difficulty, caused by an act of God, caused by weather, or caused by economics.

It is a very simple amendment. It does not regulate airlines. It is not imposing new regulations; it is just simply a matter of disclosure—simply giving the reasons why an airline flight is delayed over 15 minutes or just outright canceled.

I realize that simply reporting the reasons for cancellations and delays is not going to stop the practice of delaying and canceling flights for economic reasons because airlines are businesses. They may still want to go ahead and cancel or delay a flight for economic reasons. But I do think the public has the right to know the reason for the cancellation or the delay.

If airlines have to start reporting the reasons for missed connections and disrupted lives, consumers will soon see that rural America is grounded so that the rest of the country can go about its business.

It may turn out that as a consequence there will be fewer cancellations for economic reasons. That is very much my hope, because for many parts of the country, particularly rural America, the airlines' actions are having a disproportionately adverse effect in parts of the country that don't have as much airline service as other parts of the country.

That is my amendment. I see one Senator on the floor. I do not know if he will speak to it or not, but I don't see him jumping up in his chair.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendments be set aside.

AMENDMENT NO. 1899

(Purpose: To provide for designation of at least one general aviation airport from among the current or former military airports that are eligible for certain grant funds, and for other purposes)

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. ROCKEFELLER], for Mr. LEVIN, for himself and Mr. ABRAHAM, proposes an amendment numbered 1899.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam 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 appropriate place, insert the following new section:

SEC. . DESIGNATION OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT.

Section 47118 is amended—

(1) in the second sentence of subsection (a), by striking ''12'' and inserting ''15''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) DESIGNATION OF GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, at least one of the airports designated under subsection (a) may be a general aviation airport that is a former military installation closed or realigned under a law described in subsection (a)(1).''.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 1899) was agreed to.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, for the RECORD, amendment No. 1899 was cleared by the majority.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HURRICANE FLOYD RELIEF

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, it was on September 16 that Hurricane Floyd crashed into the North Carolina coast dumping 20 inches of rain that resulted in devastating floods. The region of Eastern North Carolina most affected was visited by another 4–6 inches of rain just a week later, making an already catastrophic situation even worse.

So I noted with great interest when President Clinton paid a visit to a group of elite international financiers at the annual World Bank and IMF meeting 13 days later (September 29) to make an important announcement. It was there that he disclosed with great fanfare his proposal to forgive 100 percent of the debt owed by some 40 foreign countries to the United States—and much of their debt owed indirectly to the U.S. through the World Bank and the IMF.

Thirteen days after Hurricane Floyd arrived, and when many communities in my state were still literally under water, President Clinton decided it was appropriate to make the following plea on behalf of debt relief to foreign governments—he said: ''. . . I call on our Congress to respond to the moral and economic urgency of this issue, and see to it that America does its part. I have asked for the money and shown how it would be paid for, and I ask the Congress to keep our country shouldering its fair share of the responsibility.''

No wonder my constituents are puzzled as to why, in the words of John Austin of Tryon, North Carolina, ''we can help everyone else—but not our own people.'' North Carolinians understand instinctively that there is something odd about our national priorities when we have spent more—$27.9 billion—on foreign aid in the past two years than the $27.7 billion FEMA has expended in the past ten years. That's right: government aid through FEMA for such wide-ranging disasters as the Northridge earthquakes in California, Hurricane Andrew in South Florida and the catastrophic Midwestern floods doesn't even measure up to the past two years of foreign aid.

Now, I have been in constant communication with the Majority Leader, the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, members on the other side of the aisle, and countless federal agencies seeking relief for thousands of North Carolinians who have been ruined by Hurricane Floyd. Helping these victims is the number one priority for those with whom I have spoken. And for the record, I am gratified by their cooperation and their determination to help.

With respect to the President's plan to forgive the debts of foreign governments, I remind Senators that every one of the governments whose debt the President proposes to forgive has no one to blame but themselves for pursuing socialist and statist policies, and often outright theft, that drove them in a hole in the first place.

Just how much is being taken away from victims in my state to fund the President's proposal? The Administration calculates that it will cost $320 million to forgive the $5.7 billion in mostly uncollectible debts owed to the U.S. Additionally, Uncle Sam is being asked to underwrite debt forgiveness to the World Bank and the IMF to the tune of $650 million.

That's a total of $970 million which North Carolina and other devastated regions desperately need, but will not get because money used to forgive the debts of foreigners is money that cannot and will not be used to assist hurricane victims.

Bear in mind, Mr. President, that the United States has already provided approximately $32.3 billion in foreign aid to just these countries since the end of World War II. And the U.S. Government has already provided $3.47 billion in debt forgiveness to these countries in the past several years alone.

If Senators study the list of countries, it turns out that the President seeks to reward governments who keep their people in economic and political bondage, and he proposes to do it at the expense of suffering Americans. The human rights organization Freedom House determined that only eight of the 36 proposed beneficiaries are ''free'' in terms of political expression. At least one on the World Bank's list of countries eligible to receive debt forgiveness is a terrorist state, and that's

Sudan. Also included are the communist dictatorships in Angola, Vietnam and the military dictatorship Burma.

The Heritage Foundation determined that none of the countries in question are ''free'' economically. (The economies of the vast majority of the countries judged are either ''repressed'' or ''mostly unfree'' according to the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom.) Some countries on the World Bank's list do not even have functioning governments, such as Somalia, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

Only one of 36 countries voted with the United States more than half of the time at the United Nations in 1998 (that is Honduras, which supported the U.S. only 55 percent of the time). Make no mistake about it: this proposal diverts assistance from Hurricane Floyd victims to corrupt, economically and politically repressed foreign countries—many of whom are not even friendly to the United States.

