

U.S. Government, President Clinton created the advisory committee to advise the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group on the ethical and scientific issues related to such experiments. The Human Radiation Interagency Working Group, is a Cabinet-level body that includes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown.

I believe the advisory committee should be commended for devoting considerable attention to atomic veterans in its final report and including two recommendations concerning compensation for them. On several occasions, I strongly advocated that the advisory committee include atomic veterans in their inquiry. In February, for example, I issued a statement urging the panel to include atomic veterans in their final report and recommend specific options for the Government to provide recourse to atomic veterans seeking compensation. At that time, I stressed:

By any standard atomic veterans are perhaps America's most neglected group of veterans, and with the work of the advisory committee we now have an excellent opportunity to finally answer some of these veterans' questions and to address some of the injustices they have suffered.

In March, I had the honor of being the only Senator to publicly testify before the advisory committee—dedicating my testimony to the Forgotten 216th. I did so not only because many of these atomic veterans are Minnesotans but also because they have done so much to educate me about the plight of atomic veterans and their brave and continuing fight for justice.

Mr. President, since January 1994, I have had numerous meetings and contacts with the men of the Forgotten 216th and their families. Since their problems typify those of other atomic veterans nationwide, permit me to tell you about veterans of the U.S. Army's 216th Chemical Service Company and about why they now term themselves the Forgotten 216th.

The Forgotten 216th participated in a series of atmospheric nuclear tests in Nevada in 1952 called Operation Tumbler Snapper. They believed their Government's assurances that it would protect them against any harm, but now are convinced they were used as guinea pigs with no concern shown for their safety. Many were sent to measure fallout at or near ground zero immediately after a nuclear bomb blast, encountering radiation so high that their geiger counters literally went off the scale while they inhaled and ingested radioactive particles. They were given little or no protection, sometimes even lacking film badges to measure their exposure to radiation and were not informed of the dangers they faced. Moreover, they were sworn to secrecy about their participation in nuclear tests, sometimes denied access to their own service health records, and provided with no followup health care or even medical monitoring. Many members of the 216th have already

died, often of cancer. Is it any wonder these men now refer to themselves as the Forgotten 216th?

Given this horrendous situation, I was delighted to see that the advisory committee report included a recommendation that held out hope that the Forgotten 216th and other atomic veterans may never again be forgotten by the Government that placed them in harm's way. The report urged the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group to work in conjunction with Congress to promptly address the concerns expressed by atomic veterans. Among these concerns cited by the committee are several that I have long believed needed to be addressed, including:

The list of presumptive diseases for which atomic vets automatically receive VA compensation is incomplete and inadequate.

The standard of proof for those atomic vets without a presumptive disease cannot be met and, given the incompleteness of the exposure records retained by the Government, inappropriate.

Time and money spent on contractors and consultants in administering the program, particularly the dose reconstructions required for most atomic vets filing claims with the VA, would be better spent on directly aiding vets and their survivors.

With regard to the last two concerns, it is important to note that the advisory committee found that "the Government did not create or maintain adequate records regarding the exposure of all participants [and] the identity and test locale of all participants. * * *" This finding justifiably calls into question the ability of the Government to come up with accurate dose reconstructions on which the approval of claims for VA compensation of many atomic veterans depend.

In the aftermath of the President's acceptance of the report, Jesse Brown announced the establishment of an interagency working group consisting of representatives from the VA, HHS, and DOD in response to the advisory committee's recommendations concerning compensation for atomic veterans. The interagency working group is expected to submit its report to the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group in the spring of 1996.

Both advisory committee recommendations on atomic veterans urge the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group to work in tandem with the Congress to implement them and, therefore, I have requested that my distinguished colleague Chairman SIMPSON hold hearings soon after the interagency working group established by Secretary Brown issues its report in the spring. The purpose of the hearings would be to permit the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to determine what legislative action may need to be taken.

It is worth noting that the cover of every copy of the Atomic Veterans

Newsletter, the official publication of the National Association of Atomic Veterans, contains the simple but eloquent statement: "The atomic veteran seeks no special favor * * * simply justice." Their fight for justice has been long, hard, and frustrating, but these patriotic and deserving veterans have persevered.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join me in seeking to ensure that atomic veterans finally win their struggle for justice.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1995

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it stand in adjournment until the hour of 1 p.m., on Monday, November 27, that following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be deemed approved to date, no resolutions come over under the rule, the call of the calendar be dispensed with, the morning hour be deemed to have expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and then there be a period for morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. DOLE. I also ask unanimous consent that the Senate begin consideration of the HUD-VA conference report at 3 p.m., on Monday, November 27.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will begin consideration of the conference report accompanying the HUD-VA appropriations bill at 3 p.m. The Senate may also be asked to take further action with respect to the foreign operations appropriations bill. However, any votes ordered will be postponed to occur at 2:15 p.m., Tuesday, November 28, 1995.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, it is my understanding the House will not act on the adjournment resolution until about 5 o'clock. I do not know of any other Senators seeking recognition, so I now move we stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

The motion was agreed to; and at 12:09 p.m., the Senate recessed until 3 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. DEWINE).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO REPORT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, notwithstanding

the adjournment of the Senate, that on Tuesday, November 21, committees have from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to file any legislative or executive reported business.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 1 P.M.,
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1995

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, if there be no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now stand in adjourn-

ment under the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution 32.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3 p.m., adjourned until Monday, November 27, 1995, at 1 p.m.