

what we have been able to achieve. This is a model that our delegation is going to use to tackle other critical natural resource questions and, frankly, we are especially proud tonight because we think that with our Steens bill, we set a model for other communities across this country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

LIBERIAN IMMIGRANTS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to discuss the issue of Liberians in the United States who, up until a few days ago, faced an imminent threat of deportation. Today, through Executive action, that has been stayed at least for a year, but it is a community of people residing here who are literally living on the edge, not knowing if next year at this time they will, in fact, be deported back to Liberia, which is a country in great turmoil and crisis as we speak.

For the last several years I have tried with diligence and determination to do justice for these people, to give them a chance to become permanent residents of this country and ultimately citizens of this country. In my determination and my dedication, I have objected to the consideration of other legislation regarding immigrant groups, not because this legislation lacked merit, but because, in my view, it was unfair not to consider in some way the plight of the Liberians who are in the United States today.

I hope at this point, given assurances by the White House that this issue of justice for Liberians in the United States is a paramount issue for the President in the final days of this Congress in his negotiation with the congressional leadership, that the legislation I have objected to can and will move forward promptly.

Let me try to explain briefly the status of Liberians in this country.

In 1989, Liberia, which historically is a country with close ties with Africa and the United States—it was founded by freed American slaves; its capital is Monrovia, named after our President James Monroe—this country in 1989 was engulfed in a brutal civil war. This civil war over the next 7 years would claim 150,000 lives; it would displace the population; it would destroy infrastructure. In 1991, realizing the gravity of this crisis, the Attorney General of the United States granted temporary protective status to approximately 14,000 Liberians. They were allowed to remain in the United States. They could apply for work authorization, and they could work during this temporary protective status.

This status was renewed annually because of the crisis in Liberia until 1999. In that year, it was determined that since there had been at least an election of democratic reform in Liberia, and since the situation of armed conflict had subsided, temporary protec-

tive status was no longer required. But rather than immediate deportation, the President decided to authorize something which is known as deferred enforced departure, or DED, essentially telling the Liberian community in the United States: You are subject to deportation today, but we are simply deferring that for at least a year.

Just recently, again at the end of last month, we were able to get another Executive extension, but essentially what we are doing to these good people is putting their lives on hold one year at a time. They are unable to establish the same kind of permanency that we are seeking for other groups in this country.

They are good and decent people who have worked hard. They are a vital part of our community, and in the intervening almost 10 years, they have established themselves; quite literally many of them have children born here who are American citizens.

Yet each year we force these people to worry, to be concerned, to contemplate the very idea of leaving a home they have found and established here, taking with them children who know nothing of their native land, taking with them their skills which are not particularly useful, and going into a country that is violent.

Yesterday, the President of the United States and our Department of State declared the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, persona non grata in the United States. He cannot get a visa to come here because of his deportations within Liberia, because of his support of a campaign of terror in Sierra Leone. We have all been horrified by the pictures of mutilated children in Sierra Leone. This is all part of his involvement there—his trading guns for diamonds, his attempt to destabilize the country, and defy international law.

That is the situation in Liberia, a situation, I might add, which we have also recognized is a threat to Americans. Our State Department is advising Americans they should not go to Liberia. We are withdrawing nonessential embassy personnel from Liberia. Yet we are unable to tell these Liberians in America: You can stay here and become permanent residents.

In fact, we are saying: We are prepared to deport you at the end of next year because that is the message that DED gives. I think it is wrong. I think it is unjust.

So I objected to certain measures. I think it is important to point out these measures.

First, there was legislation, H.R. 4681, to provide an adjustment status for Syrian Jews. These individuals came to the United States in 1992 through an arrangement between President Bush and President Assad of Syria. They were allowed to leave the country to seek refuge in the United States. But part of the negotiations, part of the fiction was that they would leave Syria on tourist visas. So they

came to the United States. They did not come as refugees. They came as asylees. They sought asylum when they entered here.

