

the transportation casks can survive any real-world crash. They say the radiation protection standard is unsafe. We have shown how our standard is more protective than the current EPA guidance that allows five times as much, and we will allow EPA to tighten the standards further if need be.

The doomsayers say the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board says there is no compelling or technical or safety reason to move fuel to a central location. We have shown that a more complete reading of the technical review report and testimony indicates that there is a need for an interim storage and that there is a need for it at Yucca Mountain, if, indeed, Yucca is determined to be suitable for a permanent repository.

They say, "We can delay the decision." We have shown that delay is what got us into this mess in the first place; inactivity. Any time now, the courts will tell us what damages we will face when the Government is in breach of its contract. With each delay, the damages are going to mount. With each delay, the liability of the taxpayer will mount. With each delay, there will be pressure to yield a further delay. That is the way this place works. When we have a problem, we simply delay. The call for delay is a siren song and, ultimately, a trap.

We stand at a crossroads. The job of solving this problem is ours. The time for solving the problem is now. We have made much progress at Yucca Mountain. The 5-mile exploratory tunnel is complete. We can build on this progress. Both the Senate and House bill contain site characterization activities for the permanent repository. But we cannot put all our eggs in the Yucca basket. We need a temporary storage facility now or we are going to be storing spent fuel all across the Nation for decades to come. We can choose whether this Nation needs 80 interim storage sites or just one. Where is that? The arid, remote, Nevada test site where we exploded scores of nuclear bombs during the cold war. It is a safe, remote location. It is monitored, and it is appropriate for an interim site.

If Yucca Mountain is licensed, it will be an easy task to move the spent fuel a short distance to the repository. If Yucca is not licensed and is found to be unsuitable, we will need a centralized interim site anyway, so we will be way ahead of the game. Regardless of what happens at Yucca, this is a responsible step that we should take.

Mr. President, the time is now. This legislation passed the House and the Senate. It is the answer. I urge my colleagues over the recess to reflect on the merits of our obligation to take this waste, to recognize the dependence we have on the nuclear industry, and move to take a responsible position to uphold the contract that has been made by the Government to take this waste in conformance with the terms of the agreement and the \$13 billion paid by the ratepayers.

For those who are still in doubt as to the merits of this legislation, I encourage them to recognize that it is irresponsible to object to what has happened in both the House and the Senate without providing an alternative. The development of this legislation has required a great deal of time and effort and a great deal of examination of alternatives. So I hope the critics come up with a workable alternative, as opposed to just criticism of the plan that is currently pending in the Congress of the United States, to meet our obligations to address the high-level nuclear waste issue.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. 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. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TED KENNEDY'S 35TH YEAR IN THE SENATE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, 35 years ago today, the people of Massachusetts made the very wise decision to send EDWARD M. KENNEDY to Congress. For 35 years, TED KENNEDY has fought for their interests—and for the interests of all working people.

It is said that some people seek public office to be someone; others seek it in order to do something. TED KENNEDY is a pre-eminent example of the latter. For 35 years, he has fought unwaveringly to improve the living standards of working families and to make sure that, in America, if you're sick, you can see a doctor—no matter how much money you have, or how little.

He has used his great, booming voice to speak for those who have no voice, and he has never wavered in his principles. TED KENNEDY does not change his politics with the season. He is a man of principle.

At the same time, he is a pragmatist who wants, more than anything, to get things done.

I will never forget how he looked after the balanced budget agreement was signed and the new children's health care program was created. He came into my office. His Irish eyes were smiling. To everyone he passed he said, "Isn't it wonderful?" He looked so much like a proud new father—I half-expected him to start handing out cigars.

When he spoke about that victory, he didn't talk about how many votes his plan had gotten. He talked about how many children it would help.

In 35 years, he has never forgotten the reason he is here. It's not about strategy, or abstract policy. It's about people.

