

Neither President Bill Clinton nor President George W. Bush signed the treaty, which was negotiated in 1997 and took effect in 1999. Their rejections left the United States at odds with more than 150 countries that embraced the accord, including every member of NATO.

The treaty prohibits the manufacture, trade and stockpiling of land mines. The United States has not used antipersonnel mines since the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and stopped producing them in 1997, but the military keeps about 10 million of them in reserve.

In November, State Department spokesman Ian Kelly announced that the Obama administration had decided against signing the treaty, saying, "We would not be able to meet our national defense needs nor our security commitments to our friends and allies." But after Leahy and human-rights groups condemned the decision, the State Department said it would revisit the issue and conduct a broader policy review.

White House and State Department spokesmen emphasized Friday that the administration is in the midst of a comprehensive review, cutting across all affected agencies, that will not be completed for some months. But two senior U.S. officials speaking on the condition of anonymity indicated that the administration is actively looking for ways to come into compliance with the treaty without endangering national security needs.

"We are asking that if you come into compliance, what would be the costs and the benefits—and if there are costs, how can they be addressed in other ways," one senior official said.

The official described the administration's review as "a herculean effort" intended to "cut through reflexive reactions" to the issue of eliminating land mines from the Pentagon's arsenal.

Officials also said they welcomed the indication of bipartisan support represented by the Leahy letter.

Another senior U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations, said the administration is looking at what new technologies could be used to bring the United States into compliance with the treaty while also allowing it to respond to threats such as North Korea. Some military officials want to maintain the U.S. stockpile in case it is needed to slow an invasion of South Korea by the North. About 30,000 U.S. forces are stationed in the South.

The Pentagon declined to say whether it would support the treaty, citing the Obama administration's review. "It would be premature at this time to provide any statement until the review is complete," said Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon press secretary.

Leahy, who has fought for a land-mine ban for many years, said there was bipartisan support in Congress for ratifying the treaty. Ten Republicans have signed the letter to Obama, which Leahy said will be delivered to the White House next week. The lead Republican co-sponsor is Sen. George V. Voinovich (Ohio), Leahy aides said.

In November, Leahy criticized the Obama administration's initial decision to reject the treaty as "a default of U.S. leadership." Since then, he said, White House and State Department officials have left him with the impression that they are seriously considering adopting the treaty, especially if he can help deliver the votes in a Senate that is usually sharply divided along partisan lines.

"It's been a much more positive response than I've seen in a long, long time," Leahy said of his talks with administration officials.

Leahy noted that Obama has pushed for a global reduction in nuclear arms; ignoring land mines, he added, could undercut U.S. diplomacy on that front. "If we want to keep the high moral ground, then we have to do it," he said.

Although Clinton did not sign the international mine ban, he ordered the Pentagon in 1998 to develop alternatives to anti-personnel mines, with the goal of giving them up completely by 2006.

In 2004, in response to objections from the Pentagon, Bush adopted a different policy that permits the U.S. military to use sophisticated mines that are designed to self-destruct within a fixed number of days. The idea was to reduce civilian casualties from unexploded mines left on the battlefield.

At the same time, Bush set a deadline of 2010 for the U.S. military to end the use of antipersonnel or anti-vehicle mines that lack timers. Obama administration officials have said that they are on track to meet that deadline this year.

Neither China nor Russia has ratified the international mine ban treaty. Human rights groups say there is little pressure for them to do so as long as the United States doesn't sign.

HONORING THE LIFE OF EL HADJ AMADOU THIOUF

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the life of a great educator, El Hadj Amadou Thiouf. Born in Bargny, Senegal, he devoted his entire life to the cause of education. Studying for 4 years at *ecole normal* William Ponty, an elite school in Thies, Senegal, he was first assigned to Lamingue, Kaolack, where he served for 2 years and met his wife Adj Fatou Ndoeye. They were married on August 11, 1957.

