

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1645

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of entering into a colloquy with the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade, and Technology, I rise today regarding the authorization of the Defense Production Act and the legislation that the House of Representatives and Senate have produced. I wish to make two points.

First, the House of Representatives and the Senate have agreed to include language that makes clear that all the authorities included within the DPA may be used for critical infrastructure protection and restoration purposes. I have been informed that in past administrations there may have been some confusion regarding the applicability of the DPA to critical infrastructure. The language included in the reauthorization legislation ends any debate that may have existed.

Secondly, it is the intent of the House that the DPA be interpreted to allow the administration to exercise the authorities provided under Section 101 of the DPA to directly assist a private sector critical infrastructure owner or operator in furtherance of critical infrastructure protection or restoration.

The House of Representatives' desired interpretation, however, should not be construed, in any way, as limiting the applicability of the DPA's other authorities with respect to critical infrastructure protection and restoration.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of New York. I yield to the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as ranking member of the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade and Technology, I rise today to echo the statements of the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) regarding the reauthorization of the Defense Production Act and its applicability to critical infrastructure protection and restoration. The language that the House of Representatives has agreed to include in the reauthorizing legislation should leave no doubt that the Defense Production Act may be used for critical infrastructure protection and restoration purposes.

Also, it is the intent of the House of Representatives that the administration refrain from interpreting the Defense Production Act as limiting the administration's ability to provide direct assistance to critical infrastructure owners and operators under Section 101 of the Defense Production Act.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the Senate bill. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1680, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SYRIA ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1828) to halt Syrian support for terrorism, end its occupation of Lebanon, stop its development of weapons of mass destruction, cease its illegal importation of Iraqi oil and illegal shipments of weapons and other military items to Iraq, and by so doing hold Syria accountable for the serious international security problems it has caused in the Middle East, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1828

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On September 20, 2001, President George Bush stated at a joint session of Congress that "[e]very nation, in every region, now has a decision to make . . . [e]ither you are with us, or you are with the terrorists . . . [f]rom this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime".

(2) On June 24, 2002, President Bush stated "Syria must choose the right side in the war on terror by closing terrorist camps and expelling terrorist organizations.

(3) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (September 28, 2001) mandates that all states "refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts", take "the necessary steps to prevent the commission of terrorist acts", and "deny safe haven to those who finance, plan, support, or commit terrorist acts".

(4) The Government of Syria is currently prohibited by United States law from receiving United States assistance because it has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, as determined by the Secretary of State for purposes of section 6(j)(1) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405(j)(1)) and other relevant provisions of law.

(5) Although the Department of State lists Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism and reports that Syria provides "safe haven and support to several terrorist groups", fewer United States sanctions apply with respect

to Syria than with respect to any other country that is listed as a state sponsor of terrorism.

(6) Terrorist groups, including Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command, maintains offices, training camps, and other facilities on Syrian territory, and operate in areas of Lebanon occupied by the Syrian armed forces and receive supplies from Iran through Syria.

(7) United Nations Security Council Resolution 520 (September 17, 1982) calls for "strict respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon through the Lebanese Army throughout Lebanon".

(8) Approximately 20,000 Syrian troops and security personnel occupy much of the sovereign territory of Lebanon exerting undue influence upon its government and undermining its political independence.

(9) Since 1990 the Senate and House of Representatives have passed seven bills and resolutions which call for the withdrawal of Syrian armed forces from Lebanon.

(10) On March 3, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell declared that it is the objective of the United States to "let Lebanon be ruled by the Lebanese people without the presence of [the Syrian] occupation army".

(11) Large and increasing numbers of the Lebanese people from across the political spectrum in Lebanon have mounted peaceful and democratic calls for the withdrawal of the Syrian Army from Lebanese soil.

(12) Israel has withdrawn all of its armed forces from Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 (March 19, 1978), as certified by the United Nations Secretary General.

(13) Even in the face of this United Nations certification that acknowledged Israel's full compliance with Security Council Resolution 425, Syrian- and Iranian-supported Hezbollah continues to attack Israeli outposts at Shebaa Farms, under the pretense that Shebaa Farms is territory from which Israel was required to withdraw by Security Council Resolution 425, and Syrian- and Iranian-supported Hezbollah and other militant organizations continue to attack civilian targets in Israel.

(14) Syria will not allow Lebanon—a sovereign country—to fulfill its obligation in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425 to deploy its troops to southern Lebanon.

(15) As a result, the Israeli-Lebanese border and much of southern Lebanon is under the control of Hezbollah, which continues to attack Israeli positions, allows Iranian Revolutionary Guards and other militant groups to operate freely in the area, and maintains thousands of rockets along Israel's northern border, destabilizing the entire region.

(16) On February 12, 2003, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet stated the following with respect to the Syrian- and Iranian-supported Hezbollah: "[A]s an organization with capability and worldwide presence [it] is [al Qaeda's] equal if not a far more capable organization . . . [They're] a notch above in many respects, in terms of in their relationship with the Iranians and the training they receive, [which] puts them in a state-sponsored category with a potential for lethality that's quite great."

(17) In the State of the Union address on January 29, 2002, President Bush declared that the United States will "work closely with our coalition to deny terrorists and their state sponsors the materials, technology, and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction".

(18) The Government of Syria continues to develop and deploy short- and medium-range ballistic missiles.

(19) According to the December 2001 unclassified Central Intelligence Agency report entitled "Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat through 2015", "Syria maintains a ballistic missile and rocket force of hundreds of FROG rockets, Scuds, and SS-21 SRBMs [and] Syria has developed [chemical weapons] warheads for its Scuds".

(20) The Government of Syria if pursuing the development and production of biological and chemical weapons and has a nuclear research and development weapons and has a nuclear research and development program that is cause for concern.

(21) According to the Central Intelligence Agency's "Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions", released January 7, 2003: "[Syria] already holds a stockpile of the nerve agent sarin but apparently is trying to develop more toxic and persistent nerve agents. Syria remains dependent on foreign sources for key elements of its [chemical weapons] program, including precursor chemicals and key production equipment. It is highly probable that Syria also is developing an offensive [biological weapons] capability".

(22) On May 6, 2002, the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, stated: "The United States also knows that Syria has long had a chemical warfare program. It has a stockpile of the nerve agent sarin and is engaged in research and development of the more toxic and persistent nerve agent VX. Syria, which has signed but not ratified the [Biological Weapons Convention], is pursuing the development of biological weapons and is able to produce at least small amounts of biological warfare agents".

(23) According to the Central Intelligence Agency's "Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions", released January 7, 2003: "Russia and Syria have approved a draft cooperative program on cooperation on civil nuclear power. In principal, broader access to Russian expertise provides opportunities for Syria to expand its indigenous capabilities, should it decide to pursue nuclear weapons".

(24) Under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (21 UST 483), which entered force on March 5, 1970, and to which Syria is a party, Syria has undertaken not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons and has accepted full scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency to detect diversions of nuclear materials from peaceful activities to the production of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

(25) Syria is not a party to the Chemical Weapons Conventions or the Biological Weapons Convention, which entered into force on April 29, 1997, and on March 26, 1975, respectively.

(26) Syrian President Bashar Assad promised Secretary of State Powell in February 2001 to end violations of Security Council Resolutions 661, which restricted the sale of oil and other commodities by Saddam Hussein's regime, except to the extent authorized by other relevant resolutions, but this pledge was never fulfilled.

(27) Syria's illegal imports and transshipments of Iraqi oil during Saddam Hussein's regime earned Syria \$50,000,000 or more per month as Syria continued to sell its own Syrian oil at market prices.

(28) Syria's illegal imports and transshipments of Iraqi oil earned Saddam Hussein's regime \$2,000,000 per day.

(29) The Government of Syria also utilized the railway network linking Mosul, Iraq, to Aleppo, Syria, to transfer a wide range of weaponry and weapon systems to Saddam Hussein's regime.

(30) On March 28, 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld warned: "[W]e have information that shipments of military supplies have been crossing the border from Syria into Iraq, including night-vision goggles . . . These deliveries pose a direct threat to the lives of coalition forces. We consider such trafficking as hostile acts, and will hold the Syrian government accountable for such shipments."

(31) According to Article 23(1) of the United Nations Charter, members of the United Nations are elected as nonpermanent members of the United Nations Security Council with "due regard being specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to other purposes of the Organization".

(32) Despite Article 23(1) of the United Nations Charter, Syria was elected on October 8, 2001, to a 2-year term as a nonpermanent member of the United Nations Security Council beginning January 1, 2002, and served as President of the Security Council during June 2002 and August 2003.

(33) On March 31, 2003, the Syrian Foreign Minister, Farouq al-Sharra, made the Syrian regime's intentions clear when he explicitly stated that "Syria's interest is to see the invaders defeated in Iraq".

(34) On April 13, 2003, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld charged that "busloads" of Syrian fighters entered Iraq with "hundreds of thousands of dollars" and leaflets offering rewards for dead American soldiers.

(35) On September 16, 2003, the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, appeared before the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia of the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives, and underscored Syria's "hostile actions" toward coalition forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Under Secretary Bolton added that: "Syria allowed military equipment to flow into Iraq on the eve of and during the war. Syria permitted volunteers to pass into Iraq to attack and kill our service members during the war, and is still doing so . . . [Syria's] behavior during Operation Iraqi Freedom underscores the importance of taking seriously reports and information on Syria's WMD capabilities".

(36) During his appearance before the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives on September 25, 2003, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, stated that out of the 278 third-country nationals who were captured by coalition forces in Iraq, the "single largest group are Syrians".

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) The Government of Syria should immediately and unconditionally halt support for terrorism, permanently and openly declare its total renunciation of all forms of terrorism, and close all terrorist offices and facilities in Syria, including the offices of Hamas, Hizballah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command;

(2) the Government of Syria should—

(A) immediately and unconditionally stop facilitating transit from Syria to Iraq of individuals, military equipment, and all lethal items, except as authorized by the Coalition Provisional Authority or a representative, internationally recognized Iraqi government;

(B) cease its support for "volunteers" and terrorists who are traveling from and through Syria into Iraq to launch attacks; and

(C) undertake concrete, verifiable steps to deter such behavior and control the use of territory under Syrian control;

(3) the Government of Syria should immediately declare its commitment to completely withdraw its armed forces, including military, paramilitary, and security forces, from Lebanon, and set a firm timetable for such withdrawal;

(4) the Government of Lebanon should deploy the Lebanese armed forces to all areas of Lebanon, including South Lebanon, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 520 (September 17, 1982), in order to assert the sovereignty of the Lebanese state over all of its territory, and should evict all terrorist and foreign forces from southern Lebanon, including Hizballah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards;

(5) the Government of Syria should halt the development and deployment of medium- and long-range surface-to-surface missiles and cease the development and production of biological and chemical weapons;

(6) the Governments of Lebanon and Syria should enter into serious unconditional bilateral negotiations with the Government of Israel in order to realize a full and permanent peace;

(7) the United States should continue to provide humanitarian and educational assistance to the people of Lebanon only through appropriate private, nongovernmental organizations and appropriate international organizations, until such time as the Government of Lebanon asserts sovereignty and control over all of its territory and borders and achieves full political independence, as called for in United Nations Security Council Resolution 520; and

(8) as a violator of several key United Nations Security Council resolutions and as a nation that pursues policies which undermine international peace and security, Syria should not have been permitted to join the United Nations Security Council or serve as the Security Council's President, and should be removed from the Security Council.

SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that—

(1) Syria will be held responsible for attacks committed by Hizballah and other terrorist groups with offices, training camps, or other facilities in Syria, or bases in areas of Lebanon occupied by Syria.

(2) the United States shall impede Syria's ability to support acts of international terrorism and efforts to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction;

(3) the Secretary of State will continue to list Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism until Syria ends its support for terrorism, including its support of Hizballah and other terrorist groups in Lebanon and its hosting of terrorist groups in Damascus, and comes into full compliance with United States law relating to terrorism and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (September 28, 2001);

(4) efforts against Hizballah will be expanded given the recognition that Hizballah is equally or more capable than al Qaeda;

(5) the full restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity is in the national security interest of the United States;

(6) Syria is in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 520 (September 17, 1982) through its continued occupation of Lebanon's territory and its encroachment upon Lebanon's political independence;

(7) Syria's obligation to withdraw from Lebanon is not conditioned upon progress in

the Israeli-Syrian or Israeli-Lebanese peace process but derives from Syria's obligation under Security Council Resolution 520;

(8) Syria's acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs threaten the security of the Middle East and the national security interests of the United States;

(9) Syria will be held accountable for any harm to Coalition armed forces or to any United States citizen in Iraq due to its facilitation of terrorist activities and its shipments of military supplies to Iraq; and

(10) the United States will not provide any assistance to Syria and will oppose multilateral assistance for Syria until Syria ends all support for terrorism, withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon, and halts the development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction and medium- and long-range surface-to-surface ballistic missiles.

SEC. 5. PENALTIES AND AUTHORIZATION.

(a) PENALTIES.—Until the President makes the determination that Syria meets all the requirements described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (d) and certifies such determination to Congress in accordance with such subsection—

(1) the President shall prohibit the export to Syria of any item, including the issuance of a license for the export of any item, on the United States Munitions List or Commerce Control List of dual-use items in the Export Administration Regulations (15 C.F.R. part 730 et seq.); and

(2) the President shall impose two or more of the following sanctions:

(A) Prohibit the export of products of the United States (other than food and medicine) to Syria.

(B) Prohibit United States businesses from investing or operating in Syria.

(C) Restrict Syrian diplomats in Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations in New York City, to travel only within a 25-mile radius of Washington, D.C., or the United Nations headquarters building, respectively.

(D) Prohibit aircraft of any air carrier owned or controlled by Syria to take off from, land in, or overfly the United States.

(E) Reduce United States diplomatic contacts with Syria (other than those contacts required to protect United States interests or carry out the purposes of this Act).

(F) Block transactions in any property in which the Government of Syria has any interest, by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(b) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of paragraph (2) of subsection (a) for one or more 6-month periods if the President determines that it is in the vital national security interest of the United States to do so and transmits to Congress a report that contains the reasons therefor.

(c) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA.—If the President—

(1) makes the determination that Syria meets the requirements described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (d) and certifies such determination to Congress in accordance with such subsection;

(2) determines that substantial progress has been made both in negotiations aimed at achieving a peace agreement between Israel and Syria and in negotiations aimed at achieving a peace agreement between Israel and Lebanon; and

(3) determines that the Government of Syria is strictly respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon through the Lebanese army throughout Lebanon, as required under para-

graph (4) of United Nations Security Council Resolution 520 (1982), then the President is authorized to provide assistance to Syria under chapter 1 of Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (relating to development assistance).

(d) CERTIFICATION.—A certification under this subsection is a certification transmitted to the appropriate congressional committees of a determination made by the President that—

(1) the Government of Syria has ceased providing support for international terrorist groups and does not allow terrorist groups, such as Hamas, Hizballah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command to maintain facilities in territory under Syrian control;

(2) the Government of Syria has withdrawn all Syrian military, intelligence, and other security personnel from Lebanon;

(3) the Government of Syria has ceased the development and deployment of medium- and long-range surface-to-surface ballistic missiles, is not pursuing or engaged in the research development, acquisition, production, transfer, or deployment of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons, has provided credible assurances that such behavior will not be undertaken in the future, and has agreed to allow United Nations and other international observers to verify such actions and assurances; and

(4) the Government of Syria has ceased all support for, and facilitation of, all terrorist activities inside of Iraq, including preventing the use of territory under its control by any means whatsoever to support those engaged in terrorist activities inside of Iraq.

SEC. 6. REPORT.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 12 months thereafter until the conditions described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 5(d) are satisfied, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(1) Syria's progress toward meeting the conditions described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 5(d);

(2) connections, if any, between individual terrorists and terrorist groups which maintain offices, training camps, or other facilities on Syrian territory, or operate in areas of Lebanon occupied by the Syrian armed forces, and the attacks against the United States that occurred on September 11, 2001, and other terrorist attacks on the United States or its citizens, installations, or allies; and

(3) how the United States is increasing its efforts against Hizballah given the recognition that Hizballah is equally or more capable than al Qaeda.

(b) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 7. DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

In this Act, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that debate on

the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1828, as amended, be extended to 60 minutes, equally divided.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1828, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1828, as amended, a bill I introduced with my colleague the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), to hold Syria accountable for behavior and activities which threaten U.S. national security, our interests and our allies.

The Syrian regime has the blood of Americans on its hands, and we cannot, and we will not allow this to go unpunished. That is one of the primary reasons we are here today. And we would not have reached this point were it not for the commitment and unwavering support of a great American, our distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and we thank him for that support.

Mr. Speaker, following the deplorable terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush clearly articulated what would be the guiding principles of U.S. foreign policy. He said: "Every Nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any Nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."

The choice was clear, and Syria chose to be on the wrong side of history. Syria continues to harbor Hezbollah, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the PFLP-GC, and Hamas, including permitting the operation of offices and terrorist camps in Syrian territory and in Syrian-occupied Lebanon.

These and other Syrian-sponsored groups have perpetrated acts of terrorism against Americans, most notably the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Syrian-occupied Lebanon in 1983, which killed 241 American Marines, and the attack on the Khobar Towers in 1996, where, with the assistance of Syria, the terrorists killed 19 American servicemen and injured scores of others.

The Syrian regime has continuously allowed Iranian transshipment of weapons to Hezbollah and, in recent years, has also begun to supply Hezbollah

militants with mortars, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and other weapons.

The Syrians vehemently defend, as well as support, protect and harbor, the leaders of Hezbollah. For example, Sheik Nasrallah, a terrorist, who proclaimed in a speech broadcast on Hezbollah's TV station in late April of this year, he said, "Death to America was, is, and will stay our slogan."

The actions that have earned the Syrian regime the pariah status as a state sponsor of terror have been further highlighted in Iraq, where Syria has been complicit against our forces in Iraq, as repeatedly articulated by the Syrian foreign minister, when he said, "Syria's interest is to see the invaders defeated in Iraq."

Syria has encouraged thousands of so-called "irregular forces" and other "volunteer" terrorists to cross the Syrian border into Iraq to battle our coalition forces. When U.S. military forces captured a large group of Syrians, they reportedly confiscated 70 suicide jacks, each filled with 22 pounds of military grade C4 explosives and mercury detonators. U.S. soldiers also reportedly found several hundred thousand dollars on a bus that came from Syria, together with leaflets suggesting that Iraqis would be rewarded if they killed Americans.

Ambassador Paul Bremer, the Administrator of the Coalition Provision Authority in Iraq, testified before our Committee on International Relations just a few weeks ago, and he said that the largest number of third-country detainees in U.S. custody in Iraq are from Syria. Ambassador Bremer underscored: "And we believe that there are rat lines, as they call them, from Syria into Iraq, where both fighters and, in many cases, terrorists are still coming in."

Despite the Syrian regime's efforts at manipulation, the terrorists they support remove any question that Syria is facilitating the movement of fighters into Iraq to kill our men and women in the Armed Forces. In September 14, 2003, an interview was printed with the Sunday Times World where a member of the militant Islamic group Martyrs of Islam, identifying himself only as Jamal, revealed that he and many others had trained at a camp in Syria during the buildup to the recent war in Iraq.

According to Jamal, while at the Syrian camp, he was trained to make bombs, set booby traps and fire various small arms, including rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Jamal said, "Our entire group was trained in Syria. Other groups were trained there after us. We are here to kill American soldiers." He claimed that his 15-member cell had carried out about 60 attacks against American forces in 3 months.

Syria also continues to occupy Lebanon, in direct contravention of the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Through its illegal occupation of Lebanon, the Syrian regime has im-

posed its will on the Lebanese people through electoral intimidation, through political persecution, through the stifling of free speech, assassination of opposition leaders, and, last but not least, through brute military force.

The Syrian regime has all but eliminated Lebanon from the international political map, denying the Lebanese people their right to self-determination. It hijacked the democracy process in Lebanon, converting Lebanon into a proxy of the dictatorship in Damascus, a proxy in much the same way that the former Soviet Union used Eastern Europe to propagate its "evil empire."

The Syrian regime has even tried to extend its repression of the Lebanese people to the U.S., to the hallowed halls of Congress. For example, for his testimony during a Congressional roundtable that I held on September 17 as chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, General Michel Aoun, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon and one of the leading opposition figures in Lebanon, faces prosecution on charges of tarnishing Lebanon's ties with Syria. His statements in support of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act were viewed as an "offense and he should be tried for it," said the authorities.

For all of the reasons I have articulated this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we render our overwhelming support to H.R. 1828, as amended.

The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003, as reported, establishes a clear set of policies with respect to Syria. It calls for the imposition of sanctions intended to deny Syria resources to pursue its threatening behavior and limit its diplomatic legitimacy should it persist in pursuing these activities. If the Syrian regime does not alter its behavior, it will suffer the consequences.

