

the White House. They are supposed to provide leadership in this area also. But they do not want to. So it is our burden in the Republican majority to provide commonsense leadership, to take the hits, to make the tough votes.

Mr. President, one of the newspapers in South Dakota this morning reported that the Federal Government—the Treasury—released how much my State would suffer if some of the budget cuts were made. I say to my fellow South Dakotans, that is the oldest trick in the book by the Federal bureaucracy. They release how much people are going to suffer, and how much money is going to be lost. They do not say that they might have to reduce the number of bureaucrats in Washington or at the Denver regional headquarters. They do not say that they are counting as part of the budget impact the elimination of bureaucrats and regulators whose work may involve South Dakota, but actually live in Washington, DC, or Denver. They merely say, “Your State is going to be hurt this much,” and, “Senator, if you vote to cut us, you are hurting your State.” Those numbers that are released in such a timely fashion show how skillful the Federal bureaucracy is at trying to protect themselves by politically hurting Senators and Congressmen who vote for cuts in the budget.

So I urge all South Dakotans, and all Americans, to take a close look at exactly what they are talking about.

In conclusion, Mr. President, on the budget, we face a very painful choice. On the one hand, we can go broke as a nation and see the value of the dollar decline and leave a great debt for future generations. We also can keep spending in Medicare at the same level without making changes and have it go broke by the year 2002.

On the other hand, we can take a responsible course. We can follow the outline of PETE DOMENICI's budget, which he is bringing to this floor.

The Republicans in the Senate have a plan. The Democrats do not. They are criticizing our plan. That is fine. We will take the criticism. But I want to say to the people in my State and to this country that I hope they give us the understanding and the credit for taking leadership, for taking the tough votes we will soon take, because the other side is merely throwing rocks at us as we are trying to climb up the hill.

Let us remember that our country is at a historic point. We could choose to go bankrupt, with a \$4 trillion debt this year. With many programs such as Medicare going broke, we can keep doing what we are doing, and if so, it is going to lead to a cataclysmic event. Or we can take some tough medicine, and take some tough votes.

In the next 6 months, I believe that I will be casting the toughest votes of my Senate career. I ask for the understanding of my constituents because it is not easy. I would rather be voting to give everybody everything. It must have been fun to be a Senator in the

1960's, when you could vote for amendments without having any budget offset. Now, with every amendment we have, if we add something to the budget, we have to say where we are taking it from. We have to state under the budget rules what this is going to do to the Federal budget.

So the whole tone of the next 6 months in this Chamber is going to be a very difficult one. We are going to see Senators struggle in their votes. It is going to be easier to demagog and to say let us wait until next year, or delay it 3 or 5 years. But the time has come to stand up and be counted. I believe that we can do a great deal for the future of the United States if we do so.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BRYAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for a period not to exceed 10 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

PRAIRIE ISLAND DRY CASK

Mr. BRYAN. Mr. President, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues a little noticed, but I think significant, event that occurred last week.

Last Thursday, Northern States Power transferred spent nuclear fuel from its reactor pool at Prairie Island into a new dry storage cask located at the reactor site.

Prairie Island, near Red Wing, MN, is the location of two of Northern States Power's three nuclear power reactors.

Licensed to operate starting in 1973 and 1974 respectively, Prairie Island 1 and Prairie Island 2 share a spent fuel storage pool.

Today, 20 years into the 40-year licensed life of the reactors, the pool is filling up.

Northern States Power needed to find more storage for the waste generated at Prairie Island. Fortunately, licensed technology, dry cask storage, was available which would allow the utility to move the oldest spent fuel assemblies out of the pool.

NSP proposed to locate the casks at the reactor site.

Thursday's announcement of final NRC approval to load the casks is the final chapter in a prolonged political and public relations effort by NSP to resolve until the year 2002 its Prairie Island waste problem.

The public outcry that erupted after NSP proposed to expand on-site storage is every utility executive's nightmare, and led to the perception of the Prairie Island situation as the poster child of

the nuclear power industry's current propaganda campaign for interim storage of high-level nuclear waste in Nevada.

In spite of the obvious solution available to NSP, on-site dry casks, the Prairie Island situation has, for several years now, been held up as the prime example of why Congress must immediately reopen the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to speed up progress on moving high-level nuclear waste to Nevada.

Twenty percent of the Nation's electricity power supply, we have been told, is at risk if Congress does not act soon.

Reactors will shut down, cities will go dark, and electricity rates will skyrocket, if Congress does not take the waste off the hands of the utilities soon—according to the nuclear power industry. The nuclear power industry's shameless campaign to get the Federal Government to take responsibility for its waste is not new.

In 1980, at the same time Congress was considering options for the permanent disposal of high-level waste, the nuclear power industry was pushing for away-from-reactor storage, or AFR.

Without a Federal AFR facility, according to the industry, reactors would begin closing by 1983.

Of course, no Federal AFR was built, and no reactors closed for lack of storage.

Besides creating the misleading impression of a crisis, of impending doom, the nuclear power propaganda campaign has always sought to create the impression that there is only one solution, one option for avoiding the supposedly catastrophic consequences of reactor shutdowns: move the high-level nuclear waste to Nevada. That is the only proposal that is offered.

First, we as a State were targeted for a permanent repository.

That program is an acknowledged failure.

Now we are targeted for interim storage.

For the nuclear power industry, that means 100 years, subject to renewal. That amounts to de facto permanent storage.

