

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

STUDENT CONGRESSIONAL TOWN MEETING

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, today, I recognize the outstanding work done by participants in my Student Congressional Town Meeting held this spring at the University of Vermont. These participants were part of a group of high school students from around Vermont who testified about the concerns they have as teenagers, and about what they would like to see government do regarding these concerns.

I respectfully request that the following testimonials be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

ON BEHALF OF STEPHANIE HORVATH, KATIE BLANCHARD, CADY MERRILL, AND JESSE BUTLER REGARDING ABORTION

STEPHANIE HORVATH. We are doing our presentation on abortion.

Abortion is never an easy decision to make, but women have been making these choices for thousands of years, for many different reasons. Whenever society has sought to outlaw abortion, it has driven women to back alleys, where this procedure becomes dangerous and illegal.

Each year 50,000 to 100,000 women die after receiving an abortion in unsafe and unsanitary conditions, and an estimated 20 million unsafe abortions take place each year.

KATIE BLANCHARD. Regardless of what people around you think about a decision such as abortion, it is the ultimate choice of the woman, their doctor, and their god. Parental involvement for minors should be necessary due to the conditions performed in this surgical procedure.

Every woman should have a supportive mentor to turn to in case of an emergency following an abortion. A parent could be there to care for, protect and comfort child in such a situation. Most women experience such complications as loss of appetite, lack of sleep, persistent crying, isolation from friends, excessive anger and thoughts of suicide.

CADY MERRILL. Although a parent's reaction could be unexpected, it is normal for them to have some emotional feelings about their daughter's pregnancy. It is normal to feel frightened, sad, angry, betrayed and disappointed. Regardless, most parents are and should be beside their child through hard times, and would only help their daughter through an abortion if that was her choice.

JESSE BUTLER. Abortion is a highly sensitive topic. I'm not here to debate whether it is right or wrong. I am here, however, to state that I think, when an abortion is being considered by a minor, at least one parent or the legal guardian of the minor should be required to be involved. The state has already established that minors are not allowed to make many decisions or perform many actions without their parent's or guardian's consent. Abortion should not be any different.

Many questions have to be considered when thinking of having an abortion. Some of those questions included whether or not

the abortion or pregnancy or baby can be supported. Another question includes whether or not a minor can deal with the physical and psychological consequences of whichever decision is made. All of those questions are serious questions a minor may not have enough life experience to be able to make good judgments on. 5 percent of the time, abortion should involve a doctor's opinion. Adults will also be more inclined to recognize and respect a doctor's opinion. Young women may be afraid to tell their parents that they are pregnant. Requiring parents to be involved in the abortion decision will encourage parents to pay attention to any clues that their child may be pregnant. Overall, I think if an adult is involved in a decision, it is more likely that the best judgment will be made.

ON BEHALF OF ELIZABETH ECHEVERRIA AND DAMON ROONEY REGARDING LABOR EXPLOITATION

DAMON ROONEY. First of all, I would like to thank you, Congressman Sanders, for letting us come here. And I also thank Lamaille; we really appreciate you switching your timeframe with us.

ELIZABETH ECHEVERRIA. We are dealing with labor exploitation, and this touches on a couple of the topics that were already talked about. It ties in with child labor, and it ties in with free trade, and things like that.

Do you wear brand-name clothes? Do you drink coffee? Have you ever wondered where these things came from? The answer may surprise you. Because many of these things are made or picked by malnourished, oppressed and exploited men, woman and children.

DAMON ROONEY. I would like to read a passage written by the National Labor Committee: We went there by chance on an early Friday afternoon, the Muslim holiday, when the garment workers were supposed to have their weekly day off. We met an 18-year-old girl who, minutes before, had just returned from having been forced to work three 20-hour shifts in a row. She had worked 64 hours in the last three days, 120 hours in the last week. She was working seven days a week. Her eyes were more bloodshot than I'd ever seen anyone's before. The entire eyeball was pale, glassy red. She could barely speak. She was not just exhausted, but she had nearly lost her voice, and all that was left was a painful, low harsh rasp. This woman earned 14 cents an hour, \$6.83 a week, sewing clothing for U.S. companies.

ELIZABETH ECHEVERRIA. That is just one example of the conditions that our American companies are fostering. People all over the world, in factories like the one this woman works in, are kept in abject misery and poverty. These factories are poorly ventilated, poorly lighted, and, basically, miserable places to be.

In an article from the New York Times, Adelia Pinvata, who investigated conditions in the San Marcos Free Trade Zone in San Salvador, said, and I quote: The wages are not enough to cover the basic food basket. It is a scandal. There are workers who faint because of the heat inside the factories, and because they are badly nourished. Various workers fainted when we were there.

