

Since then, not one hearing has been held in the Committee on Foreign Relations. Not one.

It is a great mystery to me that a treaty that calls for the international promotion of civil and human rights for women would not be considered by the Senate.

Over 160 nations have become party to this treaty, which entered into force in 1981. To its great discredit, the United States stands outside this treaty with a just handful of other nations.

There is hardly anything revolutionary about this treaty. It contains a specific set of obligations calling on member states to enact legal prohibitions on discrimination against women—prohibitions which, in large part, the United States has already enacted.

In fact, if the United States becomes a party to the treaty, we would not need to make any changes to U.S. law in order to comply with the treaty.

So what are the opponents of this treaty supposedly concerned about?

In 1994, the five Senators who voted against the Convention in the Committee filed “minority views.” In it they expressed two concerns.

First, the dissenting Senators expressed concern that, in ratifying the Convention, several nations had taken reservations to the treaty, and thereby “cheapened the coin” of the treaty and the human rights norms that it embodies.

To this objection there are two answers. First, no treaty signed by dozens of nations will ever be perfect. It will be the product of numerous compromises, some of which will not always be acceptable.

That’s why the Senate thinks it so important that we retain the right, whenever possible, to offer reservations to treaties—to attempt to remedy, or if necessary, opt-out, of any bad deals agreed to by our negotiators.

Second, this Senate has frequently entered reservations in ratifying human rights treaties in the 1980s and 1990s—such as the Convention on Torture, the Convention on Racial Discrimination, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In unanimously approving each of these treaties, the Senate imposed numerous reservations and understandings on U.S. ratification. In approving the Race Convention, for example, the Senate added three reservations, one understanding, and one condition.

Did we “cheapen the coin” of the Race Convention in doing so? The answer is no, because in entering these reservations we did not undermine the central purpose of the treaty—to require nations to outlaw racial discrimination.

The second objection registered by the five senators who voted against the Convention in 1994 is that joining the treaty was not the “best use” of our government’s “energies” in promoting the human rights of women around the world.

This is a rather remarkable objection. What this group of senators was saying, in short, is that we should reserve our resources—and only promote human rights for women at certain times and in certain places.

I would hope that every senator would agree that we should promote equal rights for women at every opportunity—not when it suits us or when where it is the “best use” of our “energies.” Advancing human rights and human liberty—for women and for everyone else—is a never-ending struggle.

Of course, the United States has a powerful voice, and we do not need to be a party to this Convention in order to speak out on women’s rights. But we should join this Convention so we can be heard within the councils of the treaty.

Now the Senator from California stepped forward with a simple resolution which calls on the Senate to have hearings on the treaty, and for the Senate to act on the Convention by March 8, International Womens’ Day.

Unfortunately, the effort to call up this resolution yesterday was objected to. So we are here on the floor today simply to try to raise the profile of this treaty. I hope that our colleagues are listening.

I urge the other members—whether on the Foreign Relations Committee or not—to step forward and join with us in urging support for this treaty.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, there is a lot of information swirling about concerning the Middle East Peace Process, specifically the so called “Syrian track.” Facts and figures are being bandied about freely and there is little to indicate which are fact and which are fiction. Therefore I rise today to lay down a marker for the coming year and to express the hope that the administration will consult with Congress on a continual basis as this process picks up again.

Last year, Congress and the American people were presented with a bill for the Middle East peace process that was in excess of \$1 billion—that is \$1 billion more than the \$5 billion plus we already spend in the Middle East. And this extra bill was compiled without any congressional input. It was approved, but this is no way to do business.

The peace process is ongoing, but the President and the Department of State should consider themselves on notice from this moment on: This Congress will not rubber stamp another Wye Plantation Accord, we will not cough up another check without consultation and due consideration; we will not be left out of our Constitutionally assigned role.

I am a strong believer in the Middle East peace process. The Governments of Egypt, Jordan and Israel have shown enormous character and courage in making peace, and they deserve our

support. The nations of Egypt and Jordan, like Israel, need economic and military security in a bad neighborhood. They have made real sacrifices to do the right thing, and they have the backing of the United States.

