

Filling Civilian Gap to Rebuild Afghanistan" says it all.

We now have a President who has formed a sound policy for Afghanistan, but we simply do not have the civilian international development experts necessary to fill the civilian needs in Afghanistan.

This is tragic.

Think about after the attacks of September 11 how many Americans wanted to serve their country, whether in the military, in Americorps programs, or in the Foreign Service.

We should have taken advantage of that groundswell of American idealism and determination to bring some of our brightest minds into the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development where they could use their talents and desire for public service to make a difference in the lives of others around the world and to help bring stability to faraway places.

The need is stark. Take USAID alone. In the 1960s when President Kennedy launched the agency, it had more than 5,000 Foreign Service officers. Today, with obvious needs around the world from Afghanistan to Iraq to Congo, it has just over 1,000.

Its budget in real dollars has shrunk by almost one quarter.

That is right. At a time when people on both sides of the aisle, as well as in the military and civilian leadership of our government, agree on the great need for such civilian engagement, our lead international development agency has seen its key staff cut by 80 percent and its funding by more than 25 percent.

We have this all backwards.

This increase in development professionals would be a first step towards rebalancing the three pillars of our foreign policy and national security—development, defense, and diplomacy, and would go a long way in helping face some of our country's biggest global challenges.

I urge support for this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

#### NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to discuss the benefits of nuclear power to our Nation.

Last week, I was fortunate enough to visit the Savannah River Site, along with three of our colleagues, Senator ISAKSON and our two South Carolina colleagues, Senator GRAHAM and Senator DEMINT, to watch the Department of Energy employees at the Savannah River Site carry out their mission.

This site has been safely operating since the 1950s refining materials for nuclear weapons. In more than fifty years, there has not been a single nuclear incident at the Savannah River Site, proving that it is possible to safely operate and maintain our nuclear facilities. But in the past decade, the place that has helped bolster America's

standing in the atomic age and has been a watchword for America's nuclear might has also begun to harness spent forces for peaceful purposes—to bring light and heat into American homes.

The Savannah River Site has helped lead the way in disposing of nuclear material. For more than 6 years, the facility has blended weapons-grade, highly enriched uranium to make low-enriched uranium that is being converted into commercial reactor fuel. It recently expanded its mission to include converting excess weapons-grade plutonium from decommissioned nuclear weapons and will become a consolidation point for all weapons-grade plutonium in the United States. This will result in more fuel for commercial power reactors.

Materials that once tipped our arsenal of nuclear warheads are now being used to provide the light by which Georgians eat dinner, do their homework, and the power with which they heat their homes in winter and cool them in our hot summers. In fact, one-fifth of Georgia's total generating capacity comes from nuclear power—second only to coal.

The two nuclear plants in Georgia provide some of the lowest cost electricity in our State. The power they generate is safe, reliable, and, most significant in the midst of this national debate on climate change—emissions free and environmentally responsible.

Despite those clear advantages, in America at large, nuclear power produces some 20 percent of the Nation's energy. Compare that to France, where nuclear power sources provide nearly 80 percent of that country's power.

Intriguingly, in terms of national security, the Savannah River Site is playing a key role in America's nuclear nonproliferation efforts. The nuclear power generated from reducing our nuclear weapons stockpile at the Savannah River Site is coming full circle: In its conversion from weapons to commercial nuclear fuel, it is helping reduce America's dependence on foreign energy sources, often from countries that do not like us and do not have our best interests at heart.

Additionally, the work conducted at the Savannah River Site helps maintain America's technical and scientific nuclear base, preserving the expertise to expand commercial nuclear energy as well as the expertise to modernize our existing nuclear weapons arsenal.

I was impressed by the talent and expertise of Savannah River Site employees I met who are some of the leading nuclear experts in the world. However, they are an endangered breed and will continue to be unless America commits to expanded nuclear energy and research and development.

We know America's energy consumption will increase. We know the increased demand will drive the need for more base-load capacity. Demographers predict that 40 percent of the total U.S. population will live in the

Southeast by 2030. Georgia alone is slated to add 4 million new residents during that time frame. If we are to meet the growing energy needs of Georgia and of our Nation in keeping with America's national security interests, the ingenuity of employees at the Savannah River Site and other such facilities is key to such efforts. I applaud their great work. I look forward to many more years of expansion of the technology that is being developed to dispose of our nuclear waste as well as recycle our nuclear waste and to reuse that waste.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, due to an official event in New Jersey, I was necessarily absent for rollcall votes 186 and 187. Had I been present, on rollcall No. 186, passage of S. 454, the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009, I would have voted yea; rollcall No. 187, the confirmation of R. Gil Kerlikowske to be Director of National Drug Control Policy, I would have voted yea.●

#### RETIREMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL CLYDE A. VAUGHN

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, this week, LTG Clyde Vaughn, Director of the Army National Guard, retires after almost 35 years of excellent service to the Army National Guard and the U.S. Army. He has been an absolutely superb Army Guard Director.

Under General Vaughn's watch, the Guard has undertaken one of the most successful recruiting programs in history. The Army Guard has become more capable, ready, and better equipped than at any point over the past several decades. Under his watch, the Army Guard has helped make the country stronger. General Vaughn leaves big shoes to fill.

The Army National Guard is a critically important part of the Army and the entire Armed Forces. Citizen-soldiers from the Army National Guard have comprised a high percentage of the forces on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan. The members of the Army Guard also are our military first responders for emergencies at home, ready to quickly support our elected leaders and other civilian authorities in such emergencies as flooding and hurricanes. General Vaughn has brought an acute understanding of the Army National Guard, built from his experiences in the Missouri National Guard and from successful joint assignments in Washington and further afield.

During his time as Army Guard Director, the National Guard has racked up some extraordinary accomplishments. Soldiers—the proud citizen-soldiers from all the States and Territories—and families have remained