

TS

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

10-10-95

PATRICK J. LEAHY
VERMONT



UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

October 31, 1995

Dear Hillary,

As always, it is good seeing you and having a few moments to chat.

I so appreciated your concern and interest in the antipersonnel land mine issue. Although there is an enormous amount of material I could send you on this important issue, I have enclosed but a few articles that I thought you and the President would find most informative.

Sincerely,

This issue is a growing one. It is interesting that support for a landmine moratorium goes across party lines.

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

VECPOTUS
F

from HRC

Don't study
I continue to believe
This is an important
issue we would need
union on esp. if we get
an agreement in Prague
(on the way out)
BC

3- One
copy of
whole
package
for me
1 p/s.
T.

The World

Everywhere, Weapons That Keep On Killing

By CHRISTOPHER S. WREN

UNITED NATIONS

KEN RUTHERFORD, an American relief worker for the International Rescue Committee, was traveling a dusty road in rural Somalia on Dec. 16, 1993, when, he recalled, "the whole front of the car blew up." He looked down and saw his right foot, torn off by a land mine. "I was trying to put it back on," he said, "and it kept falling off."

He was rushed to Switzerland and the United States for treatment, which so far has cost \$250,000. But Mr. Rutherford, 33, who will soon undergo more surgery to reconstruct his mangled left foot, considers himself lucky. "The only reason I'm here is because I was born in this country," he said in an interview last week. "In developing countries, they don't have a chance."

Wars come and wars go, but land mines seem to last forever, perpetuating the slaughter long after the armies have gone home. Up to 110 million mines contaminate the soil of 64 countries, and mines kill or injure more than 20,000 civilians a year, the United Nations estimates. Several million of them lie buried in Croatia and Bosnia, where the cease-fire has now increased the prospects for the eventual deployment of American peacekeeping troops.

Always Planting

In fact, while about 100,000 mines are cleared annually, two million to five million more are planted, Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said last month. "If that trend continues," he said in a statement delivered to a United Nations conference on land mines in Vienna, "the international community will have to clear mines well into the third millennium and will have to suffer, between now and then, the loss of several million people who will be wounded or killed."

The 79 nations gathered in Vienna are discussing an indiscriminate weapon likelier to kill or maim farmers, shepherds, refugees and other civilians than soldiers. Proposals range from a total ban to requiring that some mines incorporate a timing device that will deactivate or destroy them after a set period.

The conference, which ends Oct. 13, is reviewing part of a 1980 Convention on conventional weapons covering land mines and booby traps. Forty-nine nations, including the United States, have signed the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, as it is formally titled.

Twenty-nine nations have stopped exporting anti-personnel mines. Belgium passed the first law banning their production, use and export. Austria destroyed its stockpile and France has begun doing so.

"The United States should be showing a lot more leadership than it is," said Senator Patrick Leahy, Democrat of Vermont, who wants a year's moratorium on the use of some anti-personnel mines by the American armed forces.

Almost everyone agrees that land mines have wreaked tragedy on innocent civilians like Mr. Rutherford, but consensus on what to do remains elusive. "There are a lot of practical problems," said Joerg Wimmers, a lawyer with the United Nations Mines Clearance Unit. For one, land mines are cheap and accessible to poorer nations. An anti-personnel mine can cost as little as \$2, prompting Senator Leahy to call

They Walk With Fear

Countries where the most land mines are deployed, according to the most recent United Nations estimates. For some countries, like Vietnam, there is too little information for them to be included in the estimates.

	TOTAL LAND MINES	AVERAGE LAND MINES PER SQ. MILE
Egypt	23,000,000	59
Iran	16,000,000	25
Angola	15,000,000	31
Afghanistan	10,000,000	40
Cambodia	10,000,000	142
China	10,000,000	3
Iraq	10,000,000	60
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3,000,000	152
Croatia	2,000,000	92
Mozambique	2,000,000	7
Eritrea	1,000,000	28
Somalia	1,000,000	4
Sudan	1,000,000	1
Ukraine	1,000,000	4
Ethiopia	500,000	1
Yugoslavia	500,000	13
Jordan	207,000	5