However, ultimately, peace is not something that can be bought. Both Israel and its Arab partners, be they the Palestinians, the Lebanese or the Syrians, must make peace on their own terms without regard to sweeteners or inducements from the United States. The US has always played a historical role in promoting peace, but ultimately, peace only works when it is in the interests of the parties directly involved. Should we help? I believe we can. Should that help be the sole basis of an agreement? Unreservedly, no.

All of us who follow foreign policy issues are well aware that in this, the last year of the Clinton Administration, the President would like to preside over an historic peace between Israel and its remaining enemies in the Arab world. Perhaps we shouldn’t blame President Clinton too much for yearning for a place in the history books. But President Clinton and his entire foreign policy team need to remember a few important points: 1: Congress has the power of the purse; 2: We are not the Syrian parliament: We will not rubber stamp any agreement with any price tag; 3: Notwithstanding rumors to the contrary, we are interested and wish to be kept apprised of important developments in American diplomacy. In other words, Mr. President, come and talk to us. Keep us in the loop.

I have read in the newspapers that Israel is looking at the security implications of returning the Golan Heights and is also considering requesting a security package from the United States which will be very costly. There are ongoing discussions between Israel and the Defense Department on this matter. But Congress has not been briefed. Syria too, has visions of sugar plum fairies dancing into Damascus with billions in aid; and I am sure the Lebanese will not be too far behind.

There will be many reasons to support a peace in the Middle East, but much will depend upon exactly what commitments will be expected of the United States. The President must not again make the mistake of signing IOUs which, this time, the Congress may have no intention of covering. We are willing partners in peace, but we will not accept the presentation of another fait accompli. Mr. President, we look forward to hearing from you—often.

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SARBAKES. Mr. President, today I rise in recognition of Women’s History Month—a time to honor the many great women leaders from our past and present who have served our Nation so well. These women have worked diligently to achieve social

change and personal triumph often against incredible odds. As scientists, writers, doctors, teachers, and mothers, they have shaped our world and guided us down the road to prosperity and peace. For far too long, however, their contributions to the strength and character of our society went unrecognized and undervalued.

It is also important to recognize the countless American women whose names and great works are known only to their families. They too have played critical roles in the development of our State and National heritage.

Women have led efforts to secure not only their own rights, but have also been the guiding force behind many of the other major social movements of our time—the abolitionist movement, the industrial labor movement, and the civil rights movement, to name a few. We also have women to thank for the establishment of many of our early charitable, philanthropic, and cultural institutions.

I am proud of the many women from Maryland whose bravery, hard work, and dedication have earned them a place in our Nation's history. They include Margaret Brent, America's first woman lawyer and landholder. In 1648, she went before the Maryland General Assembly demanding the right to vote. Another brave Maryland woman was Harriet Tubman, hero of the Underground Railroad, who was personally responsible for freeing over 300 slaves. Dr. Helen Taussig, another great Marylander, in 1945, developed the first successful medical procedure to save "blue babies" by repairing heart birth defects in children whose blood was starved of oxygen, turning their skin a bluish hue. This breakthrough laid the foundation for modern heart surgery.

I would also like to recognize my colleague, another great Maryland woman, Senator BARBARA A. MIKULSKI. One of only nine female Members of the Senate, she has forged a path for women legislators into the Federal political arena and has tirelessly fought for recognition of the right of women to equal treatment and opportunities in our society. Through her leadership, the effort to designate March as Women's History Month has been a resounding success.

Other Maryland women leaders include Dr. Lillie Jackson and Enolia McMillan, two great champions of the Civil Rights Movement, and Henrietta Szold, the founder of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America. Hattie Alexander, a native of Baltimore, was a microbiologist and pediatrician who won international recognition for deriving a serum to combat influenzal meningitis. Rachel Carson, founder of the environmental movement, Billie Holiday, the renowned jazz singer, and Elizabeth Seton, the first American canonized as a saint were also all from Maryland. The achievements and dedication of these women are a source of inspiration to us all.

