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**A NEW SYNERGY BETWEEN THE OCEANS,  
ENVIRONMENT, AND DEFENSE  
COMMUNITIES**

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As we convene the 105th Congress, policy makers embark on a fundamental debate about the direction of our country. While both major political parties may disagree on key policy issues dealing with the environment, economics, and defense, Republicans and Democrats alike have exhibited broad bi-partisan support for working together to promote a comprehensive national oceans agenda.

Much of the groundwork for a national oceans agenda has been laid in the past two years, during the 104th Congress. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Research and Development of the House National Security Committee—which oversees the Department of Defense research budget—I led a major legislative initiative to better coordinate oceanic research among the military, academia, and industry. This effort began to refocus national interest in oceanography in the United States in a way that we have not seen since the Presidential Stratton Commission over 25 years ago.

I will focus on the specifics of my legislation later in this article, but I want to stress to my colleagues in the oceanographic community—both domestically and internationally—that the momentum in the U.S. Congress is at an all time high. Throughout the next year, I will be solidifying Congressional support for a national oceans agenda. I am confident that as we approach the Year of the Oceans in 1998 that the United States will play a pivotal role within the international community to raise awareness of the importance of our world's oceans.

While I can play a major role in reviving support for the oceans here in the United States, it is essential that my friends in the international community join this effort. Through several international organizations which I will discuss in-depth later, I have forged new relationships with legislators from around the world to form personal connections so that we might better understand the key policy issues facing our individual countries. Whether it be the environment, defense, or economic policy, each nation can benefit by developing a better understanding of how each other's systems of government works. With this in mind, I urge my counterparts in the Korean parliament to join this effort and look forward to building upon our working relationship as we prepare for the daunting environmental challenges facing us in the next millennium.

## **The Changing Face of Defense**

In terms of our defense policy in the United States, we look at the post-Cold War world differently. We no longer face one large super power enemy with its accompanying potential for open-ocean conflict. Instead, the post-Cold War era has left us with worldwide proliferation of sophisticated weaponry, thus increasing the likelihood of regional conflicts. Accordingly, the U.S. Navy faces new challenges in its mission. We have seen a shift from open-ocean battle to the more likely situation of engagements in the littoral waters, or shore areas. Thus, the importance of oceanic research has been heightened. Among those obstacles which the Navy must now overcome are: understanding the complicated terrains above and below the water, rapidly changing ocean features, greater impact on sensor/weapon performance, shorter reaction time to threat, limited or denied access to the littoral waters, lack of data, and limitations on performance models.

To successfully compete in littoral waters, real time observation and on-scene processing of data are critical. The Navy has addressed these challenges by encouraging balanced and enhanced cooperation among all of our federal agencies and the international oceanographic organizations, as well as exploiting new technologies for the rapid collection, processing, and dissemination of ocean data. Internationally, the Navy is currently pursuing cooperative agreements with several countries, including South Korea, to better coordinate littoral water surveys. This is a good example of how countries can work together in the field of oceanography as it relates to defense.

## **Optimizing Research and Development Investments**

My role as Chairman of the Research and Development Subcommittee is to ensure that we are doing all that we can to maximize our investment in research, development, and technology. As a senior Member of the House Science Committee, I also want to ensure that there is a sharing of research data, where feasible, between our defense and civilian communities. With this in mind, I have been working with the Navy over the past several years to develop formal mechanisms to

enhance and promote increased cooperation among our federal agencies, academia, and industry here in the United States.

Recognizing the need to optimize oceanic research, on January 25, 1996 I chaired a watershed joint hearing between the Subcommittee on Research and Development, the Energy and Environment Subcommittee of the House Science Committee, and the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans of the House Resources Committee to discuss how the United States could better use its oceanographic research capabilities to better address national needs. Testifying before the Subcommittees were the heads of key funding agencies for oceanography, such as the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the former Chief of naval operations, as well as the National Academy of Sciences and individuals from industry and academia.