From 1957 to 1971, he lived in Rufisque where he taught at three different institutions: Diokoul, Fass and Matar Seck. In 1971, he was sent to Matam, a city in northwest Senegal, and then moving again, serving in Bargny, the city of his birth, from 1972 to 1975.

In 1978, he returned to his hometown of Rufisque and became the principal of Thiokho Elementary School, the school close to his home and where his children attended. There, he remained as principal until 1985, when he became the head of El Hadj Ousseynou Diagne, the largest elementary school in Rufisque.

After a long and distinguished career as an educator, Mr. Thiouf retired on September 9, 1992. He is a recipient of the *Ordre National du Lion*, Senegal's highest national honor and the *Chevalier des Palmes Académiques* for his lifelong dedication and commitment to education.

In 1998, Mr. Thiouf and his wife became permanent residents of the United States and spent half their time in the United States and the other half in Senegal.

He is survived by his widow Fatou Ndoeye and their 10 children: Mame, Diaraf, Abdou, Seynabou, Pape, Adj, Sokhna, Awa and Mahomet. Mr. Thiouf also had 13 grandchildren. Their oldest son Alassane, a graduate of the University of Arizona, died in a tragic car accident in September 1990 in Senegal.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to come before you today and share the life of this great man.

TRIBUTE TO SONNY CALLAHAN, 2009 MOBILIAN OF THE YEAR

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to former Alabama Congressman Sonny Callahan, who was honored on April 8 with the Mobilian of the Year Award, presented by the Cottage Hill Civitan Club. Former Congressman Callahan received the Bienville Plaque and a proclamation from Mayor Sam Jones.

I was honored to deliver a tribute to Sonny Callahan's life and career during the award celebration on April 8 and below is an excerpt of my remarks.

The Sonny Callahan story is much like that of many other young men his age—and from that time in Mobile's past. But Sonny, according to those who have known him the longest, was always someone special. He had the good looks, the charm and personality that made other people feel good about themselves when they were with him.

He had a natural charisma and intellect, often masked with that Reagan-esque self-deprecating humor, that made Sonny, even to his peers and colleagues, a natural-born leader that people gravitated to for his counsel and advice, for his often unique perspective on life . . . or simply for a little humor and levity to lighten the moment.

As the story goes, we know he used those talents early on in the world of business and it was a success story that made for a natural campaign brochure.

I'll never forget what our wonderful friend, mentor and advisor, the late Bill Yeager, told me when I was first interviewing to be Sonny's campaign press secretary back in 1982 . . . Bill said, "Jo, Sonny's story of a self-made man who grew up with all the reasons not to succeed, but overcoming one obstacle after another, always finding a way to be successful, is not just biographical hype.

"Even if he is sometimes hard to pin-down," Bill told me, Sonny is truly one of the most decent human beings I have ever known."

And as Bill Yeager often was in his judgment of others, he was right on the money as it related to Sonny.

Sonny's early success on the campaign trail . . . he was elected to the Alabama House in 1970 and only once—in the 14 times his name appeared on the ballot—did he not finish first—was an omen of even bigger opportunities that would come.

But Sonny wasn't just someone who loved politics . . . he loved helping people.

And that, my friends, is a distinction that sadly, too few of us make when it comes to lumping everyone in politics in the same vat.

There were the light-hearted moments . . . like the time when Sonny was driving to Montgomery when the legislature was in session and his friend, Tommy Sandusky, had finally gotten one of those Motorola car phones almost a year after Sonny had gotten his first car telephone.

The story goes that Tommy was so proud of the fact that he had finally caught up to Sonny, that he pulled up to Sonny in his car at a stoplight in Montgomery, picked up the phone and called him to say, "hey Sonny, I just wanted you to know that I'm calling you on my car phone."

. . . to which Sonny—with that quick Callahan wit replied without missing a beat—"Tommy that's great . . . unfortunately, I can't talk right now because my other phone is ringing."