Source: United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs

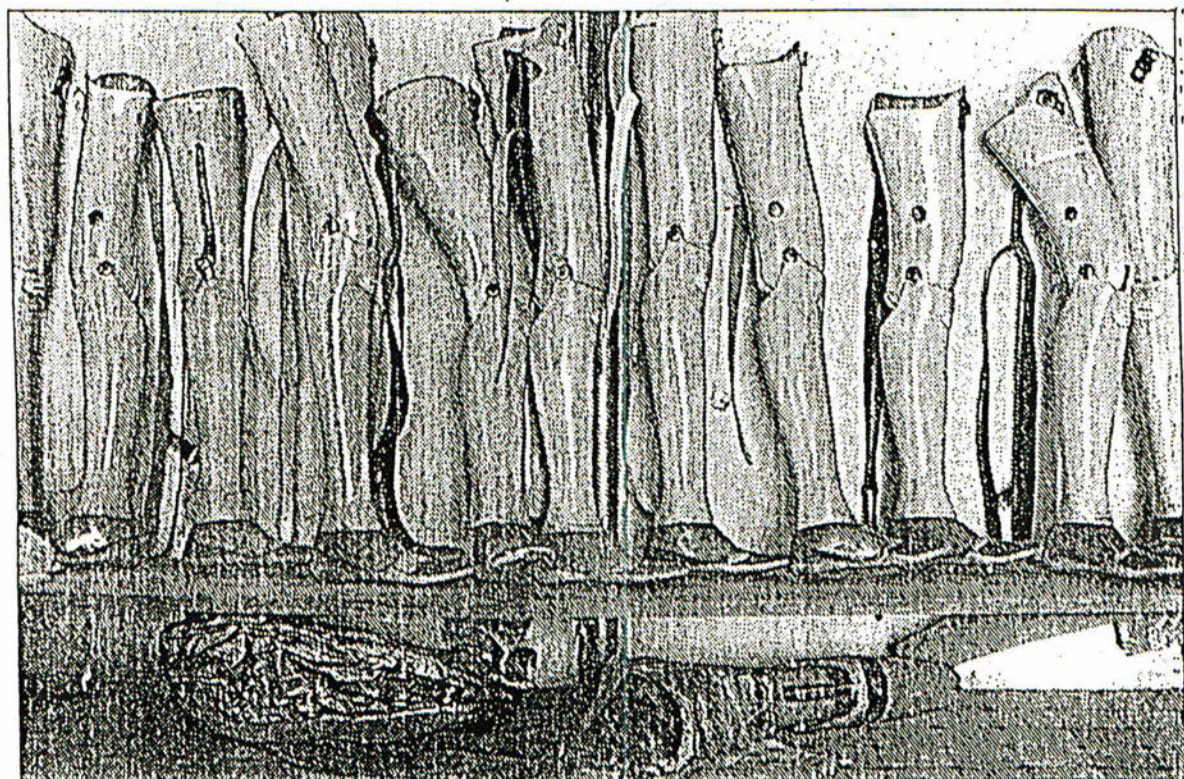
them the "Saturday night specials of warfare."

Some nations contend that land mines have legitimate uses. "Mines are effective defensive weapons for many countries, especially developing ones, to resist foreign aggression," Li Chenghe of China, a leading producer of mines, said at the Vienna conference. And Gilbert Chauny of Peru asked other delegates to consider the "special situation" of countries afflicted by criminal and terrorist groups.

No Civil Wars

Even if nations restrict some types of mines, compliance is almost impossible to verify. And the 1980 Convention applies to wars between nations, not to internal conflicts like those in Angola, Cambodia or Bosnia.

Mine warfare dates to the American Civil War, when General William Tecumseh Sherman, who was never squeamish, denounced land mines as a "violation



Photographs by Lois Ralmondo for The New York Times

At a rehabilitation center near Ho Chi Minh City, new patients line up to receive artificial legs and wheelchairs. Some lost legs during the war, and some more recently, when land mines planted long ago exploded. Two such centers, financed by a Vietnamese-American, have aided 13,000 amputees since 1991.

of civilized warfare." A century later, as many as a third of American casualties in Vietnam were caused by mines, many of them American-made.

By now, they have become so routine in military arsenals that it is difficult to create the kind of international consensus that produced sweeping bans on chemical weapons, for example. Johan Molander, chairman of the Vienna conference, has admitted that "no rule of international law pertaining to the use of a weapon will stand a chance to be observed if it is incompatible with perceived legitimate defense interests."

To rid the world of all buried land mines would cost as much as \$58 billion. Kuwait spent \$800 million purging its territory of mines after the Gulf War. But even where other mine-clearing operations are underway, as in Afghanistan or Mozambique, mines still get exploded, as a de-mining specialist phrased it, "one arm and one leg at a time."

