

It is not evident to many of us that cells in a Petri dish are equivalent to identifiable people suffering from terrible disease. I am and have always been pro-life. But the only explanation for legislators comparing cells in a Petri dish to babies in the womb is the extension of religious doctrine into statutory law.

This from an Episcopal priest, a former Republican Senator.

Finally, this from Nancy Reagan:

Science has presented us with a hope called stem cell research, which may provide our scientists with answers that have so long been beyond our grasp. I just don't see how we can turn our backs on this—there are just so many diseases that can be cured or at least helped. We have lost so much time already, and I just really can't bear to lose any more.

I believe that we ought to proceed with thoughtful, ethical guidelines on stem cell research. I understand that is a controversial position for some. In fact, in the last campaign for office for me, my opponent ran a television advertisement that was novel and fairly disgusting. In it was a fellow who was sitting around a campfire with some little children. One of the little children said to the camp fire leader: Tell us a scary story.

And the camp fire leader said: Well, there is this man named Dorgan and he has a plan to put embryos inside the womb of a mother and grow them for body parts to be harvested later.

An unbelievable television commercial, bearing no relationship to what has been discussed under any set of circumstances. But the controversy that exists these days with stem cell research, I understand; I am respectful to those who disagree with me on this subject.

I am mindful that there should be solid ethical guidelines in terms of how it is dealt with. But I don't believe this is about harvesting body parts. This is about giving life. This is about giving hope. This is about unlocking the mysteries of dread diseases—to tell those who live with Alzheimer's or heart disease or cancer or juvenile diabetes or ALS or Parkinson's that we are doing everything we can to find ways to cure these diseases. That is what this research is about. I really believe it is about giving life—providing opportunity for those who are suffering from these dread diseases.

That is why I am a cosponsor of the Senate companion bill to the House bill called the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, which has 41 cosponsors. It is a bipartisan group of Senators who has cosponsored this legislation.

I take some hope with the statement of the majority leader that it appears we will begin debating this issue within the next week or two.

It is important to be clear that this bill only deals with stem cells—embryos that were created for fertility purposes by in vitro fertilization clinics that would otherwise be thrown away. That is all that is being discussed. As I indicated, there are about

400,000 of those embryos that are now frozen at in vitro fertilization clinics.

I know there will be great controversy when we discuss this. However, I am comforted, as well, that there is a bipartisan group of Senators who believes this ought to be done and supports the legislation. It is a fact that sometimes those of us who serve here lament that we are taking lightly things that should be taken seriously, or taking seriously things that are light. This is a serious issue. And bringing this to the floor of the Senate means that we are sinking our teeth into a piece of public policy that is very important and that we recognize is controversial but nonetheless very important for us to make decisions about.

I look forward to being a part of that discussion and that debate when it comes to the floor of the Senate, hopefully, next week if the information I have is correct, if not within a week or so following.

I yield the floor. 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. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Are we in the parliamentary procedure of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The Senator is recognized for 10 minutes.

BLACK HAWK HELICOPTERS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, we have an interesting situation where the Department of Defense is requesting that seven Black Hawk helicopters that the U.S. Army owns but are detailed to the Drug Enforcement Administration in the Bahamas be taken out of the Bahamas. No doubt there is a need elsewhere in the world, perhaps in Operation Iraqi Freedom. But this Senator wants to make the case, as I did 2 weeks ago when we had the Defense authorization bill on the floor, that the United States Government needs to find some additional helicopters to replace those that are there for the purpose of interdiction of all kinds of contraband.

Indeed, we have experienced enormous success from having those seven helicopters in the last 5 years: 800 drug smugglers have been apprehended as a result of those helicopters being there; 25 tons of cocaine have been taken away from the drug smugglers; 82 tons of marijuana, as a result of the effectiveness of these helicopters. Of course, I am just speaking about the interdiction of contraband drugs, not even to speak of the interdiction of all of the human smuggling that is attempted into the United States through that route.

