

Under the commission survey by the University of Maryland, when Americans are told about this proposal, and they are asked about this concept of transporting high-level nuclear waste throughout the country, 66 percent express opposition. And of the 66 percent who expressed opposition, 75 percent were strongly opposed.

I hope, as this debate is likely to resume during the present Congress, that my colleagues will hear the voice of their constituents. They know that this is bad policy, they know it is unsafe, and they know that it is unnecessary once the facts are freely laid out for them.

Mr. President, you will recall, during the course of the debate we made the point here that in order to transport high-level nuclear waste to the so-called temporary site at the Nevada test site, it must pass through 43 States and that 50 million Americans live within a mile or less of the major rail and highway corridors in America. The red lines depicted on this map of the United States indicate the highway corridors. The blue lines indicate the rail corridors.

One does not have to be a student of geography to understand that these highway and rail corridor systems make their way through the major metropolitan centers of our country. Indeed, they are arteries of commerce that connect the major cities of our country. So in transporting high-level nuclear waste, that waste is going to go through the major metropolitan areas of our country. When citizens in those communities are made aware of this peril, they react without reference to partisanship but to strongly express their opposition.

We have communities such as St. Louis, Denver, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Philadelphia, and other communities that have passed ordinances expressing their strong opposition. What brings me to the floor this morning is that just earlier this week in Flagstaff, AZ, its city council passed a resolution expressing its strong opposition to this proposal.

It is unnecessary. It is opposed by the scientific community. It is opposed by the Department of Energy. It is opposed by sensible Americans who have looked at the issue because it is unnecessary. Transporting 70,000 tons of high-level nuclear waste across the country to a temporary facility makes no public policy sense at all. As we have pointed out time and time again on the floor, this is not a new proposal. The origin of this proposal can be traced to one group and one group only, and that is the nuclear utility industry. Two decades ago they came before the Congress and urged the Congress to pass what was then referred to as an away-from-reactor program to remove the nuclear waste from the reactor sites and place it in some other facility off-location, off-reactor, as it was referred to. But Congress wisely rejected that proposal two decades ago.

I might say that the arguments then, as now, are that catastrophe will occur in America if this is not transported to some temporary location away from reactor sites. In the 1980s, it was asserted that we would have a nuclear brown-out, that these utilities would simply be unable to function because they did not have onsite storage if these shipments were not made. It is now two decades later. No nuclear utility in America has closed as a result of the absence of storage capacity onsite. Many have closed because they are unsafe. Others have closed because, from an economic point of view, to retrofit older reactors to bring them up to the safety standards that are required is simply uneconomical.

Many of my colleagues find it difficult to accept, but the nuclear industry is an energy dinosaur in America. No new reactors have been ordered or built in America in two decades. I think it is highly unlikely, in light of increased public knowledge and understanding of what is involved in siting a reactor in a community, that we will ever again have a new reactor built in America.

So when the public is presented with the facts—namely, are you aware that the Congress is considering in this session of the Congress a proposal to transport nuclear waste through 40 States, 50 million Americans within a mile or less; and what do you think of that proposal?—the overwhelming reaction, two-thirds, expressed strong opposition.

My point, Mr. President, in bringing this to the floor today is that I hope my colleagues will listen to their constituents and hear from them. We have heard the arguments of the nuclear utility industry. But the American public, by and large, because they did not know about this proposal, we have not heard their voices. I can tell you, having been to St. Louis and Denver, when you talk with citizens in those communities, and make them aware of what is involved here, they understand the risk and they express strong opposition to this proposal.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. CAMPBELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Thank you, Mr. President.

TAXPAYER FUNDS AND THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL LEGAL DEFENSE

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today not only as a concerned citizen but also as a concerned lawmaker. As the chairman of the appropriations subcommittee which oversees the White House budget, I have some serious concerns about the taxpayer funds being used to pay for the President's personal legal defense.

