

mammals in waters or lands subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products into the United States.

The United States has made known to the Government of Canada its objections and the objections of concerned American legislators and citizens to the Canadian commercial seal hunt on numerous occasions over recent years. The United States has also opposed Canada's efforts within the Arctic Council to promote trade in sealskins and other marine mammal products.

We hope this information is helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance in this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

NANCY POWELL,
(For Paul V. Kelly,
Asst. Secretary, Legislative Affairs).

[From the New York Times, Mar. 19, 2009]

RUSSIA TO BAN HUNTING OF BABY SEALS
(By A.G. Sulzberger)

Russia announced on Wednesday that it would ban the hunting of baby seals, effectively shutting one of the world's largest hunting grounds in the controversial trade in seal fur.

The decision is yet another blow to an age-old industry that has been losing a public relations battle in recent years to animal-rights groups, who have gained public support by using stark photographs of harp seal pups less than a month old being clubbed to death on blood-stained ice flows.

In addition, the European Union is considering a ban of all seal products—similar to one that the United States adopted decades ago—which would eliminate a key trade route and end market for the furs. And even in Canada, where the world's largest seal hunt is scheduled to begin later this month and top leaders vigorously defend the industry, a legislator for the first time introduced a proposal to curtail sealing.

"It's highly significant," Rebecca Aldworth, director of Humane Society International in Canada, said of the political developments. "It shows that world opinion is moving away from commercial seal hunting. There's hope on the horizon that this may be the last year that we ever have to witness this cruelty."

In Russia, where the number of new pups has dropped sharply in recent years because of the hunts as well as shrinking ice in the White Sea, the government initially announced a ban on the killing of the very youngest and most highly prized seals, known as "whitecoats." The seals shed the white fur in about two weeks, with the resulting silver coat also coveted.

But the government announced in unsparring language that it intended to extend the ban to include all seals less than a year old. (While adult seals are also hunted in smaller quantities, their coarse, scarred fur is generally not used in clothing.) The move, publicly backed by Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin and coming just weeks before the hunting season was to begin, could save as many as 35,000 seals, according to a spokesman for the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

The Associated Press quoted the natural resources minister, Yuri Trutnev, as saying in a statement: "The bloody sight of the hunting of seals, the slaughter of these defenseless animals, which you cannot even call a real hunt, is banned in our country, just as well as in most developed countries, and this is a serious step to protect the biodiversity of the Russian Federation."

Masha Vorontsova, the head of the International Fund for Animal Welfare in Russia

and a biologist who has been pushing for a ban since the fall of the Soviet Union, credited an outpouring of public support for ending the hunt. "It's a fantastic achievement," she said.

In contrast, Gail Shea, Canada's Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, did little to disguise her frustration at moves taking aim at the industry both abroad and at home, which she attributed to "mistruths and propaganda" spread by special interest groups.

"For some reason the European Union will not recognize what the actual facts are because it's an emotional issue and a political issue," she said in an interview.

Ms. Shea, who earlier flew to Europe to lobby against a European Union ban, warned that such a move could violate international trade law. An industry spokesman said that nearly all Canadian seal products passed through Europe on their way to major consumers like Norway, Russia and China. It is unclear whether Russia will also ban the import and sale of seal products.

Commercial sealing also takes place in a handful of other countries, including Norway, Greenland and Namibia.

In Canada, last year's catch of 207,000 seals—or roughly one in every five pups born that year—earned the roughly 6,000 licensed sealers a total of \$7 million, down from \$33 million in 2006, according to Phil Jenkins, a spokesman for the Canadian fisheries department. The hunting decreased, he said, largely because of a sharp drop in prices for the pelts, from \$97 to \$33, for a perfect specimen. Seals are killed by rifle or by club.

The harp seal population level has held steady at about 5.6 million for the last decade, he said, but anti-sealing groups contest that figure.

However, the Canadian industry came under rare official scrutiny last week, when Mac Harb, a senator from Ontario, introduced the legislation to cancel the coming hunt. He argued that the industry was dying, propped up by public tax dollars and costing Canada international good will. But his proposal died when Mr. Harb could not get another member to second his motion.

"There was silence. Total silence!" he said in a telephone interview on Wednesday. "I was amazed that not one of my colleagues, from any one of the political parties, would even want to debate the issue."

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND
PROPOSED

SA 687. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1388, to reauthorize and reform the national service laws.

SA 688. Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. CORKER, Mr. GREGG, and Mr. BOND) proposed an amendment to amendment SA 687 proposed by Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1388, supra.

SA 689. Mr. CORKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 690. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 687 proposed by Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 691. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 687 proposed by Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 692. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 687

proposed by Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1388, supra.

SA 693. Mr. JOHANNNS proposed an amendment to amendment SA 687 proposed by Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) to the bill H.R. 1388, supra.

SA 694. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 695. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 696. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1388, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 697. Mrs. MURRAY (for Mr. LAUTENBERG) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 37, calling on Brazil to comply with the requirements of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and to assist in the safe return of Sean Goldman to his father, David Goldman.

SA 698. Mrs. MURRAY (for Mr. LAUTENBERG) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 37, supra.

SA 699. Mrs. MURRAY (for Mr. LAUTENBERG) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 37, supra.

SA 700. Mr. BINGAMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1388, to reauthorize and reform the national service laws; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 687. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1388, to reauthorize and reform the national service laws; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Serve America Act".

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AMENDMENTS TO NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT OF 1990

Sec. 1001. References.

Subtitle A—Amendments to Subtitle A (General Provisions)

Sec. 1101. Purposes.

Sec. 1102. Definitions.

Subtitle B—Amendments to Subtitle B (Learn and Serve America)

Sec. 1201. School-based allotments.

Sec. 1202. Higher education provisions.

Sec. 1203. Campuses of Service.

Sec. 1204. Innovative programs and research.

Sec. 1205. Service-learning impact study.

Subtitle C—Amendments to Subtitle C (National Service Trust Program)

Sec. 1301. Prohibition on grants to Federal agencies; limits on Corporation costs.

Sec. 1302. Eligible national service programs.

Sec. 1303. Types of positions.

Sec. 1304. Conforming repeal relating to training and technical assistance.

Sec. 1305. Assistance to State Commissions; challenge grants.

Sec. 1306. Allocation of assistance to States and other eligible entities.

Sec. 1307. Additional authority.