The sanctions are to be imposed unless the President certifies that Syria is not providing support for terrorists; has stopped all support for terrorist activities inside of Iraq; has withdrawn all military, intelligence and other security personnel from Lebanon; is not involved in the production, development, deployment, acquisition or transfer of weapons of mass destruction and long-range ballistic missiles; has provided credible assurances that such behavior will not be undertaken in the future; and has agreed to allow United Nations and other international observers to verify such actions and assurances.

The imposition of some, but not all, of the sanctions may be waived by the President for a 6-month period if he determines that it is in the vital national security of the United States to do so and transmits a report to Congress on the reasons substantiating such a determination.

Mr. Speaker, diplomacy with the Syrian regime has failed miserably. It is time to reinforce our words with

concrete, tangible and punitive measures. This bill provides the President with the tools and the overwhelming Congressional support he needs to hold the regime in Damascus accountable for choosing to side with the terrorists and engaging in activities threatening the American people and U.S. national security interests.

Syria cannot be allowed to continue to act with impunity. The game is over.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1828.

Mr. Speaker, among the Members who deserve our praise for sponsoring this bill, I would like to single out the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who first introduced this bill in the 107th Congress. I want to commend the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, for their invaluable work in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, no one in Damascus should be surprised by our action today.

□ 1700

One might even say that the Syrian Government is the moving spirit behind this action.

Syria, Mr. Speaker, is the leading regional force for destabilization and against peace. Syria is a charter member of the U.S. Government's list of state sponsors of terrorism. Syria hosts and provides both military and economic support to a wide array of vicious terrorist groups.

For too many years, inexplicably, our government has treated Syria better than it does other state sponsors of terrorism. We have been allowing more trade with Syria, and we have maintained normal diplomatic ties. It is time, Mr. Speaker, for this special treatment to end.

The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 will closely align our Syria policy with our policy toward other state sponsors of terrorism.

Twenty years ago, Mr. Speaker, Syrian-sponsored terrorism was responsible for the worst pre-September 11 terrorist incident in American history: the murder of 241 U.S. Marines by a suicide bomber in Lebanon in October of 1983. I visited with those Marines just a few weeks before the tragedy. Now, Syria's irresponsible behavior is again resulting in more murders of American soldiers, this time in Iraq.

Six months ago, Mr. Speaker, I visited Syria and met with the president of that country. I told him that he had made a major miscalculation regarding Iraq. Completely misunderstanding media reports of Coalition difficulties

in the first days of the war due to a sand storm, Syria promptly aligned itself with Saddam Hussein, opening its borders to jihadists and suicide bombers, and opening the floodgates for arms and military equipment to flow into Iraq. To this very day, Mr. Speaker, Syria keeps its borders open, and suicide bombers and pro-Saddam thugs are allowed to cross into Iraq and attack our American soldiers in that country.

But it is not the only way that Syria is aiding terrorists in Iraq. This last weekend, Mr. Speaker, we learned that Syrian state-controlled banks are holding some \$3 billion of Saddam Hussein's cash. Despite our diplomatic efforts, Syria is refusing to freeze those funds and to return them to pay part of the cost of rebuilding Iraq. Meanwhile, Saddam's "bitter-enders," perhaps Saddam himself, are drawing on those funds to fuel their murderous attacks on American soldiers.

When I met with President Asad 6 months ago, I warned him that the Syria Accountability Act would soon be on its way to passage in the House and in the Senate unless Syria changed its ways in Iraq and throughout the region. President Asad understood me perfectly. I was not surprised to find that he was very familiar with the Syria Accountability Act.

Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Asad one week after my visit; and told him, as I had, what he needed to do to improve Syria's standing in the United States: he had to end support for terrorism in Iraq and elsewhere. He had to stop supporting Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in Lebanon. He had to close the terrorist offices in Damascus. He had to remove the 17,000 Syrian soldiers in Lebanon. He had to remove the thousands of Syrian military intelligence officers who effectively run Lebanon. He had to stop work on weapons of mass destruction. He had to free the many political prisoners in Syrian prisons, and he had to end vicious anti-U.S. incitement in Syria's media.

I repeated my warning in a press conference with Arab media immediately after my meeting with Asad. When I returned to Washington, I wrote the president of Syria, reviewing the contents of our meeting. I reminded him that congressional action was looming, but that he had the power to avert it.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I will introduce into the RECORD the text of my letter of last May to President Asad.

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, May 23, 2003.

His Excellency, President BASHAR AL-ASAD,
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Once again I would like to thank you for receiving me in your office recently. Our discussion was valuable, and I believe it could mark the beginning of a productive dialogue that benefits both our nations.

I have therefore been surprised and deeply dismayed by Syria's failure to take truly meaningful action on the issues we discussed

in the weeks since my visit. Notwithstanding press reports that some of the offices of Palestinian terrorist organizations in Damascus may have been closed, I am deeply disappointed by your failure to confirm this definitively and to affirm that their closure is the result of a decision by the Syrian government, not by the terrorists. I was also disturbed by your failure to join the U.N. Security Council consensus in favor of UNSC Resolution 1483 ending sanctions on Iraq and by the Syrian state media's harsh and inaccurate accusations against the U.S. regarding that resolution.

Mr. President, closing the offices of Palestinian terrorist organizations is the most basic of steps you must take if we are to make a start toward improving U.S.-Syrian relations, as you and I discussed. But it is crucial not only that you actually close the offices and prevent these groups and their partisans from carrying out activities in Syria but that you also make clear, publicly and formally, that you are doing so. Only if such actions are executed in a transparent and definitive manner can Syria demonstrate to the world that it opposes the actions of these terrorist organizations. A stealthy closing of the offices, or a sham closing in which terrorist personnel continue to carry out their activities less publicly and from different locations—or a closing which you claim is strictly the result of the terrorists' decision, as you so far have done—will only leave the world skeptical of your real intentions and will prevent you from reaping any benefits in U.S.-Syrian bilateral relations.

I was pleased that, in our meeting, you said you oppose terrorism "anywhere." Since the Palestinian groups with offices in Damascus have claimed credit for numerous terrorist attacks in Israel—and sometimes have issued these claims from Damascus itself—they surely have no business in Syria, and you should have no trouble making public declarations to that effect. As we agreed, there is no point in discussing semantics. Whether one calls them information offices or terrorist headquarters, it is imperative that they be closed and their cadre expelled—and that this decision be publicly announced and definitively implemented—if we hope to begin a new era in bilateral relations.

You will recall that we discussed the Syria Accountability Act. I told you at that time that, depending on your decisions and actions, Congressional action on that bill will be delayed, halted, or accelerated. I also told you that I would be looking for the earliest possible positive action on your part and in particular in the immediate aftermath of the Powell visit. Based on what I have seen and read thus far, such positive action from you has not been sufficiently forthcoming. Should that continue to be so, I will have no choice but to join with like-minded colleagues in the near future to accelerate action on the Syria Accountability Act.

So that there be no misunderstanding, I think it is important that I review with you the content of our discussion and my reflections on it. As I indicated to you, Syria made many regrettable decisions in the months leading up to the Iraq war, during it, and in its immediate aftermath. These mistakes were reflected in both your statements and actions during this period. My impression during our meeting was that you understand this. In fact, it is crucial that your future performance fully reflect this understanding, that you expel any Iraqi officials and Saddam Hussein family members who took refuge in Syria, that you seal your border so as to prevent the smuggling of arms and other military equipment into Iraq as well as the infiltration of anti-U.S. personnel, and that

you fully cooperate with the United States' Iraq policy in all other ways. Indeed, my overwhelming concern—and I believe that of all of my colleagues in the U.S. Congress—is that you cooperate to the fullest extent with ongoing United States efforts in Iraq. Based on Syria's absence from yesterday's UN Security Council vote, you clearly have not comprehended the urgency of this concern.

Beyond cooperation regarding Iraq, several steps are necessary in order to reverse the recent erosion of bilateral ties. Let me once again enumerate these steps:

(1) The offices of the Palestinian terrorist groups must be closed and their activities ended immediately, and this decision be publicly announced and definitively implemented, as discussed above.

(2) All military assistance to Hezbollah, both directly and as a conduit for Iran, must be terminated.

(3) Hezbollah must be removed from the Lebanese-Israeli border area as well as from the area of Shebaa Farms, and the Lebanese Armed Forces must be deployed throughout the length of the border. Hezbollah also must cease its attacks on Israeli territory and personnel, including in the Shebaa Farms area.

(4) Hezbollah must be disarmed, as every other Lebanese militia has been.

(5) Iranian Revolutionary Guard cadre must be expelled from Lebanon.

(6) All terrorist bases in Lebanon and Syria must be closed, and all other support for terrorism must end.

(7) Syrian military forces must be evacuated from Lebanon.

(8) All Israeli prisoners held by Hezbollah or Syria must be released.

(9) Syria must take immediate steps to address the many serious human rights problems addressed in the U.S. State Department's recent human rights report. In particular, it must release the academicians, journalists, and members of the Syrian parliament currently in prison for crimes of speech and thought.

(10) Hostile anti-U.S. propaganda in state media must be terminated.

All of these steps are required urgently, but again I emphasize that an affirmative decision to close the offices of the Palestinian groups in Damascus must be announced and implemented definitively and immediately.

During our meeting, you asked me whether I expect you to undertake these actions "for free." To reiterate, I am not asking anything for free. In English, there is a saying that virtue is its own reward. Indeed, a state that supports terrorist groups and violates the sovereignty of a neighboring nation cannot be fully accepted as member in good standing of the civilized world in the twenty-first century. But of course I understand that you were asking what the political pay-off would be for Syria. The reward, Mr. President, is immeasurable and of the greatest significance. It is the goodwill of the Congress, the Administration, and the American people. This goodwill is a priceless commodity, and it has long been lacking in our bilateral relations precisely because of Syria's failure to take the necessary actions I enumerated in our talk and have underscored here. From the establishment of goodwill all other benefits flow.

If you show clear indication that you are progressing in the direction I outlined—beginning with full cooperation regarding Iraq and the immediate and definitive closing of the offices of the Palestinian terrorist organizations and the cessation of their activities on Syrian or Lebanese soil—I will do everything I can to prevent Congressional consideration of the Syria Accountability Act. Let me add something else: Once it would be fully clear that Syria no longer belongs on the list of state-sponsors of terrorism, nothing would give me greater satisfaction than to advocate its removal from that list.

Absent such indication, however, I can only foresee the worst. I must again underscore the importance of your acting immediately. Time is running out.

You asked that I sound out the Israelis about their interest in pursuing negotiations regarding the Golan Heights and Syrian-Israeli peace. I did indeed raise this matter with Prime Minister Sharon during my visit to Israel. He assured me that he is ready to engage in negotiations, on an unconditional basis, at any time. I would be delighted to be of any further assistance to you on this matter.

