or S. 270, the Texas low-level radioactive waste bill, and any other legislative or executive business cleared for Senate action. Therefore, Members can anticipate rollcall votes throughout Wednesday's session of the Senate.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order, upon the completion of the remarks of Senator HARKIN.

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

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I am advised the Senator is on his way. I will suggest the absence of a quorum, but at the conclusion of Senator HARKIN's remarks it already stands that we will adjourn under the previous order; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The Senate will be in adjournment at that time.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATO EXPANSION

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I would like to speak just for a few minutes about the issue of the NATO expansion that has come to the floor today. As I understand the parliamentary situation, the NATO expansion resolution has been laid down, we are now in morning business, and we will not be back on the NATO expansion resolution until sometime later—not tomorrow—maybe later this week or maybe next week or beyond.

I am hopeful at the outset that even though the bill has been laid down, the Senate will be given time for due discussion and debate on the proposed NATO expansion. Quite frankly, I was one of those who signed a letter with my colleague Senator SMITH from New Hampshire and, if I am not mistaken, 17 other Senators, both Republicans and Democrats, asking that the debate on the proposed NATO expansion be suspended or postponed for a while. I will get into the reasons for that in just a moment. I am sorry it is now before the Senate. I think it should have been postponed for very good and sufficient reasons.

This is an issue with profound implications for our Nation and the international community. It is also an issue that, I am disappointed to say, has not received the kind of vigorous national debate that it deserves. I was asked the other day when I was in my home State of Iowa about the NATO expansion bill and what kind of interest was in it. I said basically it is a big yawn. No one is talking about it, very few people are writing about it, and yet this may be the most serious vote that we take this year in the U.S. Senate.

Quite frankly, even though I respect the Foreign Relations Committee, they have had a lot of hearings on it I know, they have had witnesses in, but still it has not received the kind of national debate and national focus that it really deserves. I think we are kind of rushing this issue right now in light of the fact that there is supposed to be a NATO study that is due this June. Again, I will talk about that in a moment.

Taking such a huge step in foreign policy with such low levels of awareness among the public and even in Congress is not a good idea. The debate or, more accurately, I should say the lack of debate on this important policy question has concerned and surprised me. Moving forward before legitimate concerns and competing viewpoints receive a complete airing does not seem prudent. The usually deliberative Senate seems to be in a rush to pass judgment on this issue. I ask, what's the rush?

Concerns about the extension of America's military obligations have been voiced by Members, interest groups and academics across the political spectrum. One must observe more than just casually that when the voices expressing caution include progressives, conservatives, libertarians and others, Republicans and Democrats, such diverse opposition may be a sign to act more slowly and deliberatively on this issue.

Let me be clear, I have not yet decided how I will vote on NATO expansion. If I had to vote tomorrow, I would vote no, because I believe, more often than not, that is the safest way to proceed when one does not have all the information that one needs and when there are, I think, sufficient questions about the expansion and what it is going to cost and what its implications for our foreign policy will be. However, later on, after more information is gleaned in a vigorous public debate, I might be inclined to vote for it. But at the present time, I cannot support it without more information and without some more enlightenment as to the actual cost figures.

Without a comprehensive consideration of the issues surrounding NATO expansion, I am concerned that we will continually have to revisit potentially divisive issues, such as cost and burdensharing among member nations, the issues of command and coordination of forces, issues of responses to real and perceived threats, or even the more basic question of the mission and scope of the organization itself. These are not simple questions that lend themselves to a sound-bite debate. These are questions which will shape, for better or for worse, our defense and foreign policy options for decades to come.

To be sure, NATO has been a success. It has helped keep the peace in Europe for nearly 50 years both by deterring aggression from the Warsaw Pact nations and encouraging cooperation between NATO members. I must say that due to the commitment of its members and the leadership of the United States, NATO has largely fulfilled the reason for its very birth—the Soviet Union. NATO has fulfilled its original intent, it has outlived the Soviet Union, and now we have to ask, what is its future? What role would an expanded NATO play in a post-cold-war era? What role would it play in a new century, in a new millennium? And the question I will be raising tonight and many times during this debate is, at what cost, both in financial terms and in less tangible areas such as the potential for strained relations with nonmember nations or even a dangerous rollback of the nuclear nonproliferation progress made since the end of the cold war?

One of my primary concerns, as I said, is the wide variance in and suspect reliability of projected financial costs. I have seen projections range from $125 billion down to $1.5 billion. When you have that kind of wide variance, something is very strange.