Under our immigration law, there is a limit on the number of asylees that can adjust to permanent status each year. But it is important to point out, these individuals, these very good decent people, these Syrian Jews, are not in danger of being deported back to Syria.

Liberians are in grave danger of being deported back to Liberia. Essentially what this legislation would do—and I would support this legislation—is it would jump in ahead of other asylees who are waiting to fulfill the yearly quota of the number of asylees who can become permanent residents.

So this is a situation of concern and importance, but not the level of criticality, I believe, with respect to the Liberian community. Yet this legislation has moved through this House promptly, is on the verge of passage, while still the Liberian legislation languishes. I do not think that is right. I do not think it is just. I don't care. I certainly am pleased literally within a few days these Syrian Jews will have a chance to adjust to permanent status. Again, what about the Liberians?

There is another piece of legislation, the religious worker visa extension bill, which is also known as the Mother Teresa Religious Worker Act. This bill will allow the religious to come to the United States on a visa to do pastoral work.

It has been in effect for several years. It is a good program. About 2,500 workers come in a year. Very importantly, once these individuals are here, they can also adjust to permanent residency status, unlike the Liberians who now, under our DED, cannot do that. It is a worthy program, but it is a program, again, that I do not think has the same kind of compelling justice that the Liberians have in their case.

We again applaud the fact that this piece of legislation is likely to become law. But what about the Liberians?

There is also another piece of legislation that would grant immediate citizenship to children adopted internationally by the American public. Once again, these children are not in any danger of being returned to their homeland involuntarily. The Liberians are in such danger.

Each time now that a child is adopted, they come in on a visa. The adoptive parents can fill out an application for citizenship on behalf of the child and pay a \$2,500 fee. The application is then considered with all other applications for permanent residency. It takes a few years, but these children are virtually assured of becoming American citizens.

Let me try to suggest the incongruity of not dealing with the Liberian legislation in the same way we are dealing with this type of legislation.

If we do not, next September, grant DED, we could be in the awkward position of having legislation which would

allow an American couple to adopt a Liberian child and automatically make that child a citizen while at the same time we deport Liberian families in which the children are already American citizens having been born here. Again, not fair, not just. Even though this adoption bill is quite worthy—it will likely become law; I will support it—what about the Liberians?

So what we have seen is that legislation that has been introduced after legislation I introduced has already proceeded through the House and the Senate and will likely become law to the benefit of these good people, but what about the Liberians?

I have tried all I can to get a fair hearing for the Liberians in this country. I hope, in the last few days, we will get that hearing, through the intervention of the White House and through the consideration of my colleagues.

There are about 10,000 people here who have become important parts of our communities, who have sunk roots deep in our communities, many of whom have children who are Americans. It is not fair and it is not right that they are being ignored. I have tried to prevent at least that from happening, of them being completely ignored and being deported. They have suffered our indifference. I hope we can work this out in the next few days.

I thank my colleagues for their indulgence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

PUERTO RICAN ELECTIONS COMMISSION

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, this Congress has taken a historic step to advance the process of self-determination of the American citizens of Puerto Rico by approving an appropriation of \$2.5 million as requested by the President for a grant to the Elections Commission of Puerto Rico to be used for voter education and a choice among the island's future status options. As an advocate of that process and the need to resolve the island's political status after 102 years, I am pleased that we have acted.

This is historic because it represents the first authorization from Congress for the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to choose the ultimate political status for their island. Presidents since Truman have been seeking such an authorization and each house has passed similar language in the past, but the same language has never passed both houses and been enacted into law. Our approval of this appropriation should be read as Congress' determination to resolve the century-long question of the island's ultimate status and let Puerto Rican Americans choose a fully democratic governing arrangement if they wish to replace the current territorial status.