It might be instructive for us to know that when a similar situation was done elsewhere in the Caribbean, in Central America in the late 1990s, and seven helicopters were taken from Central America with a similar kind of mission, the incidence of drug smuggling rose precipitously. Of course, that is what will happen if these helicopters are not replaced.

Since the 1980s, these helicopters have made an enormous difference. For example, it is hard to believe the statistic I am going to tell you, but 80 percent of all the cocaine that was smuggled into this country came through that region of the Atlantic, the Bahamas and the Turks and the Caicos, back in the 1980s. That percentage of the total cocaine smuggled into the country has been reduced to 10 percent. So the proof is in the pudding. The success is there.

Two weeks ago when we had the Defense authorization bill on the floor, I added an amendment that said that the U.S. Government should come up with a replacement for those helicopters. If they are needed elsewhere, fine; that is, the war on terror. We also have a war on terror and a war to defend the homeland as well. That is right here. That is the southern sector off the shores of the Southern United States.

It is my hope that the Defense Department will take very seriously the Defense authorization bill that makes that statement to the U.S. Government. Surely in the inventory of the entire U.S. Government, there are seven helicopters that can replace the ones being taken out and sent to Iraq. The success of our interdiction and the protection of our homeland is at stake.

I yield the floor.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS TERRY WALLACE

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army SFC Terry Wallace of Nebraska. Sergeant Wallace died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle in Taji, Iraq on June 27. He was 33 years old.

Sergeant Wallace was born in Winnsboro, LA. He graduated from Winnsboro High School, where he ran track and played drums in the school band. He enlisted in the Army in 1990. In recent years, Sergeant Wallace lived in Bellevue, NE, with his wife Shunda and daughter Raven.

Sergeant Wallace had several assignments overseas, including other locations in the Middle East. In December 2005, he was deployed to Iraq with the 4th Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, based out of Fort Hood, TX. Sergeant Wallace will be remembered as a smart, hardworking man who was honored to serve and defend his country. Thousands of brave Americans like Sergeant Wallace are currently serving in Iraq.

In addition to his wife and daughter, Sergeant Wallace is survived by his

parents J.R. and Mary Wallace; his twin brother Jerry, as well as several other brothers and sisters. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this difficult time. America is proud of Sergeant Wallace's heroic service and mourns his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SFC Terry Wallace.

CORPORAL JEREMY S. JONES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of our Nation's most courageous men, who fell while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. CPL Jeremy S. Jones gave his life on June 27, 2006 when an improvised explosive detonated while he was on patrol. Corporal Jones was a member of D company, 1st battalion, 67th Armored Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was 25 years old.

My thoughts and prayers are with the Jones family, his father, Scott; his mother, Diane; his wife, Jennifer; and his two young children, Mackenzie and Anthony. Also, my deepest sympathies go out to Jeremy's friends, to the men and women of the 4th infantry, and to all who knew him.

Jeremy was a soldier, a patriot, and a father. Jeremy did not die in vain but gave his life defending freedom and protecting all of us back home. He is truly an American hero. Corporal Jones' sacrifice and the sacrifice of so many others will be remembered by all freedom-loving Americans.

U.S.-INDIA CIVIL NUCLEAR COOPERATION

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, the Foreign Relations Committee recently had an opportunity to mark up historic legislation that would permit civilian nuclear cooperation between the United States and India. I say historic because such cooperation will dramatically shift 30 years of nonproliferation policy towards India and potentially set the United States-India relationship on a new foundation.

Our relationship with India is one of our most important. As we look ahead to the coming decades, it is clear that United States-India relations will be crucial to establishing a secure, sustainable, and prosperous global system. But as we consider a fundamental shift in the international nonproliferation regime, we must also make sure we have adequate protections in place to guard against the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology.