The hearing led to a consensus that in order to achieve the necessary level of understanding of the oceans in minimal time and at the least cost, there was a need for a formal mechanism to establish partnerships among public and private stakeholders in ocean sciences and education.

### **The National Oceanographic Partnership Act**

As a result, last year Congressman Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and I introduced H.R. 3303, the National Oceanographic Partnership Act. This legislation strengthens our coordination of oceanographic research by formalizing the process of building partnerships which leverage existing resources of multiple stakeholders in a more cost-effective and efficient manner. The bill also encourages our U.S. Navy to be more aggressive in outreach with civilian federal agencies and the academic community—an issue that I have been pushing for some time now. The National Oceanographic Partnership Act received overwhelming bi-partisan support last Congress both in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In fact, the Senate Majority Leader, Senator Trent Lott, was the lead sponsor of the bill in the Senate and played a key role in ensuring the measure passed before Congress adjourned for the year. Vice President Al Gore—who is a champion of these kinds

of efforts—expressed his strong support for the coordination of oceanographic efforts in a letter which I submitted for the record at the January 25th hearing.

It gives me pleasure to report that the National Oceanographic Partnership Act passed Congress as part of the FY 1997 Department of Defense Authorization bill which President Clinton signed into law last fall. Congress provided \$20.5 million to carry out the measure as part of the FY 1997 defense appropriations legislation. But despite our accomplishments we still have much work ahead of us. This year my top priority will be to ensure the National Oceanographic Partnership Act prospers and to encourage increased participation in the program.

### **International Cooperation Among Oceanographic Interests**

While 1996 proved to be an exciting time for oceanographic research here in the United States, much has happened internationally as well to refocus our attention on the world's oceans. Early last Congress, I was asked to serve as the United States Vice President for the Advisory Committee on the Protection of the Seas (ACOPS). ACOPS is an international, non-political organization consisting of a variety of foundations, governmental and non-governmental institutions, companies, and private individuals aimed at promoting strategies for global sustainable development of marine and coastal environments.

ACOPS regularly hosts conferences around the world to bring together high-level ministers, legislators, and members of academia to discuss various issues related to ocean protection. Our most recent conference was held in Manila, Philippines last December. The focus of the meeting was to explore measures for regional implementation of the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, which was adopted in Washington, D.C. in 1995. While a delegation from South Korea did not attend the meeting due to scheduling conflicts, the government of South Korea has expressed support for the regional program and will be working with ACOPS in the future.

I have the pleasure of hosting the 1997 ACOPS Global Conference here in the United States on May 19-21, 1997. The event will be the premier ocean event in the United States this year. I have personally received the commitment of over 20 nations—including South Korea—to attend the conference. The agenda will focus on economic, food, and environmental security as well as research and defense issues, with special emphasis on the oceans and seas of the Americas, the Middle East, the Russian Federation, and the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. I have spoken recently with both House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott who have expressed interest in the conference and have tentatively agreed to address the opening session. I have asked Vice President Al Gore to address the participants during a dinner reception. I look forward to Korea's participation in the May conference and believe we can use this opportunity to further solidify our work together on ocean policy.

In addition to ACOPS I am also a member of the U.S. chapter of Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE USA). GLOBE USA—which is co-chaired by Senator John Kerry (D-MA) and Congressman John Porter (R-IL)—consists of about fifty Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, who have an interest in establishing relationships with legislators from around the world to address pressing environmental concerns. GLOBE currently has networks in numerous world legislative bodies, including the European Parliament, the Russian Duma, and the Japanese Diet.

As the Chairman of the GLOBE Task Force on the Oceans, I have been successful in bringing ocean issues to the attention of my colleagues in Congress. In May of 1995, Senator John Kerry and I convened a session on the oceans here in Washington. This event set the stage for where we are today with regard to the oceans. The conference—which was attended by GLOBE members from around the world, as well as by representatives from the U.S. government, academia, and industry—focused on three specific areas: improved understanding of the oceans, land-based sources of marine pollution, and conservation management of international fisheries.

