

land and water have been so poisoned by toxic waste that ten percent of babies are born with birth defects. Virulent insects thrive in contaminated areas. Urbanization has produced an ideal environment for the spread of disease. Carolyn Stevens, an epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, notes that poverty is the root cause of such epidemics. Disproportionate numbers of poor people living in cities die from both infectious diseases and chronic illnesses. As migrants flood cities, resulting urban growth outruns the installation of sanitation. Hopeful citizens view metropolitan life as one of opportunity; however, resources are drained quickly and the standard of living falls exponentially. As time progresses, crowded, unsanitary slums will continue to harbor disease, perpetuating massive poverty.

Massive migration also strains rural economies. Millions move toward the cities, abandoning suburban life in hope of metropolitan prosperity. Many of those who migrate in the developing world are farmers. The world's largest nations, including India and China, depend upon massive production of grain to feed their millions. As rural populations dwindle, grain output also dwindles commensurably. Burgeoning city populations, on the other hand, demand widespread resources. Agricultural output fails to fulfill the demand of large metropolises. As a result, much of the third world must import billions of pounds of grain. Although such attempts are successful, many are still left in poverty. Urban growth creates an unprecedented strain on the worldwide agricultural industry, ensuing economic hardship and widespread poverty.

Population growth also strains urban economies. As cities swell from migration and births, workers face crowds of competitors. Economic growth cannot keep up with population expansion. Beijing is home to an estimated one million floating workers in search of jobs. Unemployment rates in scores of African cities top twenty percent and are unlikely to drop anytime soon. Newcomers have fled to Kinshasa, yet recent violence has scared away affluent businessmen and foreign workers. As a result, over the last three years, Kinshasa has seen its economy shrink by forty percent. Thousands of government jobs have disappeared, and the city's infrastructure has crumbled. In Beijing, the banking system is on the brink of collapse, as inflation is rapidly outpacing income growth. Hundreds of cities face similar situations; growing demand outpaces economic supply, harboring unemployment and depression. Metropolitan economies can't keep up with increased pressure.

More and more, the fate of cities determines the fate of nations and regions. In dozens of countries, a single major city accounts for half of the government's revenues and a large portion of GDP. Karachi is Pakistan's financial center, only major port, and has the highest concentration of literate people. Large cities such as these are not only fundamental to the economy of their nation but are also catalysts for political movements. Depression and widespread poverty often spur ethnic or religious conflict. Overcrowded cities harbor violence and civil strife; passions incubate among disgusted peasants. In Pakistan, if factional violence intensifies, unrest could engulf the rest of the populace, leading to international conflicts and large movements of people. Cities are fundamental to economic and social stability.

The problems of the world's major cities demand the attention of policy makers. The international community must work toward creating a new agenda for dealing with rapid urbanization. First, aid must not be

prioritized to the world's few largest metropolises. Most international attention is directed toward the most gigantic cities, although smaller urban centers often face more severe hardships. Future programs must concentrate on assisting cities with the deepest problems, not those with the largest populations.

Moreover, international organizations, such as the United Nations, must support community-based initiatives. These projects, pioneered by the World Bank, focus on small, yet fundamental problems. One of these initiatives, the Kampung Improvement Program in Jakarta, Indonesia, gave citizens an incentive to clean up their community. This method of foreign aid concentrates expertise of foreign workers, yet also gives cities a certain degree of autonomy in the self-improvement process. After the Jakarta program was implemented, Josef Leitmann, a World Bank urban planner, indicated that the "poor began to look at their community as their home. A simple change in psychology produced a change in physical surroundings." By impressing the process of social and economic development, rather than blanketing certain areas with massive amounts of aid, international organizations can improve the welfare of cities dramatically.

The international community must also promote multilateral free trade. Developing countries, such as China and Russia, must be included in the World Trade Organization. Increasing economic relations between all nations helps narrow the North-South gap, the economic and political barrier between first and third world countries. The United States and other major global powers can no longer concentrate trade with a select few large partners; they must open their doors to small, indigenous nations. Such an initiative would boost the economies of struggling cities, as increased exposure to world markets would boost standards of living and calm protectionist unrest.

Current United States policies, such as the Export Enhancement Program (EEP), are contributing to third world city poverty. The program, known as the EEP, allows China to purchase grain from the United States at a substantially reduced price. Although China is the world's largest importer of grain, programs like the EEP, essentially subsidize foreign agricultural industries, killing their ability to compete. Nations such as China are, thus, able to purchase grain from the United States at a cheaper price than from their own farmers. This system pressures the individual farmers, causing millions to move to cities. Mass migration, in turn, strains resources in urban areas, perpetuating poverty and unemployment.

Corporate investment also plays a fundamental role in reaching out to swelling metropolises. Abolishment of protectionist trade barriers must be accompanied by increased investment in fledgling economies. Multinational corporations, or MNCs, must be encouraged to develop new initiatives to boost the infrastructures of struggling cities. Hands-on investment, as opposed to large monetary grants, will pave the way for worldwide metropolitan prosperity.

