

The Beijing agenda goes far beyond basic rights for women. The draft Platform claims that peace and development cannot be achieved unless women represent 50 percent of all national and international political and economic agencies. How or why women are uniquely capable of bringing in this utopia is never explained.

The danger of the Beijing women's conference is that it attempts sweeping and unnecessary social change—change that will undermine rather than enhance the rights of women. The draft Platform for Action equals or surpasses the Marxist-Leninist experiment in its ambition. The draft Platform for Action calls for the most intrusive, arrogant, and radical restructuring of the social order in human history—all on the baseless assumption that this will produce a just, prosperous, and peaceful world. I'm convinced of the opposite. It is the road to tyranny and oppression for women and for men.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, July 5, 1995, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

U.S. environmental policy is at a crossroads. On the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, we can take great pride in the advances that have been made in environmental protection. We have succeeded in reducing the levels of lead and other dangerous pollutants from the air. Lakes and rivers once so contaminated they could catch on fire, now support large fish populations. Endangered species like the eagle and the buffalo have been saved from extinction and are now thriving.

The challenge ahead is to build on these successes, but in smarter, more cost-effective ways. The objectives of our environmental laws are almost always worthy: cleaner air; safer drinking water; protection of endangered species and so forth. The issue is whether current laws go about achieving these goals in the most sensible way.

Cleaning up the environment has become much more complicated. At the time of the first Earth Day in 1970, there was a broad consensus that the environment was a mess and that the government had to do something about it. Today that consensus is much less firm. There are competing claims about the environment's condition, strong rivalries within the environmental movement, and active opposition to environmental regulation. Furthermore, the nature of environmental regulation is changing. Whereas in the past government regulators focused on large polluters, such as the local factory, new regulations aim to curb pollution from more diffuse sources, such as runoff from farm lands.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Most environmental programs are of a "command and control" variety. The federal government sets regulations which the public and private sectors must follow. For example, the Clean Air Act mandates how much pollution factories can emit and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act directs industry to dispose of hazardous waste in a certain manner.

This regulatory approach can be credited with improving environmental quality over the last 25 years. The question now is whether it is the correct approach for the 21st Cen-

tury. The current regulatory system offers the advantages of uniformity, administrative efficiency, and predictability, but it has drawbacks as well.

First, "command and control" can be too inflexible. It takes a one-size-fits-all approach to regulation. For example, the Safe Drinking Water Act requires all localities to test for a broad menu of contaminants even if there is little or no chance that a community's water system has been exposed to certain contaminants. Localities cannot pursue innovative alternatives that could achieve the same level of water quality at lower cost.

Second, the current system can be very expensive. Pollution controls, for example, cost an estimated \$26 billion per year. Protecting the environment will cost money—and in many cases, that money is well spent—but I am concerned we are not getting the best return on the dollar. Some programs don't work as well as they should. The Superfund program, for example, was designed to clean up the nation's most hazardous waste sites, but too much funding has been wasted in overhead and litigation costs. Other laws mandate, at great cost, compliance from state and local governments or private enterprises, often without any financial assistance from the federal government.

Third, the "command and control" approach can be too complex. Our environmental statutes have evolved into a cumbersome system that tends to over-specify compliance strategies and mandate extensive reporting requirements.

NEW APPROACH

We need to rethink how we regulate the environment. This does not mean repealing current standards, but rather defining a sensible role for the federal government. There continues to be a federal role in protecting the environment. Many environmental problems, such as water and air pollution, cross state and even international borders, and, consequently, demand a national response. Furthermore, most Americans want federal leadership on environmental issues.

I believe the following principles should, where appropriate, guide future environmental policy with the objective of making regulation more flexible, less costly and less complex.

First, we should work to find market-based solutions to environmental problems. Such an approach might entail providing incentives to private business or local governments to meet or exceed environmental standards; or creating a system of marketable pollution permits. Market-driven solutions offer the promise of achieving environmental objectives in a way that is more cost-effective and less disruptive to industry.

Second, we should encourage cooperation between the federal government and the regulated community. Environmental regulation will always involve some tension between the two, but the federal government can take steps to minimize such conflict by working cooperatively with businesses, landowners and other private interests to find solutions.

Third, we should give more discretion to state and local governments in managing environmental problems. The federal government has the expertise to set national standards for environmental protection and compliance strategies. State and local governments, however, are often closer to the problems, and may have better ideas about solving them in innovative, cost-effective ways.

Fourth, we should allocate federal resources to the most pressing environmental problems, particularly in an era of tight federal budgets. Too many federal dollars are wasted on programs of marginal social or economic benefit. Federal agencies should

conduct risk assessment, based on scientific evidence, and cost-benefit analysis before implementing new regulations.

CONCLUSION

Protecting the environment today demands something more than the standard regulatory prohibitions. The environmental movement has taught us the responsibility of protecting our own natural heritage. We now must reshape our efforts with a new openness to what works and what does not work in environmental protection.

IN SUPPORT OF SISTER CITIES

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 1995

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the United States Information Agency and their continued funding of the Sister Cities International Program. The USIA is responsible for our Government's overseas academic and cultural programs. They conduct a variety of activities to promote democratic and free market values and to foster international understanding of U.S. policies. The Sister Cities Program is a vital part of this effort. I am proud to demonstrate my support for this worthwhile cause, and as a former mayor, Alexandria, VA, I am pleased to submit for the RECORD the attached letter from the U.S. Conference of Mayors International Affairs Committee.

SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL,

June 17, 1995.

An Open Letter to Congress:

We, the undersigned Mayors of The U.S. Conference of Mayors' International Affairs Committee, urge our elected Representatives and Senators in the United States Congress to preserve important United States Information Agency (USIA) supported programs such as Sister Cities International that enable us to build bridges with communities overseas.

Through programs supported by the USIA, diverse elements from our communities—business, working people, educators, and many individuals and organizations—have forged strong economic and cultural ties with their international counterparts. These vibrant programs have afforded us the opportunity to create people to people relationships which have brought countless contributions to our communities.

The special relationships developed as a result of these international partnerships reap tangible returns for the modest resources that are used to sustain them. Across the United States, substantial construction projects, special trade relationships, provided direct access to foreign markets for American goods and services, and increased tourism are just a few of the ways they have boosted our local economies and enhanced international understanding.

The lives of our citizens and their children, in their homes and in their classrooms, are enriched by interacting with people from our sister cities. It is important for the people of our communities to gain a better understanding of just how interdependent our world is. For some of our citizens this may be the only exposure they will ever receive to people who live in other countries.

We are united in our belief that for many reasons our communities are strengthened when we are internationally engaged. We