Let me reiterate that I foresee the prospect of a new and positive era in U.S.-Syrian bilateral relations. The recent war in Iraq is a cataclysmic development that will usher in great changes in the region. A Middle East that is more politically liberal and increasingly friendly to the United States is on the horizon. This trend is typified by some of your bordering neighbors, such as Jordan, Israel, Turkey, and, soon no doubt, the new Iraq. It is my fervent wish that Syria be seen as fully in step with these regional trends. It is my firm conviction that Syria indeed must be fully in step with these trends if U.S.-Syrian relations are to improve and prosper rather than suffer still further damage. The path our relations follow will depend, Mr. President, on your vision, your leadership, and, most important, your willingness to take bold decisions along the lines we have discussed.

Sincerely,

TOM LANTOS,
Ranking Democratic Member

Mr. Speaker, after 6 months of waiting, 6 months after Secretary Powell's visit, and 6 months after my own visit, Syria has done nothing to comply with our long-standing requirements. This conclusion is confirmed by the administration which has sensibly changed its position on the Syrian Accountability Act from one of opposition to its current stance, which I view as implicit support for our legislation. It seems, Mr. Speaker, everyone's patience has run out.

I wish that this legislation had not been necessary, but the Syrian regime's actions, or perhaps I should say inactions, have made it imperative. Despite warning after warning, the Syrian Government has refused to heed the dictates of common sense. In fact, it has regressed with its latest outrages resulting in more terrorism in Iraq. The door to good relations with the United States has been wide open to Syria, but the Syrian regime has contemptuously slammed it shut. Now it must pay the consequences.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, as our legislation makes it clear, the United States remains ready and receptive to good relations with Syria, just as soon as the Syrian regime conforms to the norms of civilized conduct.

The whole Middle East is changing, Mr. Speaker. Syria cannot and will not be frozen in a past of supporting terrorism and suppressing its own people. I trust change in Syria will come peacefully. I know it will come soon.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the

majority leader who is responsible for this legislation moving quickly through the House.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding me this time and for her leadership on this issue. I also want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for sponsoring this legislation and, as always, thank my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for his leadership and advocacy for peace and security in the Middle East. I should also, by the way, on behalf of the House thank my predecessor, Dick Armey, for initially proposing the Syrian Accountability Act in the last Congress before his retirement. It is a good bill, one that I am proud to sponsor and support; and it is a critical addition to America's diplomatic arsenal in the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, Syria's hostility to the United States and our allies is no secret. Neither is its weapons of mass destruction program or its sponsorship of Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other terrorist networks. And least secret of all, Mr. Speaker, is Syria's active support of terrorists seeking safe passage into Iraq to kill Americans. According to Ambassador Bremer, of the 276 terrorists detained in Iraq since the end of major combat there, 123 are from Syria.

The current Syrian regime is not a friend, and it is not a misunderstood bystander. It is a government at war with the values of the civilized world and a violent threat to free nations and free men everywhere. It is a textbook example of a terrorist state and poses a clear and present danger to American soldiers, diplomats, and civilians in the Middle East.

President Bush made the terms of the war on terror very clear: "You are either with us or you are with the terrorists." And since then, we have tried everything, and the President has tried everything. But despite every olive branch and carrot that we have offered, Syria has chosen to side with the terrorists. Therefore, we in the House have no choice but to begin identifying ways to change their leaders' minds, and this legislation will empower the President to pressure Syria in several ways from economic sanctions and travel restrictions to diplomatic isolation.

But, Mr. Speaker, this bill is about more than its substantive penalties. After all, international sanctions have been levied against Syria for years, and Syria's regime has only scoffed at them. But times have changed, and the heightened sanctions in this bill are just the beginning. Congress will be watching Syria's every move and responding accordingly. And by passing this bill today, we will start that process. We will send a very clear message to President Asad and his fellow travelers along the Axis of Evil. The United States will not tolerate terrorism, its perpetrators, or its sponsors; and our warnings are not to be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this bill, send that message, and enlighten the Syrian regime as to America's resolve in the war on terror.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), my good friend and the original author of this legislation, who has been indefatigable in pursuing this cause; and I am delighted to see it is coming to fruition this afternoon.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for yielding me this time and for his kind words.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of H.R. 1828, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003. As the lead sponsor of the bill, I am very appreciative that this bipartisan bill, which I wrote in my office and introduced more than a year and a half ago, is today coming to the floor. I am pleased to have worked on this bill with our lead Republican sponsor, the chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and it has been a delight to work with her on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, since the war in Iraq, it has become plain to ordinary Americans, Members of Congress across party lines, and officials in the administration what has been plain to me for many years, that Syria is among the most dangerous, destabilizing countries in the Middle East. In 1979, our U.S. State Department put forth a list of countries which support terrorism. Syria was a charter member of that list. She has been on that list unabated for 24 years; and yet she is currently the only country on this list with which we have normal diplomatic relations. I have never understood that, and it is time to tell Syria that the game is over.

As President Bush said on June 24, 2002, "Syria must choose the right side in the war on terror by closing terrorist camps and expelling terrorist organizations." In fact, terrorist groups that have thrived under Syrian protection have taken hundreds of American lives. In 1983, Hezbollah killed 241 U.S. Marines in a terrorist attack near Beirut and killed more in the bombing of the U.S. embassy annex the following year.

Syria also plays host to a number of terrorist groups in its capital, Damascus, and terrorist camps throughout Syria and Syrian-occupied Lebanon. In fact, the leader of the Palestine Islamic Jihad, which just murdered 21 innocent people in a homicide bombing in the Israeli city of Haifa, lives in Damascus. Israel was correct and justified in its recent attack on the Palestine-Islamic Jihad training camp in Syria.

The threat of collusion between terrorist groups and the Government of Syria must be addressed directly, especially because of Syria's arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Under

Secretary of State John Bolton testified last month before the Subcommittee on the Middle East that “since the 1970s, Syria has pursued what is now one of the most advanced Arab state chemical weapons capabilities and is continuing to develop an offensive biological weapons capability.”

□ 1715

For a country with Syria’s history with weapons of mass destruction, this is a cause for serious concern.

Even with all this damning evidence about the threat that Damascus poses some have suggested that we should not hold Syria accountable. The reasons they give have varied, but the most common is that Syria has somewhat helped the U.S. in our war on terror. Absolutely nonsense. Syria is both the arsonist and the fireman. She continues to help terrorism and then throws us crumbs and says look, I am putting it out. That shell game has got to stop.

Syria is two-faced, throwing the few small bones of information to American sources while continuing to aid the most violent terrorist groups in the Middle East. This is not an acceptable deal in the post-September 11 world.

Under this bill, unless Syria meets four key criteria, it will face several sanctions, both economic and commercial and military. First and foremost, Syria must end its support for terrorism. It must close the offices and end the operations of the Palestinian terror groups and stop the supplies to Hezbollah. And it must come into full compliance with Security Council Resolution 1373 which directs all countries to fight terror.

Secondly, Syria must withdraw its armed forces from Lebanon. Nothing would do more for peace and the promotion of democracy in the Middle East than a free and sovereign Lebanon. The U.N. long ago certified Israel’s withdrawal, but the Syrian military occupation remains. It is time to let the Lebanese run Lebanon.

Thirdly, Syria must halt development and procurement of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. The Syrian force of hundreds of Scud missiles topped with unconventional warheads poses a serious danger to the Middle East.

Finally, Syria must take immediate steps to stop guerrillas from traveling to Syria to Iraq to attack and kill American troops.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform you that this bipartisan legislation has gathered 297 cosponsors in the House including a majority of Democrats and Republicans, and the bill received an overwhelming 33 to 2 vote in the Committee on International Relations. The Senate version of our bill tells a similar story with 76 cosponsors led by Senators BOXER and SANTORUM.

Finally, I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for moving the bill forward and for their support, as I mentioned before. I also thank the chair of the subcommittee, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her hard work, and all 297 Members of the House who have cosponsored this important bill. I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority leader, for moving the bill forward quickly on the House floor, and the minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and the majority whip, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), for their cosponsorship of the bill.

I urge the House to pass this important legislation and send a clear message to Syria to end its destabilizing policies. I am also grateful that the administration recently lifted its opposition to the bill, and President Bush has indicated that he will sign this bill. Again, in the war against terrorism this is a good place to continue. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the chief majority deputy whip, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H.R. 1828 and want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGLE) as well as the chairman of the Middle East Subcommittee on International Relations, the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) as well as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for pushing this bill forward because it comes at a very important time.

And it is true that the time has come to hold the Syrian Government accountable for its role in sponsoring the activities of terrorist organizations. Passage of this bill will send a message that the American people are fed up with the broken promises and unmet obligations of Bashar Assad and his government. Syria has a long-standing history of providing safe haven, refuge, and logistical support to a number of terrorist groups including Hezbollah and Hamas. When innocent people are blown up and killed in Jerusalem, they issue the press releases in Damascus. This must come to an end.

President Bush has been resolute as he leads our country and the world in the fight against the terrorists. Under the Bush doctrine, we cannot and will not allow there to be a gap between the state sponsors of terrorism and the terrorists themselves. Closing this gap in Syria is exactly what this bill does.

Mr. Speaker, not only must we pass this bill here today, we must also work to persuade some of our European and Arab state allies to take similar action.

Working to strengthen economic ties with a terrorist regime is unacceptable while American men and women are dying in Iraq fighting these same terrorists.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished democratic whip who has been an indefatigable fighter for freedom and against terrorism throughout the globe.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS).

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important piece of legislation. And I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGLE) for his leadership and sponsorship of this legislation. This bill is part and parcel of our Nation’s continuing war on terrorism. And it is a necessary reminder to states that want to belong to the family of civilized nations while simultaneously sponsoring and providing safe harbor to terrorist organizations, you cannot have it both ways.

Syria has regularly appeared on the State Department list of state sponsors of terrorism. Let me recall the remarks of our President as he spoke to a joint session of Congress on September 20. He said, “And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make,” our President said, “either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.”

Now, when he said “us,” he did not simply mean America; he meant the civilized law-abiding nations of the world and peoples of the world. “From this day forward,” he went on, “any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.” Strong words but appropriate words.

Syria provides safe haven and support for terrorist groups operating in Israel and throughout the region, including, as has been mentioned, Hezbollah. I saw that, Mr. Speaker, with my own eyes when I led a congressional delegation to Israel just a few weeks ago. We traveled to the Israeli-Syrian border in the Golan Heights where members of Hezbollah openly walk about on the Syrian side, have arms on the Syrian side, have missiles, and launch terrorist attacks from the Lebanese-Syrian side.

