

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GUAM'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express some concerns about environmental conditions on Guam as a result of problems with PCBs and as a result of some recently discovered mustard gas vials left over from the military. I am very concerned about the safety of my constituents in light of these recent discoveries of chemical weapons testing kits containing measurable amounts of mustard gas and other toxic chemicals on Guam. Given the public health dangers associated with exposure to these substances, I have requested the Department of Defense to perform a historical record survey to determine the final disposition of chemical weaponry that was brought to Guam. This survey should be comprehensive and include identifying former military dump sites as well as other potential disposal sites used by the military.

Guam has been a significant area for U.S. military activity for more than 50 years. First used as a major staging area during World War II, the military presence in Guam increased correspondingly with the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

□ 1945

Its full value as an area to forward deploy American military forces continues to be strong, even in today's post-Cold War era. At the time, Guam was home to a fully operational Naval Base, Naval Air Station, Naval Communications, Submarine Base, Air Force Strategic Air Command and Naval Weapons Depot, and today still has the largest weapons storage area in the entire Pacific.

But over these many years it has become clear that it was military activities during World War II that posed the greatest threat to the people of Guam. During World War II, Guam was used as a staging area for the invasion of the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and eventually, as contemplated, the invasion of the Japanese homeland.

Over time, several instances of mustard gas have been discovered; and a few months ago, officials from the University of Guam presented documents to military officials that a huge shipment of mustard gas was brought to Guam in 1945. But there has been no documentation of these weapons leaving the island.

In a September 5, 2000, Pacific Daily News article, a spokesman for the

Army Corps of Engineers surmised that the shipment had been likely dumped at sea. It is illogical, because the shipment was brought to Guam. How could it be taken off and dumped at sea? He went on to say that lacking evidence of a definitive area that should be searched, the Army Corps could not conduct a comprehensive search. "Otherwise, it is almost like a needle in a haystack."

However, just last week, additional chemical weapon cannisters were found with a pile of unexploded ordnance at Anderson Air Force Base, and these cannisters resemble the testing kits that had been earlier found in the central part of Guam, in Mongmong, an area that used to be a military base. With these two discoveries of toxic chemicals in less than 2 years, I believe that we have in fact found just the beginning of countless needles in the haystack.

I would have hoped that the first discovery of mustard gas would have spurred the Department of Defense to engage in this exhaustive survey, historical survey, of what chemical weapons and what general ordnance was stored on Guam left over from World War II.

In addition, this is combined with another issue concerning the environmental condition of Guam, and that is the inability to take PCBs out of Guam. Guam and other territories are outside the customs zone, and as laws regarding the disposal of PCBs, PCBs can be brought to Guam from the U.S. mainland, but they cannot be brought back into the U.S. mainland for proper disposal. I remain in strong conversation with EPA officials and have received a strong commitment to resolve this problem administratively in the upcoming months.

However, in a neighboring island to the north, Saipan, there were recently discovered PCB materials, but the EPA has already issued an administrative order releasing those PCB items to be moved back into the U.S. mainland. I think it is a situation that cries out for solution and fair and balanced treatment for all the territories.

It is important to understand that the Toxic Substances Control Act prohibits Guam from importing PCBs inside the U.S. customs zone, even though the PCBs originated inside the U.S. customs zone. The U.S. Court of Appeals Ninth Circuit's 1997 ruling of *Sierra Club v. EPA* overturned an attempt by EPA to solve this problem administratively, which would have dealt with PCBs in a more rational manner.

Parenthetically, PCBs that are on military bases are easily moved back into the U.S. This disparate treatment between military bases and the civilian community of Guam, composed of U.S. citizens, just like everywhere else, is simply intolerable and must be resolved by EPA.

In general, we have a very difficult situation with PCBs and their disposal in Guam. We have this issue with

chemical toxic weapons. I certainly call upon the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Defense to conduct an exhaustive search. We first called for this exhaustive search in July of 1999. We continue to press the issue, and certainly I hope that the Department of Defense will see fit to finally review all of the weapons which have been brought into Guam and through which two or three generations of people from Guam have been raised in the shadow of these weapons.

THE VETERANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DICKEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, in April, as a matter of fact, this Congress declared the American GI the Person of the Century. I believe it was entirely proper and fitting that we did so. But I also believe it is appropriate that those men and women whose contributions were recognized as the single-most significant force affecting the course of the 20th century have an opportunity to share their unique experience so that future generations might better understand the sacrifices made for the cause of democracy. Now, we have the technology to do so, Mr. Speaker.

That is why I, along with my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), introduced a couple of weeks ago H.R. 5212, the Veterans Oral History Project. What the bill would do is direct the Library of Congress to establish a national archives for the collection and preservation of videotaped oral histories of our veterans, as well as the copying of letters that they wrote during their time in service, diaries that they may have kept, so there is a national repository of this very important part of our Nation's history.

We also believe that time is of the essence with this oral history project, given that we have roughly 19 million veterans still with us in this country today, 6 million of whom fought during the Second World War, roughly 3,500 still exist from the First World War, but we are losing approximately 1,500 of those veterans a day. With them go their memories. That is why we feel this project and this legislation has a sense of urgency attached to it.

Abraham Lincoln during his Gettysburg Address I think underestimated his oratorical skills when he stated, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but we must never forget what they did here."

That is exactly the concept behind this oral history project. It will require the cooperation of people across the country, not only the veterans to come forward to offer their videotaped stories, but also their family members to do the videotaping, or friends or neighbors, with VFW and American Legion halls across the country participating in it.