

NTS workers to the Special Exposure Cohort, SEC, making them eligible for automatic compensation. I immediately wrote a letter to President Bush asking for his administration to rectify this horrible wrong, and for some NTS workers, the situation was set right the next year.

In 2006, employees who had worked at NTS for at least 250 days from 1951 to 1962, or the atmospheric testing years, saw a tremendous victory. They were designated as part of a new Special Exposure Cohort, SEC. However, the sacrifices of NTS workers from the years of underground testing and their families went largely unacknowledged, until now. Thanks to the new SEC which goes into effect today, some measure of justice will be brought to these employees of NTS and their families.

Unfortunately, this new SEC will not put an end to the years of waiting for all NTS workers. Some won't be eligible for automatic compensation because their cancer isn't on the official list or because they worked less than 250 days, even if they were present for a large release of radiation. I will continue to fight to make sure each and every one of Nevada's Cold War veterans and their families get the compensation and justice they deserve for the enormous personal sacrifices they have made for their country. Still, I am very happy that today an estimated 1,365 claimants may be eligible for automatic compensation under the new SEC.

After submitting legislation to add the underground testing years to the SEC in 2006, my office began the long and complicated process of working with workers, survivors, and experts to submit an SEC petition. After much hard work, on February 5, 2007, I joined with three Nevadans in submitting an SEC petition arguing the scientific problems with the radiation dose reconstruction process that was denying so many NTS workers and their families the compensation and recognition they deserve. When the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH, initially recommended that the petition be denied, it was the tireless work of more than a dozen individuals standing up for what is right that prevented the petition from being rejected completely. It was as a team that we persevered to gain approval for the petition and, with this approval, justice for the underground testing workers and their families.

Today's victory would not have happened without the dedicated team of NTS workers, their families, and others who fought for years to make this day possible. I would like to take a moment to thank some of these people.

First, I personally extend a heartfelt thank you to the three petitioners who devoted their time, energy, and testimony to bring this issue to the forefront. Thank you Lori Hunton, Paul Stednick, and Peter White. Lori's father, Oral Triplett worked at the Ne-

vada Test Site and passed away when she was only 16. Paul worked at the site from 1966 to 1994 as a laborer and labor foreman. Peter worked as a laborer, pipefitter, and welder from 1985 to 1989. Each of these individuals provided invaluable insight and support necessary to complete the petition process.

I also thank Navor Valdez, Gene Campbell, Mary Bess Holloway Peterson, William Clegghorn, Robert Lemons, Cooper Michael Boyd, Patricia Niemeier, and John Funk, for sharing their stories about what really happened on the ground in Nevada.

No thank you would be complete without acknowledging Richard Miller, formerly of the Government Accountability Project, without whom this petition would never have been filed.

Finally, I send my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have worked at the Nevada Test Site and their families. I especially would like to acknowledge workers who passed away while fighting for benefits and their widows, widowers, and children surviving them who took up the fight for their loved one. Nevada's Cold War heroes have made immeasurable contributions to our nation's security, and the sacrifices they have made their health and their lives make it impossible for us to ever adequately thank them.

BBG NOMINATIONS

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have my letter to Mr. MCCONNELL, dated April 28, 2010, concerning BBG nominations printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, April 28, 2009.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: I am requesting that I be consulted before the Senate enters into any unanimous consent agreements regarding Presidential nominees to the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). On April 13, 2010 the Committee on Foreign Relations reported the following nominations to the Senate: Walter Isaacson, of Louisiana, as Chairman; Victor Ashe of Tennessee; Michael Lynton of California; Susan McCue of Virginia; Dennis Mulhaupt of California; and S. Enders Wimbush of Virginia.

Additionally, the Committee on Foreign Relations is still considering the nominations of Dana Perino of the District of Columbia, and Michael Meehan of Virginia to the Broadcasting Board of Governors. I request that I be consulted before the Senate enters into any unanimous consent agreements for these two nominations as well.

