

bringing the total number of nations we have normalized trade relations with this year to four.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff which have worked late nights and long weekends to ensure that the Tariff Suspension and Trade Act of 2000 was a success. On the Finance Committee Minority staff, Linda Menghetti, Timothy Hogan, Holly Vineyard, and Pat Heck, and on the Majority staff, Grant Aldonas, Faryar Shirzad, Tim Keeler, and Carrie Clark worked tirelessly to ensure the passage of this important bill. Polly Craighill, of the Legislative Counsel's Office, spent countless hours drafting and redrafting this extensive piece of legislation. Anita Horn and Gary Myrick of the Minority leadership were also crucial to its final passage. Mr. President, we have taken three major steps forward since Seattle, and I hope the momentum will continue.

THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, before the Senate passes the miscellaneous tariff bill, I would like to bring attention to a provision in the bill that would grant permanent normal trade relations, PNTR to the Republic of Georgia. In general, I support the proposition that the time is ripe for Georgia to receive PNTR. However, I also think we should recognize that the Republic of Georgia has demonstrated enforcement of internationally recognized core labor standards.

Georgia grants its citizens the right to emigrate. It is a leader in democratic reform in the Caucasus. It has a relatively strong human rights record. It has been shedding its status as a non-market economy, and this year became a member of the WTO. And it has been an important strategic partner of the United States.

To a certain extent, these accomplishments are acknowledged in the preambulatory clauses to the PNTR grant. But there is something missing. There is no recognition of Georgia's effective record of enforcing internationally recognized core labor standards and its demonstrated commitment to continue its protection of worker rights in the future. I hope that this gap can be filled in when the bill goes to conference.

Why should a grant of PNTR to Georgia acknowledge that country's protection of worker rights and its commitment to continue protecting worker rights? Because, increasingly, U.S. trade policy is reflecting the link between trade and labor. Different countries' different levels of protection of core labor standards have an impact on trade. We cannot ignore that. Indeed, we affirmatively recognized that fact in both the China/PNTR bill and in the Africa/CBI bill.

It stands to reason that when we make a significant change in our trade

relationship with another country—as when we grant PNTR—we ought to take account of that country's enforcement (or lack of enforcement) of core labor standards. Here, the country in issue has a strong record in this area. We ought to recognize that fact, since it reinforces the case for granting PNTR. This sends an important signal to future PNTR candidates.

Therefore, I hope that, in conference, we will be able to include a simple recognition of Georgia's record and its commitment going forward.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. The Senator's point is a good one and I will press it in conference.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill be read a third time and passed, as amended, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (H.R. 4868), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

MAKING A TECHNICAL CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 4868

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 152, which makes a technical correction in the enrollment of H.R. 4868 and, further, the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 152) was agreed to, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 152

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That, in the enrollment of the bill (H.R. 4868) to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to modify temporarily certain rates of duty, to make other technical amendments to the trade laws, and for other purposes, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall make the following correction:*

On page 160, line 8, strike “: and” and all that follows through line 10, and insert a period.

SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the troubling developments in the Middle East. Given what has happened in the past several days, it is increasingly apparent that we are at a dangerous juncture in a critically important region of the world. The United States can and must stay engaged in the Middle East.

First and foremost, Mr. President, my heart goes out to the families of the seventeen sailors reported killed

and the 36 injured in the explosion yesterday on the U.S.S. *Cole* off the coast of Yemen. These brave individuals lost their lives or suffered injury in defense of our country, our values, and our future. This explosion underscores the danger that the men and women of our Armed Forces face every day, and our debt of gratitude for the duty they undertake.

All evidence strongly suggests that yesterday's explosion was a terrorist attack. Such an attack is senseless and cowardly, and those responsible will be found and brought to justice. The world should know that the President and the Congress stand united on this score.

We will not grant the perpetrators an ounce of satisfaction that they have succeeded in altering the way the United States conducts business. We will remain a force for stability. We will continue to press for a negotiated peace in the Middle East. We will stand against insecurity and senseless violence in the Middle East and throughout the world. We owe that much to the brave sailors who were killed yesterday.

Recent days have also confronted us with a stream of horribly violent incidents in Israel and the territories. Unfortunately, efforts to end unrest have yet to succeed. Yesterday two Israeli soldiers were killed in a distressing scene of mob violence as protests gave way to deadly confrontation. I deplore that violence, Mr. President, and I call on Chairman Arafat to raise his voice in favor of peace.

I have followed with grave concern the violence that has gripped Israel and the territories for more than two weeks. After years of instability and violence, this region of the world—so riven with religious and strategic interests—was experiencing relative calm. This state of affairs was born out of an emerging consensus among all parties in the region that the future peace and security of Israel and the territories could be decided only through negotiation. The outlines of and expectations for a lasting peace were beginning to take shape. A successful conclusion to these negotiations seemed tantalizingly close just two short months ago when Israel made unprecedented compromises in the name of peace.

In addition to the human toll exacted by the recent string of violent incidents, there has been another equally tragic casualty—at least in the short term. The events of the past week or so have apparently punctured the hope for a quick peace settlement, putting at risk the great progress that had been made toward settling long-standing Israeli-Palestinian differences. Moreover, the latest crisis in Israel and the territories also threatens wider regional conflict, as evidenced by the abduction of three Israeli soldiers by