

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BROWNFIELDS LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

HON. SHERROD BROWN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 3, 1995

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation along with my colleagues Mr. DINGELL of Michigan, Mr. GEPHARDT of Missouri, Mr. BORSKI and Mr. KLINK of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUSH of Illinois, Mr. STOKES of Ohio, and Mr. MANTON and Mr. TOWNS of New York, to address the dire need for the development of so-called Brownfields.

Those of us who have seen industries come and go in our congressional districts know the problems resulting from land that had been used for industrial purposes which is now abandoned—left barren and often contaminated—with no hope of productive use. Our legislation will address this problem in four important ways.

First, the bill would establish a grant program for local communities to use to determine the extent of the contamination of the property. While many sites could be re-developed with a minimal investment, local communities cannot be sure of this until the assessment is done. This bill offers these communities an opportunity to assess the situation so that prompt action can be taken to clean up the site.

Second, this legislation would establish a revolving loan fund for local governments to fund the actual clean-up actions. Mr. Speaker, we know it is essential that we be fiscally responsible in the development of new Federal programs. For this reason, we established a loan program for the local governments to assist them in getting the land to a place where it will begin to produce revenue. But we require the loan to be repaid over 10 years—a time frame which allows them the opportunity to begin to recoup their investment.

Third, the bill would protect the purchaser of such properties as long as the purchaser does due diligence to find the problem and cooperate with the clean-up response. Under the current Superfund law, purchasers could be liable for clean-up even if they did not own the land when it was polluted. This provision should help attract new purchasers to these lands and encourage the voluntary clean-up of sites.

Fourth, and finally, the bill would protect the lending institutions from becoming the deep-pockets at sites where their participation was limited to the lending of money. Unfortunately, the current laws has allowed innocent lenders to be held liable for the clean-up of properties for which they provided the financial backing and nothing more. It is contrary to the intent of the Superfund Program to discourage voluntary clean-up actions such as those that would be backed by financial institutions. Yet, that is the result of the current law. Institutions are afraid to lend the financial backing when they could be held liable for millions in clean-up costs.

Mr. Speaker, I believe our legislation will provide a boost in the arm to local communities across this nation which are struggling to re-create productive properties. It will revive local economies, reduce threats to public health and improve the environment. I hope my colleagues will offer their support by co-sponsoring this bill.

A TRIBUTE TO KANWAL SIBAL

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 3, 1995

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, during the past 3 years the relationship between the United States and the Government of India has dramatically improved. India is no longer a country with which our Government has a reserved relationship. It is now a nation which is one of our Nation's major emerging markets. There are many reasons for the improvements in our relationship with India.

Prime Minister Narashimha Rao has embarked on a bold economic reform program which has made our Nation India's largest trading partner. India's Finance Minister, Manmohan Singh, has worked tirelessly to build economic bridges between the Indian consumers and important American companies. Our diplomatic relationship with India will only succeed, however, if the Indian Embassy successfully conducts its relationships with the Congress, the State Department, and other agencies of our Government. During the past 3 years the Indian Embassy has been an important player in our nearly improved relationship with the world's largest democracy.

Mr. Speaker, Kanwal Sibal has served in Washington with distinction for the past 3 years as the Deputy Chief of Mission. Prior to coming to Washington, Kanwal Sibal served as India's Ambassador to Turkey. Now, with the completion of a successful tour in Washington, Kanwal Sibal is about to become India's Ambassador to Egypt.

Mr. Speaker, I know many of my colleagues join with me in congratulating Kanwal Sibal for the successful completion of his assignment to Washington. I call to the attention of my colleagues an article which appeared in the July 14, 1995, edition of News India-Times regarding Kanwal Sibal's years here in Washington. I know my colleagues will agree with the praise accorded to Ambassador Sibal. Kanwal Sibal will be missed in Washington, but I am certain he will ably represent his nation in Cairo and I request that the attached News India-Times article be printed at this point in the RECORD:

[From the News India-Times, July 14, 1995]

SATISFACTION AT THE END OF A SUCCESSFUL
INNINGS

(By Tania Anand)

WASHINGTON.—“The canvas is huge, the players numerous. No embassy or government can be in control all the time. One has

to be genuinely modest about making any claims or reordering India-US relations.” The man reflecting is Kanwal Sibal, deputy chief of mission at the Indian embassy. Having completed three years as the chief of the IFS battery in Washington, Sibal will make way for Shyamala Cowsik, who takes his place on September 1.

In an extensive interview with News India-Times at the end of an eventful term which saw India move from an inconsequential point outside the US radar screen to a centerpoint as one of the foremost Big Emerging Markets identified by the US government, Sibal was modest about his role in the transition.

“A lot of our progress is thanks to policies back home. My role, as part of the team, has been essentially consolidating on the positive trends that are occurring.” Following are excerpts from the interview, conducted in two sessions in his office last week.

On Indo-US relations when he assumed office in September 1992: There were a lot of uncertainties in our relationship. There was a lack of confidence in US intentions toward India. We were feeling US pressure specially on the nuclear proliferation issue and within a few months on human rights. There were sanctions on ISRO the technology transfer issue culminated in pressure on Russia to cancel the cryogenic engines, there was concern on intellectual property rights. There was pressure from Congress on Kashmir and Punjab and generally on human rights.

The atmosphere in relations between the two countries became even more difficult by statements made on Kashmir which seemed to suggest a reopening of the accession question there was a third party to the Indo-Pak dialogue on Kashmir.

The economic reforms process was not more than a year old and had not begun to register either at the government or at the business level. From the government point of view India was not blinking on the US radar screen. It was very difficult to get the attention of the policy-makers.

On relations today in general: Today on all fronts the scenario is much better. It has obviously been a team effort where everybody has contributed. Yet having said that I will take some credit for the contribution.

Our relationship with the US is highly complex. The US is the world's foremost power, we are not. In many areas, the US holds the strong hand vis-a-vis all countries. This makes the task of dealing with the US a challenging one. The decision making process here is complex. The capability of innumerable agencies to block a decision here has to be understood. These non-governmental agencies are powerful but from our point of view irresponsible. They do not think in a narrow agenda and push it to the maximum. Yet the overall atmosphere has improved vastly.

On nuclear proliferation: We have certainly made significant advance in persuading the American side that India's security dilemmas cannot be adequately dealt with within the India-Pakistan or South Asian framework. The US is no longer persisting with a proposal that would limit the nuclear no-proliferation dialogue to just India and Pakistan. There have been no new pressures on India on the NPT front despite its indefinite extension.

Mode of communication: A significant advance following Strobe Talbott's visit to

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