As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, Syria’s relationship with Hezbollah is reason enough to end economic relations with Damascus, as the President indicated we would do, but there are others as well. Damascus has failed to fulfill its agreement to withdraw its forces from the security zone in southern Lebanon. In recent years, Syria had become a major supply route for oil flowing out of Iraq and illegal arms shipments into Iraq. And Syria is believed to be pursuing both nuclear weapons and missile development. Syria, in fact, is subject to fewer sanctions, fewer sanctions than any other country designated by our government as a state sponsor of terrorism.

This bill would require the President to impose economic and diplomatic

penalties on Syria unless immediate and meaningful changes are made in its policies.

Left unchecked, I strongly believe Syria poses a grave risk to Israel, to the Middle East, and to our interests. It threatens regional stability and is ultimately a major U.S. national security concern. This bill seeks to reign in one of the major impediments to peace in the Middle East. And I urge my colleagues to support it.

The President was correct, you are either with the civilized law-abiding nations of the world or you are not. And if you are not, our relations with you should not be normal. In fact, they should impose sanctions and penalties for such conduct destabilizing and making less secure the region and the world.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to a new member of our Florida delegation, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE).

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this important bipartisan legislation, the Syrian Accountability Act. It will authorize new sanctions against Syria until it meets certain conditions.

Although the Department of State lists Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism, fewer sanctions apply to this country than to any other nation on this list. We know that Syria provides a safe haven and support to several terrorist groups including Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, to name only a few.

Secretary Rumsfeld has asserted that bus loads of Syrian fighters entered Iraq with thousands of dollars and leaflets offering rewards for dead American soldiers.

Syria deserves the same sanctions and loss of diplomatic relations as any other nation that sponsors terrorism overseas or against Americans. It is absolutely critical that this renegade nation be held accountable for its actions once and for all.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill which the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) proudly sponsors.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield whatever time she may consume to the distinguished democratic leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), my friend and colleague and neighbor, who has been a fighter against terrorism and for free societies through her entire life.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding and for his great leadership as the chair of the Human Rights Caucus and a fighter against terrorism and a person who understands better than any of us America's leadership role in the world.

I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his leadership in bringing this important legislation to the floor and commend our colleague, the gentlewoman from

Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), for her usual extraordinary leadership on this issue. I also want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), working with the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for what they have done to make this discussion possible today.

I am pleased to join nearly 300 of our colleagues in cosponsoring this important measure, which is an effort to encourage Syria to cease its support for terrorism and to end its occupation of Lebanon. Syria's assistance to terrorist organizations is well known, and the State Department continues to list Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism in violation of resolutions on that issue by the U.N. Security Council.

The Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, which Syria controls, provides a haven and a site of training facilities for Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist groups. These activities could not occur without the assent of the Syrian government.

The people of Israel and the cause of peace in the Middle East have been the traditional targets of groups led by, and helped by, Syria. But today's attack on the U.S. convoy in Gaza is a reminder that the United States and our interests in the world are foremost on terrorist target lists. Dealing with the problem of terrorism is our top priority.

Rhetoric has thus far not been effective in encouraging the Syrian Government to cease its assistance to terrorists and to remove its forces from Lebanon.

This legislation provides another alternative. The imposition of sanctions that will hopefully convey a stronger message of our seriousness.

□ 1730

As proposed in the bill, sanctions are a flexible tool that the President may weigh against other interests of the United States in fashioning a response to whatever the Syrian Government may do with respect to the presence of terrorist organizations within the territory it controls.

The costs of terrorism are well known in our country and in the countries throughout the world. It behooves us to have a range of options to address the threat terrorism poses. H.R. 1828 adds to our options with respect to terrorism in the Middle East, and I urge its adoption and once again commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) on their leadership on this important matter.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of holding Syria accountable for aiding and abetting terrorists and for helping those who are killing Americans in Iraq, also to sug-

gest to the Syrians that it is time for them to leave Lebanon.

Terrorism, we hear that word a lot. What is it? A terrorist is an individual or an organization or a nation that uses violence against noncombatants in order to achieve its goals. Syria needs not face this type of punitive legislation. First of all, let me note that before the Syrian Army went into Lebanon, the Lebanese were engaged in slaughter among themselves and that the Syrian troops played a positive role at that time. That has long since passed. They should be out of there by now.

But also the fact is that the Syrian Government fully understands that it is offering its country as a base of operations for organizations that target women and children in Israel. They are based there. They announce their attacks and the results of their attacks from there. There is no doubt that terrorists, people who are slaughtering innocent people, are there in their country; yet they refuse to change the policy that permits those terrorists to operate out of that country.

Now, when you talk to them about it, which I have, they always use what they perceive as the evils of Israel as an excuse. Well, I will tell you this, I am opposed to anyone who targets non-combatants to achieve their military or political ends. It is sinful. And today I wholeheartedly support this because what Syria does by providing safe haven to terrorists is an affront to civilization. Also, they are now engaged in helping those who are pulling the trigger in killing Americans as we do our job in Iraq. And I do not have to condemn all evil in the world in order to wholeheartedly condemn this evil. Today it is even more incumbent upon us to take a strong stand with Syria's wrong doing because every day our soldiers are being killed by people who are sneaking through Syria to get into Iraq. I would plead with Syria, please change your ways. You need not be our enemy. You need not have the policies you do.

Finally, let me note that while I wholeheartedly support this legislation condemning Syria's wrongdoing, I also condemn when other countries are engaged in wrongdoing in that part of the world. I would suggest that as a body we do not forcefully condemn Israel when it is apparent to us that Israel is engaged in wrongdoing. I believe that undermines our credibility with these Arab countries and these Arabs when we plead with them on issues like this. If we could be more balanced, I think we could be a greater force for the good and moral standards that we talk about today.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), who has been fighting for peace in this region for his entire congressional career.

(Mr. ACKERMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Syria Accountability Act, encourage the administration to use all of the tools at its disposal to enforce that accountability.

Mr. Speaker, today's debate over the Syria Accountability Act, is in my view, Congress's long overdue response to the Bush Administration's failure to match its tough talk with demonstrations of our resolve.

This spring, the Administration took sudden notice of the numerous and longstanding Syrian policies that are hostile to our national interests. The President dispatched the Secretary of State to loudly threaten serious consequences; there were the predictable rounds of feckless diplomacy; and then the Administration's attention wandered off. Syria's policies, of course, didn't change one bit.

We know that during combat operations in Iraq, there was credible evidence of arms and people moving from Syria into Iraq. And we know that Syria is directly responsible for providing safe passage and transit documentation to many of the terrorists now working to undermine our relief and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. The Bush administration's response? Zero.

We know that Syria's highly touted cooperation in battling Al-Qaeda has dried up. According to the State Department counterterrorism coordinator, Damascus has "allowed Al-Qaeda personnel to come in and virtually settle in Syria with their knowledge and their support." The Bush Administration's response? Zero.

We have known for years that Damascus has actively opposed U.S. efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through its patronage of Hezbollah.

Today, Hezbollah, is aggressively working to facilitate ever greater levels of Palestinian terrorism against Israel. And since Hezbollah can't get Iranian weapons through Iraqi airspace, Damascus is reported to be supplying Hezbollah with weapons from Syria's own depots. The Bush Administration's response? Zero.

On July 22, President Bush said "Syria . . . continue[s] to harbor and assist terrorists. This behavior is completely unacceptable, and states that support terror will be held accountable."

It's now mid-October. Secretary Powell went to Damascus in early May. Where's the accountability?

Moreover, when asked only weeks ago to testify about Syria's weapons of mass destruction, the Administration provided an elaborate listing of the numerous authorities they have under U.S. law, the powers provided by executive orders, and the manifold capabilities of the executive branch, all to counter Syria's proliferation efforts. But next to nothing was offered on how these tools are being used.

By now, two things should be indisputably clear: terrorism is the Assad regime's preferred strategic option in dealing with America, and bluster is the favored method of the Bush Administration in dealing with Syria.

Mr. Speaker, Congress can only provide the tools, and with this bill, we will be adding to the already considerable stockpile of authority the President has chosen not to use. What's lacking in our Syria policy is not legal authority. What's lacking is consistency, focus, and resolve.

I hope passage of this bill will prompt the Bush Administration to conduct the kind of se-

rious policy review that has been unfortunately absent so far, that has allowed our policy to drift so badly, and that has brought this legislation to the floor of the House.

I strongly encourage Members to support the bill.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), who has been unique in his support for constructive development in the region and who has been fighting tenaciously against terrorism throughout the region and the world.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the State of California (Mr. LANTOS) for his kind comments. Obviously, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his sponsorship of this and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for her wonderful sponsorship and lead on this in terms of the subcommittee Chair.

This act is one that has been overdue. I am very, very pleased that the President has not opposed this and has given us the liberty now to bring this before the floor.

This is a piece of legislation that should have been passed 25 years ago when we had the original State Department list on state-sponsored terrorism. Syria has been on this list now for 25 years. For 25 years they have been on this list as a state-sponsored terrorist country. They have had Hezbollah. They have had Hamas. They have had a number of terrorist groups that have had offices in Syria. They have had training bases in Syria, and they also have weapons of mass destruction that could get in the hands of these terrorists.

In addition, even recently Syria has allowed visas to be given to terrorist individuals who have gone into Iraq for the sole purpose of doing damage to the infrastructure in putting the lives of American men and women in jeopardy. This act would merely give the President the authority to take two actions out of a menu of about 15. They would be simple things like preventing many of the diplomats from going 25 miles outside of the U.N.

Let me conclude, if I may. It would perhaps impose trade sanctions on the Syrian Government. It is very, very simple kinds of sanctions for the kinds of terrorist activities the Syrian Government has been responsible for. I urge the adoption of this legislation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE).

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1828, the Syrian Accountability Act. It is time for Syria, quite frankly, to make a choice. In Lebanon its troops have been there far too long. The sponsorship of terrorist activity against the State of Israel is no longer, and never was, acceptable. Finally, the porous borders between Iraq and Syria which terrorists move across is a constant threat to American troops.

As our President has said, There is no middle ground in the war on terrorism.

It is simply not acceptable to cooperate in some areas as Syria occasionally has, and yet to cooperate with terrorists on the other hand as it constantly has done.

I am extraordinarily proud of the United States Congress for making this strong statement in a bipartisan fashion, and I hope the message will be understood and acted upon in Damascus.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill. We have to show Syria that there are consequences for supporting terrorism and undermining peace in the region. It is amazing to me that Syria offered support to Iraq even as U.S. and Coalition forces were engaged in combat and subsequently has turned a blind eye to militants who slip across their borders into Iraq to kill American soldiers.