I have had longstanding concerns regarding transparency and effectiveness of our taxpayer funded international broadcasting agencies under the purview of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. In particular, I am troubled by the operations and management of Voice of America (VOA) given issues raised by the media, Inspector General, and former employees of VOA. Therefore, I have

requested to meet with all the prospective nominees to discuss these issues. The Broadcasting Board of Governors performs a vital role regarding oversight and management of our international broadcasting. As the nation faces threats from the Middle East and in fact throughout the world, transparent and effective international broadcasting agencies are critical to ensuring our international broadcasts are in fact fulfilling the America's interests in securing peace for ourselves and our allies.

Again, thank you for protecting my rights on these nominations.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
U.S. Senator.

IRAN AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I read with interest, and disgust, the press reports about the comments of Iranian President Ahmadinejad at the United Nations on Monday, when he attempted to defend Iran's secret nuclear program and his government's continuing defiance of the Security Council.

I could not help but contrast his words with the efforts so many other countries have been making to prevent a nuclear weapon from ending up in the hands of a terrorist, or a nuclear arms race from taking off in the Middle East or South Asia.

In the past couple of weeks, the United States and Russia—two former enemies that once came to the brink of a nuclear war and since the 1980s have slashed their nuclear arsenals—agreed to make further reductions, and President Obama has said he wants to negotiate deeper cuts in furtherance of his long-term vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

On Monday, the Pentagon disclosed publicly the number of weapons that remain in our arsenal, which would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

There are serious efforts being made to establish nuclear weapons-free zones in South America, Africa, and the Middle East.

And at the United Nations, even countries such as Russia and China, which have traditionally sided with Iran, have all but lost patience with what Secretary Clinton rightly called Iran's "history of making confusing, contradictory and inaccurate statements."

Nobody questions Iran's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. But the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is, as United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has said, more important today than ever. Terrorists like the Times Square bomber could cause death and destruction on a scale we have not seen since World War II. Nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists would have consequences for life as we know it that are almost unfathomable. And Iran has long been a state sponsor of terrorism.

President Ahmadinejad insists there is no proof that Iran is building a nuclear weapon, at the same time that he

refuses to permit the kind of international inspections that could establish whether Iran's nuclear program is only for peaceful purposes. After Iran was offered the option of sending its enriched uranium to Russia and France for refinement into fuel rods for its research reactor, he responded by stalling with one contradictory counteroffer after another, all the while continuing to enrich increasing amounts of uranium to the point when Iran now is believed to have enough to build two nuclear bombs.

Mr. President, I want to commend Secretary of State Clinton for her measured, strong statements at the United Nations about Iran's duplicitous, dangerous flaunting of the international nuclear control regime. It does not appear that anything short of sweeping, multilateral sanctions has a chance of convincing Iran's leaders to change their reckless course.

It is tragic that Iran, a country of such talented, sophisticated people—many of whom risked their lives to protest a blatantly fraudulent election and who want peaceful relations with the United States—currently has a President who is squandering Iran's resources and reputation in pursuit of a narcissistic, foolhardy quest for a nuclear bomb that will only increase his country's isolation and intensify Iran's confrontational relationship with its neighbors and the international community. The potential consequences could not be more frightening for ordinary people everywhere, including the people of Iran, and the Security Council should delay no further in imposing the strongest possible sanctions.

MILITARY FAMILIES APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in Oregon, we just honored the return of 2,700 members of the Oregon National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team. Although the 41st's service in Iraq was Oregon's biggest single contribution to a war effort since World War II, it is not the only one.

The soldiers of the Oregon National Guard's 162nd Engineer Company are currently clearing roads in Afghanistan. The 1249 Engineer Battalion in Salem, OR, is preparing to deploy to Afghanistan this winter, and about 600 soldiers from Eastern Oregon will be part of the 116th Cavalry when it deploys to Iraq this fall.

I know I will return to the floor of the Senate to talk about the bravery and service of these men and women. But today I want to talk about the often unrecognized other half of these deployments—the military families that support the service members and keep things together at home. The spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents and community supporters who work together and toil alone to pay the bills, get the kids to school, and help find employment while their loved ones are away.