Cities form the cornerstone of civilization. Recent population growth has dulled the luster of shining metropolises. Migration has strained the developing world, creating millions of unemployed workers, pushing even more into poverty. Industrialized nations must form a new set of priorities, hinging chief objectives upon free trade and multilateral investment. Although the world cannot rectify all urban problems, it must act quickly and decisively in order to promote global prosperity. If positive steps are taken, present-day slums may become, as Lewis Mumford put it, "symbols of the possible."

CASTLETON HOSE CO. CELEBRATES 125 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, anyone who visits my office can't help but notice the display of fire helmets that dominates my reception area. They're there for two reasons. First, I had the privilege of being a volunteer fireman in my hometown of Queensbury for more than 20 years, which helps explain the second reason, the tremendous respect that experience gave me for those who provide fire protection in our rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, in a rural area like the 22d District of New York, fire protection is often solely in the hands of these volunteer companies. In New York State alone they save countless lives and billions of dollars worth of property. That is why the efforts of people like those fire fighters in Castleton, NY is so critical.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, in their wisdom, the Castleton Village Board and Board President Frank P. Harder proposed starting the Castleton Fire Department back in the spring of 1871. Later that summer, the first engine House was completed on what is now the corner of Green Avenue and 1st street in Castleton. Clearly, they recognized the importance of protecting the lives and property of their friends and neighbors and established two hose companies to do just that.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, those are the traits that make me most fond of such communities, the undeniable camaraderie which exists among neighbors. Looking out for one another and the good of the whole is what makes places like Castleton a great place to live and raise a family. And this concept of community service couldn't be better exemplified than by the devoted service of the fine men and women who have comprised the Castleton Fire Co. over its 125 year history. That's right, for well over a century, this organization has provided critical services for the citizens on a volunteer basis. As a former volunteer fireman myself, I understand, and appreciate, the commitment required to perform such vital public duties.

Mr. Speaker, It has become all too seldom that you see fellow citizens put themselves in harms way for the sake of another. While almost all things have changed over the years, thankfully for the residents of Castleton, the members of their fire department have selflessly performed their duty, without remiss, since Abe VanBuren took the post as the first Fire Chief back in 1871.

You know, I have always said there is nothing more all-American than volunteering to help one's community. By that measure, Mr. Speaker, the members of the Castleton Fire Company, past and present, are truly great Americans. It will be my distinct pleasure to join the community of Castleton, this Saturday, June 8, 1996, in a parade and tribute to their fire department and the selfless sacrifices of its members over the course of the last 125 years. In that regard, I ask that you Mr. Speaker, and all members of the House, join me now in paying tribute to these dedicated men and women.

INTRODUCTION OF THE  
HOMEOWNERS RELIEF ACT OF 1996

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 4, 1996*

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Homeowners Relief Act, legislation to provide homeowners with relief from capital gains taxes upon the sale of their principal residence.

This legislation recognizes that a person's home is something more than a simple investment; it's a fundamental part of the American dream, and our Tax Code should recognize this fact. The bill exempts the sale of a principal residence from capital gains taxation. Specifically, the bill excludes from taxation the gains from the sale of a principal residence if, during the 7-year period prior to the sale of the residence, the property was owned by the taxpayer and used as the taxpayer's principal residence for 5 or more years.

Under current law, capital gains liability on the sale of a principal residence is postponed if another residence of equal or greater value is purchased within 2 years. In addition, taxpayers 55 years of age or older may claim a one-time \$125,000 exclusion of the gain from the sale of a principal residence during any 3 of 5 years immediately preceding the sale. Further, taxpayers can also avoid capital gains on owner-occupied housing by holding the asset until death and leaving it to their heirs.

While these exemptions serve to shield most homeowners from capital gains liability, certain circumstances force many homeowners to shoulder a significant capital gains tax bite when they sell their home. Increased home values put many taxpayers, particularly older Americans looking to retire, in the difficult situation of having to pay substantial capital gains taxes. In addition, at a time when corporate downsizing is all too common, often the most substantial asset held by laid-off workers is their home.

The problem is, current law has the effect of locking individuals into homes that, but for the Tax Code, they might wish to sell. Those individuals who can afford to purchase a more expensive home can postpone capital gains liability, while those who need to move to more modest accommodations, because their economic circumstances warrant doing so, must pay a tax.

Mr. Speaker, passage of this legislation will give homeowners needed relief from this inequity, and will put recognition in the Tax Code of the special status of the home. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Homeowners Relief Act of 1996.

IN HONOR OF THE GALVESTON  
BAY FOUNDATION

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 4, 1996*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Galveston Bay Foundation and its work to preserve and enhance Galveston Bay. On June 8, 1996, the Foundation will host its sixth annual "Bay Day Festival," a day long enter-

tainment, educational, and recreational event at historic Sylvan Beach County Park in La Porte, TX, to showcase Galveston Bay's many resources.