Syria has been on this terrorist list for such a long time, and yet we allow it to continue. We have imposed fewer sanctions than any other country that is a state-sponsor of terrorism. I suppose we sort of bought into this idea that somehow they were helping us over the years. But in the aftermath of the Iraq war, it has been quite clear that they have not been helping us, and whatever effort was out there supposedly to give that impression is simply not real.

The fact that they continue to be present in Lebanon, to harbor various terrorist organizations, the time has come to pass this bill. It is certainly long overdue, as so many of my colleagues have said on a bipartisan basis. Let us get it passed today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time. Mr. Speaker, I would congratulate the gentlewoman and my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), for their leadership here, and the ranking member of my committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for his continued leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. This legislation passed the House Committee on International Regulations by an overwhelming bipartisan vote. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), as well, for bringing this bill to the floor. I thank the leadership for bringing this bill to the floor and before the committee and ensuring that we have the opportunity to let Syria know that the United States will not allow a free pass any longer.

Syria has been listed as a state-sponsor of terrorism since 1979. This is unacceptable for any country that wishes to be a responsible member of the

international community, especially a country currently serving as a member of the United Nations Security Council. Unacceptable.

Syria's role on the council make a mockery of the mission of the United Nations. Syria used its role recently on the Security Council to present the draft resolution condemning Israel's right to self-defense by destroying a terrorist training camp within Syria. Instead of drafting a resolution condemning Israel's justified attack, Syria should ensure that Israel will never need to attack a terrorist camp within Syria's borders again.

Syria must cease all support for terrorist groups and close down all terrorist training camps within her borders.

If their support for terrorism were not enough, Syria also has an arsenal of biological and chemical weapons and the missile capability to deliver those weapons to her neighbors. I hope our actions here today will show President Asad that our resolve is strong.

Mr. Speaker, President Asad must change his country's ways and begin to contribute to international peace and security rather than undermining it. It is time for Syria to take her place amongst the righteous nations of the world, as well as give Lebanon the chance to take her place as a righteous nation in the world. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Once again, I would like to thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time; the sponsor of this legislation, my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL). I thank him for his work on this. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for all he has done on committee by seeing that this bill gets to the floor today.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I will vote for the Syria Accountability Act today, but I will do so with some serious reservations. Permit me to take a moment to explain.

I will vote for the bill because I deplore the terrorist attacks inflicted on Israel and understand that a strong signal must be sent to the Syrian Government that it must aggressively confront and fight terror and terrorist organizations. It must close terrorist offices, expel terrorist leaders, close terrorist supply lines, and get out of Lebanon.

This resolution, however, has no monopoly on that message. I and many others who have been able to visit with President Asad in Damascus in recent years, and he has received us often, have delivered that message unequivocally but with only limited success.

Our Secretary of State has also been unwavering on the unacceptability of Syria's sheltering of terrorists. That message, however, has not been and should not be the sum total of our diplomacy. What this bill fails to grasp is

the utility of engagement and the necessity of flexibility in our foreign policy.

Our experience suggests that Syria can sometimes be moved through engagement. In recent months, the fruits of engagement have included cooperation in the pursuit of al Qaeda, and a reduction in incidents along the northern Israeli border. Nor should we forget that at two points in the last decade, once in secret negotiations under the Netanyahu government, and then in the U.S.-Israel-Syria tripartite talks at Shepherdstown in early 2000, engagement brought an Israeli-Syrian settlement very, very close to realization.

Events in the Middle East move quickly. Diplomacy requires flexibility, but the directives in this bill at the high waiver standard move in the opposite direction. A law is a clumsy instrument with which to engage in the art of diplomacy. This bill is overly prescriptive, and it could make the complex work of our diplomats far more difficult.

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A more sophisticated policy of incentives, as well as sanctions, carrots as well as sticks, is called for as our Nation attempts to engage in a worldwide war against terrorism.

We must solidify a network of nations to confront terrorism, not stake ourselves out as an isolated combatant. That struggle could be far more successful with Syria as a full-fledged partner. But if that is to happen, our diplomacy will have to be far more skilled and flexible than the formula prescribed by the Syria Accountability Act.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs.

(Mrs. LOWEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time, and I rise in support of this Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, and I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his long-standing leadership on this issue. He has been insisting that we hold Syria's feet to the fire for a very long time.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSEHTINEN), my good friend and colleague, for her leadership on this issue and, of course, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our ranking member of the committee, for his leadership and strong voice.

It is time that Congress send a strong and clear message to Syria. We will no longer tolerate their support of terrorism. We will not allow them to further destabilize the Middle East, a re-

gion so crucial to the national security of the United States, and we will not risk undermining our efforts to secure peace and stability in Iraq and the region.

Syria had its chance and had the opportunity to reform its political environment and become a positive force in the region. Instead, it has remained as it was, a closed society and haven for terrorists. Many terrorist groups, including Hezbollah and Hamas, have offices and training camps in Syria or Syrian-occupied Lebanon. These groups remain heavily active, even after Secretary of State Powell met with President Assad earlier this year and urged him to shut them down.

These groups thwart efforts for peace in Israel by destabilizing the Israeli-Lebanese border. They are the groups that might very well be sending terrorists over the Iraqi border to commit terrorist acts against our soldiers and the Iraqis brave enough to work with us to create a stable democratic country. Indeed, at a recent hearing of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, the State Department confirmed that Syria is allowing "volunteers" and others to enter Iraq to attack and kill Americans.

Congress must send the message, it is time to end the terror, and H.R. 1828 is heavily supported on both sides of the aisle. It imposes a variety of penalties upon Syria until it ends its support of terrorism, withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon, halts development of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, and stops facilitating terrorism in Iraq.

It is necessary, appropriate, and in my judgment, long overdue.

I strongly support H.R. 1828.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), a distinguished member of our committee, my good friend.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Syria Accountability Act because Syria is an epicenter of terror, and despite repeated warnings, Syria continues to develop weapons of mass destruction, occupy Lebanon, harbor Palestinian terrorists and support Hezbollah.

The very notion that fewer sanctions apply to Syria than any other country on the State Department's terrorist list is unconscionable. This is why I support sending an unequivocal message to Syria that its hostile action will be met with serious consequences.

For too long, America has kowtowed to Syria as it played a duplicitous game of providing Washington with limited intelligence while continuing to support terror. I hope that President Assad understands that no one in Washington is fooled anymore. The time for soft pedaling with Damascus has come to an end.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), my distinguished colleague.

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly support the Syria Accountability Act. This legislation is long overdue.

Syria has funded and encouraged organized terrorism in the Middle East and around the world. Syria controls the Lebanon-Israeli border from the Lebanese side where kytusha rocket attacks are regularly launched against innocent Israeli citizens. Syria openly houses Hamas and Hezbollah training grounds, and its government and citizens knowingly fund their criminal activity.

Just today, terrorists operating in the West Bank murdered four U.S. citizens. Were they trained and funded by Syria? We should not have to wonder. If Syria provides aid and comfort to the terrorist enemy, it should not receive aid and comfort from the United States.

This legislation is modest in comparison to the recent actions the United States took against Iraq, and it is clear that Syria provides a lot more aid to terrorist organizations than Iraq ever did. This bill provides for economic sanctions against Syria for restrictions on diplomatic activity in the United States and, most importantly, calls for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his strong leadership in championing this legislation. I give it my full support, and I look forward to the Saudi Arabia Accountability Act.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH), my good friend and distinguished colleague.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the ranking member's time, and also I want to congratulate the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the chairperson of the sub-committee, my friend and colleague from Florida, who really, with the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) as well, brought this to our attention, and, through fighting for several years, brought it to the floor of the House.

This bill I believe will pass today, but it is somewhat melancholy because at the same time, right after this debate is over, we are going to take up the supplemental bill which includes \$20 billion of direct aid to Iraq, and when we talk about terrorism, all of these issues around the world are really intertwined. We know that Iraq sent several billion dollars, Saddam Hussein sent several billion dollars to Saudi Arabia that, at this moment in time, the United States Government still does not know where that money is, and in fact, there are many indications that money is directly supporting terrorism even while we speak and even while we stand here today.

Those issues tying into getting to the root of terrorism cannot stop anyone.

They cannot stop at Syria. They cannot stop at Saudi Arabia. This legislation will go a long way in protecting the lives of Americans, but yet we need to go further.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Speaker how much time is remaining and if the gentleman from California has any other remaining speakers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) has 9 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional requests for time, and we yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It has been a delight for me to have worked with the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the author of this legislation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), and so many others in our Committee on International Relations, and I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for his strong leadership as always.

As has been pointed out, Mr. Speaker, this bill, as reported, clearly outlines congressional views of steps that the Syrian regime must undertake: ending support for terrorism; stopping support and the facilitation of terrorist attacks on our coalition forces in Iraq; halt its weapons of mass destruction efforts; withdraw from Lebanon, all of these.

It establishes a U.S. policy that Syria will be held accountable for these activities. It prohibits the exports of military and dual-use items, and then provides the President with a choice of six sanctions, from which the President is to impose at least two. And these sanctions, for example, are to prohibit the export of products from the United States other than food and medicine; to prohibit United States businesses from investing or operating in Syria; to restrict the travel of Syrian diplomats in Washington and in the U.N. in New York City; to prohibit aircraft of any air carrier owned or controlled by Syria to take off from, land in or overfly the United States; to reduce United States diplomatic contacts with Syria other than those required under this Act, and this could mean suspension of diplomatic relations altogether or a reduction of diplomatic representation or other actions. It also would block transaction in any property in which the government of Syria has any interest, by any person or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of here in the United States.

As we can see, there is strong support for this bill. We have almost 300 co-sponsors. One of my colleagues raised concerns about the flexibility issue, and I would like to underscore that we provide the President with ample dis-

cretion in choosing which sanctions to impose.

Secondly, for anyone who believes that the Syrian regime has assisted the U.S. in any way to eradicate terrorism, I would like to note that the statements made on Thursday of last week by the State Department spokesman and he said, "Frankly, the Syrians have done so little with regard to terrorism that we do not have much to work with." He added, "There's not too much grounds for argument that Syria's done anything that would mean that this bill was a bad idea." This is coming from the ultimate diplomatic agency.

Mr. Speaker, this is the end of the line for the Syrian regime. Enough is enough. They have made a mockery of requests by our Secretary of State and by our congressional colleagues. The blood of Americans is on their hands, and for this, they must be called to task. They must be punished, and I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1828.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1828, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003. I am proud to cosponsor this important legislation for the 2nd straight Congress, and I look forward to supporting it today on the floor of the House.

