE OF HOLBROOK

Because Morton Holbrook Jr.'s accomplishments were so many, his love for his community so strong, his quest for knowledge so persistent and his zest for life so complete, penning a tribute to his life invites inadequacy.

Holbrook, who died Friday at the age of 91, was a Daviess County icon who mixed a legal career as a Harvard-trained lawyer with a lifetime of public service, gaining fame in both arenas. Twice his leadership helped completely change the face of Kentucky's legal system. Closer to home, there might not be an Owensboro Community & Technical College without his point work in the 1980s.

Whenever and wherever Holbrook decided to take a stand, he usually became an irresistible force for progress and change. Slight of build and not tall, Holbrook was nevertheless formidable, thanks to his agile mind, gifted and eloquent speaking ability and compelling personality.

For 56 years Holbrook practiced law and would have been admired for his legal abilities alone. One colleague called him the greatest attorney he ever knew. But Holbrook strayed far beyond private practice, to Kentucky's lasting benefit. In 1948 he was appointed to a state judicial committee that totally revised the state courts' rules of procedure. Two and a half decades later he helped push through an in-toto reform of Kentucky's judicial system, which required changing the state Constitution.

Holbrook's other passion was higher education. He was a member of the Kentucky Council on Higher Education for 10 years. OCTC can trace its origins to his involvement in the early 1980s.

Holbrook received many awards and recognitions through the years. Perhaps the most fitting came on his 90th birthday in September 2004 when Daviess Fiscal Court named the county's judicial center in his honor—the Morton J. Holbrook Jr. Judicial Center.

Morton Holbrook—a delight and truly one of a kind—will be deeply missed.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to remember the horrifying terrorist attacks that took away so many innocent lives 5 years ago.

As a rule, tragedies of the magnitude we saw on 9/11 do not have silver linings. On that day, we were left only with an aching sense of loss, a sadness that seemed endless, and a bitter rage toward those who had brought chaos to our doorstep.

And yet it is undeniable that amidst one of the worst moments in our history, an ordinary goodness emerged in America. You could see it in the rescue workers and firefighters who rushed toward the rubble, in the scores of young people who signed up to serve their country, and in the quiet candlelight vigils held by millions of people for those they had never met and never would.

In our politics, too, there was a brief moment where it seemed as though the crass partisanship of the nineties would give way to a unity of purpose among Republicans and Democrats that would refocus our efforts on attacking the terrorists, not each other. We saw this in the immediate support given to President Bush, in the near unanimous vote to go after the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan, and in the formation of an independent, bipartisan commission that would tell us how and where to strengthen our homeland security.

Five years after 9/11, the days of that unity are long gone. In the last two elections, the Republican Party has used national security as a political weapon to attack and beat opponents, while the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission float further and further from the front pages. Now, as we approach another election season, the party in power has announced again that it intends to "run on" the issue of national security, with some going so far as to say that the terrorists are just waiting for Democrats to take over so that they can attack.

I realize that in this day and age, it is naive to think that politics would stop at the water's edge. But I refuse to believe that we cannot find the will or the resources to implement a series of recommendations that an independent panel of Democrats and Republicans agree would keep our country safer from terrorist attack.

In a report card delivered last year by the 9/11 Commission, the country's security efforts received mediocre to failing grades—17 Ds and Fs in 41 areas of homeland security.

To this day, our first responders still do not have the communications equipment they need to coordinate a rescue in the event of an attack. We still inspect only 5 percent of the 9,000,000 containers that enter this country every year. We are still spending only 2 percent of what we need to secure our railroads and subways, and not nearly enough on baggage and cargo screening at our airports. We still have only