Galveston Bay is one of southeast Texas' most valuable and most threatened natural resources. Since the 1950s, the Bay has lost more than 30,000 acres of coastal wetlands and 90 percent of its aquatic grass beds. More than half the Bay has been permanently closed for commercial oyster harvesting while the remainder is routinely closed after heavy rainfall. With the completion of Lake Livingston Dam, the Trinity River Delta has been reduced dramatically, eliminating vital wetland habitat.

The Galveston Bay Foundation has played a critical role in helping to reverse this degradation and bring the Bay back to health. The Foundation was formed in 1987 as a non-profit organization made up of commercial fishermen, developers, business people, environmental groups, government officials, recreational interests, and other citizens who sought to increase education and communication about the importance of Galveston Bay to the region.

The Foundation's work to preserve the Bay has four fundamental principals—education, conservation, research, and advocacy. Through these efforts, the Foundation seeks to increase awareness of the multiple uses of Galveston Bay and to increase participation in projects to preserve the natural resources of the Bay.

In 1987, through the leadership of U.S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen, the U.S. Congress designated Galveston Bay as a part of the National Estuary Program in an attempt to solve problems to the Bay caused by pollution, development, and overuse. The Galveston Bay Plan was developed by a consortium of scientists, corporate and governmental representatives, and local citizens. The Foundation has served as a partner in the effort to restore vital Bay habitats, contain contaminated runoff, and curtail sewage and industrial waste. The success of the clean-up is a testament to the Foundation and its ability to reach consensus on a solution to improve the quality of life on Galveston Bay.

The Foundation has also been instrumental in developing environmentally sound approach to modernize the Houston Ship Channel, demonstrating that environmental protection and economic growth can go hand in hand. This innovative plan that will both expand the Houston Ship Channel and contribute significantly to the restoration of Galveston Bay.

This project will use dredged material to restore Galveston Bay's wetlands, creating new wildlife habitats and enhancing recreational benefits. The creation of marshlands, a critical part of the Galveston Bay ecosystem, will provide habitats for thousands of species of plant and animal life, including several endangered species. The three islands to be created under the plan will also provide natural habitats for birds and other wildlife. New boating channels and anchorages will give fishermen and other recreational users increased access to the Bay. The Foundation's role in developing this plan has increased the benefits exponentially for Texas' families and wildlife that rely on Galveston Bay.

I commend the Galveston Bay Foundation for its nine years of service to the committees surrounding Galveston Bay, and I wish the Foundation continued success in achieving its

goals in preserving and enhancing one of Texas' and the nation's most treasured natural resources.

CONTINUATION OF THE SUMMER  
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 4, 1996*

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues, I would like to have printed in the RECORD this statement by Amy DeCarmine, Amber Johnson, Beth Carmine, and Nathina Roy, high school students from Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people.

The Summer Youth Employment Program has kept us off the streets; kept us from the use of drugs, alcohol and violence of any type. The Youth Program has also given us the experience of how living can be in real life, and how to conserve money for our future.

There can be nothing more positive in our lives than the Summer Youth Employment Program; it is a continuance of encouragement of being a responsible young adult. The Summer Youth Employment Program has been the cause of so many young people being employed, and in some cases it may help to slow down the cycle of the welfare generation. It gives us ideas, training for possible future employment, and it gives us a better idea of what we need to do to accomplish our future. Please help us to keep what has been proven to be a wonderful chance to understand what is expected from us as adults.

It has given us a great source of self-pride in our abilities to contribute and know what this is—that this is a great start in life. And with your support in us, you have also given us hope that you believe in all of us. We need this opportunity to prove that we are serious about our future, and need your consideration to allow us this Program to continue. That's it.

Congressman Sanders: Can you tell us what kind of work you did in the Summer Youth Employment Program?

Answer: I've been on the Youth Program for two years now. And, the first year I worked at Project Independence, which is helping elderly people take care of themselves and entertain them. And last summer, I cleaned the elementary school of Williamstown to get [it] ready for school.

Answer: I've only been in this for one year, which was last year, but I worked with Amber at the elementary school cleaning, and I thought it was a really great thing, because a lot of people that are inexperienced, like under 16, [employers] don't want to hire you \* \* \*

Answer: I worked at a hospital as a spot clerk in the basement, and I was in the program for one year. It was a very good skill because I'm going to be working at a hospital after I graduate.

Congressman Sanders: So I think what you're seeing here is an example of a Federal program which meant a lot to you three, and to tens and tens of thousands of other young Americans.

Answer: Yes.

Congressman Sanders: There is a major debate taking place in Congress right now, as to whether this fund, with this program, should continue to be funded. I prefer, strongly, that it should; but we're fighting against people who prefer to put money into