I want to begin, Mr. Speaker, by noting that I do not normally support sanctions legislation. In fact, I believe that all too often, Congress and U.S. administrations place unrealistic expectations on the ability of sanctions to destabilize reckless regimes. We naively believe that placing economic sanctions on countries that, more than not, are not dependent upon U.S. dollars and tourists, will somehow result in countries complying with our demands.

The truth of the matter is, sanctions rarely accomplish what we intend for them to accomplish. We need not look any further than Iraq to see the effect that long-term economic sanctions have on a regime. But what they do accomplish, in this instance, is a shift in U.S. foreign policy toward Syria, a nation that has long supported the efforts of terrorist organizations to attack Israel and the Western world. It is for this reason that I come to the floor today in support of this legislation.

I have long said that one of the true threats to peace and security in the Middle East is not Baghdad, but instead Damascus. While the Bush administration has focused its efforts on disarming Iraq, Syria has continued to fund and harbor terrorist cells living and training within its borders. Until today, the United States government has remained largely silent.

Realize, we should not expect Syria to change its ways simply because we apply new economic sanctions. But in passing this legislation today, we are sending a clear and strong message to the Syrian government that the United States will no longer stand idly by while countries masking as our allies work against us.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Syria Accountability Act. Syria has been on the State Department's list

of countries sponsoring terrorism since the list began in 1979, and recent intelligence reports have only confirmed what we have long thought to be true—that Syria remains an incubator of terrorism and instability in the Middle East and throughout the world.

Syria has refused to shut down the offices of the Islamic Jihad, has permitted weapons to flow freely to Hezbollah, and has allowed Hezbollah to expand terrorist training operations. These terrorists have attacked innocent men, women and children in Israel, and Syria's unwillingness to put a halt to this lawlessness threatens not only Israel but also stability and peace in the region.

In addition to the devastating effect of the Syrian government's willingness to crack down on known terrorist groups within its borders, Syria has allowed fighters seeking to harm American troops to cross its borders. As we ask more and more American service members to put themselves in harm's way in defense of our Nation, it is critical that we also take steps to protect them from known threats.

We must act now by sending a clear message to Syria that they must take a strong stand against terrorism, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Syria Accountability Act.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, the Syria Accountability Act comes to the House floor at a time when the situation in the Middle East is more volatile than ever: the United States' effort to gain control of the situation in Iraq; the breakdown of the Israeli and Palestinian peace negotiations; and the new tensions between Syria, Lebanon and Israel are all major concerns of U.S. Middle East policy.

The proposed legislation, H.R. 1828, could harm the United States' ability to influence various actors in the region and could seriously impair U.S. diplomatic efforts at a very critical time in the Middle East.

At this critical juncture in America's War on Terrorism we should work with Nations like Syria who are aiding our pursuit of the terrorists who attacked America on 9-11.

Since September 11th, 2001, Syria has quietly helped the United States by detaining suspected members of Osama bin Laden's organization. Our government should continue its diplomatic relations with Syria in order to capture these terrorists.

Syria supported the United States by voting in support of U.N. Resolution 1441 asking Iraq to comply with the United Nations and to allow inspectors back into the country.

During America's Operation Iraqi Freedom, Syria assisted the U.S. by supplying power to northern Iraq, thus calming the population, and undoubtedly saving American troops' lives.

In a most recent act of cooperation with the United States and at our request, Damascus has opened its financial and banking institutions allowing us to trace the accounts of the former Saddam Hussein regime.

Syria is currently designated by the U.S. State Department as a state-sponsor of terrorism and, therefore, is already ineligible for U.S. assistance and faces numerous, strict sanctions. This legislation would further restrict the already limited leverage we have with Syria.

Instead of singling out Syria for developing weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, Congress should instead support United Nations resolutions (687, par. 14) pursuing the goal of declaring the whole Middle East a region free from all such weapons and delivery systems. This bill lacks credibility by ignoring Israel's own advanced pursuit of such weapons including nuclear arms.

Imposing unilateral sanctions on Syria would hurt American businesses. At a time when our country is facing increasing unemployment rates, Congress and the Administration should take action to foster economic growth and trade, including with countries in the Middle East, to foster an increase in American jobs.

European and Russian companies have already made contact with Syrian businesses hoping to move in as American companies are forced to leave after adoption of SAA.

This legislation attempts to adopt a simplistic approach to Lebanese-Syrian relations. Both Syria and Lebanon are sovereign countries capable of resolving their own differences without U.S. congressional meddling.

Now is not the time to limit American options as we seek to pursue a long-term comprehensive political solution to conflict in the Middle East. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to stand in opposition to H.R. 1828 as we must remain focused on the difficult issues of the Middle East already at hand.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my strong opposition to this ill-conceived and ill-timed legislation. This bill will impose what is effectively a trade embargo against Syria and will force the severance of diplomatic and business ties between the United States and Syria. It will also significantly impede travel between the United States and Syria. Worse yet, the bill also provides essentially an open-ended authorization for the president to send U.S. taxpayer money to Syria should that country do what we are demanding in this bill.

This bill cites Syria's alleged support for Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestine Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and other terrorist groups as evidence that Syria is posing a threat to the United States. But none of these organizations targets the United States. Not since the Hezbollah bombing of a U.S. Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 has any of these organizations attacked the United States. After that attack on our Marines, who were sent to Beirut to intervene in a conflict that had nothing to do with the United States, President Ronald Reagan wisely ordered their withdrawal from that volatile area. Despite what the interventionists constantly warn, the world did not come to an end back in 1983 when the president decided to withdraw from Beirut and leave the problems there to be worked out by those countries most closely involved.

What troubles me greatly about this bill is that although the named, admittedly bad, terrorist organizations do not target the United States at present, we are basically declaring our intention to pick a fight with them. We are declaring that we will take preemptive actions against organizations that apparently have no quarrel with us. Is this wise, particularly considering their capacity to carry out violent acts against those with whom they are in conflict? Is this not inviting trouble by stirring up a hornet's nest? Is there anything to be gained in this?

This bill imposes an embargo on Syria for, among other reasons, the Syrian government's inability to halt fighters crossing the Syrian border into Iraq. While I agree that any foreign fighters coming into Iraq to attack American troops is totally unacceptable, I wonder just how much control Syria has over its borders—particularly over the chaotic border with Iraq. If Syria has no control over its borders, is it valid to impose sanctions on the country for its inability to halt clandestine bor-

der crossings? I find it a bit ironic to be imposing a trade embargo on Syria for failing to control its borders when we do not have control of our own borders. Scores cross illegally into the United States each year—potentially including those who cross over with the intent to do us harm—yet very little is done to secure our own borders. Perhaps this is because our resources are too engaged guarding the borders of countless countries overseas. But there is no consistency in our policy. Look at the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan: while we continue to maintain friendly relations and deliver generous foreign aid to Pakistan, it is clear that Pakistan does not control its border with Afghanistan. In all likelihood, Osama bin Laden himself has crossed over the Afghan border into Pakistan. No one proposes an embargo on Pakistan. In all likelihood, Osama bin Laden himself has crossed over the Afghan border into Pakistan. On the contrary: the supplemental budget request we are taking up this week includes another \$200 million in loan guarantees to Pakistan.

I am also concerned about the timing of this bill. As we continue to pursue Al-Qaeda—most of which escaped and continue to operate—it seems to me we need all the help we can get in tracking these criminals down and holding them to account for the attack on the United States. As the AP reported recently:

So, too, are Syria's claims, supported by U.S. intelligence, that Damascus has provided the United States with valuable assistance in countering terror.

The Syrians have in custody Mohammed Haydar Zammar, believed to have recruited some of the Sept. 11 hijackers, and several high-level Iraqis who were connected to the Saddam Hussein government have turned up in U.S. custody.

Numerous other press reports detail important assistance Syria has given the U.S. after 9/11. If Syria is providing assistance to the U.S. in tracking these people down—any assistance—passing this bill can only be considered an extremely positive and welcome development. Does anyone here care to guess how much assistance Syria will be providing us once this bill is passed? Can we afford to turn our back on Syria's assistance, even if it is not as complete as it could be?

That is the problem with this approach. Imposing sanctions and cutting off relations with a country is ineffective and counterproductive. It is only one-half step short of war and very often leads to war. This bill may well even completely eliminate any trade between the two countries. It will almost completely shut the door on diplomatic relations. It sends a strong message to Syria and the Syrian people: that we no longer wish to engage you. This cannot be in our best interest.

This bill may even go further than that. In a disturbing bit of *déjà vu*, the bill makes references to "Syria's acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)" and threatens to "impede" Syrian weapons ambitions. This was the justification for our intervention in Iraq, yet after more than a thousand inspectors have spent months and some 300 million dollars none have been found. Will this bill's unproven claims that Syria has WMD be later used to demand military action against that country?

Mr. Speaker: history is replete with examples of the futility of sanctions and embargoes

and travel bans. More than 40 years of embargo against Cuba have not produced the desired change there. Sadly, embargoes and sanctions most often hurt those least responsible. A trade embargo against Syria will hurt American businesses and will cost American jobs. It will make life more difficult for the average Syrian—with whom we have no quarrel. Making life painful for the population is not the best way to win over hearts and minds. I strongly urge my colleagues to reject this counterproductive bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1828, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and our allies around the world have stood steadfast in holding accountable terrorist states, those who harbor or otherwise provide sanctuary for terrorist, or those who threaten the world with weapons of mass destruction. That's what the legislation before us today is all about.

The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 does not advocate the use of force against Syria. Instead, it gives the President and the Secretary of State expanded authority to impose U.S. diplomatic and economic sanctions against Syria unless serious action is taken by Syria to rid itself of the cancer of terror and the policies by which terror manifests itself throughout the region and the world.

It's no secret that Syria hosts terrorist organizations including Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, all of which maintain offices, training camps, and other facilities within Syrian borders and within areas of Lebanon currently occupied by Syria. This is a threat that simply cannot continue to be ignored.

This Act holds Syria accountable for its part in facilitating terrorism and in so doing, threatening the world. It requires Syria to withdraw from the nation of Lebanon, and to finally cease Syria's ongoing pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. It calls for sanctions against Syria including a prohibition on the export of defense and dual-use items. In addition, it also requires the President to impose two or more sanctions which may be waived in the interest of national security. These are: prohibiting the export of products of the U.S. other than food and medicine to Syria; prohibiting U.S. businesses from investing or operating in Syria; restricting the travel of Syrian diplomats to within a 25-mile radius of Washington, DC or the United Nations; reducing levels of U.S. diplomatic contracts with Syria; and blocking transactions in any property in which the Government of Syria has any interest.

