

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I observe the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The absence of a quorum has been noted. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that further proceedings under the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I would like to move to morning business for the purpose of giving a statement of about 7 or 8 minutes. I would ask unanimous consent that I might speak as in morning business for a period not to exceed 8 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. BRYAN. Again, I thank the Chair.

#### HIGH-LEVEL NUCLEAR WASTE

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues an issue of great importance to Nevada, but should be of concern to those from other States as well.

Mr. President, for 13 years, since 1982, Nevada has been the prime target of the nuclear power industry for the disposal of its high level commercial nuclear waste.

In spite of the fact that Nevada has no nuclear reactors, commercial or otherwise, and never benefited from nuclear power, Nevada has been identified by the nuclear power special interest lobby as its chosen site for the disposal of one of the most poisonous, dangerous substances known to mankind.

Since 1987, as the result of a back-room deal reached during the deliberations of a conference committee, Yucca Mountain, 90 miles northwest of Nevada, has been the sole site being studied by the Federal Government for a high-level nuclear waste dump.

As many of my colleagues are aware, the repository program has been a dismal failure.

Despite the expenditure of nearly \$5 billion, a repository is no closer to being built today than it was in 1982, when the original Nuclear Waste Policy Act was passed by Congress.

Faced with the failure of the permanent repository program, and frustrated by the Federal Government's obvious inability to accept nuclear waste from commercial reactors anytime near the originally planned 1998 deadline, the nuclear power industry and its advocates decided to initiate another, even more dangerous, assault on Nevada.

Raising the specter of widespread shutdowns of nuclear power reactors across the Nation, and demanding adherence to the obviously impossible

1998 deadline, the nuclear power industry now demands that the Federal Government immediately build so-called interim storage facilities at the Nevada test site.

This new attack on the health and safety of Nevadans is coming at us from all angles.

Numerous bills have been introduced in the House and Senate to target Nevada for interim storage—all written by the nuclear power industry, and all fiercely opposed by Nevada's Governor and congressional delegation, and the vast majority of Nevadans.

At the same time, we face the prospect of another back room deal on a conference report singling Nevada out for a dump it wants no part of.

In spite of the fact that neither the House or Senate energy and water appropriations bills would allow interim storage to be constructed in Nevada, by all indications, the conference report may target Nevada as the sole site for interim storage.

Mr. President, nothing could be less fair to the citizens of my State and I, and the rest of the Nevada congressional delegation, will do everything possible to see that this provision does not pass.

Mr. President, as you may expect, we in Nevada fear that should a nuclear waste dump of any type ever be built in our State, the health and safety of Nevadans will be severely threatened.

With 16,000 shipments of highly toxic waste arriving from across the Nation, the potential for a catastrophic accident near Las Vegas, a community of 1 million residents, is enormous.

Mr. President, while Nevada faces the greatest risk, and is at the most peril should the nuclear power industry get its way with Congress, every Senator should take a careful look at exactly what is being proposed.

As citizens across the Nation are slowly beginning to realize, the nuclear power industry is proposing to ship, at the earliest date possible, an unprecedented volume of shipments of extremely poisonous, highly toxic high level nuclear waste—over 16,000 shipments across 43 States, by both rail and truck.

Mr. President, I invite my colleagues' attention to the proposed shipment routes. Each Senator will note that his or her State may be a candidate for this massive shipment with all the risks that are here by way of accident or other unforeseen consequence. Even though the plan sadly targets Nevada out here as the ultimate repository, it will pass through the States of most of my colleagues. I emphasize that they too and their constituents are at risk, as are my constituents.

Mr. President, my colleagues should look closely at this map, because this map shows the likely routes for the transportation of high-level waste in the very near future.

As I pointed out a moment ago, nearly every State would be effected.

The nuclear power industry, of course, is quick to claim that we have

nothing to worry about, that nuclear waste transport is perfectly safe.

Mr. President, I doubt many of my constituents, or those of other Members, would put much faith in the nuclear power industry's assertions.

Quite simply, accidents do happen. While only a relative few make the national news, the United States has nearly 1,500 rail derailments a year.

Heavy truck accidents occur approximately six times for each million miles traveled which, if applied to the thousands of truck shipments under the nuclear power industry's plan, would result in at least 15 truck accidents involving nuclear waste each and every year.

The events of the past week raise even more frightening possibilities. In addition to the potential for accidents, nuclear waste shipments could become prime targets for acts of sabotage or terrorism.

Monday's sabotage of the Sunset Limited near Hyder, AZ, is a stark reminder of the dangers we face from criminals and terrorists every day. In a matter of minutes, those responsible for the Sunset Limited wreck created a derailment which took the life of one passenger, and injured numerous others.

From the reports that I have read, Mr. President, that sabotage took approximately 10 minutes to effect.

In an ironic twist, this week's act of sabotage appears to be a copycat of the August, 1939 derailment near Harney, NV, that killed 24 passengers.

The simple fact is that no one, not the nuclear power industry, not the Department of Energy, and not the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, no one can guarantee the safety of the transportation of nuclear waste.

Sound public policy dictates a cautious approach to the transport of such hazardous materials. They should only be moved if absolutely necessary. This is simply not the case with nuclear waste.

Nuclear waste is currently stored on-site, at the 109 nuclear power reactors in the United States—80 percent of them east of the Mississippi River.

