

HENRY J. HYDE UNITED NATIONS
REFORM ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2745) to reform the United Nations, and for other purposes:

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak in support of the Lantos Shays substitute and in opposition to the United Nations Reform Bill sponsored by Chairman HYDE.

While I am concerned about the withholding of funding from the United Nations, I believe that reforms are needed within this world body while enhancing not diminishing the U.S.'s moral authority in this august body.

While I agree with many of my colleagues who have spoken on this bill that reform is needed, I am troubled by the way Chairman HYDE has drafted this bill.

I have great respect for the Chairman but I think the bill could have been drafted in a less draconian manner.

This bill makes it almost impossible for the United Nations to complete all the reforms within the time frame that has been set.

I do not believe that the United States should be withholding contributions if reforms are not made at the pace this bill sets them at.

Withholding our contributions from the United Nations until certain programs are shifted to voluntary is something that all of the member states would have to approve and I do not believe that this bill gives a reasonable enough time frame.

The Lantos Shays substitute will arm the United States to promote serious reforms and not just forcing to cut off funds to the United Nations that would be counterproductive to our national interests.

The substitute keeps the reform of the Chairman HYDE's bill as a goal, but does not link it to a mandatory \$100 million deduction in U.S. contributions.

Another important difference between the Chairman's bill and the substitute is the inflexibility on the issue of peacekeeping.

The substitute retains the much needed reforms on peace keeping instead of just cutting aid to these missions. The substitute will provide the Secretary of State with a waiver in the event that a new mission is essential to America's national interest.

We all know that the United States has problems and we see one of the most evident ones in its treatment of the state of Israel.

The General Assembly has turned itself into a forum to bash Israel and until recently it had a policy equating Zionism as racism.

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights also routinely castigates Israel and the General Assembly has gone out of its way to pass a one-sided resolution condemning Israel for protecting its citizens from terrorism.

The General Assembly created two committees which focus negatively on Israeli actions and protectively on the Palestinians: the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, and the Committee on the Exercise of

the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The United Nation needs to be reformed so it is a body of creating diplomacy and understanding not a forum for hate.

I do believe the United Nations needs to be reformed to remain a strong supporter not just because of its close proximity to my Congressional district or the large amounts of my constituents who work at the United Nations but because I strongly believe in the founding principals of the United Nations.

This multilateral organization has helped the world come together since its creation and brought us out of the horrors of World War II. If we truly want to work toward reform we must work with our friends and partners to make this happen—not just threaten the loss of contributions.

This will solve none of the reforms that are needed so badly to get the United Nations back on the right tract.

I do not support this bill in its current form and urge all of my colleagues to support the Lantos Shays substitute so we can start to have a real dialogue on the much needed reform of the United Nations.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF
ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT ON
U.S. INTERESTS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the death of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the emergence of a new Palestinian leadership, and the government of Israel's proposed disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank have created a high degree of optimism in the International Community that we are on the cusp of dramatic new openings in the Middle East peace process.

As a senior Member of the House International Relations Committee, I have watched the often turbulent goings on in the Middle East for a few years to say the least, and my experience tells me that our optimism should be tempered by the lessons of the past. In fact, I believe we should take a very cautious view of the current round of Israeli Palestinian peacemaking, particularly with regard to Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.

I have met Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and I know that he is a fine man. I am sure he firmly believes that this "strategic retreat" from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the West Bank is the best way to guarantee Israel's long-term security by allowing Israel to conserve and consolidate military and security resources, reducing opportunities for further friction with the Palestinians, and potentially reducing pressure on Israel to negotiate a final peace settlement on unfavorable terms. Personally, I will not second guess the Prime Minister's wisdom; I very much hope that he is right. But again, my experience tells me that if you take steps to appease an enemy you only give him a green light to put more pressure on you. In my opinion, it is imperative and critical to U.S. National Security that we as policymakers understand the consequences should the Israeli disengagement plan fail to live up to expectations.

