Mr. President, I just want

to clarify the procedural situation. As

the Chair just said, it is 90 minutes on

the underlying measure, and then 90

minutes on the Levin amendment, if

need be to use that time. It is the intent

that we go forward to completion

of this act and that we have a recorded

vote at the end of that time.

I am really pleased the Senate is finally

completing action on this very

important piece of legislation. Senator

LIEBERMAN and I introduced the Iran

Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act on

October 23, 1997. It has 84 cosponsors in

the U.S. Senate. This is not really a

complicated piece of legislation. It is

designed to address one of the most

pressing security issues we face in the

world, Iran’s determined drive to acquire

ballistic missile production capability.

This legislation requires specific targeted

sanctions against any foreign entities

providing direct support to Iran’s

missile development efforts. The House

passed companion legislation on November

12, 1997, without a single dissenting

vote. House action modified

certain provisions of the legislation to

meet concerns of the administration,

most notably—and I have made this

point to the President in my discussions

with him about this legislation—

that he is granted a waiver, and that

was requested by the administration,

and that was included in the bill when

the House passed it.

The House also passed legislation

adding the Chemical Weapons Convention

to the package. Our legislation addresses

a clear and present danger. Iran

is a terrorist state under U.S. law. Last

year, a German court found Iranian intelligence

directly responsible for murder

committed on German soil. Earlier

this very week, the Government of Argentina

found Iran responsible for a

terrorist bombing of a Jewish synagogue.

The same Iranian Government

responsible for terrorist murder around

the world is engaged in efforts to acquire

nuclear weapons and the means

to deliver them. They already have

chemical weapons. They are working

on biological weapons. This is a very

serious matter.

Much of the knowledge that Senators

and administration officials have on

this issue cannot be talked about here

in the Senate because of their very sensitive

intelligence issues. But every

time I receive a briefing, I become

more alarmed about what Iran has and

what additional capability they are

trying to acquire.

Their missile program has been advanced

tremendously by the assistance

from a wide range of Russian entities.

The details, as I said, are classified, but

it is comprehensive and it is ongoing. I

urge every Senator to review the intelligence

information. A summary is

available right now in S–407 for Members’

review. The intelligence community

will brief any Senator on the extent

and impact of Russian cooperation.

I have had that briefing and continue

to review intelligence information.

Let me assure the Senate, Russian

cooperation is deeply disturbing.

It is widespread. It has made the day

Iran is able to target American forces

and American allies closer by years. If

I went into the details of the capability

they have acquired and how soon they

could have the ability to use that, everybody

in the Senate and the United

States would be alarmed.

The basic facts are not in dispute.

Iran wants ballistic missile production

capability. Russian assistance has materially

advanced Iranian efforts.

American diplomatic efforts to halt assistance

have not succeeded. That assistance

continues today. That is why

we have H.R. 2709 before us today in

the Senate.

We have not rushed to judgment on

this issue. Last November, we did not

act after the House sent us the legislation,

and I received specific calls from

the President’s National Security Adviser

asking that we not act. In the

last week we were in session, this legislation

could have been passed, probably

on a voice vote, immediately. But, in

response to the administration’s efforts

and assurances that they were going to

get some cooperation, we said all right,

we will see if we get some results by

waiting.

In January, the administration asked

for a 3-week delay to compare assessments

with Israel, our ally most directly

threatened by Iranian weapons

of mass destruction. In February, the

administration asked for delay until

Vice President GORE’S March meeting

with then Russian Prime Minister

Chernomyrdin. In March, the administration

asked us to wait until April. In

every instance, I consulted with Senators

on both sides of the aisle, talked

to Senator LIEBERMAN, checked the intelligence

information, listened to the

requests from the President’s National

Security Adviser and the Vice President,

and continued to make an effort

to give them time to see if we could get

some results, get some action. It did

not happen. It did not happen again

and again and again.

In April, though, we said there had to

be an end to this or the Senate’s credibility

would be in doubt, if we continued

to just hold this out there and not

act. And, also, if we do not act soon

and this continues—the capabilities

that they are acquiring are extremely

dangerous, to say the least.

So we entered into the unanimous

consent agreement in April, the middle

of April, to consider this legislation

today. We said we would do it by or on

May 22. For 6 entire months, we have

tried to give more time for this matter

to be addressed, for there to be some

indication that Russia was in fact able

to deal with these companies and these

individuals who were involved in this

intelligence, scientific, and ballistic

missile capability exchange. It did not

stop. Again, I cannot go into details,

but there were specific instances of

things we were concerned about. The

overwhelming majority of them did not

stop, did not change.

We have had at least five delays that

have been requested by the administration

and granted by the Senate. President

Clinton has had ample time to

allow his diplomatic approach to work.

I would point out, however, the administration

has refused to make sanctions

decisions which are required by law,

and there clearly have been some instances

where those sanctions could

have and probably should have been

implemented. A number of Russian actions

supporting Iran’s missile program

require U.S. sanctions under the Missile

Technology Control Act. In fact, if

the administration had acted last year,

as called for under that law, this legislation

probably would not be necessary.

The administration often asks for bipartisanship

regarding foreign policy,

and I think that is as it should be. I

have tried more than once to be cooperative

and to make sure that we proceeded

in a bipartisan way. We have

done that. I have done it sometimes

while coming under heavy criticism

from the media or members of my own

party. But I thought, and I think, it is

the right thing to do. I try to accommodate

whenever and however I can.

This legislation, though, should not be

delayed further. It could not be more

bipartisan. I reiterate, 84 Senators on

both sides of the aisle are cosponsors of

this legislation.

I hope the administration will reconsider

its opposition. I think it actually

could be helpful. I think the fact we

have had this legislation pending has

been helpful. It has given the administration

leverage. Unfortunately, the leverage

has not produced results.

I fear that the Russian Government

does not have sufficient capability to

stop this exchange from occurring.

They do not have the export control

laws that we do. They do not have the

ability to go to a company in Russia as

easily as we do and say, ‘‘Do not be engaged

in this very dangerous process.’’

Or if they do, they haven’t been able to

carry it out so far.

There are those who are going to say,

‘‘Well, there have been some changes.

We have a new government there.

Chernomyrdin has been replaced by a

new young Prime Minister. He is talking

good.’’

They have made some recommendations,

but some of the things we have

been told have happened we do not

have the evidence of yet. Again, we are

being told that within the last 10 days

greater assurances have been given by

Russian officials. This has been going

on for months, really years, and now

all of a sudden they say, ‘‘Well, wait,

there is a new leader on the block; he

is going to make a difference.’’

If we go forward today and accept the

amendment of Senator LEVIN from

Michigan and pass this legislation, it

still has to go back to the House. It

will probably be 10 days or so before

the House can act. There will be a little

more time to see if, in fact, these

new leaders in Russia can begin to

make a difference. The President, I reiterate,

has waiver authority, and he

may decide that this is such a sensitive

national security issue at this particular

time that he needs to veto it. He

can do that. But I think that the Senate

should not delay any longer.

There is beginning to be a pattern

around the world of some of our

friends, supposedly, and allies, or countries

that we are trying to work with,

contributing to very dangerous weapons

proliferation and nuclear activity.

Think about it. Do we want Iran to

have this ballistic missile capability?

Not only chemical and biological weapons,

but they would like to have nuclear

weapons and the ability to deliver

them in the region or in the world. I

don’t think so.

It is time the Senate delivered a

clear message on this—a clear bipartisan

message. I really think it will be

helpful in getting this process, that

Russia and others have been participating

in, stopped now before it is too

late.

I yield the floor, Mr. President.