

people each year, the State Department estimates.

Most victims are civilians in war-torn countries like Angola, Cambodia, Vietnam and El Salvador, but land mines also pose risks to U.S. troops participating in the Bosnian peacekeeping mission.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the International Red Cross have urged a worldwide ban on land mines. And Canada, Austria, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Mexico, the Netherlands and five other countries already have renounced their use.

But until now, U.S. military officials have insisted they needed the option of using land mines to protect the lives of American soldiers. They also have argued that the United States should not give up a weapon if other nations won't.

Despite Pentagon objections, Leahy pushed through Congress a one-year ban on the military's use of anti-personnel land mines, except along borders and in demilitarized zones. The ban would begin sometime within three years, and President Clinton signed it into law.

"The rest of the world wants the United States to lead on this," Leahy said in an interview Sunday. "If the most powerful nation in the world can't do away with land mines, how can we ever persuade other countries to?"

Shalikhshvili ordered the review of Pentagon policy after he and Defense Secretary William J. Perry received a confidential letter from the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine K. Albright, the Times said.

Albright, who had just returned from Angola, urged that the current policy on land mines be changed, the Times said. Parts of the letter were read to the newspaper by an unidentified official who received a copy.

Leahy argues that many military officials, both retired and active-duty, also privately support a permanent ban on land mines.

"This is not a Republican-Democratic, liberal-conservative or civilian versus military issue," Leahy said.

The Pentagon estimates Bosnia has 3 million land mines and Croatia another 3 million. Some are sophisticated; others crude or homemade. NATO officials say no more than 30 percent have been mapped.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I see nobody else seeking the floor, so I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The absence of a quorum has been noted. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistance legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I do not see anybody seeking recognition, so I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for 6 minutes.

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

NUCLEAR TERRORISM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the General Accounting Office has released a report which describes the appalling state of Russia's nuclear waste storage facilities. It described how a GAO investigator was able to enter one facil-

ity without identifying himself, and there was only one guard present, who was unarmed. There are other descriptions of incredibly lax security that even the most inept thief could easily penetrate undetected. It is almost an open invitation.

The implications of this are staggering. A grapefruit-sized ball of uranium, which would weigh about 30 pounds, could obliterate the lower half of the city of New York. A lot more uranium than that is already unaccounted for. We do not know whether it is in the hands of terrorists, or where it is. All we know is that it is missing.

We have already witnessed several instances of nuclear smuggling, in some cases enough uranium to cause incalculable damage. The fact that these attempts were thwarted should not give anyone a lot of confidence about the future because many, if not most, crimes go unsolved.

Mr. President, I mention this today both because of the timeliness of the GAO report, but also because we spend countless hours, sometimes days and months, here holding hearings on arcane topics and debating sometimes relatively meaningless resolutions, unless it is meaningful for someone's campaign, or voting repeatedly on issues that pale in importance to the dangers of nuclear terrorism. We make speeches about it. I am making one now. But when it comes to providing the money and other resources to seriously address this threat, the Congress oftentimes shirks its responsibility.

One good example is in the foreign aid budget. Some Members of Congress were eager to take credit for sharply cutting funds for foreign aid last year over the objection of myself and a minority of other Senators. To his credit, Senator MCCONNELL, the chairman of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, supported funds to combat international crime, as did I. But the budget was cut anyway. In fact, some of those funds could have been used to help safeguard nuclear material in countries of the former Soviet Union. It would be hard to think of an example where foreign aid is more in the interest of the security of the American people.

I want to single out Senator NUNN and Senator LUGAR, who have led the effort in Congress to get funds appropriated to safeguard nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union. Senator NUNN made the point in today's issue of Defense News, when he said "there is skepticism about spending any money in Russia. Nunn-Lugar funds are often described as foreign aid, in quotes, as if some type of charitable giving was going on * * * We are talking about dismantling warheads and missiles aimed at us * * * things we spent trillions of dollars trying to arm ourselves against."

We are about to begin the fiscal year 1997 budget process. I hope that the Congress does not make the same mistake twice. I hope Members of Congress

will read this GAO report on nuclear proliferation. Unlike some Government reports that you can read to help fall asleep at night, this one will keep you awake. Cutting these programs is the ultimate example of penny-wise, pound-foolish. I am already hearing rumors that foreign aid may be slashed again this year. If that happens, some of those who vote that way should ask themselves what responsibility they bear.

There is no way to guarantee the safety and security of fissile material, but there is a lot more that we and others can and should do to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism. It is going to cost a lot of money. Budgets are already stretched, but can anyone here say that we can afford to watch this problem get worse? This is about the security of every American, and of future generations.

So I urge the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the Department of Energy, and other agencies with responsibility for nuclear safety to develop an effective program to combat this threat. Tell us what needs to be done, and come to Congress with a request for adequate funding for it.

I wish there were better security controls in the former Soviet Union, but there are not. That is the reality, and it is a reality that a lot of thieves, a lot of would-be terrorists know even better than we do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. I ask unanimous consent that I be given 5 minutes as if in morning business.

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

Mr. THOMAS. I thank the Chair.

CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I wanted to comment just a moment on an effort we made last week and intend to make again tomorrow relating to the affairs in the Taiwan Strait. All of us know that there has been now for some time a series of threats, a series of missiles, a series of live-ammunition military maneuvers by the People's Republic designed, we believe and I believe, to intimidate the Taiwanese election that comes up this week. Certainly, our country and the world, indeed, has a great interest in what happens in this area, partly because of our efforts to improve our relationship with the People's Republic of China—a relationship that will be increasingly important as time goes by, increasingly important to the Pacific rim and to the Asian