

What we need are Fed nominees who will be independent. We need nominees who will stand up to the chairman if they believe he is wrong.

I do not believe Dr. Ferguson will assert that independence. I believe his answer to my question in the Banking Committee proves that.

For this reason, I reluctantly vote "no" on the nomination of Dr. Roger Ferguson, to a 14-year term as a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

Mr. BREAUX. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Roger Walter Ferguson, Jr., to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System? On this question the yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. HELMS) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Exec.]

YEAS—97

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Akaka | Durbin | McCain |
| Allard | Edwards | Mikulski |
| Allen | Ensign | Miller |
| Baucus | Enzi | Murkowski |
| Bayh | Feingold | Murray |
| Bennett | Feinstein | Nelson (FL) |
| Biden | Fitzgerald | Nelson (NE) |
| Bingaman | Frist | Nickles |
| Bond | Graham | Reed |
| Boxer | Gramm | Reid |
| Breaux | Grassley | Roberts |
| Brownback | Gregg | Rockefeller |
| Burns | Hagel | Santorum |
| Byrd | Harkin | Sarbanes |
| Campbell | Hatch | Schumer |
| Cantwell | Hollings | Sessions |
| Carnahan | Hutchinson | Shelby |
| Carper | Hutchison | Smith (NH) |
| Chafee | Inhofe | Smith (OR) |
| Cleland | Inouye | Snowe |
| Clinton | Jeffords | Specter |
| Cochran | Johnson | Stabenow |
| Collins | Kennedy | Stevens |
| Conrad | Kerry | Thomas |
| Corzine | Kohl | Thompson |
| Craig | Kyl | Thurmond |
| Crapo | Landrieu | Torricelli |
| Daschle | Leahy | Voinovich |
| Dayton | Levin | Warner |
| DeWine | Lieberman | Wellstone |
| Dodd | Lincoln | Wyden |
| Domenici | Lott | |
| Dorgan | Lugar | |

NAYS—2

Bunning

McConnell

NOT VOTING—1

Helms

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be 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.

NUCLEAR WASTE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope everyone recognizes the tremendous tragedy we sadly heard of yesterday in Baltimore. A train derailed in a tunnel. The fire is still burning. The hydrochloric acid is still leaking from that tank. Last night, the city of Baltimore, one of the largest cities in America, was closed down. The Baltimore Orioles were in the middle of a double-header. They stopped the game and sent everybody home.

The reason I mention this is there has been a mad clamor about the nuclear power industry and shipping nuclear waste. The nuclear industry doesn't care where it goes, although they are focused on Nevada for the present time. I think everyone needs to recognize that transporting hazardous materials is very difficult. If people think hydrochloric acid is bad—which it is—think about how bad nuclear waste is. A speck the size of a pinpoint would kill a person. We are talking about transporting some 70,000 tons of it all across America.

I hope before everybody starts flexing their muscles about the reestablishment of nuclear power in this country that we recognize first there has to be something done with the dangerous waste associated with nuclear power.

It is estimated that some 60 million people live within a mile of the routes that may be proposed for transporting this nuclear waste by train or truck. Not to mention the problems related to terrorism, which we have discussed at some length on this floor in previous debates.

We should leave nuclear waste where it is. Eminent scientists say it is safe. It could be stored onsite in storage containers for a fraction of the cost of a permanent repository. It would be much less dangerous. It could be stored relatively safely for 100 years, the scientists say. During that period of time, we might develop a breakthrough idea as to what could be done safely with these spent fuel rods.

RADIATION EXPOSURE CLAIMS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to speak today about a

group of Americans, some of whom are in my State. Some are in Arizona. Some are in Wyoming. Some are in Connecticut. These people have only one thing in common: they are the beneficiaries of an American law that is called RCRA, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. A number of us were part of getting that law passed. It was a recognition that there were certain Americans, including uranium miners and some others, who very well might have been overexposed to low-level radiation when they were mining in uranium mines that weren't aerated—where they did not have enough air conditioning and not enough clean air. They may have very well during their lives breathed in radiation and contracted serious illnesses. Some might have died. Some may today be suffering from cancer or other diseases.

