

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator yield from Nevada.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator yield for an inquiry?

Mr. BRYAN. I yield for an inquiry, but I do not lose the floor; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thought it was customary that we went back and forth in a manner that is traditional with the Senate. I have seen this occur from time to time. All I can ask the Chair is to recognize and view the entire Chamber, because the Senator from Alaska had been advised to be here at 9:50. The Senator from Alaska was here and was not recognized, even though the Senator had been standing up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is the Chair's understanding of the rules of the U.S. Senate, the Chair is to recognize the Member who first addresses the Chair. In this case—

Mr. MURKOWSKI. The Senator from Alaska addressed the Chair in a timely manner.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the Senator will suspend—

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Well, I am very disappointed. If the Chair—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the Senator will suspend, the Chair will finish the statement. It is the Chair's understanding of the rules of the U.S. Senate the Chair is to recognize the first Member who addresses the Chair.

It was the Chair's opinion, and still is the Chair's opinion, that the first Member clearly to address the Chair was the Senator from Nevada. The Chair, therefore, recognized the Senator from Nevada.

Further, it is the understanding of this Chair that there is no rule in the U.S. Senate that provides for alternating back and forth. That can be accommodated between the Members themselves, but it cannot be done by the Chair. The Chair has no authority to do that. The Senator from Nevada has the floor.

Mr. BRYAN. I would like to accommodate—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the Senator will yield.

Mr. BRYAN. I would like to accommodate. I think the Senator from Alaska and I both have had time set aside during the morning business. I had time and I know he had time. It is going to require unanimous consent that time be extended. I will offer to extend time for him as well.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BRYAN. I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended for a period of 20 minutes, so I might be accommodated for my 10 minutes and the distinguished Senator from Alaska

may be accommodated for his 10 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I shall not object. I do not think there is any need for all this activity, and I have the greatest respect. I am supposed to be up at 10 o'clock. So I am not going to lose any sleep on that. Let us proceed and then we will go to the regular order. Senator MURKOWSKI can have 5 minutes and certainly Senator BRYAN. There is no rule in the U.S. Senate in morning business, in any sense, that there be an accommodation on both sides. That is not morning business. It is the first one present and the first one seeking recognition. Really, I hope there will not be any acrimony with regard to that decision.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Is there objection to the request? If not, it is so ordered. The time is extended for 20 minutes. The Senator from Nevada still has the floor.

Mr. BRYAN. I thank the Chair.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, tomorrow, April 26, is the 10th anniversary of the most dramatic ecological disaster of the 20th century—the explosion of reactor No. 4 at the V.I. Lenin Atomic Power Plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine.

On that day, 10 years ago tomorrow, a combination of poor design, human error—or, more accurately, human negligence and incompetence—led to a massive explosion within the core of reactor No. 4—an explosion that blew off the 2,000-ton reactor chamber roof, spewing massive amounts of radiation into the surrounding area and the Earth's atmosphere in a radioactive cloud that eventually reached as far away as California.

It was not until several years after the disaster occurred that the truth about Chernobyl, the crown jewel of the Soviet nuclear power industry, began to emerge—that following the explosion, reactor No. 4 experienced what has long been considered the worst-case scenario in nuclear power—a full reactor meltdown. The core material burned, exposed to the atmosphere, for nearly 10 days, and resulting in a total meltdown.

Our colleague, Senator KENNEDY, summed it up shortly after the disaster, when he said “The ultimate lesson of Chernobyl is that human and technological error can cause disaster anytime, anywhere.” That has particular resonance for us in Nevada.

The ecological and economic consequences of Chernobyl were massive, immediate, and will last for tens of thousands of years.

Thirty-one people died as an immediate result of the explosion, 200 were hospitalized, and 135,000 were evacuated from 71 nearby towns and villages. High doses of radiation spread over at least 10,000 square miles, affecting 5 million people in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. The explosion spread more

than 200 times the radiation released by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki blasts combined. Anywhere from 32,000 to 150,000 people could eventually die as a result of the blast. Millions of people have had their lives permanently disrupted by the accident. Belarus and Ukraine now report a broad rise in respiratory illness, heart disease, and birth defects. Scientists are still waiting to see what the role may be of the radiation exposure in leading to the many cancers that take longer than 10 years to develop, but expect it to be significant.

The children of Belarus have been particularly hard hit. Seventy percent of the Chernobyl fallout landed in Belarus—a nation that itself has no nuclear reactors. Huge tracts of land in Belarus were contaminated with radioactive cesium, strontium, and plutonium. Prior to 1986, Belarus's thyroid cancer rate for children under 14 was typical—2 cases in a nation of about 10 million. By 1992, the rate was up to 66, and by 1994, the rate had increased to 82—an increase that can only be explained by the Chernobyl fallout.

One quarter of the land of Belarus, home to one-fifth of the nation's population, has been severely contaminated by the Chernobyl explosion.

The power plant complex is surrounded by an 18-mile radius exclusion zone—an area of very high contamination that is off-limits to for residence and entry without a special permit.

Lying outside of the exclusion zone is a much larger area with lesser, but still very high, contamination. Despite official government pronouncements that this area is unsafe, it is still home to 237,000 residents of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, who simply cannot afford to live anywhere else.

The remains of reactor No. 4, still highly radioactive, are contained in a hastily erected sarcophagus—a highly unstable structure, considered by many the most dangerous building on earth. As concerns regarding the possibility of collapse of the sarcophagus or the reactor entombed inside increase, it is unclear if the technological or financial challenges of stabilizing and cleaning up reactor No. 4 can ever be met.

Mr. President, If Chernobyl has taught us anything, it is that when dealing with such high-risk matters as nuclear power, or nuclear waste, small mistakes can have enormous consequences.