May 8 is Military Families Appreciation Day in Oregon. On this special day, our State honors the dedication and service of military families and veterans who have helped make America's military the strongest the world has ever seen.

Being left behind when a loved one goes to war is not an easy mission. Yet our military families continue to make the difficult sacrifices, and call upon their inner reserves, to nurture family life so that their service member can focus on the business at hand.

Our military spouses are the glue that holds our military families together. They unselfishly give up their husband or wife, their partner and friend to help serve our Nation. They celebrate important events like birthdays, anniversaries, and sometimes a child's first step or first word alone. They assume the difficult role of being both mother and father—shouldering the responsibility of creating and nurturing a loving family environment when their loved one is away. Their strength and determination are examples to the rest of the country.

And to all of the grandparents and friends who step up when our single-parent service members are called to duty, I thank you. You unselfishly answer the Nation's call by caring for our future generation. You help relieve the pressures of military service by making sure our service members' children are safe, happy, and loved. Stand tall, stand proud. You, too, are our unsung heroes.

Finally, I would like to recognize the sons and daughters who grow up in a military family. As the children of America's defenders, they cope with unbelievable circumstances. The smells of shoe polish, starch, and Brasso may remind them of home more than the smells of cookies and apple pie. Their mothers and fathers are called to duty at a moment's notice, and they have no choice but to be strong, even when it hurts to say goodbye. Their contribution to the Nation and personal strength does not go unnoticed. They are our future and represent the best America has to offer.

Today's military family—spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents and community—inspire us through spirit and strength. They proudly wave flags and keep the candles burning as a reminder of those who are gone.

Their dedication reminds us all that the U.S. flag is brilliant indeed; patriotic songs are not just reserved for the fourth of July; that a parting kiss can hold for months; and that shared tears can somehow bring us closer together. They put their own priorities aside. They take care of one another. They take care of America.

So to all military families, I thank you. Thank you for your service to your family, our community, and to our Nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CYNTHIA L. MUNSCH

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to honor a North Dakota woman retiring from a long and honorable career dedicated to assisting U.S. military veterans throughout Burleigh County in the State of North Dakota.

Cindy Munsch, of rural New Salem, ND, started her professional career as a teacher, educating young people on the Standing Rock Reservation, in the Bismarck Public Schools, and at United Tribes Technical College.

In 1985, after 14 years in education, Cindy commenced employment with the Burleigh County Veterans Service Office. Initially the office secretary, Cindy's outstanding work ethic and duty performance was recognized by the Burleigh County Commission with promotion to the position of Deputy County Service Officer. She is now retiring after 25 years of service to our veterans.

Cindy has assisted thousands of veterans with obtaining needed benefits and services. She is recognized by her peers across the State as an expert in veterans benefits, and she frequently provides advice and counsel at the request of other veterans service providers. She also assists in the administration of the veterans transportation program, which provides van transport to veterans from western and central North Dakota to the VA Regional Medical Center in Fargo.

Seeing a need for women veterans in the area to have the opportunity to address issues and experiences unique to their gender, in conjunction with staff from the Bismarck Vet Center, Cindy started a Women Veterans Group that meets monthly for the purpose of discussion and support, education and community service projects. In addition, Cindy cochaired the inaugural Women Veterans Summit, held recently in Bismarck, to bring women veterans issues into focus and to provide a networking opportunity for women veterans from throughout the State.

There is no more admirable vocation than one of service to others. Cindy Munsch dedicated her professional career to ensuring that our service members, who stepped forward to serve the Nation by preserving our freedom and way of life, receive the benefits and assistance they deserve. I am honored to salute Cindy Munsch for her dedicated and selfless service to our veterans for the past 25 years and to congratulate her on her retirement from the Burleigh County Veterans Service Office.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOSEPH W. BASCUAS

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I would like to thank Dr. Joseph W. Bascuas for his invaluable contributions as interim president to Becker College and