

progress as democratic states determined to join with other NATO members in preserving the peace that NATO has won in Europe. This debate, this vote, will affirm the importance of these nations to NATO's continued mission.

Mr. President, I look forward to a successful vote and to a formal accession in Washington next spring.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business for 5 minutes to allow the Senate to consider a few items that have been cleared by both sides. I further ask that following my closing remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of the NATO treaty to allow Senator CONRAD to offer an amendment.

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

#### FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today marks the first anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which bans the development, production, stockpiling, and use of poison gas. The achievement of that Convention and of U.S. ratification were signal accomplishments of the Bush and Clinton Administrations.

I am pleased to report that, after a year in force, the Chemical Weapons Convention has begun to pay significant dividends for our national security. Those dividends would be even greater if both Houses of Congress would pass legislation to implement the Convention, so that the United States could come into compliance with it.

When the United States finally ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, just days before it entered into force, we joined roughly 90 other states. In the days and months that followed, several important countries followed our lead. Among the 107 countries that now have joined the Convention are Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and Iran. Over 60 more nations have signed the Convention, and some of those are in the final stages of ratification.

I want to emphasize those five particular countries that have ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention since we did. Many opponents of ratification said that Russia and China would never join, that we would be limiting our own options while other major powers refrained from the obligation to do without chemical weapons. Both Russia and China have joined, however, and China has admitted—for the first time—that it has had a chemical weapons program.

India and Pakistan have also ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, and

that is something of a triumph. South Asia is probably the area where the risk of nuclear war is highest today. Both countries are generally assessed as nuclear-capable. Pakistan recently tested a missile that could target nearly any site in India, and India is talking about reviving a missile that could strike all of Pakistan. Yet both those countries ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, and India admitted—again, for the first time—to having a chemical weapons program.

Before the Convention entered into force, the United States and Russia were the only two admitted chemical weapons possessors. To date, however, six more countries—including South Korea, as well as China and India—have complied with the Convention's requirements to declare their chemical weapons and existing or former chemical weapons facilities.

The chemical weapons that India has declared will be destroyed. The chemical weapons facilities that China, South Korea and other countries have declared will be destroyed, unless the Council of States Parties approves conversion of those facilities under stringent safeguards. These are achievements that we could not guarantee a year and four days ago, when Senate consent to ratification was debated and approved. But we have them today, and I hope there will be more such admissions, declarations, and destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons facilities in the years to come.

In the past year, the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Warfare (the international inspectorate for the Convention) has conducted nearly 200 inspections. Roughly three-fourths of those inspections—including 25 in Russia—have been at chemical weapons production, storage, and destruction facilities.

About a third of the inspections have been in the United States—with no problems in protecting sensitive U.S. information. The United States is the only country currently destroying its chemical weapons, and the Technical Secretariat must monitor these facilities continually during destruction operations. As other countries begin to destroy their chemical weapons stocks, their inspection numbers will increase accordingly.

Few among the treaty's critics or proponents expected this much progress so soon. There is still a long way to go. But in just one year, the Convention has clearly begun to prove its utility as a tool to reduce the threat of chemical weapons.

What remains to be done? One crucial step is for the United States to come into compliance with the Convention. We have yet to enact implementing legislation pursuant to the Convention. Until we do so, our country will remain a violator of the Convention.

Why is that? The Convention requires us to make violations of it a crime; we have yet to do that. The Con-

vention also requires declarations regarding certain chemical production. We have submitted that declaration only regarding government facilities, because we lack legislation to require commercial reporting and to protect the confidential information in those reports from disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act. Finally, we still need a regime to govern international inspections of private U.S. facilities.

Aside from the dishonor that we bring upon ourselves by failing to comply with a treaty that we have ratified, why should we care? We should care because our failure to enact implementing legislation harms the national security. It makes it difficult to encourage compliance by other countries, or to request a challenge inspection if another country's declarations omit a suspected chemical weapons facility.

In addition, other countries are using our delay to draw attention away from their own misdeeds. Last month, a Russian general was interviewed by *Izvestiya*. The general made an utterly specious claim that the Sverdlovsk anthrax disaster was due to natural causes—a claim that even Russian officials have long since abandoned—and he even recycled the old lie that the United States invented AIDS. But how did the article end? Why, with a recital of the U.S. failure to enact implementing legislation! That's truly outrageous, but that will continue until we come into compliance.

The fault does not lie with this body, Mr. President. The Senate passed S. 610 on May 23 of last year. It then languished in the House for six months, before being attached to an unrelated measure. One way or another, we must enact this legislation.

The implementing legislation is not perfect. I noted last year that it harms U.S. interests if we bar the analysis of U.S. samples outside this country or give the President the right to invoke a national security exemption from inspections. The immediate need, however, is to enact a bill and bring our country into compliance with this important and useful Convention.

We have come far with the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is already proving its worth. But there is still this overdue work to accomplish—not for the sake of others, but to further our own national security. We can do it, and we should do it now.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, April 28, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,512,793,625,127.26 (Five trillion, five hundred twelve billion, seven hundred ninety-three million, six hundred twenty-five thousand, one hundred twenty-seven dollars and twenty-six cents).

One year ago, April 28, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,347,125,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred forty-seven billion, one hundred twenty-five million).