

My bill would ease the administrative burden on wood preserving facilities in my district and around the country, on the EPA, and on the States. It would also recognize the extensive environmental recycling efforts of not only the wood preserving industry, but of all affected industries. I hope to have sufficient support to bring this legislation to the House floor under the Regulatory Corrections Day process.

OCTOBER 6 IS GERMAN-AMERICAN DAY

HON. MICHAEL PATRICK FLANAGAN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 1995

Mr. FLANAGAN. Mr. Speaker, October 6 is German-American Day. Today, more than 57 million Americans trace at least part of their ancestry to Germany.

German-Americans have, since the arrival of the first German immigrants in Philadelphia, PA, on October 6, 1683, distinguished themselves by their loyalty to their new homeland and their contributions to the cultural and economic life of the United States of America. German-Americans have supported America's democratic principles and have dedicated themselves to the promotion of freedom for all people everywhere.

The German-American Friendship Garden in Washington, DC, stands as a symbol of friendly relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America.

We in Congress call upon all citizens of the United States of America to acknowledge the services and contributions of our German-American citizens and to celebrate German-American Day on the 6th of October.

WORLD MARITIME DAY 1995

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 1995

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues that World Maritime Day 1995 is being observed this week. The theme for this year's observance is "50th Anniversary of the United Nations: International Maritime Organization's Achievements and Challenges." The IMO was formed by an international convention in 1948, under the auspices of the United Nations, and today has 152 member States.

Since 1948, the IMO has worked to protect human life and the environment by promoting specific international programs focused on safety of life at sea and the prevention of pollution from ships. The U.S. Coast Guard, our country's representative at the IMO, has tirelessly worked through the IMO to bring international maritime safety and pollution laws up to our high standards. In order to honor the past successes of the IMO and better educate my colleagues about the continuing efforts of this international organization in promoting safety and environmental protection the high seas, I would like to submit the statement of Mr. William A. O'Neil, secretary-general of the International Maritime Organization, for the RECORD. Mr. O'Neil's remarks on this impor-

tant occasion discuss past IMO programs and the current challenges it faces in continuing to save lives at sea and reduce marine environmental damages.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

(By Mr. William A. O'Neil)

Fifty years ago the United Nations was created. When people consider the United Nations today, most think only of the headquarters in New York or peacekeeping missions around the world. Very few people know that the UN indeed has another side.

This side, of course, consists of the specialized agencies of the UN system which deal with such matters as the development of telecommunications, the safety of aviation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the improvements of education, the world's weather, and international shipping, the particular responsibility of the International Maritime Organization.

IMO was established by means of a convention which was adopted under the auspices of the United Nations in 1948 and today has 152 Member States. Its most important treaties cover more than 98% of world shipping.

IMO succeeded in winning the support of the maritime world by being pragmatic, effective and above all by concentrating on the technical issues related to safety at sea and the prevention of pollution from ships, topics that are of most concern to its Member States. IMO's priorities are often described in the slogan "safer shipping and cleaner oceans."

But today I do not want to focus on past successes. Instead I would like to talk to you about the future. Nobody can predict precisely what will happen in the shipping world during the next few years but there are indications that, from a safety point of view, we should be especially vigilant.

The difficult economic conditions of the last two decades have discouraged shipowners from ordering new tonnage and there is evidence that, in some cases, the maintenance of vessels has suffered. The combination of age and poor maintenance has obvious safety implications. Shipping as an industry is also undergoing great structural changes that have resulted in the fleets of the traditional flags declining in size while newer shipping nations have emerged.

IMO has no vested interest in what flag a ship flies or what country its crew members come from. But we are interested in the quality of the operation. We certainly can have no objection to shipowners saving money—unless those savings are made at the expense of safety or the environment. If that happens then we are very concerned indeed.

Until recently the indications were that IMO's efforts to improve safety and reduce pollution were paying off. The rate of serious casualties was falling and the amount of oil and other pollutants entering the sea was decreasing quite dramatically. But recently there has been a disturbing rise in accidents and our fear is that, if nothing is done, the progress we have diligently fought for over the last few decades will be lost. To avert this danger IMO has taken a number of actions.

We have set up a special sub-committee to improve the way IMO regulations are implemented by flag States.

We have encouraged the establishment of regional port State control arrangements so that all countries which have ratified IMO Conventions and have the right to inspect foreign ships to make sure that they meet IMO requirements can do this more effectively.

We have adopted a new mandatory International Safety Management Code to im-

prove standards of management and especially to make sure that safety and environmental issues are never overlooked or ignored.

We have recently adopted amendments to the convention dealing with standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers. The Convention has been modernized and restructured, but most important of all, new provisions have been introduced which will help to make sure that the Convention is properly implemented.

When these and other measures are added together they make impressive package that should make a significant contribution to safety and pollution prevention in the years to come. But I think we need something more.

IMO's standards have been so widely adopted that they affect virtually every ship in the world. Therefore, in theory, the casualty and pollution rates of flag States should be roughly the same but in actual practice they vary enormously. That can only be because IMO regulations are put into effect differently from country to country. The measures I have just outlined will help to even out some of these differences, but they will only really succeed if everybody involved in shipping wants them to.

That sounds simple enough. Surely everybody is interested in safety and the prevention of pollution and will do what they can to promote them? To a certain degree perhaps they are—but the degree of commitment seems to vary considerably. The majority of shipowners accept their responsibilities and conduct their operations with integrity at the highest level.

Some others quite deliberately move their ships to different trading routes if Governments introduce stricter inspections and controls; they would rather risk losing the ship and those on board than to undertake and pay for the cost of carrying out the repairs they know to be necessary. Some Governments are also quite happy to take the fees for registering ships under their flag, but fail to ensure that safety and environmental standards are enforced.

The idea that a ship would willingly be sent to sea in an unsafe condition and pose a danger to its crew is difficult to believe and yet it does happen.

The reasons for this are partly historical. We have become so used to the risks involved in seafaring that we have come to see them as a cost that has to be paid, a price which is exacted for challenging the wrath of the oceans. We must change this attitude, this passive acceptance of the inevitability of disaster. When a ship sinks we should all feel a sense of loss and failure, because accidents are not inevitable—they can and should be prevented.

The actions taken by IMO during the last few years will undoubtedly help to improve safety and thereby save lives, but they will have an even more dramatic effect if they help to change the culture of all those engaged in shipping and make safety not just a vague aspiration but a part of every day living, so that it comes as second nature. This is a clear, precise target—a target that is within our grasp if we continue to put our minds and energies to the task.

Fifty years ago, when the United Nations was being planned, few people believed that there would ever be an effective international organization devoted to shipping safety. But, in the same spirit that led to the founding of the United Nations, IMO itself was born. The vision which led to this has been realized and seafarers of the world have benefitted as a result.

However, casualties still do occur and much remains to be done by IMO, by its Member Governments, by the shipping industry and by the seafarers who crew the