These sites, of necessity, will remain storage facilities for nuclear materials at least as long as the reactor continues to operate—several decades, if not longer. Technology Mr. President, currently exists—dry cask storage—that is licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and available for utilities to purchase if they need additional storage.

Numerous utilities have taken advantage of this technology, and have moved to dry cask storage. Outside of the local political problems many reactors face when they try to increase storage, there is simply no reason any utility needing additional storage could not do the same.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair would advise the Senator that his 8 minutes has expired.

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I would like to ask unanimous consent for an additional 2 minutes.

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

Mr. BRYAN. I thank again the Chair for his courtesy.

Mr. President, the point I would seek to make this afternoon is this is not just a Nevada issue. Look at the map. Forty-three States are affected by these proposed nuclear waste shipment proposals. And each State bears a risk of an accident or an act of sabotage, an act of terrorism with all of the frightening consequences that brings to bear on those States and the constituents of those States being represented here in the U.S. Senate.

The plans being advanced by the nuclear power industry threaten the health and safety of citizens across the Nation, for no good reason.

The crisis mentality generated by nuclear power industry propaganda is nothing new. In the early 1980's, advocates for the nuclear power industry argued on the Senate floor, and elsewhere, that unless some away-from-reactor plan called AFR storage was provided by the Federal Government soon, reactors across the Nation would shut down, creating an electricity crisis for millions of Americans. Of course, no reactors have ever shut down for lack of storage, and there is no crisis. The same is true today.

Mr. President, the reality is that the nuclear power industry is a dying industry. No new reactors have been ordered for over a decade, not because of lack of storage, but because nuclear power is simply not competitive in the marketplace. In an ill-founded and irresponsible attempt to jump-start a dying industry, nuclear utilities have advanced a proposal that places the population of 43 States at risk, all for the benefit of the bottom line of the commercial nuclear power industry.

I urge my colleagues to reject the nuclear power industry's interim storage proposal.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ASHCROFT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

#### CUBAN LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY [LIBERTAD] ACT OF 1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 2916, AS MODIFIED

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I send a modification of my second-degree amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

Strike all after the word "SEC. ." and insert the following:

#### SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING CONSIDERATION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO LIMIT CONGRESSIONAL TERMS.

It is the sense of the Senate that the United States Senate should pass a constitutional amendment limiting the number of terms Members of Congress can serve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I offer this amendment to clarify the sense of the Senate that would be expressed, and the amendment makes very clear the simplicity of this sense-of-the-Senate resolution.

The sense-of-the-Senate resolution would read as follows:

It is the sense of the Senate that the U.S. Senate should pass a constitutional amendment limiting the number of terms Members of Congress can serve.

I think that is a straightforward statement of the intention and sentiment which I believe the American people have as their agenda for reform, and I believe we should advance that agenda of reform in accordance with their clear mandate last fall.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. H.R. 927 is the pending business.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for not to exceed 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The pending business, H.R. 927, is set aside and the Senator is recognized for 10 minutes to proceed as in morning business.

#### ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, one habit or custom that the President and I have in common is that we are runners—I know I can say in my case, I believe in his case, not particularly gifted or particularly fast, but nonetheless we are runners as a method of keeping in good physical condition. I believe that the President, as I have, has on some occasions run in these rather large races where there are a large number of people and one tests oneself against the clock.

We always will attempt to beat our previous best time in a given race, but at least in this connection, we never attempt to do so by saying, "Gosh, I just can't break 45 minutes for 10 kilometers, so I'll shorten the race. I'll shorten it to 8 kilometers, but I'll call it 10, and then I will have broken 45 minutes."

The President of the United States would not consider doing that in a road

race, but that is precisely what he has done with respect to our dispute over a balanced budget.

Shortly after Mr. Clinton took the Office of the Presidency of the United States, he sought to lay to rest a dispute, which the Presiding Officer will remember, as I do, over economic assumptions. Through all of the Reagan administration and all of the Bush administration, we on this side of the aisle were criticized for using assumptions about the future state of the economy that were too optimistic, too rosy and, thereby, underestimating the challenge presented to us by continuing huge deficits in the budget of the United States.

Almost without exception, those budget assumptions in the Reagan and Bush administrations presented by the administrations were more optimistic than those presented to us by the Congressional Budget Office.

So President Clinton, on taking office, said, "Let's end this dispute. Let's all agree that in the past, the Congressional Budget Office has been both more cautious and more conservative and more accurate and we will debate substance in the future. We will all work off the same set of projections. We will all work out of the same books."

I think everyone, both Republicans and Democrats, took that as a statement of good faith and a significant step forward, because the motivation to overestimate growth in the economy on the part of an administration and, thus, to make its budgeting job easier is not limited either to Republicans or Democrats. There is always an easy way out.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, when push came to shove, the President abandoned that salutary way of making estimates and has gone back into exactly what he criticized his predecessors for—estimating or projecting his way out of difficulties. And so while this Congress, both in the Senate and in the House, has accepted without reservation the economic projections of the Congressional Budget Office and has proposed to balance the budget within 7 years, under the rules which the Congressional Budget Office has set out, as difficult as they are and although as a consequence we, in order to bring the budget into balance, have been forced to propose relatively drastic changes in policies which would reduce the growth of spending in the United States across the broad spectrum of all of the items which the Government of the United States funds, we find a President saying, well, there is not really much difference between us. The President says: I want to take a little longer, 9 or 10 years to balance the budget, while the Republicans want to do it in 7. We can easily reach an agreement or an accommodation on those two goals, they are so close to one another.