

Are the personnel adequate and are they trained that need to do these inspections? Are we taking extra effort when we are dealing with hazardous materials?

Mr. Speaker, I have also asked the FRA and the National Transportation Safety Board to look at the adequacy of emergency response. The emergency responders did an excellent job this weekend. There is no doubt about it. But do they need more resources? Do they need more training? Do they need more equipment? Did Operation Respond function as we hoped that it would when we had it installed just last year?

It seems clear that whenever there is hazardous materials transportation along the rails that we must work together, the FRA, the National Transportation Safety Board, the railroad companies themselves, the emergency responders themselves, all work together to make sure that the emergency responders have the resources they need along that railroad right of way.

They are the ones that get called out at noon on Saturday when nobody else is around to handle 34 cars that have just derailed.

Mr. Speaker, we have made progress. Last year following the Scary tragedy, CSX working with FRA undertook a comprehensive wall-to-wall safety audit. I met in April, along with Jolene Molitoris the administrator of the FRA, with CSX personnel and we came away feeling good about some of the improvements that clearly have been made. But clearly we must all continue working even more, because hazardous materials transportation challenges us all to the highest possible safety standards.

So today I have written a letter to the administrator of the FRA. I have been in personal contact with the NTSB teams on the ground in West Virginia. We are going to request that there be a comprehensive review of safety measures in place along this hazardous materials corridor, and we want to make sure that this cleanup is undertaken in as quick a manner and safe a manner as possible.

CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, last week, Senator SLADE GORTON joined with me in sponsoring the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act. This legislation was developed with the assistance of the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross. I will be introducing this bill this week and I urge my colleagues to join me as original co-sponsors.

What is the purpose of this bill? I think that could best be told by retelling a personal experience that I heard

last week during our press conference on this legislation.

A Mr. Bob Adams provides us with one of the most compelling reasons to pass the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act. Mr. Speaker, he is still alive today because of an automatic external defibrillator, an AED. Let me explain.

On July 3, 1997, Bob Adams, who was 42 years old at the time, was walking through Grand Central Station in New York City when his heart stopped and he collapsed. He is a lawyer in a firm with 450 people, a husband, a father of three children.

He was in perfect health and in fact he had always experienced good health. In fact, Bob would tell that he was the least likely person in his firm of 450 employees to have an experience such as this. He was captain of his college basketball team, played professional basketball in Europe, and today is a nationally known college basketball referee.

Despite being in perfect health with no history of heart disease, this young man went into cardiac arrest the day before a holiday weekend in a place where half a million people pass through every day.

Mr. Speaker, timing was everything for Bob Adams. On July 2, the day before he collapsed, the automatic external defibrillator that the Metro North Commuter Railroad had ordered for use in Grand Central Station had just arrived. Luckily, the staff had also been well trained, not knowing they would have to test their skills so soon.

Bob's heart was stopped for approximately 5 minutes before the AED was unpacked from its shipping box and everyone hoped that it came with charged batteries. Thanks to the trained staff at the station, and an emergency medical technician who happened to be present, Bob's life was saved.

Doctors have never determined why Bob suffered a cardiac arrest. It simply stopped. Bob and his wife and three children are grateful that there was an AED in Grand Central Station on that particular day.

While Mr. Adams' story is more dramatic than most, my colleagues might be surprised to learn that more than 350,000 Americans suffer a sudden cardiac arrest every year. Fewer than 10 percent will be discharged from a hospital alive. The key to survival is timely initiation of a series of events, easily communicated as the "chain of survival."

The chain includes early activation of the emergency medical service, CPR, rapid defibrillation, and early advanced cardiac life support. Weakness in any link lessens the chance of survival and condemns the efforts of an emergency medical system to poor results. After as little as 10 minutes, very few resuscitation attempts are successful.

Mr. Speaker, the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act would require the development of: One, a model State training program for first responders and bystanders in lifesaving interventions.

Two, model State legislation to ensure access to emergency medical services, including consideration of the very necessary training for use of life-saving equipment.

Three, directs the coordination of a national database in conjunction with existing databases relating to the incidents of cardiac arrest and whether interventions, including bystanders or first responders, improved the rate of survival.

Mr. Speaker, we need to pass this type of bill. It is not expensive. It encourages joint partnership between the commercial and the private industry. This bill will ensure that all Americans will have the same protection available to them should they ever be caught in such a life-threatening position as Bob Adams.

PLIGHT OF ALEXANDER NIKITIN HAS BROAD INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SKAGGS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention the case of Alexander Nikitin, a case that has broad implications for the future of democracy, free speech, and the rule of law in Russia.

Nikitin is a retired Russian Navy captain who coauthored this report, "The Russian Northern Fleet: Sources of Radioactive Contamination," published by the environmental group Bellona. The report outlines a potential Chernobyl in slow motion from the release of radioactivity in the Russian northern fleet's nuclear submarines and storage facilities for nuclear waste.

The report describes an environmental disaster waiting to happen with retired and rusting nuclear-powered submarines still containing highly radioactive fuel docked at the Kola Peninsula in the Arctic Circle. Unprotected nuclear waste reportedly is also stored at bases and shipyards near Murmansk.

Mr. Speaker, if such a report were released about the U.S. fleet, it would be a national scandal. Clearly, this report, if published during the Communist rule of the Soviet Union, would have been repressed and its author charged with treason.

Unfortunately, that is exactly what has happened in Russia today. The report is banned and Nikitin has been charged with treason and releasing State secrets. This despite the fact that all the information in the report was taken from open, documented sources.

The saga of Nikitin's legal trouble is a sorry one. He was arrested and jailed for almost a year. Then he was released as the various investigations proceeded, but not allowed to travel outside of St. Petersburg. He was charged incredibly on six separation occasions