The struggle to create the children's health plan also illustrates another of

the basic truths about TED KENNEDY. There are those who view my friend as an inflexible liberal. While he would claim the liberal label with pride, TED KENNEDY is one of the most flexible people in this Chamber.

Ask his friend, ORRIN HATCH. People call them the Odd Couple. I'll let my colleagues decide for themselves who is Felix Unger, and who is Oscar Madison.

TED KENNEDY takes his work seriously, but he doesn't take himself too seriously. His staff Christmas parties and his costumes are legendary on the Hill. But not many people off the Hill know that one year he came as Milli—or was it Vanilli?—and last year he and Vicki appeared as 2 of the 101 dalmations.

Sometimes when I am on this floor, I look up to the gallery to see the people who have come here to see this great institution at work. I can always tell when TED KENNEDY has walked on to the floor by the reactions of the people in the gallery. Invariably, people will sit up. Someone will lean over and whisper to the person next to them, "Look, TED KENNEDY."

He is, undoubtedly, the best known and most recognized Member of this body. Yet, he remains a modest man. He is a worker among workers.

No one in our caucus works harder. He's often the first one to work in the morning, and the last person to leave at night.

No job is too small for TED KENNEDY. At the same time, no challenge is too big.

He comes from a family that understands the American dream. And he is determined to keep that dream alive for a new generation of Americans.

Senator KENNEDY's family also understands heartbreak. Carved into the desk in which he sits are the names of his two brothers who sat there before him, John and Robert. Two brothers who were taken from him, and us, because of their commitment to public service.

Many people—perhaps most people—who had suffered such loss might withdraw from public service, in fear or anger. They might conclude, rightly, that their family had given enough.

But not TED KENNEDY.

He has stayed here and he worked. To some of us, he is an inspiration. To others, he is, frankly, an irritation. But he is the same sort of irritation that the speck of sand is to the oyster. Because of him, we have produced pearls.

We passed the Kennedy-Kassebaum Health Care Portability Act and the Children's Health Care Act.

We raised the minimum wage.

As long as here is here, I know that TED KENNEDY will continue to fight for better health care for all Americans, for educational opportunity, and economic justice.

If history is any guide, he will move this body, and this Nation, forward on all those fronts.

I am proud to call him my colleague and my friend.

I congratulate him today on 35 years of service in the Senate to his State and to his country.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

FAST-TRACK LEGISLATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I agree with President Clinton's goal of creating economic growth through more export opportunities, but I must vote against this legislation to renew fast-track authority because it fails to protect our workers and our environment.

I understand that exports are a key ingredient of Vermont's economic growth. As a small State, we must rely on selling our products beyond the Green Mountains. Exports give Vermonters the opportunity to create good jobs right here in Vermont through rising trade. For instance, Cabot Creamery recently made headlines by selling its Vermont-made cheddar cheese in London, England.

Vermonters are reaping the benefits of more open markets around the world, where we can sell our high quality goods. Since 1992, Vermont exports are up 29 percent, with 70,000 Vermonters now working in export-related jobs. On a per capita basis, Vermont is the largest exporter of goods among the 50 States. We just need to look at the Vermont expansion of Husky, a Canadian company with European plants, to understand the importance of trade in the world economy.

I will continue to work with Vermonters to encourage exporting of our goods and services as a path for prosperity for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren.

But trade is about more than economic statistics, it is a moral issue as well. Just as the fight to ban landmines worldwide is the right thing to do, free trade must also be fair. Fair trade expands exporting opportunities. But just as importantly, fair trade safeguards our standard of living by supporting our absolute right to a clean environment and sound labor practices.

In earlier times workers' rights and environmental concerns were mostly separated from trade considerations, but that has begun to change. In today's global economy, the interaction between trade and the rights of workers and environmental protections cannot be ignored. One of the reasons I voted for the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] was because it contained side agreements on labor and environmental issues—the first trade agreement to ever link these issues together.