By adopting this provision as part of the unanticipated needs account of the

Office of the President, it is Congress' intention that its support for a future vote in Puerto Rico be coordinated with the Administration's efforts to provide realistic options to be included on the ballot in the island's next referendum. In recent months the President has brought Puerto Rico's major political parties together in an unprecedented effort to define the available political status options. Our approval of the \$2.5 million request evidences our expectation that the White House will provide realist options upon which to base a future status referendum. It can only responsibly allocate the funds for the consideration of options that are realistic.

Mr. President, the ultimate resolution of Puerto Rico's political status will require that Congress and the American citizens of Puerto Rico work together to make a choice based on clearly defined status options that are consistent with the U.S. Constitution. The action we have taken is a major contribution towards that goal.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to speak for a couple of moments on an issue that I know is important to many of us and has been addressed by both myself and the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee who has now joined us on the floor, Senator Frank MURKOWSKI of Alaska.

Last night, the Vice President stated his belief that global warming is caused by fossil fuel use. The Senator from Alaska and I have both introduced legislation to deal with the question of climate change and global warming. We have looked at this issue extensively over the last several years, and through the eyes of the committee by a resolution, expressed on the floor of the Senate, as it related to the Kyoto Protocol.

With all of that, the Vice President said one thing last night. Governor Bush said he was not certain that climate change was a direct result of fossil fuel use. In fact, he said, science would govern environmental decision-making in his administration, and he did not believe that science had yet fully resolved that fossil fuel use and the creation of greenhouse gases was, in fact, creating climate change.

I happen to agree with the Vice President. I say that because the scientists we have had before us may generally agree that our globe is gaining some heat, with some temperature change, but they do not yet agree that fossil fuel usage and the aftereffects, the greenhouse gases, are in fact the sole cause or are they causing climate change?

Which opinion is more supported by the scientists themselves? On Monday, the Washington Post reported, in unusual detail, a new theory of global warming that is being advanced by sci-

entists from Denmark to UCLA. It goes like this:

First of all, they say, charged particles from space, better known as cosmic rays, cause cloud formation by changing atmospheric molecules with neutral charges into charged ions. The charged ions cluster, forming dense, low clouds.

Now, this may sound like a scientific lecture, but this was the kind of detail that the Washington Post was giving in this article.

They said, secondly, the Sun's magnetic field deflects much of the cosmic rays away from the Earth, reducing their ability to trigger cloud formation.

With less cloud cover to shade the Earth, the Earth gets warmer.

That seems like pretty reasonable logic, doesn't it?

It turns out that satellite data over the last 20 years reveal an uncanny correlation between changes in the Sun's magnetic field and cloud cover. Meanwhile, Greenland ice-cores show that cosmic rays have declined over the past century.

James Hensen of NASA, once a leading proponent of the human cause theory that the Vice President embraces to the exclusion of all others, now acknowledges in the Post that the Sun has probably been a significant contributor in past climate change. But Hensen would still like to see some convincing evidence. Hensen, by the way, has also published recent work suggesting that methane gases, many of which are emitted naturally, may be as large a contributor to climate change as CO₂.

How can we find out what is right? Here is what the Post reports:

A consortium of more than fifty scientists have petitioned CERN, the European particle physics facility in Geneva, to conduct an experiment that could help settle this theory, this argument, this general issue, as reported by the Washington Post.

The researchers want to use one of CERN's particle beams as a source of artificial cosmic rays that would strike a "cloud chamber" containing the equivalent of air in the lower atmosphere. If there is a clear link between cosmic rays and cloud formation, the experience should reveal it.

The scientists proposing the experiment say:

If this link is confirmed, the consequent global warming could be comparable to that presently attributed to greenhouse gases from the burning of fossil fuels.

In other words, what the scientists are saying is, if this theory and this test were proven accurate, then cosmic rays and their influence in the atmosphere and the formation of clouds could have equal or greater influence over the Earth's atmosphere and climate change or global warming.

How can we in the Senate use this information? If this experiment indicates that changes in solar magnetic fields account for all of the detected warming, then burning fossil fuel might account for none of it. Interrupting our