Mr. President, my office has received a steady stream of visitors and mail urging Congress to support the ''Jubilee 2000'' debt forgiveness plan, which now includes the President's proposal. It has been a well-orchestrated lobbying campaign.

But since the day Hurricane Floyd slammed into the North Carolina coast and dumped 20 inches of rain on the eastern third of my state, the phone calls and mail from North Carolina in support of debt forgiveness to foreign governments has dried up. The reason is clear: we have a natural disaster unlike any seen in 500 years here at home, and our duty is to help suffering Americans first.

Mr. President, I'm putting the Administration on notice here and now that the first priority shall be helping victims of Hurricane Floyd. Not until sufficient resources are dedicated to this effort by the federal government will I agree to Senate consideration of President Clinton's debt forgiveness to foreign governments proposal.

THE COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

Mr. HELMS. Madam President, I was fascinated when I saw in the Washington Post this Sunday the front-page headline reading: ''CIA Unable to Precisely Track Testing: Analysis of Russian Compliance with Nuclear Treaty Hampered.''

The first paragraph of the story below that headline said it all:

> In a new assessment of its capabilities, the Central Intelligence Agency has concluded that it cannot monitor low-level nuclear tests by Russia precisely enough to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. . . . Twice last month the Russians carried out what might have been nuclear explosions at its . . . testing site in the Arctic. But the CIA found that data from its seismic sensors and other monitoring equipment were insufficient to allow analysts to reach a firm conclusion about the nature of events, officials said. . . .

This surely was devastating news for a lot of people at the White House. Our nation's Central Intelligence Agency had come to the conclusion that it cannot verify compliance with the CTBT.

Mercy. I can just see them scurrying around.

But more amazing than this was the response of the White House spin machine. I've seen a lot of strange things during my nearly 27 years in the Senate, but this is the first time I have ever seen an administration argue that America's inability to verify compliance with a treaty was precisely the reason for the Senate to ratify the treaty. Back home that doesn't even make good nonsense.

Yet this is what the White House has been arguing all day today. This revelation is good news for the CTBT's proponents, they say, because the CTBT will now institute an entirely new verification system with 300 monitoring stations around the world.

Madam President, I am not making this up. This is what the White House said.

I say to the President: What excuse will the White House give if and when they spend billions of dollars on a ''new verification system with 300 monitoring stations around the world''—and the CTBT still can't be verified? Talk about a pig in a poke. Or a hundred excuse-makers still on the spot!

If the Administration spokesman contends that the CTBT's proposed ''International Monitoring System,'' or IMS, will be able to do what all the assets of the entire existing U.S. intelligence community cannot—i.e., verify compliance with this treaty—isn't it really just a matter of their having been caught with their hands in the cookie jar?

Let's examine their claim. The CTBT's International Monitoring System was designed only to detect what are called ''fully-coupled'' nuclear tests. That is to say tests that are not shielded from the surrounding geology.

But the proposed multibillion-dollar IMS cannot detect hidden tests—known as ''de-coupled'' tests—in which a country tries to hide the nuclear explosion by conducting the test in an underground cavern or some other structure that muffles the explosion.

''Decoupling'' can reduce the detectable magnitude of a test by a factor of 70.

In other words, countries can conduct a 60-kiloton nuclear test without being detected by this fanciful IMS apparatus, a last-minute cover up for the administration's having exaggerated a treaty that should never have been sent to the U.S. Senate for approval in the first place.

Every country of concern to the U.S.—every one of them—is capable of decoupling its nuclear explosions. North Korea, China, and Russia will all be able to conduct significant testing without detection by our country.

What about these 300 ''additional'' monitoring sites that the White House has brought for as a illusory argument in favor of the CTBT? They are fiction. The vast majority of those 300 sites already exist. They have been United States monitoring stations all along—and the CIA nonetheless confesses that it cannot verify.

The additional sites called for under the treaty are in places like the Cook Islands, the Central African Republic, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Niger, Paraguay, Bolivia, Botswana, Costa Rica, Samoa, etc. The majority of these will add zero, not one benefit to the U.S. ability to monitor countries of concern. The fact is if U.S. intelligence cannot verify compliance with this treaty, no International Monitoring System set up under the CTBT will. This treaty is unverifiable, and dangerous to U.S. national security.

If this is the best the administration can do, they haven't much of a case to make to the Senate—or anywhere else—in favor of the CTBT. The administration is grasping at straws, looking for any argument—however incredible—to support an insupportable treaty.

We will let them try to make their case. As I demonstrated on the floor last week, the Foreign Relations Committee has held 14 separate hearings in which the committee heard extensive testimony from both sides on the CTBT—113 pages of testimony, from a plethora of current and former officials. This is in addition to the extensive hearings that have already been held by the Armed Services Committee and three hearings exclusively on the CTBT held by the Government Affairs Committee.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will hold its final hearings this Thursday to complete our examination of this treaty. We will invite Secretary Albright to make her case for the treaty, and will hear testimony from a variety of former senior administration officials and arms control experts to present the case against the treaty.

I have also invited the chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee, Senator WARNER, to present the findings of his distinguished panel's review of this fatally flawed treaty.

Finally, the facts are not on the administration's side. This is a ill-conceived treaty which our own Central Intelligence Agency acknowledges that it cannot verify. Approving the CTBT would leave the American people unsure of the safety and reliability of America's nuclear deterrent, while at the same time completely unprotected from ballistic missile attack. That is a dangerous proposal, and I am confident that the U.S. Senate will vote to reject this dangerous arms control pact called the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

I yield the floor.