GLOBE EU hosted a successful follow-up session on the oceans in Lisbon, Portugal last November. One of the most important outcomes of the event, however, was the desire among the participants to convene a world's legislative summit on the oceans in Lisbon to coincide with the Year of the Oceans in 1998. Carlos Pimenta, President of GLOBE EU and a Member of the European parliament, and I have agreed to lead this unprecedented effort. We will be working closely together throughout the coming year to establish worldwide support for this event.

While ACOPS and GLOBE play an important role in bringing together the international community to discuss environmental and ocean policy, they also play a far more vital role in establishing closer working relationships between legislators from around the world. This is particularly important here in the United States because nearly half of my colleagues in the U.S. Congress have served less than five years. It is important that we impress upon these new Members the need to work with our allies when considering policies with broad international implications. It is also important that the Korean government has a network of American legislators who understand their concerns when an issue of importance comes before the U.S. Congress.

The momentum here in the U.S. Congress to promote ocean issues is growing each day. Having spoken with Speaker Newt Gingrich and Majority Leader Trent Lott, I am confident that a renewed focus on oceanographic research will be a top priority during the 105th Congress. Momentum within the international community is also growing and I urge my colleagues from Korea to take advantage of the many international networks available to better promote ocean issues worldwide and to utilize these resources to establish new relationships with legislators from around the world.

### **Nuclear Waste Dumping**

In 1992, when I was ranking-member of the Oceanography Subcommittee, Solomon Ortiz (D-TX) convened a hearing on the problem of nuclear waste dumping. Later, as Chairman of the Resources and Development Subcommittee, I held a follow-up hearing in Washington on radioactive

contamination. I asked Alexi Yablokov to testify on what was happening inside of Russia and how we might enhance our cooperation. It was one of the first times in the U.S. Congress that an official of the Russian government—Yablokov serves on the National Security Council for Boris Yeltsin—testified. There is no reason why that can not be done more often. Officials of the Korean Government can come and testify before Members of Congress on Korean priorities and then we can testify to your sessions on ideas and initiatives that we can work on together.

While we are beginning to better understand the problems of nuclear waste dumping, they are still monumental. We have been pushing to get the United States to become a signatory to the London Convention, and last year the Clinton Administration did change our policy and join on as a signatory. In part because of our prodding in the Russian Duma, the Russian Government has announced that Russia will abide by the London Convention. Korea has been a leader in the London Convention, signing long before the United States and Russia realized the importance of coming together as a world community on this vital issue.

The bottom line is that there are ways that we can all work together even more aggressively than we have in the past. We are doing solid things in this Congress that are forcing the military, sometimes unwillingly, to be more open. I am a strong supporter of our military, but I am also one of the first to criticize our military when we have a dual standard.

At a hearing that we convened three years ago on the issue of nuclear waste dumping, a naval witness was testifying about the problems of the Russians not allowing access to information pertaining to the Consmolitz, a Russian nuclear submarine lying on the bottom of the Bering Sea. I agreed that we have to convince the Russians that they need to be more open with our scientific community, but when the witness refused to comment on the status of the Thrasher and the Scorpion, I chided him for criticizing the Russians when we do not even acknowledge publicly the existence of two vessels on the bottom of the ocean, both of which have the potential for nuclear problems. As a result of that hearing, the Navy declassified all of the film footage and the data relative to the Thresher and the Scorpion. The U.S. Navy does in fact know exactly the status of those vessels and

they are monitoring in a very scientifically sound way any potential leakage or problem that might occur in the future.

That is the kind of new vision that many of us in the Congress see for international cooperation relative to the oceans. As we go down the path toward more difficult times in the world when there are some who would look to challenge the sovereignty of nations and the freedoms that we take sometimes for granted, we need to make sure that our policy makers understand the perspectives of our allies and have close personal working relationships with them.

All of these things are important, but nothing is more important than solidifying the friendship that we have between Korea and the United States. So that, as I like to say in this county, 1996 will go down in history as the "Year of the Oceans," where we began a major effort in the world community to better understand, appreciate, and cooperate on ocean issues.