

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SPACE

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Science, Technology and Space Subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation be authorized to meet on Thursday, September 18, 1997, at 2:00 p.m. on International Space Station.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## COMMEMORATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of the Nation's most vibrant communities: Hispanic-Americans, and join in celebrating September 15 through October 15, 1997, as Hispanic Heritage Month.

America is blessed with a wide variety of peoples and cultures. The Hispanic community, comprising cultures from Central and South America as well as Europe, has had an especially far-reaching impact on our Nation. From the arts and literature, to the sciences and business, the Hispanic community has helped shape America into a vibrant, dynamic society envied by the world.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge Hispanic Americans and their immigrant ancestors for their many significant and positive contributions to America. This country was built by immigrants—a great many of whom were of Hispanic descent. Hispanic individuals came to this country to seek opportunity, flee oppression, or find a better place to raise their families.

Many of these immigrants became successful in many disciplines, including business, education, entertainment, politics, and medicine. We know them, or their children or grandchildren, as pillars of our communities. And many immigrants went beyond the call of duty to serve their adopted homeland.

One such immigrant was Alfred Rascone, who immigrated to the United States from Mexico. At age 20, as a lawful permanent American resident, Mr. Rascone volunteered for military service in Vietnam as a paratrooper combat medic. On one fateful mission Mr. Rascone twice used his own body to shield wounded comrades from enemy guns. Severely wounded, he refused to be evacuated until all the wounded were safe. He kept tending the wounded until he collapsed, so hurt that a priest at the scene gave him last rites.

Mr. Rascone's comrades are to this day pursuing his proper recognition: the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Our Nation is much richer for having Alfred Rascone in it. He has the kind of character any American would do well to emulate. We can only gain by attracting more Alfred Rascones to our shores.

Across the Nation and in my home State of Michigan, events are taking place which demonstrate the rich Hispanic heritage in our country. These festivities will give every American the chance to participate in Hispanic culture. These events will educate, inform, and entertain, all with a distinctive cultural flair. Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes how important this community is to the United States, and I join my colleagues in looking forward to the many opportunities this month will provide.●

## HALF THE WORLD'S POPULATION LIVES WITHOUT BASIC SANITATION

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Senator MCCONNELL and I have worked this year to bring more attention and resources to combat infectious diseases, which afflict many millions of people around the world and pose a serious public health threat to Americans both here and abroad. The scope of this problem was illustrated in a July 23 article in the New York Times, about the UNICEF 1997 "Progress of Nations" report which revealed that nearly half of the world population does not have access to basic sanitation.

For most Americans, it is hard to fathom living without something as basic as a clean toilet. Yet over 2 million children die each year from diseases and diarrhea directly related to a lack of basic sanitation. Some of the countries with populations suffering from the worst sanitation problems, including Haiti and Cambodia, have received millions of dollars in United States and international aid. Addressing these basic needs should be a priority of our assistance programs in these countries.

Mr. President, the United States cannot fund the infrastructure to provide clean water and sanitary sewer systems for the 3 billion people in the world who currently lack such basic necessities. That is beyond our means or responsibilities. However, we should do all we can. The developing countries themselves are investing approximately \$200 billion a year on new infrastructure. The Agency for International Development is currently spending about \$44 million on urban infrastructure projects in parts of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe, among other regions. This has shrunk from the \$150 million in loan guarantees that were available in 1993 for similar projects.

Epidemics that spread in unsanitary living conditions can and will become threats in the United States. Both the Senate and House fiscal year 1998 Foreign Operations appropriations bills provide additional money to combat infectious diseases. I am hopeful that with these additional resources, AID, the World Health Organization, the Center for Disease Control, and other government and international agencies and private organizations involved in

this effort, will be able to develop a coherent plan to expand research, provide training and medicines to public health officials, and help establish the global surveillance and response system necessary to combat these diseases.●

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUMMIT

• Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, for many rural communities in my home State of New Mexico, the wonders and advantages of the telecommunications explosion—Internet, telecommuting, wireless communications—remain an unfulfilled promise. Yet, my recent 2-week trip throughout rural New Mexico showed me signs that the telecommunications revolution has begun to take hold in our State. As I continue to make rural economic development in New Mexico my top economic priority, through an innovative program that we call rural payday, full use of telecommunications will play a key role.