I appreciate the fact that the legislation we were asked to mark up represented a substantial amount of work from Chairman LUGAR, Ranking Member BIDEN, and their staffs. This bill was a substantial improvement over the original proposal, which would have removed any meaningful congressional oversight from consideration of a nuclear cooperation agreement with India and which had virtually no protections for nonproliferation concerns.

However, I remain concerned with the broader implications of this legis-

lation. My primary concern is this: the threat of nuclear weapons to the United States and the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear material are among the gravest dangers that our country faces. It is crucial to our national security that the nuclear non-proliferation framework remains strong. I want to make sure that the United States, as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is working to strengthen the international treaties and regimes that have been designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

That is why I offered an amendment that would simply spell out in greater detail that this deal will be only civilian in nature and that none of the assistance the United States provides to India will be used for strengthening or further developing India's nuclear weapons arsenal. This is something we are already committed to under article 1 of the NPT. The amendment would have required the President to certify that he had received sufficient assurances that U.S. assistance would not contribute directly or indirectly to the development of India's nuclear weapons arsenal.

This should not have been a controversial requirement, but unfortunately my amendment was defeated during markup. However, I was pleased to have four of my Democratic colleagues vote in favor of my amendment. They recognized that this is an important, legitimate concern and that a Presidential determination along these lines would have provided protections against the diversion of U.S. technology, equipment, and fuel toward a nuclear weapons program. In the absence of such protections, I was compelled to vote against this legislation.

My "no" vote does not mean that I am opposed to the entire deal. I will work with my colleagues to ensure that the final version of this bill contains adequate protections against the spread of nuclear weapons technology.

I yield the floor.

FISHERIES RESTORATION AND IRRIGATION MITIGATION ACT

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I wish to join my colleagues from Oregon and Washington in introducing S. 3522, the Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act, FRIMA, of 2006. It is important that we pool our resources and work together in the region to get serious about fish restoration. FRIMA has proven to be cost effective and efficient at this goal and, therefore, should be reauthorized.

The FRIMA program exemplifies the great potential of forward-thinking public-private partnerships, and the wisdom of working closely with local communities. Since it was enacted in 2000, we have achieved real results. In my home State of Idaho, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service, 13 projects have been completed and 206

miles of streams have been "protected, enhanced, or made accessible to fish." One example of work being done is in the Salmon River Basin near Salmon, ID, where partners such as the Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District and the U.S. Forest Service have installed fish screens on three irrigation water diversions. These screens protect salmon and other fish species and allow farmers to continue to irrigate their farms. And let me emphasize in supporting the reauthorization of this program that there remain important projects such as these yet to be completed.

This program makes sense, especially from a financial perspective. FRIMA extends the reach of Federal dollars by enlisting other interested parties. This results in more money for FRIMA projects and more talent and experience working to achieve success. In fact, from fiscal years 2002 to 2004, local and State government, businesses, irrigation districts, and environmental groups, to name just a few, have shouldered 58 percent of the cost. This cost-sharing surpassed the 35 percent threshold required in the original legislation.

An important aspect of this legislation reduces the hurdles for public and private restoration dollars to participate in the Fish and Wildlife Service's cost-sharing program to protect, enhance, and restore important fish habitat in the Pacific Northwest. This clarification is important so that the Bonneville Power Administration's non-federal dollars can be used to make other Federal and private money go further to recover salmon.

Finally, this program has received the support of our new Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne. When he was Governor of Idaho he remarked:

The FRIMA program serves as an excellent example of government and private land owners working together to promote conservation. The screening of irrigation diversions plays a key role in Idaho's efforts to restore salmon populations while protecting rural economies.

The Idaho Fish and Game Department and the Idaho Water Users Association are also strong advocates of the program.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING TOM COTA

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to thank Tom Cota, an intern in my Sioux Falls office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota this summer.

Tom is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD, and is currently a student at the University of South Dakota. He is a hard worker and has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I give my thanks to Tom and wish him continued success in the years to come.●