In any event, this law was passed. It was kind of heralded as a very good commitment by the Government and very simple. You didn't have to get a lawyer for these claims. It was limited to \$100,000 in exchange for making it simple and setting some standards: You can come in and prove your case. You could probably prove your claim in a relatively short period of time.

Lo and behold, if Congress put the money up, you would get your check. You could get it as a widow. You could get it as one who was sick. You could get it as anyone entitled to it under the statute. It worked pretty well for a while.

Then something very ghastly happened for the beneficiaries. Pretty soon, they started going to the Justice Department which has charge of these claims and asking them for money.

The Justice Department told this growing group of Americans: We don't have any money.

They said: What do you mean? Here is the law.

They said: Well, Congress didn't put up the money. We ran out. So you will not be worried, why don't we give you an IOU. Here is your assurance that the Government says it owes you \$100,000.

These people started coming to see their Senators—not only me but Senator BINGAMAN and other Senators—saying, time is passing. I am getting sicker. I may even die, and I have an IOU from this great big American Government. Why can't they pay me?

Let me say in this Chamber that it is embarrassing to say it even here, but it is more embarrassing to say it to the victims. There is a big series of discussions going on between committees—even appropriations subcommittees—as to which one ought to appropriate the money.

In the meantime, no money is appropriated. People walk around with the IOUs filing their claims, and they are working on them day by day. And another law passes. It is for a larger group of Americans who come in to adjudicate their claims for exposure to low-level radiation. It is for radiation where we had uranium in a Richmond,

VA, mine or perhaps in Paducah, KY, and various places in Ohio. For this larger group of people, those claims are still being worked.

We say: Well, time has passed, and maybe these claims should be a little higher. So they are awarded \$150,000 if they can prove the claim that they are either totally disabled or are an heir.

Congress in that case—coming out of a different committee—made that program an entitlement. Even the occupant of the Chair, who is a new Senator, would understand that those claims are paid without anybody appropriating it—just like the Social Security check or your veterans check.

Here is one group of Americans filing their claims. Some of them are already adjudicated; we stamp out a check, while over here another group of Americans carry around IOUs.

A number of Senators have been working on this issue. A number of House Members have been working on it. My friend, Senator BINGAMAN, has been working on it.

But essentially our last opportunity to cease the embarrassment and do something half fair was to put language in the supplemental appropriations bill that would see to it that for any claims already finished where people are carrying around the IOUs, or any that are completed for the rest of this year, there is money for them. We provided that in the Senate bill on supplemental appropriations.

Frankly, we even had to find a way to pay for it because it had to be budget neutral. So we found a way to pay for it. I did, out of a program I started a few years ago. I said: It is not being used, so cancel it so we have room.

Today, at about 10:30, 11 o'clock this morning, after a number of days of conferring, the House-Senate committee on that bill approved it. It should come back before us very soon and get approval. It has language in it that says whatever amount of money is needed for those holding those IOUs and for those finishing up their claims by the end of this fiscal year, they will have the money in the Justice Department to pay it.

I say to the Senate, I know it is difficult, unless you have this problem, for you to be as concerned as I or those in my particular region. But I thought maybe I should tell the whole Senate because it is time they know that this is a festering embarrassment.

Is it solved? No. The appropriations bill that is going to put in money for next year only carries a small amount of money because it expects, as does the President in his budget, to convert this program to an automatic payment program called a mandatory or an entitlement. But we have not been able to get that done yet.

So I have said it for a second reason. I hope the committees that are considering it—and I will do my best to go see the committees to make myself understood, and take with me whatever evidence I need to convince the chair-

men and ranking members they ought to make this an entitlement. But in the meantime, the people who have claims right up until the end of this year will get paid. It will take a couple weeks, so they should not be coming into our offices saying thank you yet, nor should they come in and ask where is the money. They just have to wait a little while. It takes a little bit of time.