Highlighting the relationship between the telecommunications revolution and rural economic development was a full-day Telecommunications Summit we organized in Albuquerque last month. Organized under the auspices of the Small Business Advocacy Council of New Mexico, which I established 3 years ago, this summit brought together more than 200 telecommunications professionals, businessmen, and scientists from throughout our State. Key to this summit was the help provided by personnel from Sandia National Laboratory, who generously gave of their time, immense talent, and expertise throughout the planning period of the summit and during the day-long event.

What all of us learned from this summit can be summarized easily:

First, for rural small business owners, intelligent and creative use of telecommunications can mean the difference between survival and failure;

Second, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 will continue to play an unpredictable and major role as rural communities try to use telecommunications to solidify their economic futures;

Third, the large telecommunications, Internet and wireless providers must do more to help rural communities try to use telecommunications to solidify their economic futures;

Fourth, basic telecommunications infrastructure remains a serious obstacle to rural economic development in many areas;

Fifth, potential for economic development using telecommunications is limited only by the users' imaginations;

Sixth, the unique expertise of the national laboratories in New Mexico hold the potential to help spread economic development throughout our State and, by example, beyond the borders of our State.

During my trip in August, I saw many examples of how telecommunications helps small businesses thrive. Let me give you two examples.

In Socorro, NM, Don Tripp of Tripp's Incorporated has expanded his operations by establishing a virtual call center for his sales associates. By capitalizing on advances in telecommunications, Tripp was able to provide many of his employees with the option of telecommuting. This approach has worked well and Tripp's Inc. has moved forward with a happier, more productive and flexible work force.

An example of using the talents of the national laboratories to help foster rural economic development is the recently-developed New Mexico Arts Database in Santa Fe, NM. With the aid of Los Alamos National Laboratory, many New Mexico artists and artisans will soon be able to sell their art over the Internet. No longer will these artists be limited to traditional, and very expensive, outlets or by location. Their art will become accessible via the Internet to potential customers throughout the world.

We hope to coordinate these and other innovative approaches to rural economic development through the Rural Payday, Inc., organization I mentioned earlier. This initiative will focus on attracting and encouraging telecommunications-related businesses, and businesses that can use telecommunications tools more innovatively, to New Mexico. Such businesses as 1-800 call centers, automatic data processing satellite offices, more traditional businesses that can expand into rural New Mexico using new communications tools, and telemedicine firms, to name a few, can become realities for small and rural New Mexico. If we get the cooperation of the major telecommunications firm in infrastructure and basic communications services, a serious problem that rural America must face, we can revive smalltown America. I was glad to see that the major telecommunications providers in our State were at least willing to meet with potential customers from rural areas and try to work out new approaches. More on this front needs to be done, and I pledge that I will push these major firms at every opportunity.

The New Mexico Telecommunications Summit, the first of its kind in our State, opened a little window on the future. With more cooperation between users and providers of telecommunications services, and with the continued good work of our small business community and our national laboratories, New Mexico has the chance to create a thriving rural economy that will expand in the 21st century.

I would like to recognize the many companies and individuals who made this event such a tremendous success. I would like to also thank every Small Business Advocacy Council member who took the time to attend and organize this conference. In addition, I thank especially Angela Atterbury and Paul Silverman for their tireless efforts in coordinating this event on behalf of the SBAC. And, Sandia and Los

Alamos National Laboratories deserve credit for all their work at the Summit and the accompanying Business Applications Fair. Finally, thanks to the Internet, wireless and telecommunications providers who participated in this event. We need their help greatly in the future. ●

#### A VICTORY FOR AMERICANS

● Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, in the House of Representatives yesterday an amendment that would have allowed foreign governments to export to the United States for commercial sale millions of lethal military weapons the U.S. previously made available to them was dropped from the Treasury Appropriations bill. I have vigorously opposed this amendment in the Senate, and have worked to keep it out of Senate Appropriations bills. I congratulate Representatives MCCARTHY, LOWEY, KENNEDY, SHAYS, and MALONEY for successfully working to delete the provision from the House bill.