Next week, the Senate may turn to a bill aptly dubbed the “Mobile Chernobyl Bill”—S. 1271, the Craig nuclear waste bill.

As many of my colleagues are aware, this establishes, on an accelerated schedule, a so-called interim high-level nuclear waste dump in Nevada.

I want to be clear on what this interim storage program means. Tens of thousands of tons of high-level nuclear waste will be removed from reactors, loaded on over 16,000 trains and trucks, and shipped cross country to Nevada, a State with no nuclear power. The

waste will travel through 43 States on transportation routes that bring the waste within one mile of over 50 million people.

Mr. President, I know the nuclear power industry is lobbying hard for this bill. I know there is a lot of pressure on Senators to support this legislation. I also know that the nuclear power industry has spread a massive amount of disinformation about the bill.

By any objective evaluation, this legislation is completely unnecessary. In fact, the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, a Federal agency created by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, and comprised of the Nation's most respected scientists, said just 1 month ago that there is simply no need for an interim storage facility at this time.

This is not the first time the industry has cried wolf. In 1980, a supporter of the industry asserted:

We are running out of reactor space at reactors for the storage of the fuel, and if we do not build what we call away-from-reactor storage, another type of interim storage, and begin soon, we could begin shutting down civilian nuclear reactors in this country as soon as 1983.

Of course, Mr. President, no U.S. reactors have closed due to lack of storage. Thirteen years have passed since the prediction that in 1983 there would result the closure of reactors.

Despite the crisis mentality created by the nuclear power industry, there is no nuclear reactor in America that will be forced to close down due to lack of storage. Every nuclear utility, if it so chooses, can take advantage of existing, NRC licensed, off the shelf dry cast storage systems to meet its spent fuel storage needs. Should the mobile Chernobyl bill come to the floor next week, I will have a lot more to say about the lack of any compelling need for this legislation.

There are, however, plenty of other reasons to oppose this bill. The bill preempts nearly every local, State, or Federal environmental protection. It creates a taxpayer liability of billions of dollars to solve the private industry's waste problem. It eliminates EPA authority to protect the health and public safety.

Mr. President, I do not know when the Senate may consider this bill. It is my hope that it never comes up. Nevertheless, I urge my colleagues to fully consider the many legitimate public health safety consequences raised by this legislation, particularly as they relate to their own constituents, and to oppose the mobile Chernobyl bill. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Alaska is recognized to speak in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair and wish the Chair a good morning.

(The remarks of Mr. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the introduction of S. 1703 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair and wish the Chair a good day. I thank the floor managers for allowing additional time in morning business.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I believe we are at the order of business under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. SIMPSON. Which is to go to the illegal immigration bill, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1698

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I have business to do that has nothing to do with this bill before the Senate. I want everyone to be alert. No need to alert your staff that I am up to some giant caper.

I understand there are two bills due for their second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the first bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1698), entitled the "Health Insurance Reform Act of 1996."

Mr. SIMPSON. I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2937

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the second bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2937) for the reimbursement of attorney fees and costs incurred by former employees of the White House Travel Office with respect to the termination of their employment in that office on May 19, 1993.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will announce that morning business is closed.

IMMIGRATION CONTROL AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 1996

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1664) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase control over immigration to the United States, and so forth and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Simpson amendment No. 3669, to prohibit foreign students on F-1 visas from obtaining free public elementary or secondary education.

Simpson amendment No. 3670, to establish a pilot program to collect information relating to nonimmigrant foreign students.

Simpson amendment No. 3671, to create new ground of exclusion and of deportation for falsely claiming U.S. citizenship.

Simpson amendment No. 3722 (to amendment No. 3669), in the nature of a substitute.

Simpson amendment No. 3723 (to amendment No. 3670), in the nature of a substitute.

Simpson amendment No. 3724 (to amendment No. 3671), in the nature of a substitute.

Simpson motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report back forthwith.

Simpson amendment No. 3725 (to instructions of motion to recommit), to prohibit foreign students on F-1 visas from obtaining free public elementary or secondary education.

Coverdell (for Dole/Coverdell) amendment No. 3737 (to Amendment No. 3725), to establish grounds for deportation for offenses of domestic violence, stalking, crimes against children, and crimes of sexual violence without regard to the length of sentence imposed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3739 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3725

(Purpose: To provide for temporary numerical limits on family-sponsored immigrant visas, a temporary priority-based system of allocating family-sponsored immigrant visas, and a temporary per-country limit—to apply for the 5 fiscal years after enactment of S. 1664)

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I send a second-degree amendment to the desk to amendment numbered 3725 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. SIMPSON] proposes an amendment numbered 3739 to amendment No. 3725.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

SEC. . TEMPORARY WORLDWIDE LEVEL OF FAMILY-SPONSORED IMMIGRATION, ALLOCATION OF FAMILY-SPONSORED IMMIGRANT VISAS, AND PER-COUNTRY LIMIT

(A) TEMPORARY WORLDWIDE LEVEL OF FAMILY-SPONSORED IMMIGRATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following provisions shall temporarily supersede the specified subsections of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act during the first fiscal year beginning after the enactment of this Act, and during the four subsequent fiscal years:

(1) Section 201(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act shall be temporarily superseded by the following provision:

"ALIENS NOT SUBJECT TO DIRECT NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Aliens described in this subsection, who are not subject to the worldwide levels or numerical limitations of subsection (a), are as follows:

"(1) Special immigrants described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 101(a)(27).

"(2) Aliens who are admitted under section 207 or whose status is adjusted under section 209.

"(3) Aliens born to an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence during a temporary visit abroad."