I thought, since we see them and we hear them, that maybe I should let the Senate vicariously hear them—you can't see them, but you can hear them through me.

What we have to do is not let another year pass because this is a problem, whether or not you come from a State that has "down-winders" and/or uranium miners; this carries with it some very serious kinds of overtones for the U.S. Government. You create a program. You tell people: We have been sorry for you up until now, but we will give you a little claim here—\$100,000—and then, when you prove it up, you will take it, and you no longer have any claims, and we have said that we have paid you. It is just not right that you do not do it, just not right.

It is growing. The newspeople are starting to carry it. I guess they are starting to carry: "Congress finally puts up the money today." That is good. But I hope there is a lingering interest in how we fix it. It should not be that 6 months into next year somebody exposed to low-level radiation at one of America's uranium enrichment plants proves their claim and gets an automatic check, but yet you have these people who might have worked 35 years ago, for 20 years, in a nonaerated uranium mine, where the U.S. Government, even through its heralded Atomic Energy Commission, which I know a lot about, made a mistake with reference to the quality of air in the mines—where acknowledgements were made many years later; and it is hard to get the acknowledgement, but we finally got it—yet a mistake was made.

So I thought it would be good, while we had nothing to do in this Senate Chamber, that maybe we could spread this story of what has happened and say thank you to the Appropriations Committee for the emergency measure today. And we look forward to one of our committees passing a bill that will make these few remaining people who are entitled to it know they will get their money when their claim is adjudicated.

JACKIE M. CLEGG

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I seek recognition to express a deep appreciation for the dedicated service of Jackie M. Clegg as first Vice President and Vice Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

As I think many of my colleagues are aware, Jackie's 4-year term at the Eximbank will be concluding on tomorrow, July 20. As chairman of the Sen-

ate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, I note our committee's gratitude and, indeed, the gratitude of the Senate for the many extraordinary contributions she has made to the Export-import Bank during her tenure.

Jackie spent more than 8 years in a series of senior positions at the Eximbank, devoting herself tirelessly to the agency's mission of supporting U.S. exporters and sustaining American jobs. She first joined the Eximbank in April of 1993, served as special assistant, chief of staff and vice president for congressional and external affairs, prior to her nomination, in May of 1997, to be first Vice President and Vice Chair of the Export-Import Bank.

Her exceptionally effective service at the Eximbank was a logical outgrowth of her extensive legislative staff career in the Congress. She worked for more than a decade as the legislative assistant for foreign policy, trade, and national security issues, for Senator Jake Garn of her home State of Utah, as an associate staff member to the Appropriations Committee, and later as a professional staff member on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on International Finance and Monetary Policy.

It thus came as no surprise to us in the Congress when Jackie skillfully led the bank's efforts on its reauthorization legislation in 1997.

The legislation received overwhelming bipartisan support in the Congress and set the stage for the agency's excellent work on behalf of U.S. exporters during her term.

We on the Banking Committee have had the benefit of Jackie's wise counsel on export and trade matters for several years. She has an acute sense of the relationship among Federal agencies, Congress, foreign governments, and the business community.

In her travels on the Bank's behalf, and in her speeches, Jackie has raised awareness of the critical nature that international trade and trade finance can play in improving the lives of our citizens. Jackie has also devoted herself to improving the management of the Eximbank and its responsiveness to staff concerns. She has helped shepherd the Bank towards increased automation as a means of better fulfilling its objective of satisfying the needs of small business. She has served as both an institutional memory and a trailblazer—traits not often found in the same person.

The board of directors of the Eximbank today adopted a resolution expressing its appreciation and thanks to Jackie for her distinguished service to the Bank.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be printed in the RECORD after my remarks.

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

(See Exhibit 1.)

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, for those of us who have supported and