Mr. Speaker, let us act today and hold accountable terrorist states by eliminating policies which advance terrorism. Let us pass the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 1828, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003, and am even prouder still to see it on the floor of the House of Representatives today.

This important piece of legislation gives the president the diplomatic tools necessary to hold Syria accountable for its support of terrorism, its weapons of mass destruction program and its occupation of Lebanon. Syria should not be allowed to support terrorist ac-

tivity from groups, such as Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, with continued impunity.

Passage of this bill will require that sanctions be imposed on Syria unless the president can certify that it has taken steps to end its support of terrorism, discontinue its weapons of mass destruction program, and end its occupation of Lebanon. Sanctions could include banning most U.S. exports to, and investment in, Syria; restricting the movement of Syrian diplomats here in the United States; barring Syrian aircraft from our airspace; and freezing Syrian assets in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation, which will put appropriate pressure on a regime that continues to support groups that perpetrate heinous acts of terror against the people of democratic Israel and that further destabilizes an already volatile region.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1828, a resolution that calls for an end to Syria's support for terrorism and an end to its occupation of Lebanon.

In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush stated that the gravest danger facing the United States in the war on terrorism is the acquisition by other countries of weapons of mass destruction, and that we must confront this danger. A senior Administration official recently testified before the Committee on International Relations that Syria remains a security concern as a supporter of international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction proliferation.

I commend the Administration's efforts to reach a diplomatic solution with Syria. President Bush has consistently called on Syria to close its terrorist camps and to expel terrorist organizations. Secretary Powell has worked diligently with the Syrian government towards ending its occupation of Lebanon. Since 1990, the U.S. Congress has passed seven resolutions calling on the withdrawal of Syrian armed forces from Lebanon. Many members of Congress—including myself—have been to Syria and urged the Syrian government to work with the United States in the war against terrorism. And despite our diplomatic efforts, Syria has not fulfilled its pledge to work with us.

Mr. Speaker, we know that Syria continues to offer protection to terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Recently, Syria conducted efforts to acquire technology that could be applied to a nuclear weapons program. Syria has also undermined coalition efforts to bring stability to Iraq by allowing volunteers to cross the border and fight our service members. And as we all know, Syria has ignored numerous United Nations resolutions calling on Syria to end its occupation of Lebanon, a sovereign nation.

H.R. 1828 would hold Syria accountable for the serious international security problems it has caused in the Middle East. This resolution would instruct the President to impose economic sanctions on Syria until the Department of State determines that Syria ceases to provide support to international terrorist groups, ceases the development and deployment of weapons, and withdraws all military forces from Lebanon.

Mr. Speaker, despite our many attempts to reach a diplomatic solution, Syria continues to obstruct our efforts in the war against terrorism. I support H.R. 1828 and encourage my colleagues in the House to vote in favor of this important resolution.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, for far too long, Syria has been an exceedingly irresponsible partner in the troubled Middle East. By our actions over the last two years, the United States has already sent a strong message to Syria and has gotten some cooperation in anti-terrorist efforts.

The current downward spiral of violence is not working for the Palestinians and is not making Israel more secure. We should use our resources to get the parties to resume steps to reduce pressures, tensions and bloodshed.

Since I agree with the indictments of Syrian behavior contained in H.R. 1828 I would not be comfortable voting "no." Yet, I agree with most independent commentators that passage at this time would not be helpful for our efforts to advance the peace. I choose to vote "present."

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to enter into the RECORD an opinion piece that I wrote about the future of our relationship with Syria. This piece was published in the San Francisco Chronicle on October 14, 2003.

I also want to join my colleagues today in expressing deep concern about the choices that Syria has made over the past year. This is a sad day for American diplomacy. The passage of this bill, after more than two years of debate, marks the refusal of Syria to accept our diplomatic overtures. Syria has had numerous opportunities to demonstrate that it intends to move away from the policies that keep it on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terror. It has consistently missed those opportunities, and now faces the specter of isolation.

Syria had the chance to play a key role in securing the release of Elhanan Tenebaum, Adi Avitan, Benny Avraham, and Omar Sawayid—Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah. They refused, perpetuating a hostage situation that makes peace negotiations more difficult.

Syria had the chance to grant the United States use of its airspace for Operation Iraqi Freedom. They refused, thereby dramatically increasing the risk of mission failure for American pilots.

Syria had the chance to build good will toward the United States by staying out of the war in Iraq. They refused, allowing jihadis and military equipment to flow across their borders to kill American soldiers.

Syria had the chance to demonstrate its commitment to the peace process by supporting President Bush's Roadmap to Peace initiative. Secretary Powell specifically asked Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to close offices of Palestinian terrorist groups and to expel terrorist leaders operating out of Damascus. He refused, choosing instead to continue Syrian financial and logistical support for terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians.

Following the war in Iraq, Syria had the chance to build good will in the United Nations. They were repeatedly asked to support a constructive UN presence in Iraq. Instead, they opted to pursue a diplomatic agenda that drove divisions between the United States and other members of the UN Security Council.

Syria has had the chance to withdraw its troops and end its dominance of Lebanon. They refused, choosing to maintain their intimidating military and intelligence presence in Lebanon.

And finally, Syria has had the chance to rein in Hezbollah. I have personally asked senior Syrian government officials to disarm Hezbollah, arguing that Syria's interests are best served through peace negotiations. These requests have been consistently rejected. Syria continues to provide strategic, financial, and logistical support to Hezbollah in a misguided effort to keep the Lebanese conflict with Israel burning.

These issues are not imagined and they are not part of some secret Israeli agenda, as the Syrians believe. They are real problems that have driven a wedge between our two nations. I don't know if this bill will succeed in changing Syria's behavior—sanctions are rarely an effective long-term solution. But we cannot ignore the fact that Syria and the United States are moving in two very different directions. Diplomacy with Syria has failed. Syria has been given a choice and it has chosen poorly.

[From the San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 14, 2003]

OPINION/EDITORIAL

(By Darrell Issa)

During a recent visit to Damascus, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad told me "we want to be part of this world—we do not want to be isolated like North Korea." This statement demonstrated that the young Syrian president understands that Syria is heading down a path toward complete isolation.

Unfortunately, President Assad also appears to believe that he can postpone isolation indefinitely by straddling two very different paths. One is the path of cooperation. The Bush administration has noted that, following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Syria provided us with valuable intelligence on al Qaeda that ultimately saved American lives. President Assad opened up his office to visiting American officials—something his father, the late Hafez Assad—was reluctant to do. He has talked about Syria becoming a member of the World Trade Organization and expressed interest in visiting the United States.

But Bashar Assad has also perpetuated Syrian policies that keep it on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. He has failed to fully shut down Palestinian terrorist offices that operate out of Damascus. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, he failed to stop the flow of jihadis and military equipment across the border that killed American soldiers.

The most troubling concern for America, however, is Syria's intention to support Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed terrorist organization that continues to fight a proxy war with Israel and provide assistance to other terrorist groups like Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage has referred to Hezbollah as the "A-team of terrorism." Hezbollah operatives are responsible for the murder of more than 250 American peacekeepers and diplomats in Beirut in the 1980s. They are suspected in carrying out two bombings in Argentina that killed over 100 civilians. Imad Mughniah, the suspected mastermind of numerous terrorist attacks against Americans, is a senior adviser in Hezbollah's organizational structure. There is evidence that Hezbollah operatives have infiltrated Iraq to join attacks against American soldiers. As senior Bush administration officials have stated repeatedly, Bashar Assad has a choice to make: Either cooperate and be rewarded or continue to support terrorism and risk total isolation.

Assad's strategy of trying to keep one foot on each path will not work much longer. He may be faced with isolation sooner than he

thinks. The Syria Accountability Act, which could mandate isolation at the levels of Libya or Iran, is now poised to move quickly through Congress. Until recently, the Bush administration opposed the act, arguing that it is the president's constitutional responsibility to determine the nature of diplomatic relations with foreign countries. But as Syria consistently showed no sign of changing its dangerous policies, the White House changed its mind and has now given the act the green light.

The result for Syria will be devastating. Libya has learned the costs of total isolation as a result of supporting global terrorism. Only after a decade of international rejection has Libya begun to dig its way out of isolation. Bashar Assad has but a few days left to change direction: to put both feet on the path of cooperation and lead Syria into the community of nations.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1828 as a part of my hope and commitment to finding a just, permanent, democratic, prompt, non-military conclusion to our occupation of Iraq and as part of my hope and commitment to doggedly pursue a roadmap to peace, security and justice for both the people of Israel and the people of Palestine.

There is no magic bullet, no simple solution to bringing an end to terrorism. What we do know is we cannot win alone, that we must find the means to enlist every nation as an ally. Our record, to date, in this regard can only be characterized as poor.

The President has reported that the territory of Syria has been, and is being, used as a base by certain terrorist organizations.

This bill gives the President additional diplomatic and economic leverage in the war on terror. Our goal is to deny sanctuary to terrorist who may be using the territory of Syria.

Our aim is to become partners with Syria in the war on terror, not to make Syria an enemy, not to punish the Syrian people.

We trust that these new options will offer constructive new possibilities and potential to American diplomacy and that these new powers will be used wisely and constructively.

Mr. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1828, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, October 14, 2003, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for a period of debate on the subject of

a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for defense and the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004.

□ 1758

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for a period of debate on the subject of a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for defense and the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, with Mr. LATOURETTE in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), or their designees, each will control 2½ hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YOUNG of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, before we get started, let me announce for the membership that we expect to begin the 5 hours of debate agreed to under the unanimous consent agreement on the fiscal year 2004 Supplemental Appropriations Act at this time, and we will continue through roughly 6:30 or 6:45 this evening. At that time, the committee will rise and the previous votes that were postponed will be called.

After the votes, we will continue with the general debate through ten o'clock this evening. At that time, the committee will rise.

Tomorrow morning, we will resume debate with any remaining time allocated under the unanimous consent agreement. Tomorrow there will also be one hour of debate on the rule and one additional hour of general debate on the supplemental before beginning the amendment process.

□ 1800

I am hopeful that with the assistance of our colleagues that we will be able to enter into a unanimous consent agreement to limit debate and amendments so that the House will have a full opportunity to dispose of the supplemental before adjourning on Friday.

Mr. Chairman, last week, the Committee on Appropriations ordered this legislation reported by a vote of 47 to 14. The bill recommended by the committee provides total discretionary supplemental appropriations of \$86.9 billion for reconstruction activities in both Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as funding for our military presence in both countries. We have had hearings and briefings to better understand the President's request. We have scrubbed the request, and we have made some