But, unfortunately, this fast-track authority bill moves away from the critical link between trade and labor and the environment that we fought so hard to forge in NAFTA. Under the terms of this bill, even the modest labor and environmental side agreements under NAFTA would be excluded from fast-track consideration. That is unacceptable.

Like the NAFTA debate, the rhetoric on both sides of this debate is overblown. I do not believe the lack of fast-track authority will cripple future trade negotiations. Since fast-track authority lapsed in 1994, the administration has successfully negotiated hundreds of trade pacts with countries around the world. As the world's only superpower with a market of more than 250 million consumers, the United States will continue to command the economic power to open markets and expand export opportunities with or without the President having fast-track authority.

I do not believe the Congress should lightly hand over its right to amend, even in the consideration of trade agreements. In no other area of legislation does Congress give up its constitutional right to offer amendments. If the Congress has no more recourse on these issues than to vote trade agreements up or down, the key question to ask is: Does this bill give the President the authority to negotiate trade agreements that protect the rights of all our citizens? It does not.

I had hoped that when fast-track legislation reached the Senate floor it would have allowed for expanding export opportunities while protecting our workers and our environment. This bill fails to deliver those necessary protections. As a result, I will vote against it.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JERRY B. HEDRICK

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Jerry Hedrick as he retires from 22 years of service to Hoechst Marion Roussel, the largest pharmaceutical company in the State of Missouri. Jerry is known for his expertise in the fields of health care and public policy, and has been a mentor to many persons involved in those fields.

Jerry began his career in 1975 with the pharmaceutical industry as a consultant when he joined Marion Laboratories, a predecessor company to Marion Merrell Dow Inc. and Hoechst Marion Roussel. Through Jerry's outstanding talents and dedication he has distinguished himself in the pharmaceutical industry as the vice president of government affairs for Hoechst Marion Roussel since August 1995.

Upon graduation from college, Jerry worked as a teacher, and he continues to work with young people through his volunteering with the Heart of America Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the Dream Factory, an organization dedicated to granting the wishes of very ill children. I commend Jerry

for the outstanding service he provides to his community. As our Nation looks increasingly to individuals to become more active in the work of the community, Jerry's commitment provides an example for others to follow.

Jerry also generously gives his time to the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Midwest Bioethics Center where he is one of the founding trustees, the Advisory Council at Emporia State University, and the American Quarter Horse Association as the Kansas State director.

I have had the opportunity to work with Jerry on several occasions and have always considered him to be a person of knowledge and insight. His dedication to the advancement of health care in America is truly admirable.

I urge the Senate to join me in bidding Jerry Hedrick a fond farewell, and wishing him, his wife, Bev, and his daughter, Ginger, the very best as they move on to face new challenges, opportunities, and rewards.

THE "SAVER" BILL

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, as an original cosponsor along with Senator GRASSLEY, I am pleased to strongly support the SAVER bill, Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997. This measure is a bi-partisan effort on the part of my colleague, Senator GRASSLEY, and I to help ensure that all Americans are adequately prepared for retirement. As the ranking member of the Special Committee on Aging, I have learned that there is a critical need to educate Americans on the need to save for their retirement. Mr. President, only one-half of all American workers have pensions. A mere one-third of Americans have ever tried to calculate how much money they need for retirement. And less than one-fifth of the workforce is confident that they have saved enough to live comfortably after they retire. Having become aware of this, Senator GRASSLEY and I have introduced a piece of legislation that takes the first step in educating the public about the need to plan ahead.

Mr. President, as my colleague has just told you, our legislation will create an education project to raise public awareness about personal savings. It directs the U.S. Department of Labor to maintain an ongoing program of education and outreach to the public. The program includes public service announcements, public meetings and the distribution of educational materials. It sets up an Internet site dedicated to promoting individual retirement savings. Americans will be able to log on to the site and complete a worksheet to calculate how much they need to save to adequately supplement their projected Social Security benefits when they retire.

The SAVER bill also directs the Department of Labor to provide information to small businesses on how they