In addition, I have to also state that I am concerned about the lack of re-

sponse to committee requests. Specifically, on March 3, a request was made to the White House from this committee to provide responses to two simple questions: First, has the size of the legal staff within the Executive Office of the President, funded by appropriated money, changed significantly between fiscal year 1997 and fiscal year 1998? And, second, what is the current specific number of lawyers detailed to the Executive Office, and has that number changed significantly during this time?

In a recent report, Mr. President, it appears that the cadre of attorneys at the White House has ballooned from 4 to 39 in just the last year and a half or 2 years. Fully one-tenth, according to that newspaper article, one-tenth of the White House budget now goes to pay those attorneys. A number of them were transferred from other agencies. And in this year's budget request from those agencies, they are asking for a full FTE for those attorneys.

It appeared at the time that this information was both readily available and easy to provide, yet the White House has not given us any specifics. As of about a half an hour ago, we did get some partial answers but not nearly clear enough. During this same time, I continued to get Members and constituents asking me, as the chairman of the Treasury Subcommittee which appropriated the White House's budget, to provide them with some answers.

Finally, on this past Friday, March 13, I wrote a letter in an attempt to get a response from the White House. In that letter I requested that I receive the information by them by 12 o'clock yesterday, March 18. In that letter, I also asked the White House to provide me with a list of the total number of attorneys detailed to all of the Executive Office and from which agency they came. Yesterday, the subcommittee received a call from the General Counsel's Office stating that we would receive that information by 9 o'clock this morning. And as I have mentioned, we did receive a partial answer.

So now it is March 19, Mr. President, exactly 16 days after the initial request for information was made, and we still do not have the full answer. We are now preparing to do a hearing, as many of my colleagues know, Mr. President. I believe the American taxpayers have the right to ask some specific questions.

The 12 attorneys that were so-called "borrowed" from the other agencies to help the President with his personal legal problems command very good salaries for which we expect them to do work in keeping with the mission of their agency and for what they were hired to do.

What I would like to ask the Executive Office is, was the work of those attorneys in their agencies important? If it was important, then who is doing their work while they are temporarily borrowed or reassigned to the Executive Office? And if it was not important

enough to keep them at their job, why did we hire them in the first place in the agencies?

What concerns me here is that as an appropriator I have the responsibility to follow up on these matters, and I take that very seriously. I do not think we are asking anything unreasonable and certainly do not want to just pile on the President. But this is taxpayer money and we have a right to make sure it is being spent wisely. We need to verify that the White House is not using appropriated funds for the President's personal legal defense. It is already illegal for any Government entity to use appropriated funds for anything other than what Congress appropriated the money.

In addition, there are many Government regulations from the Office of Government Ethics and the Justice Department which support the position that Government attorneys are to provide their services for Government interests only and not personal ones. That seems pretty clear and pretty well cut and dry to me. I do not request the answers to the questions that I believe are unnecessary. And I do not make frivolous requests. These are very important questions, plain and simple.

Finally, Mr. President, I announce that our committee intends to hold a hearing on the Executive Office's fiscal year 1999 request before the Easter recess and fully expect their response to this inquiry prior to that hearing.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter that we did send to Mr. Erskine Bowles, the Chief of Staff to the President, on March 13, 1998.

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

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC, March 13, 1998.

MR. ERSKINE B. BOWLES,
Chief of Staff to the President,
White House, Washington, DC

DEAR MR. BOWLES: This letter is in reference to the size of the legal staff at the Executive Office of the President (EXOP). As you are aware, there has been recent public concern about the use of appropriated funds for the private legal defense of the President.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Treasury and General Government, which funds the Executive Office of the President, I have a responsibility to respond to these concerns. I understand that my staff has made repeated requests to the Office of Administration for information relating to this issue, for which the office has not provided a response, but instead excuses and delays.

Specifically, my staff has requested that the following questions be answered: Has the size of the legal staff within all of EXOP, funded by appropriations, changed significantly during FY1997 and FY1998? And, what is the current number of Justice lawyers detailed to EXOP and has that number changed significantly during FY1997 and FY1998? In addition, I want to know the total number of lawyers detailed to all EXOP agencies and their detailing agency. Your responses should include all of the agencies falling under the EXOP and provide the specific FTE counts with a breakout of the employee and detail classification by EXOP agency.