Senator Leahy's proposal for a moratorium passed the Senate last month by a vote of 67 to 27. Though the

amendment would not take effect for three years and would exempt mines fenced along frontiers and demilitarized zones, the Pentagon has lobbied to block it. Gen. John Shalikashvili, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said land mines were needed to minimize American war casualties — an argument that Senator Leahy said was made for poison gas after World War I.

Self-Destructing

The Clinton Administration proposed that some types of anti-personnel mines carry self-destruct mechanisms, but such devices have a failure rate of about 10 percent. In any case, poorer nations have little incentive to pay extra for a mine that renders itself inoperable after 60 or 90 days.

Senator Leahy said he fears the continuing toll could include Americans sent to keep peace in Bosnia, which is strewn with about 1.5 million mines. "Some poor sergeant out on patrol will get killed," he said.

Bill to Restrict Land Mines May Be Defused on Hill

Clinton backs off from moratorium before UN conference

By Jonathan S. Landay
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON

THE high-profile battles raging on Capitol Hill over the B-2 bomber and other multi-billion dollar armaments are overshadowing a fight over the proliferation of low-tech weapons that often cost no more than a Saturday matinee: land mines.

At issue is legislation that would require the US military to observe a one-year moratorium on using "antipersonnel" land mines, except along international borders or in demilitarized zones.

Antipersonnel land mines have become a global scourge. An estimated 100 million are strewn in 64 countries, and the number is rising. They lie hidden and lethal for years after the wars during which they are planted, claiming some 20,000 casualties annually, or one every 22 minutes. The vast majority are civilians. The devices also wreak economic havoc.

By adopting a one-year ban on the use of land mines designed to injure infantry troops, advocates say, the US would encourage its allies and others to do the same, giving an enormous boost to proposals for an eventual worldwide ban.

"Land mines are the Saturday Night Specials of conflict," says the legislation's sponsor, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D) of Vermont. "Land mines kill far more civilians than all the bombs being dropped and guns being fired."

Senator Leahy says the timing of his legislation is crucial. Forty-four nations will meet in Vienna on Sept. 23 to tighten the 1980 UN Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), which restricts the use of antipersonnel land mines. The administration could ensure the conference's success by adopting his plan, Leahy says.

"Everything I hear from other countries is that they want US leadership and this [Vienna] is the place to do it," he says.

President Clinton has taken a stand against land-mine proliferation. In 1993, he extended until 1996 a moratorium on US land-mine exports and last year declared his support for an eventual global ban. But for now Mr. Clinton is backing the Army in opposing Leahy's plan.

Officials assert that the plan would endanger the safety of US troops. They also argue that it would do little to curb proliferation and the manufacture of mines by other nations, including China, France, and Britain, since few states are prepared to abandon weapons that are easily purchased for as little as \$3 a piece.

"Unilateral actions which needlessly place our forces at risk now will not induce good behavior from irresponsible combatants," Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a letter last week to Rep. Ronald

Dellums of California, the ranking Democrat on the House National Security Committee.

The letter was sent as part of an intense Pentagon campaign to block Leahy's legislation from inclusion in the compromise version of the 1996 defense budget. The moratorium was overwhelmingly approved on Aug. 4 in the Senate's version but missing in the House bill.

The administration says there are better ways to fight the land-mine scourge. One is to curb global sales. Another is to require states to replace conventional land mines with devices that cause them to self-destruct or self-deactivate.

ROBERT HARRISON - STAFF/PH



ANTI-MINE RALLY: Cambodians protest the use and manufacture of land mines, which litter the war-torn country's landscape.

vate. Self-destruct mechanisms cause mines to explode within days or weeks of being planted.

The US plans to propose in Vienna that the CCW be amended to require signatories to switch to mines that self-destruct within 30 days or self-deactivate within 120 days.

Officials say that such a measure would go far toward ending post-conflict civilian casualties and stands a better chance of acceptance than a moratorium. Leahy disagrees.

Many people were skeptical an international ban on chemical weapons could be concluded, he says, but 159 states signed one in 1993. Still, Leahy concedes that the Clinton administration will probably prevail.

"I think the administration is losing a great opportunity to take ... an historic moral position and save far more lives than the billions of dollars we spend on humanitarian missions around the world," he says.