Another piece of the puzzle we are missing is how new members are to address their military shortfalls. Although the shortfalls were to be identified in December 1997, the countries' force goals will not be set until this spring. In other words, we are without a plan to address the force goals and the price tag associated with it. I am very uncomfortable signing the American taxpayer's name to a potentially ballooning blank check.

What share the taxpayers ultimately will pay for NATO expansion is not at all clear, not just because there is no consensus on what the overall costs will be, but also because burdensharing arrangements between current and prospective members have not been firmly established.

I will offer an amendment at the beginning to deal with some of the cost concerns I have been raising. As we know, the $1.5 billion cost figure that we have seen for the United States for NATO expansion is quoted widely and broadly. That figure includes only what is known as common costs. The figure excludes a number of other expansion costs for the three nations that are due to join NATO if this resolution passes relating to the upgrading of their militaries. The United States is expected to contribute substantially to the ''national'' costs through bilateral subsidies my amendment would require, including the bilateral contributions, when calculating the U.S. share of enlargement costs.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of my amendment be printed in the RECORD.

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

At the end of section 3(2)(A) of the resolution, insert the following:

(iv) as used in this subparagraph, the term ''NATO common-funded budget'' shall be deemed to include—

(A) Foreign Military Financing under the Arms Export Control Act;

(B) transfers of excess defense articles under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961;

(C) Emergency Drawdowns;

(D) no-cost leases of United States equipment;

(E) the subsidy cost of loan guarantees and other contingent liabilities under subchapter VI of chapter 148 of title 10, United States Code; and

(F) international military education and training under chapter 5 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Mr. HARKIN. Basically, we see this figure bandied about that it is going to cost $1.5 billion. That is common costs. There are other national costs to which we have committed to subsidize. Already, just in the past 2 years, the figures that we have been able to unearth and dig into show that the United States has already spent about $1 billion in subsidies to these countries for their NATO expansion purposes. That is not calculated in the $1.5 billion. It should be, because it is still a cost to the U.S. taxpayers.

This amendment, plus some others that I will have, will try to fashion this resolution so that we will have a really good handle as we go year by year as to just what the costs are to the U.S. taxpayers. We know already that $1.5 billion is not the total cost to U.S. taxpayers. It is more than that. How much more? We don't know. That is why I was one who wanted to postpone the debate and vote on NATO expansion after June. I thought we could take it up in July, have a serious debate, pass it in midsummer, or not pass it, as the will of the body would be. At least at that time we would have a study being done by NATO at the present time that is due in June. We don't have that study right now. This study is basically on the requirements for upgrading the militaries of these three countries. That way we would have a better idea of the shortfalls in these countries, in their militaries, and the costs to the United States—not just the common costs, but the other kinds of costs that we will be enlisted to come up with in terms of the national costs which we will be subsidizing for these three countries.

I am hopeful as this debate ensues that I will be able to engage with members of the Foreign Relations Committee to explain thoroughly for the record exactly what these national costs are, what our commitments are, what the subsidies are, and if we have any data at all, to give us a better idea of what these subsidies and the national costs will be. If we just projected ahead based upon what we found in the last couple of years, in the next 10 years we would be looking at somewhere in the neighborhood of at least an additional $10 billion for our taxpayers, at a minimum, and that is before any of the upgrades have taken place in any of these countries. So that is just based upon what we spent in the last couple of years.

Mr. President, again I hope we have a good debate on this. I am hopeful we can get some better cost figures. As I said, I will offer this amendment at the appropriate time. I printed it in the RECORD today, to get a better handle on the costs. I also will be placing in the RECORD letters from former Senators, questions raised by academics around the country as to just what the purposes of NATO expansion are, what the goals will be, how will this affect our relations with Russia, how will it affect our relations with other countries that are not members of NATO now but perhaps want to be in the near future.

I understand there will be an amendment offered that will close the door for certain other countries to join NATO for some specified amount of time. What will this do to our relations with these countries and the relations of those countries with those nations that will be joining NATO if this resolution passes? I think these are all very serious questions. I hope the debate will flesh these out and that we can have some solid answers, especially as to the costs.

Perhaps as to relations between nations in the future, this may be more in the realm of speculation. But I believe that at least these ought to be talked about and debated, and they ought to be debated in light of what the costs to our taxpayers would be.

I am more interested in that than any of the other aspects of the bill that is now before us.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in adjournment until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning, March 18.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:44 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 18, 1998, at 9 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 17, 1998:

THE JUDICIARY

Susan Graber, of Oregon, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.