I remind you that my staff acts on behalf of the Appropriations Committee and I expect that any request they make to you for information to be dealt with expeditiously. Because this request is now more than a week old, I expect that this information will be on my desk by March 18, 1998 at 12:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

BEN NIGHORSE CAMPBELL,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Treasury,
and General Government.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. MURKOWSKI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair and ask unanimous consent that I may speak for 5, 6 minutes in morning business.

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

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair.

NATO ENLARGEMENT

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for the protocols of accession to NATO, specifically for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

I think this is truly a historic decision in the sense that it shatters once and for all the artificial division of Europe that occurred at the end of the Second World War. Now, if history is any guide, it ensures and enhances the prospects for peace, prosperity, and harmony throughout Europe.

Mr. President, in the nearly 50 years of its existence, NATO has provided the military security umbrella that has permitted old enemies to heal the wounds of war and to build strong democracies and integrated free economies. Expanding NATO to include the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe will, I hope, produce the same results, that is, stronger and freer economies whose people can live in the same harmony as do the people of France and Germany.

I would also note that the prospect of NATO enlargement has already begun as seen by the process of harmonization in Central and Eastern Europe. Hungary has settled its border and minority questions with Slovakia and Romania. Poland has reached across an old divide to create joint peacekeeping battalions with Ukraine and Lithuania.

Mr. President, an expanded NATO will make the world safer simply because we are expanding the area where wars will not happen. As Secretary of State Albright testified last year before the Foreign Relations Committee, and I quote, "This is the product paradox at NATO's heart: By imposing a price on aggression, it deters aggression." At the same time, we gain new allies, new friends who are committed to our common agenda for security in fighting terrorism and weapons proliferation, and to ensuring stability in places such as the former Yugoslavia.

There is no doubt in my mind that had Soviet troops not in 1945 occupied

Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, and installed puppet governments, the debate over whether these three countries should be members of NATO would have long ago been resolved in their favor.

The people of these countries have yearned to have freedom, democracy, and peace for more than 40 years, as evidenced by Poland particularly. The blood in the streets of Budapest in 1956, the demonstrations of the people in Prague in 1968 who confronted Soviet tanks, and the public confrontations of Solidarity throughout Poland beginning in the 1970s all laid the foundation for the collapse of communism, which we have seen in our lifetime.

Now as they begin to build institutions of democracy and free enterprise, as they move to further integrate their economies with the rest of Europe, they should participate in the collective security of the continent. I think this will bind these countries closer together far into the future and ensure stability and peace throughout the continent.

Mr. President, there have been expressions of concern by some people that expanding NATO is a mistake because it would somehow be perceived as a threat, a threat to Russia. I find that argument hard to accept. In my opinion, NATO has never been a threat to Russia. Even during the height of the Cold War, no one seriously considered that NATO threatened the Soviet Union. Quite the contrary. NATO stood to defend—defend—against any potential military threat to its members. There is a difference between defense and offense. And NATO is designed for defense. It was never designed as an alliance of aggression—rather, it is an alliance against aggression.

I think the same holds true today, Mr. President. The people of Russia, who are slowly trying to emerge from the darkness and terror of 70 years of communism, have nothing—I repeat, nothing—to fear from NATO. Our goal is not to isolate Russia but to engage and support her in her efforts to develop a lasting democracy and a free market.

The people in the evolving democracies of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary have earned the right to become full partners in Europe and full partners in NATO. I hope my colleagues will support the dreams, hopes, and aspirations of these people who have struggled for freedom for so long, after so many decades in which they have lived without hope. They have that opportunity today.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I listened to my friend and colleague from the State of Nevada speak relative to the movement of high-level nuclear waste across various States. I think it is important to reflect on two points. I won't extend the debate at