

Having been present at the United Nations' creation and observed its work over the last 50 years, I strongly believe in the need for such a body and in the principles upon which it was founded. While I have applauded and participated in efforts to amend and improve the organization, I would argue that these last 51 years have witnessed an impressive record of achievement. Though it has not always lived up to all the expectations of its founders, the United Nations has irrevocably changed the world in which we live. Despite the obstacles posed by the politics of the cold war, I can think of numerous examples where the United Nations succeeded in promoting international peace and security—in Namibia, El Salvador, Cambodia, and countless other countries. Whether brokering peaceful settlements to violent conflicts, halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, protecting the international environment, or immunizing children from disease, the United Nations has made the world a safer place. Clearly, if the United Nations did not exist today, we would have to invent it.

I am therefore troubled by the increasingly violent attacks on this important institution—in Congress, the press, and other public fora. These attacks seem symptomatic of a broader and dangerous tendency to seek to retreat from our international commitments and obligations. Revolutionary changes in communications, transportation, capital flows, and the nature of warfare have irreversibly linked our fate with that of the rest of the world. Today, there is no ocean wide enough—nor border fence we could build that would be high enough—to keep out an often turbulent world.

Rather than abandoning our role as part of the international community, we should endeavor to expand and improve cooperation with those states that share our values in order to address our common problems. The United Nations offers a valuable forum for such cooperation.

With this in mind, I would like to use this opportunity to address three of the more dangerous myths that have been propagated recently regarding the United Nations:

The first of these myths is that the United Nations somehow threatens American sovereignty. Critics of the United Nations have often depicted the organization as a nascent world government eager to supplant the nation-state. In fact, the United Nations more accurately resembles an unruly debating club, where members control and vote on its activities. Moreover, the United Nations charter clearly states that resolutions of the General Assembly are non-binding on member states. In similar fashion, United Nations conventions only apply to nations that elect to ratify them. The one United Nations body in which decisions could be binding upon member-states is the Security Council, where the United

States and other permanent members enjoy veto power. Because of these institutional checks, the United Nations usually must struggle to achieve enough of a consensus to make action possible. In no way could one mistake this organization for an out-of-control bureaucracy trampling upon the prerogatives of nation-states.

A second myth about the United Nations is that it does not serve American interests. In the most extreme version of this myth, critics imagine that the United States always fares worse when it acts multilaterally, than when it goes it alone. In fact, given that many of today's most pressing problems—be it crime, disease, environmental degradation, terrorism, or currency crises—transcend national boundaries, there is much to be gained from forging common solutions to common problems.

The end of the artificial divisions of the cold war has presented the United States with an extraordinary opportunity to use the United Nations to advance its foreign policy goals. In the last U.N. session, members of the General Assembly voted with the United States 88.2 percent of the time; 91 percent of Security Council resolutions were adopted unanimously. The United Nations has enabled the United States to avoid unilateral responsibility for costly and entangling activities in regions of critical importance, even as it yields to the United States a position of tremendous authority. To paraphrase former Secretary of State James Baker, U.N. peacekeeping is a pretty good bargain. For every dollar the United States spends on peacekeeping, it saves many more dollars by preventing conflicts in which it might otherwise have to become involved.

From a cost-benefit perspective, U.S. contributions to the United Nations and its agencies have been a very worthwhile investment. In addition to the American lives and dollars saved by U.N. peacekeeping missions, other U.N. agencies have worked to prevent disaster and death and to promote health and security both here in the United States and abroad. In 1977, the World Health Organization [WHO] averted an estimated 2 million deaths per year by eradicating smallpox. Today, WHO's children immunization program saves an estimated 3 million lives every year. In 1992, during a severe drought in Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme saved an estimated 20 million people from starvation. And in this last week, the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which will contribute to the security and well-being of generations of peoples to come.

Which brings me to the third myth: that U.S. participation in the United Nations is ruinously expensive. In fact, in fiscal year 1996, the United States' assessed and voluntary contributions to the U.N. system totaled \$1.51 billion.

That includes \$304 million for the U.N. general budget, \$359 million for peacekeeping operations, \$7 million for war crimes tribunals, \$337 million in assessments to the United Nations' specialized agencies, and \$501 million in voluntary contributions to programs such as UNICEF and other programs that the United States has treaty obligations to support. This total American contribution represented less than half of 1 percent of the current defense budget; that allotted for peacekeeping less than the annual budget of the New York City police force.

On a per capita basis, the annual U.S. contribution to the U.N. regular budget breaks down to slightly more than \$1 per American. This is considerably less than what most other people in the world pay. For example, the per capita contribution of the U.N.'s newest member state, Palau, is over \$6 per person. Clearly, the American taxpayer is getting a good deal for his money.

Of course there is certainly room for further economies. Like many large organizations, the United Nations could be leaner, more efficient, and more responsive. But rather than eviscerating one of the key institutional underpinnings of the present international order by starving it of funds, we should work patiently but determinedly with like-minded states and with the U.N. Secretariat to reform and to improve it. I am heartened by the consensus among such strong advocates for U.N. reform as former Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and former Assistant Secretary of State John Bolton that the U.S. benefits greatly from its membership in the United Nations. I also agree with them that a U.S. withdrawal from the United Nations would be contrary to our national interests.

How we go about the task of reforming the United Nations will say a lot about the prospects for American leadership in the twenty-first century. As after World War II, the United States faces a decisive challenge: whether to maintain the mantle of international leadership and stay engaged in the creation of a new international order, or to seek to retreat into isolationism. The latter course is an even more dangerous option today than it would have been 51 years ago. Only through international engagement and assertive leadership can America hope to prosper and safeguard its security in the next century. The United Nations can serve as an important vehicle for advancing these vital national interests.

