

development. Susan Pinto is a member of the Rosetta Gaston Democratic Club, and the interfaith auxiliary. I am proud to commend her to my House colleagues.

OCEAN RADIOACTIVE DUMPING
BAN ACT OF 1995

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, currently the ocean dumping of radioactive waste is regulated under the Ocean Dumping Act [ODA] allows dumping of radioactive waste only after Congress has passed a joint resolution authorizing the dumping. Although this provision has been in force since 1985, Congress has yet to authorize any radioactive dumping.

For decades, U.S. law on ocean pollution has been more stringent than international law. At the time of enactment, the radioactive dumping provisions in the ODA were among the most restrictive in the world, going well beyond international treaty obligations. That is no longer the case.

The Ocean Radioactive Dumping Ban Act corrects this, eliminating ODA's current arduous permitting process and replacing it with a simple ban. It ensures that the United States retains its leadership position in protecting the world's marine environment.

The relevance of the United States banning radioactive dumping is far-reaching. Historically, the United States has set international policy on ocean dumping of radioactive waste. Until last year, the United States had resisted an international ban. Through U.S. influence, the issue was left unresolved.

That all changed last November when the Clinton administration, following heavy lobbying from the Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment [GLOBE] and other organizations, reversed U.S. policy and announced its support for a ban.

Prompted largely by the new U.S. position, in November 1993, the parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Waste and Other Matter of 1972, known as the London Convention, amended annexes I and II to ban the deliberate ocean dumping of low-level radioactive waste. The Convention has always banned the dumping of high-level radioactive waste.

During the 103d Congress, as the ranking Republican on the oceanography, Gulf of Mexico, and Outer Continental Shelf Subcommittee, and the newly appointed chairman of the GLOBE Ocean Protection Working Group, I have spent the last year working to eliminate the threat of radioactive contamination of the sea.

On September 30, 1993, at my request, the Oceanography Subcommittee held a hearing on the threat of contamination from the Russian dumping of nuclear waste. For four decades the former Soviet Union, and now the Russian Federation has been dumping nuclear waste from nuclear submarines and weapons plants into the world's oceans. The information gathered by the subcommittee was sobering.

The West's first concrete evidence on the dumping came last summer following the release of the Yablokov report which was commissioned by President Boris Yeltsin to detail the extent of Soviet nuclear disposal at sea. According to the report, the Soviet Union has dumped over 2.5 million curies of radioactive waste into the Arctic Ocean and other marine environments. By comparison, the accident at Three Mile Island in my home State of Pennsylvania released 15 curies of radiation.

During the hearing, the subcommittee discovered that since 1959, the former Soviet Union dumped into the ocean 18 nuclear reactors and a reactor screen, 11,000 to 17,000 canisters of nuclear waste, and hundreds of thousands of gallons of liquid radioactive waste. It also learned that nuclear waste totaling 10 million curies is currently stored aboard vessels in Murmansk harbor.

Although water quality monitoring in the Arctic suggests that large-scale contamination of the ocean has yet to occur, our knowledge about the possibility of future leakage and transportation is very limited. Significant environmental contamination is a real possibility in the future.

Even after the fall of communism, Moscow has continued to dispose of radioactive waste at sea. In October 1993, Russia dumped 900 tons of low-level radioactive waste in the Sea of Japan in violation of a previously agreed upon international moratorium. According to Japanese press accounts, high ranking Russian officials have admitted that ocean dumping is likely to persist.

The Russian Federation's actions followed the October 1993 dumping have only reinforced these fears. Russia was one of only five nations to abstain from voting to approve the London Convention radioactive dumping ban in November 1993. Then, in February 1994, it became the only nation to declare its intention not to comply with the new international ban on dumping.

Only through strong Western pressure will this change. But before we can pressure Russia, we have to act. That is why I reintroduced the Ocean Radioactive Dumping Ban Act. This act will make U.S. law consistent with the London Convention by amending the ODA to ban the dumping of radioactive waste.

As with the amendments to the Convention's annexes I and II, which contain provisions exempting de minimis radioactive waste from the ban, the Ocean Radioactive Dumping Ban Act exempts de minimis waste from the ban. Since all matter is radioactive to some degree, a de minimis, or negligible, exemption is necessary to ensure that critical commercial activities such as dredging can continue.

Although no uniform definition for de minimis waste currently exists, the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] has produced significant guidance on the issue and is working on an internationally recognized standard. Once an international standard is devised, I expect the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] will promulgate regulations on this issue based on the IAEA's efforts.

Hopefully, with pressure from the United States, the Russian Federation can be convinced to change its policy. With 10 million curies of radiation stored aboard ships in Murmansk Harbor and awaiting disposal, the risk

to the marine environment is significant if we fail. The Ocean Radioactive Dumping Ban Act will significantly strengthen our position and will set an example as we further discuss such dumping with the Russian Federation.

Clearly the world's oceans should not be used as nuclear disposal sites. I ask my colleagues to join me in sending a strong message to the rest of the world, and support the Ocean Radioactive Dumping Ban Act of 1995.

PROMOTING THE PRIVATE SECTOR
IN AFRICA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Subcommittee on Africa under the able chairmanship of our colleague LEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, on their upcoming hearing on promoting the private sector in Africa. As ranking member of that subcommittee over 8 years, I felt very strongly that only through the proper and vigorous encouragement of the private sector will Africa be able to develop and prosper.

In this context, I want to highlight the activities and efforts of the Corporate Council on Africa, which is doing yeoman's work in advancing these goals.

I also want to salute two members of the council. M&W Pump has done fantastic work in Nigeria and elsewhere, through its water pump business which has benefited so many people. Finally, Coca-Cola one of the largest and oldest companies in Africa, has been a very positive force in Africa. Its social responsibility program in South Africa is exemplary, and it has indeed been a positive force on the continent.

TRIBUTE TO SYLVIA STOVALL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 1995

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, there is a very special woman in Brooklyn named Sylvia Stovall, who is a district administrator in district 13. Sylvia is also a consistent advocate on behalf of children. Her concern for the emotional and academic welfare of students is reflected in the mentoring she has done with young men and women, many of whom have graduated from college and experienced successful careers.

Sylvia attended North Carolina Central University, and graduated respectively from Brooklyn and Bank Street College. She is currently pursuing a doctoral degree.

Ms. Stovall is a member of the board of directors of the Cypress Hills Local Development Corp. located in Brooklyn, and she was recently honored as one of the unsung heroes and heroines of our community by the Harriet Tubman club at the First A.M.E. Zion Church in Brooklyn. It is my pleasure to highlight her contributions to Brooklyn.