An example is one of these types of factories, the Active Sporting Limited factory

in Bangladesh, who makes hats for Rebok, Falcon Headware, Georgetown University, University of Connecticut, and various other U.S. companies and universities.

I came across some disturbing facts. Many workers must put in up to 60 to 70 hours of mandatory overtime a month, "mandatory overtime" being illegal in Bangladesh. They have no regular scheduled holidays. They have a maximum of two days off per month. They don't even get weekends off. Their wages are below the legal minimum. A maternity leave isn't paid. Workers may not talk during their shifts. They must ask permission to use the bathroom. Their bathroom visits are timed, and the water is unsafe to drink. There are no sick days allowed. And they are reportedly slapped and beaten with sticks for misbehavior.

No one could last more than 10 to 15 years. In the end, they are sick, exhausted, and penniless. And it is not an isolated occurrence, it is typical. For example, according to an article from the October 9, 1995, edition of the New York Times, in Central America free-trade zones, many factories are surrounded by 15-foot cinder-block walls, barbed wire, and armed guards.

Yet these workers cannot break out of poverty and degradation, because in most places, anyone who attempts to form a union is methodically fired and blacklisted.

DAMON ROONEY. Labor exploitation is a difficult problem, but we can find solutions. The biggest problem is that wages are too low to even buy adequate food. One obvious solution to this problem is to pass legislation that forces U.S. companies and their contractors to pay higher wages.

But this is tricky, because we don't want to put them out of business. We also should think twice about boycotting for this reason. Because any poor laborer would agree that it is better to be exploited than to have no job at all. But getting them to raise their prices a little won't break them. The U.S. must force them to pay subsistence wages—in other words, earn enough for food, clothing, and adequate shelter. And this is not that big of a demand, considering that the estimated subsistence wage for Bangladesh, for example, is only 34 cents an hour, or day.

ELIZABETH ECHEVERRIA. An hour. And that is a high-end estimate, by the way.

Another approach would be to force the companies to pay the workers a higher percentage of the retail value of the product that they are producing. This would help level out the distribution of wealth. Because, for example, according to Forbes Magazine, Donald Fisher, CEO of GAP and Banana Republic, is worth \$1.5 billion, while hat makers in Dacca, Bangladesh, receive an average of 1.6 cents for every \$17.43 University hat they make. That means the workers are only receiving .01 percent of the hat's retail price. Double their wages, and the hat cost less than two cents more for us to buy. Where do you think all the money is going?

DAMON ROONEY. Another problem is lack of inspectors to enforce labor laws. Because there are numerous labor laws and U.S. national company protocols in places that are not being followed, there are only eleven for the whole Dacca export zone, which has over one million clothing workers. We must get more inspectors in there, and also raise the penalties. We could have U.S. inspectors inspect the factories that export to the United

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

States, and if the conditions are not satisfactory, then the products cannot be sent to the U.S. That way, factories don't get paid if they don't follow the rules.

ELIZABETH ECHEVERRIA. Before any of these solutions can be put into motion, we must heighten awareness of these injustices. American people have a strong voice. Because only when these companies realize that their profit will go down will they listen.

We are the consumers and we have the power. So the most important thing that all of you in the audience can do is write letters to the CEOs of these places—the GAP, Liz Clayburn, Reebok, et cetera—and let them know that the public is concerned.

DAMON ROONEY. Labor exploitation is a problem that affects us all. We are the ones wearing the clothes and drinking the coffee picked by exploited hands. It is up to us to change these injustices.

Thank you, Mr. Sanders, for your time.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CROWLEY COUNTY HERITAGE SOCIETY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the vital efforts of an organization that has dedicated its mission to preserving our nation's and Colorado's western values and heritage. This year the Crowley County Heritage Society will celebrate an important accomplishment to settling the West, the emergence of irrigated farming. As the society celebrates this vital piece of Western culture, I would like to commend the society's efforts toward preserving the early Colorado achievements and accomplishments.

This May, the society has chosen to recognize the thoughtfulness and forbearance of our early Colorado settlers. As this country was expanding, the need to create abundant and rich soil became a backbone to ensuring our settlement of Western lands. Using an available water source, the Arkansas River, our forefathers built several reservoirs and canals to gather and transfer large amounts of water that would be used to irrigate otherwise fruitless soil. Through a long duct known as the Colorado Canal, water began to be diverted to Crowley County allowing aspiring farmers to reap the benefits of an otherwise desolate landscape. Years later, more reservoirs would be created, several under the Twin Lakes and Colorado Canal company, who would further construct reservoirs and canals to bring the precious resource of water to several counties throughout Colorado. This was a remarkable accomplishment for those early times in our history and I am thankful organizations such as Crowley County Heritage Society have chosen to honor our early pioneers.

