

His are not the first such comments we have heard about modifying the ABM Treaty. The lead Russian negotiator, Grigory Berdennikov, said the mere raising of the issue meant "the arms race could now leap to outer space." Gen. Leonid Ivashov, head of International Cooperation in the Russian Ministry of Defense, said that modifying the treaty "would be to destroy the entire process of nuclear arms control."

I don't know the motivations for such statements, but I believe they deserve a response. There should be no misunderstanding of our Nation's intentions with respect to national missile defense. We face a real and growing threat of ballistic missile attack from rogue states or outlaw nations. That threat is advancing, often in unanticipated ways. The U.S. Government has a duty to protect its citizens from this threat.

It is our policy, which is now set in law, to deploy a system to defend against limited attack by ballistic missiles as soon as technologically possible. The system we intend to deploy in no way threatens the strategic retaliatory force of Russia. The ABM Treaty, an agreement between two nuclear superpowers engaged in an arms buildup in 1972, prohibits such a system and must be modernized. I am sure Russian officials know all of this. They have been briefed repeatedly on the U.S. assessment of the threat. They have been briefed repeatedly on U.S. plans for national missile defense and know as well as we do that the system we contemplate is not directed at Russia and poses no threat to its forces.

So the statements of Mr. Popkovich and the other Russian officials essentially threatening an arms race if the U.S. does what it must do to protect its citizens are very disappointing. They sound like something from the past, an echo of the cold war that is over.

The United States has embarked in good faith in discussions about the need to modernize the ABM Treaty. We negotiated in good faith with Russia when it demanded changes to the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty in order to enable Russia to adapt to changed circumstances. It would be unfortunate if the United States were put in the position of choosing between defending its citizens and adhering to an outdated agreement because we have already determined that we will defend ourselves.

I am confident the Senate will not accept an arrangement in which the U.S. continues to be vulnerable to new threats because of a 27-year-old agreement that is so clearly out of date. What is needed now is for the rhetoric to be cooled, for threats about arms races and new missiles to be set aside, and let serious and fruitful discussions proceed. It is in not only our interest for that to happen but Russia's as well.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, September 8, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,656,209,987,935.17 (Five trillion, six hundred fifty-six billion, two hundred nine million, nine hundred eighty-seven thousand, nine hundred thirty-five dollars and seventeen cents).

One year ago, September 8, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,548,700,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-eight billion, seven hundred million).

Five years ago, September 8, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,679,340,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred seventy-nine billion, three hundred forty million).

Ten years ago, September 8, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,855,859,000,000 (Two trillion, eight hundred fifty-five billion, eight hundred fifty-nine million) which reflects a doubling of the debt—an increase of almost \$3 trillion—\$2,800,350,987,935.17 (Two trillion, eight hundred billion, three hundred fifty million, nine hundred eighty-seven thousand, nine hundred thirty-five dollars and seventeen cents) during the past 10 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a treaty and sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following joint resolution was read the second time and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 33. Joint resolution deploring the actions of President Clinton regarding granting clemency to FALN terrorists.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-5082. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closes Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area for Pollock Allocated to the Inshore Component," received September 2, 1999; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-341. A resolution adopted by the Board of Tipler Township, Florence County, Wisconsin relative to the Nicolet National Forest; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-342. A resolution adopted by the House of the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature relative to the Kyoto Protocol; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 11-176

Whereas, the United States is a signatory to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Global Climate Change (FCCC); and

Whereas, a protocol to implement the goals of the FCCC was negotiated in December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan (the Kyoto Protocol), which, when ratified, will require the United States to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by seven percent below 1990 levels by the year 2012; and

Whereas, the world's leading climate scientists have warned that rising concentrations of carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases" in the atmosphere threaten to increase average global temperatures at unprecedented rates; and

Whereas, climatic alternations will have a dramatic, if not catastrophic, effects on human health and well-being, severe weather event, agricultural productivity, and other resource industries; and

Whereas, a National Academy of Sciences study concludes that the United States can reduce energy consumption by twenty percent or more, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions at a net economic benefit to the country; and

Whereas, increased United States energy efficiency and technological development will improve United States competitiveness in world trade; and

Whereas, past greenhouse emissions have already committed the world to a future rise in global temperatures, thereby making immediate action imperative to protect the health, welfare and security of the American people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the House of Representatives, Eleventh Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, That the Senate of the United States be urged to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and that the United States Congress be urged to take the lead in lowering greenhouse gas emissions; and be it further