As my colleagues may know, the amendment was originally adopted during the House Appropriations Committee markup of the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998 without discussion or debate. Last year a similar amendment was slipped into the Senate version of the Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary Appropriations bill, but it was not included in the final version of the spending law.

It has been the policy of the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton Administration's not to permit these American made military weapons to be exported for commercial sale in the U.S. market. The Administration strongly opposed the amendment to allow foreign governments to export them for commercial sale. So did a coalition of fifty organizations, including the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, Handgun Control, Inc., and the Violence Policy Center. I ask that a copy of a letter from these organizations be printed in the RECORD. I also ask that copies of editorials from the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Times of Trenton, be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The weapons that would have flooded our streets had this amendment been approved were granted or sold to foreign governments, often at a discount, through military assistance programs, and some are even "spoils of war." Their market value exceeds \$1 billion. The State Department estimates that 2.5 million such weapons have been granted or sold to foreign governments since 1950. About 1.2 million are M-1 carbines, which are semiautomatic weapons that can easily be converted to illegal, fully automatic weapons. The weapons at issue are called "curios or relics" because they are considered to have historic value or are more than 50 years old. But they are not innocuous antiques. These military weapons

may be old, but they are lethal. Ten American police officers have recently been killed with these dangerous weapons. And in just two years the weapons were traced to more than 1800 crimes nationwide.

Allowing the importation of large numbers of these lethal weapons would have undermined efforts to reduce gun violence in this country. It would have reduced the cost of the weapons, making them more accessible to criminals.

Enactment of the provision could also have provided a windfall for foreign governments at the expense of the U.S. taxpayer. Under the proposal, our government's ability to require foreign governments which received American manufactured weapons to return proceeds of the sales to the United States Treasury would have been severely limited. Consequently, countries that the U.S. assisted in times of need, such as South Korea and the Philippines, could have made a handsome profit off of our weapons. Even countries like Iran and Vietnam could have profited.

Allowing more than two million U.S.-origin military weapons to enter the United States would profit a limited number of arms importers but would not be in the overall interest of the American people. These weapons are not designed for hunting or for shooting competitions; they are designed for war. Our own Department of Defense does not sell these weapons on the commercial market for profit in the United States. Foreign countries should not be permitted to do so either.

I'm delighted that this provision has been dropped from the House version of the bill. I have introduced legislation, S. 723, to repeal a loophole in the Arms Export Control Act that could enable these weapons to enter the country under a future Administration. I hope the Congress will approve this bill.

In the meantime, Mr. President, this is a huge victory for the American taxpayer and a victory for all concerned about safety.

The material follows:

[From the New York Times, Sept. 9, 1997]

#### THE SURPLUS GUN INVASION

Gun dealers, with the enthusiastic support of the National Rifle Association, are once again trying to sneak through Congress a measure that could put 2.5 million more rifles and pistols onto American streets and provide a handsome subsidy for weapons importers and a few foreign governments. This bill, introduced with disgraceful stealth, should be pounced on by the Clinton Administration and all in Congress who are concerned about crime.

The bill is an amendment to the Treasury Department's appropriation, which may come to a vote in the House this week. It would allow countries that received American military surplus M-1 rifles, M-1 carbines and M1911 pistols to sell them to weapons dealers in the United States. The countries—allies and former allies such as the Philippines, South Korea, Iran and Turkey—got the guns free or at a discount or simply kept them after World War II, or the Korean and Vietnam wars. Current law requires them to pay the Pentagon if they sell the guns and bars Americans from importing