According to the nuclear power industry, interim storage in Nevada is the only salvation for the future of nuclear power.

Nevadans have made it crystal clear that we want no part of the nuclear power industry's solution to its waste problem. Nuclear waste is not welcome in Nevada.

Nevertheless, the nuclear power industry, and its surrogate for this matter, the Department of Energy, has been relentless in its efforts to force Nevadans to bear the health and safety risks of solving a problem we had no role in creating.

Mr. President, there are solutions to the nuclear waste storage problem that do not include Nevada. Last weeks events at Prairie Island make that abundantly clear.

For all their propaganda, and all their complaining to Congress, the nuclear utilities find a way to handle their waste, and keep reactors open and running.

The CEO of Northern States Power, John Howard, has said "Resolution of interim storage for spent nuclear fuel from our country's commercial power plants has reached crisis proportions."

Mr. Howard's assessment—that interim storage of nuclear waste is an impending crisis, and, thus, Congress must act to move this waste to Nevada as soon as possible—is a common theme in the nuclear power industry.

As the Prairie Island situation demonstrates, however, the crisis scenario is simply not true from a technical or scientific perspective.

Of course, I do not expect many of my colleagues will hear much about the resolution of the supposed crisis at Prairie Island.

The resolution of the Prairie Island waste situation simply does not track with the contrived crisis scenario developed by the nuclear power industry and its lobbyists.

To admit that nuclear utilities can find ways to take care of their own waste would shatter the carefully constructed fiction that interim storage in Nevada is the only possible alternative to shutting down the reactors.

It should be acknowledged that Northern States Power paid a price for the approval of additional storage at Prairie Island.

The debate over increased storage was intense, and many are still not happy.

NSP was forced to make concessions, such as building more renewable energy sources.

Other utilities are not anxious to go through what NSP went through.

The unfortunate fact for nuclear utilities is that nuclear power, and nuclear waste, are not popular.

The public relations and political problems associated with expanding storage capacity at reactors is an inescapable cost of nuclear power.

Northern States Power also paid a financial price for expanding storage at Prairie Island.

As other utilities do the same, especially after the 1998 goal for operation of a permanent repository included in the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act, some action ought to be taken to provide some relief to the ratepayers who have paid in the first instance into the nuclear waste fund and who are not receiving the storage at that fund which they contemplated would be operational by the year 1998.

I might say parenthetically, as the distinguished occupant of the chair knows, under no scenario, under absolutely none, will a facility be opened by the year 1998.

So I believe as a matter of fairness that ratepayers are entitled to some relief in terms of payment into the nuclear waste fund.

I have reintroduced in this Congress, as I have on previous occasions, legisla-

tion which this year bears the number of S. 429 which will provide a credit against nuclear waste fund contributions for utilities forced to build on-site storage after 1998.

Under S. 429, ratepayers will not be financially penalized for the misguided and mismanaged efforts of the nuclear power industry and the Department of Energy to build a permanent repository in Nevada.

I urge my colleagues to reject the nuclear power industry's newest assault on the people of Nevada, and support S. 429.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills due their second reading.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 761

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 761) to improve the ability of the United States to respond to the international terrorist threat.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 790

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the second bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 790) to provide for the modification or elimination of Federal reporting requirements.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

DISASTERS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, last Friday, President Clinton declared a major disaster for the State of Mississippi, due to damage resulting from severe storms, flooding, and related problems, weather problems that occurred on May 8 and during the days following. This declaration is deeply appreciated by the people of Mississippi and the State of Mississippi be-

cause very severe damage has occurred in our State as all of us know who had an opportunity to watch television and read about the devastating floods that occurred all across the gulf coast, from New Orleans to Mobile and beyond. Included in this area of severe weather damage was my State of Mississippi. All of the coast counties and some of those counties that are more inland received severe damage.

This declaration makes it possible now for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, led by James Lee Witt, to provide private, individual assistance to those disaster victims who qualify under Federal legislation. The letter also states that additional public assistance may be added at a later date.

It is my understanding that the Governor's office and his staff are working with Federal agents at this time in Mississippi, to try to ensure that all possible assistance, emergency and otherwise, is made available to these disaster victims. I commend the Governor and his staff for the fine work they are doing.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent a copy of the President's letter to our Governor, Kirk Fordice, be printed at this point in the RECORD.

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

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, May 12, 1995.

Hon. KIRK FORDICE,
Governor of Mississippi,
State Capitol, Jackson, MS.

DEAR GOVERNOR FORDICE: As requested, I have declared a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act) for the State of Mississippi due to damage resulting from severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding on May 8, 1995, and continuing. I have authorized Federal relief and recovery assistance in the affected area.

Individual Assistance will be provided. Public Assistance may be added at a later date, if warranted. Consistent with the requirement that Federal assistance be supplemental, any Federal funds provided under the Stafford Act for Public Assistance will be limited to 75 percent of the total eligible costs in the designated areas.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate Federal assistance efforts and designate specific areas eligible for such assistance. The Federal Coordinating Officer will be Mr. Michael J. Polny of FEMA. He will consult with you and assist in the execution of the FEMA-State Disaster Assistance Agreement governing the expenditure of Federal funds.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, this also brings to mind legislation that I introduced recently to bring under the purview of the Public Safety Officers Benefits Act the employees of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as well as employees of State and local emergency management and civil defense agencies.

Senators may not realize this, but State and local police officers, firefighters, State and local rescue squads