Now more than ever, women are a guiding force in Maryland and a major

presence in our business sector. As of 1996, there were over 167,000 women-owned businesses in our State—that amounts to 39 percent of all firms in Maryland. Maryland's women-owned businesses employ over 301,000 people and generate over \$39 billion in sales. Between 1987 and 1996, the number of women-owned firms in Maryland is estimated to have increased by 88 percent.

During Women's History month we have the opportunity to remember and praise great women leaders who have opened doors for today's young women in ways that are often overlooked. Their legacy has enriched our lives and deserves prominence in the annals of American history.

With this in mind, I have co-sponsored legislation again this Congress to establish a National Museum of Women's History Advisory Committee. This Committee would be charged with identifying a site for the National Museum of Women's History and developing strategies for raising private funding for the development and maintenance of the museum. Ultimately, the museum will enlighten the young and old about the key roles women have played in our Nation's history and the many contributions they have made to our culture.

However, we must do more than merely recognize the outstanding accomplishments women have made. Women's History Month also is a time to recognize that women still face substantial obstacles and inequities. At every age, women are more likely than their male contemporaries to be poor. A working woman still earns on average only 74 cents for every dollar earned by a man. A female physician only earns about 58 cents to her male counterpart's dollar, and female business executives earn about 65 cents for every dollar paid to a male executive. The average personal income of men over 65 is nearly double that of their female peers. Access to capital for female entrepreneurs is still a significant stumbling block, and women business owners of color are even less likely than white women entrepreneurs to have financial backing from a bank.

To address some of these discrepancies, I have co-sponsored the Paycheck Fairness Act which would provide more effective remedies to victims of wage discrimination on the basis of sex. It would enhance enforcement of the existing Equal Pay Act and protect employees who discuss wages with co-workers from employer retaliation.

On the other hand, we have made great strides toward ensuring a fairer place for women in our society. The college-educated proportion of women, although still smaller than the comparable proportion of men, has been increasing rapidly. In 1995, women represented 55 percent of the people awarded bachelor's degrees, 55 percent of people awarded masters', 39 percent of the doctorates, 39 percent of the M.D.'s, and 43 percent of the law de-

grees. As recently as the early 1970s, the respective percentages were 43 percent, 40 percent, 14 percent, 8 percent, and 5 percent. Women are now the majority in some professional and managerial occupations that were largely male until relatively recently.

The future does not look so bright for women in many other countries where women not only lack access to equal opportunities, but even worse are subject to dehumanizing social practices and abominable human rights violations. For this reason, I have added my name to a resolution calling on the Senate to act on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Mr. President, in the dawn of this new millennium, we must renew our efforts to ensure that gender no longer predetermines a person's opportunities or station in life. It is my hope that we can accelerate our progress in securing women's rights. As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us reaffirm our commitment to the women of this Nation and to insuring full equality for all of our citizens.

A PARENT'S PLEA

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, a week ago, Veronica McQueen didn't have the slightest idea she would be the latest parent thrust into a tragic spotlight. Now, the mother of Kayla Rolland, the six-year-old girl who was shot and killed in Mount Morris Township, Michigan, is very much the focus of public attention and empathy.

Kayla's mother and parents across the country are heartsick. Parents too often fear sending their children to school in the morning. They are joining the fight against gun violence and demanding that Congress make this country safer for their own children and the nation's children. As Kayla's mother said, "I just don't want to see another parent have to bury another baby over this, over something that is preventable, something that is very, very preventable."

I would like to share some of the thoughts and feelings of mothers across the country. They have written to the Million Mom March, an organization fighting for commonsense gun legislation, asking Congress to listen to their pleas for safety. I urge Congress to stop listening to the NRA and heed the words of parents: pass legislation before more children's voices are silenced by gunshots.

Victoria of Pittsburgh, PA writes: "It is 4 a.m. and my daughter had that terrifying dream again—the one about the man with the gun—he'd already shot you and Dad, Mom—and now he's coming for me.' Was my daughter affected by Columbine? I was!"

Cindy of Bridgewater, NJ: "Our children look to their parents for protection. What are we suppose to tell them when we can't? Who are we suppose to go to for help? It is the job of EVERY citizen in this country and EVERY