Mr. Speaker, as this country continues to change and forge our future, we will rely upon these heritage societies to remind us of our difficult and humble beginnings. Today many of us in the West take for granted the ability to raise and reap agricultural products from the land and it is imperative that we remember the trials and tribulations of those early days that ensured a future for us all. I would like to extend my thanks to Crowley County Heritage Society and commend them for their fine ef-

forts over the years to preserve our past. I wish you all the best with your celebration and good luck in your future endeavors.

CHF INTERNATIONAL: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF BUILDING A BETTER WORLD

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, in these times of world gloom and heightened concerns for global safety and security, peace and prosperity in the aftermath of the tragedy of September 11, we have come to better understand the stark reality that people and communities who feel powerless and who live in poverty-stricken conditions with little hope for a different future often become frustrated and angry with their lives. These conditions often breed contempt for society in some and eventually can contribute to the corrosion of world stability.

But we also know that human misery, powerlessness and other forms of deprecation can be addressed and are being successfully addressed by organizations such as CHF International which is celebrating its 50th Anniversary during this year of 2002.

Begun in 1952 as a housing cooperative building affordable housing in rural America and in low-income neighborhoods of older cities, CHF has grown into a world renown catalyst for sustainable positive change in low and moderate income communities around the world. CHF International works in communities from Africa to Asia to meet the challenges posed by global poverty, complex emergencies and humanitarian crises, social and economic disparities caused by conflict or political transition, and environmental degradation.

Led by the energetic and unselfishly committed team of Chairman Gordon Cavanaugh, President and CEO, Michael Doyle and Vice President Judith Hermanson and hundreds of dedicated staff worldwide, CHF International is clearly making a difference in the lives of ordinary people in over 100 countries.

CHF's formula for success, as recognized by the United Nations on its "Scroll of Honour", has always been a strong belief in the goodness and power of the human spirit, fortified by openness and transparency, fiscal responsibility, continuing education, democratic governance and greater community participation.

Supported in large part by the United States Agency for International Development and other international and domestic benefactors, CHF International, over the past ten years, has been able to leverage over \$165 million to provide more than \$60 million in microenterprise loans, to create over 500,000 jobs, to train over 103,000 people for community operations, to build or improve close to 100,000 homes, improve the economic standing of over 2 million impoverished women and help form or strengthen some 8,000 local co-ops.

Mr. Speaker, as the former Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee and current Chairman of the Europe Subcommittee, I have been aware of CHF's programs in places stretching from El Salvador and Guatemala to

Serbia, Kosovo and Azerbaijan. The work of CHF International and its worldwide staff has been impressive and should be recognized, applauded and supported for its extraordinary contribution to humanity.

Once again, congratulations to CHF International for fifty years of working to build a better world.

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH SELDON

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to and congratulating Kenneth Seldon of Hampshire County, West Virginia. For over 50 years, Mr. Seldon's hard work and dedication to his community have been truly inspiring.

With a work ethic deeply rooted in the American Dream, Kenneth Seldon has faithfully operated Riverside Service and General Store in Yellow Spring, West Virginia since May 22, 1952. In addition to operating the business, Kenneth also served as Yellow Spring Postmaster from 1957 to 1982. Mr. Seldon is also a charter member of the Capon Valley Ruritan and an active member of the Timber Ridge Christian Church.

In honor of Kenneth Seldon's 50 years of hard work, dedication, and commitment to his family and community, I ask my friends in Hampshire County and my colleagues here in the nation's capital to join me in recognizing May 19, 2002 as a day of celebration and recognition for Kenneth Seldon.

BILL TO INCREASE LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEANUP AND CLOSURE OF ROCKY FLATS SITE BY 2006

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing a bill dealing with the cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats, a Department of Energy (DOE) site just 15 miles from downtown Denver, Colorado.

Rocky Flats once produced vital components of nuclear weapons. But now production there has ended, and the site is being cleaned up and readied for closure—after which, under legislation enacted last year, it will become a National Wildlife Refuge.

Cleanup at Rocky Flats is proceeding under a plan agreed to by DOE, EPA, and the State of Colorado. DOE's goal is to complete cleanup and close the site on or before December 15, 2006.

Closure of Rocky Flats will mean increased greater safety for Coloradans. But it will also mean reduced demands for funds for security and maintenance of the site as well as for cleanup work. And that can make additional funds available to meet the needs of other nuclear-weapons sites, including sites in Washington, Texas, Ohio, Tennessee, South Carolina, Idaho, New Mexico, and other States.

As a crucial part of the cleanup, DOE intends to relocate several tons of plutonium