

In addition to these steps, there are many more positive steps that require U.S. leadership. Among these steps are de-alerting nuclear forces, separating warheads from delivery vehicles, providing assurances of No First Use of nuclear weapons, establishing an accounting for all nuclear weapons and weapons grade materials in all countries, withdrawing nuclear weapons from foreign soil and international waters, and providing internationally monitored storage of all weapons-grade nuclear materials.

The United States is a powerful country. It will have enormous influence, for better or for worse, on the future of our species and all life. Continuing on with our present policies on nuclear weapons will lead inevitably to disaster. Millions of Americans know that we can do better than this. Because these weapons are in our arsenal now does not mean they must always be, if we act courageously and wisely.

We need to set a course for the 21st century that assures that it will be a peaceful century. The lack of leadership to end the nuclear threat to humanity's future is unfortunately augmented by other unwise policies that we pursue. Our country must stop being the arms salesman to the world, the policeman for the world, and the chief trainer for foreign military and paramilitary forces.

We need to become an exporter and promoter of democracy and decency, human rights and human dignity. If these values are to be taken seriously abroad, we must demonstrate their effect in our own society. To do this, we need to reduce rather than increase military expenditures. We are currently spending more on our military than the next 16 highest military-spending countries combined. This is obscene and yet it goes unchallenged. It is another area where presidential leadership is necessary.

We live in a world in which borders have become incapable of stopping either pollution or projectiles. Our world is interconnected, and our futures are interlinked. We must support the strengthening of international law and institutions. Among the treaties that await our ratification are the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Land Mine Prohibition Treaty, the Treaty on the Rights of the Child, the Treaty on the Law of the Sea, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Treaty for an International Criminal Court.

Mr. President, I have watched many of your predecessors fail to act on these issues. You have the opportunity to set out on a new path, a path to the future that will bring hope to all humanity. I urge you to accept the challenge and take this path. Be the leader who abolishes nuclear weapons. It would be the greatest possible gift to humanity.

EXPRESSING THANKS TO COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, S. 2943, S. Con. Res. 138, and S. Con. Res. 158 are likely the last matters I will bring to the floor in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on International Relations. I have had the honor of

having served as the Chairman of the Committee for six years, preceded by two years as its Ranking Republican.

I would like to express my thanks to the Members of the Committee for their constructive cooperation over these past years. I will miss those who will be leaving the House—my colleagues BILL GOODLING, MATT SALMON, TOM CAMPBELL, MARK SANFORD, SAM GEJDENSON, and PAT DANNER.

I have worked closely with Mr. GEJDENSON, who has served as my ranking Democrat for two years, and I will miss him. I look forward to working with TOM LANTOS as he takes up the mantle of leadership on the other side of the aisle.

The House leadership has made it possible to bring our bills and resolutions to the floor. I appreciate their support and understanding of our concerns. We have also had great help from the Rules Committee under Mr. DREIER and his predecessor, Mr. Solomon. The cooperation of the Democrats in leadership and Rules has also been indispensable.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you and through you, the other presiding officers who have stood in your place as we have brought innumerable matters to the floor. Your fairness and patience has always been appreciated. I would like to say to the leadership staff to those who work on the floor and in the leadership offices off the floor—especially Brian Gunderson, Shioban McGill, and Kirk Boyle—how much we appreciate your help.

The House Parliamentarian, Mr. Charles Johnson, as well as his deputies, assistants, and clerks have always been available to us with wise advice. The official reporters and transcribers, the staff of the office of legislative operations, the cloakroom staffs, the doorkeepers, and the pages all make this House run. Thus, they are critical to our democracy.

We have had able help over the years from the office of the House Legislative Counsel, especially from Mark Synnes, Yvonne Haywood, Sandy Strokoff, and the unsung heroes of the "Ramseyer section".

Our Committee's chief of staff, Rich Garon, has coordinated the work of a wonderful group of professionals, as has his counterpart on the Democratic side, Kathleen Moazed. None of our work could have been accomplished without them, and I hope that they will continue to serve the country through their work in this House or elsewhere in government. Rather than name them all, Mr. Speaker, I will insert a list of our staff in the RECORD, with my thanks and, I am certain, the thanks of all of our Members.

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