THE RIGHT TO SAY NO

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise to make a short statement on my strong disappointment that the energy and water conference report does not include the Senate-passed amendment giving the States and the cities the right to say no to the importation of out-of-State garbage.

I must say, and I think you remember, Mr. President, this is not a new

issue. This has been around since 1989. Essentially, it is a battle between those States who want to export their trash to another State and those States on the receiving end who do not want it.

Not long ago in my State, the city of Miles City faced a prospect that was practically a Noah's flood of garbage imports. Fortunately, that plan fell through, but the really crazy and humiliating part of it all was that the 5,000 citizens of Miles City could only sit and wait. They had no say at all and no way to stop the waste from coming in. Why? Very simply, because the Supreme Court has struck down attempts by States to limit importation of garbage, saying it violates the commerce clause of the Constitution. So we in the Congress have to act and pass Federal legislation that enables States and enables local communities to say no.

It is obviously wrong, Mr. President. It is unfair for any city, whether Miles City or any other city in the United States, to not have the right to say no to garbage coming into their State. As you recall, we in the Senate have done our part. Way back in May of 1995, we passed a bill to let Montana and other States say no to the importation of out-of-State garbage. The House of Representatives, however, has a different story. They have stalled. They have stalled on any action in this measure for a couple of years.

I say that the people of Montana, the people of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and other States affected by the deluge of garbage coming into their States cannot afford to wait any longer. They are anxious. They are concerned. They feel the Government ought to be able to do something to address this situation. Some of these States are already importing millions of tons of garbage, and they do not want to import more.

Now it appears that New York City may add 10,000 tons or more of trash every day—10,000 tons of trash every day—when it closes its Fresh Kills landfill on the outskirts of New York City. That should drive home to everyone, and especially the House, how important it is to act and to act quickly.

We talk a lot around here about local control, about letting States decide their own destiny, letting local communities decide their own destiny. By saying no to the Senate amendment on this conference report, the House is preventing the people from controlling their own destiny. By saying no, States cannot stop out-of-State garbage from being dumped in their own backyard.

Obviously, the Senate bill we passed is not perfect. It is a compromise. It is a compromise between the importing States that take garbage and do not want the garbage and the exporting States that, frankly, want to export more. It is a compromise. It is a compromise we can live with.

Now, the House, apparently, does not want to act. It is not compromising. I say the House should pass something

which at least they think makes sense for them. That way, we can work another compromise that is between the House and the Senate, and we can finally solve this problem—it is not the perfect way, but in a way that generally resolves the problems so that today more local communities can say no to the importation of garbage coming into their States. That is only fair. I ask the House to act quickly.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CAMPBELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 11 a.m. having arrived, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3662, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3662) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Pressler Amendment No. 5351, to promote the livestock industry.

Bumpers modified amendment No. 5353 (to committee amendment on page 25, line 4 through line 10), to increase the fee charged for domestic livestock grazing on public rangelands.

AMENDMENT NO. 5353, AS MODIFIED

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, it is my understanding that we have now resumed consideration of the Bumpers-Gregg amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GORTON. Between now and 12:30, while we are on the Bumpers-Gregg amendment relating to grazing fees, I believe that that amendment was debated thoroughly yesterday afternoon. In addition, there will be 20 minutes equally divided on the amendment after we reconvene following the party luncheons before our vote on that amendment.

As a consequence, Mr. President, I suspect that there is time between now and 12:30 to deal with any other amendments that Members of the Senate may wish to propound. There are some 25 or 30, at least, amendments that are relevant to this bill on which the managers have been notified. Probably half or more of them can be accepted in their present form or another form can be worked out.

So all Senators who are within hearing of these proceedings can be on no-

tice that this may be a particularly convenient time in which to bring such amendments to the floor and to have them considered.

With that, and until we have some business to do, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ASHCROFT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, just a few moments ago the Democratic conferees that had intended to meet in conference between the House and the Senate to consider the immigration bill were notified that conference was indefinitely postponed. No time was established when there might be a follow-up conference.

The issues of illegal immigration are of enormous importance to this country. There are a number of States that are directly impacted by illegal immigration, but the problems of illegal immigration also affect just about every State in this country in one form or another. There has been considerable discussion and debate about what policies we ought to follow to address the issues of illegal immigration.

For a number of years, we have had special commissions that were set up by the Congress to look at various immigration issues. We had the Hesburgh Commission. The commission was bipartisan in nature and made a series of recommendations both with regard to legal and illegal immigration. The Congress acted on both of the recommendations.

Subsequently, because of the enormous flow of illegal immigrants coming to the United States, the Hesburgh Commission called for the United States to respond to the problem. After all, it is a function of our National Government to deal with protection of the borders, and also to guard the borders themselves. This area of public policy presented an extremely important responsibility for national policymakers.

Beginning just about 2 years ago my colleague and friend, the Senator from Wyoming became the Chair of the Immigration Subcommittee. I have enjoyed working with him on immigration—we have agreed on many, many different items; we differ on some issues, and some we have had the good opportunity to debate on the floor of the Senate on various occasions.

In fact, we agreed on many of the provisions in the Senate immigration bill. I welcomed the opportunity to support the legislation which passed overwhelmingly—97 to 3. Although the legislation was not perfect, it represented a bipartisan effort to try to