I was recently presented a copy of an interesting opinion piece by Ambassador Yoram Ettinger—former Minister for Congressional Affairs at Israel's Embassy in Washington, Israeli Consul General in Houston, and Director of Israel's Government Press Office; and currently editor of "Straight from the Jerusalem Cloakroom and Boardroom" newsletters—regarding the potential consequences of ceding Israeli territory to terrorists. I would like to have the text of this Op-Ed placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

[May 26, 2005]

JERUSALEM CLOAKROOM #178: THE IMPACT OF
DISENGAGEMENT ON U.S. INTERESTS

(By Yoram Ettinger)

1. Escalated Terrorism. The morally/strategically justifiable demolition of terror regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan is inconsistent with the creation/bolstering of a terror regime in Gaza, Judea and Samaria. The 1994-6 series of disengagement from 85 percent and 40 percent of the territory (and 100 percent and 95 percent of the population) of Gaza and Judea and Samaria have established the largest terrorist base in the world, led/harbored by PLO/PA graduates of terrorist camps in Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Libya and Tunisia. Since 1993 the PA has harbored anti-U.S. terrorists. U.S. GIs in Afghanistan and Iraq were encountered by Palestinian terrorists.

2. Higher U.S. Terror Casualties. The July 2000 disengagement from Southern Lebanon propelled Hizbullah from a local, to a regional, profile, haunting U.S. GIs in Iraq and Afghanistan and threatening U.S. homeland security.

3. Contradicting U.S. War on Terrorism. Disengagement is perceived, by the Mideast, as cut and run, appeasement and cave-in, in sharp contrast to U.S. war on terrorism: No negotiation with—and no concession to—terrorists; no ceasefire with—but destruction of—terrorist regimes; no political—but military—solution to terrorism.

4. Setback to Peace. The only peace attainable in the (inter-Arab) Mideast is deterrence-driven peace. Disengagement undermines deterrence; hence it sets the area farther from peace and closer to exacerbated terrorism and an all out war. Every square inch ceded by Israel to the PA, since the 1994 disengagement, has been transformed into a platform of hate-education and homicide bombing.

5. Tailwind to Anti-U.S. Terrorists. While the 1976 Israeli Entebbe Operation constituted a tailwind to the U.S. war on terrorism, the 1993-2005 retreat by the role-model of countering terrorism (Israel) in face of the role-model of terrorism (PLO/PA) has added more fuel to the fire of terrorism. Disengagement has been heralded by the PLO/PA and other Arabs as a crucial victory, frequently compared to the U.S. flight from Beirut (1983) and Somalia (1993). It would nurture Arab hope that neither the U.S. nor Israel possess a marathon-like steadfastness, required for a long-term victory.

6. PA Feeds Anti-U.S. Terrorism. A correlation has existed between the bolstering of PLO stock since Oslo 1993 on one hand, and the exacerbation of anti-U.S. terrorism on the other hand (since the 1993 Twin Towers I, through the 1995 Khobar Towers, the 1998 Kenya and Tanzania U.S. embassies, the 2000 USS Cole and 2001 Twin Towers II); the wider the maneuverability of the PLO/PA, the deeper the inspiration to regional anti-U.S. terrorism, irrespective of (and probably due to) U.S. and Israeli appeasement of—and unprecedented concessions to—the PLO/PA.

7. Undermining the Stability of Pro-U.S. Regimes (e.g. Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar,

etc.). Disengagement would enhance the profile of the PLO/PA, a lethal threat to the Hashemite regime and a chief ally of radical regimes in the Mideast and beyond. PLO-Hashemite relations have been a classic case of zero-sumgame: The stronger the PLO the weaker the Hashemites. The rise of the PLO/PA has emboldened subversive anti-U.S. terrorists in Jordan and in the Gulf area.

8. Strengthening Anti-U.S. Mideast Regimes. Disengagement would buttress the PLO/PA, which has been a sustained ally of the Saddam and bin Laden forces, of Khomeini and his successors in Iran, of the terrorist regime in Sudan and other anti-U.S. Mideast regimes. A stronger PA would be a liability—to the U.S.—in the U.N. and in the context of Clash of Civilizations.

9. Inigorating Mideast Profile of U.S. Global Rivals. The strengthening of the PLO/PA would facilitate the road to a re-assertive Russia in the Mideast. It would improve the strategic posture of China and North Korea in the region, at the expense of vital U.S. concerns, including U.S. standard of living.

10. Ignoring Plight of Christians. The 1995 disengagement from Bethlehem and Beit Jallah has accelerated the flight of Christians, caused by PLO/PA oppression and desecration of churches.

11. Setback to Mideast Democratization. Disengagement would promote the most corrupt and repressive Arab regime in the Mideast, rewarding a terrorist regime, thus dealing a blow to moderate Palestinians.

12. Undermining Israel-Egypt Peace. The 1979 peace treaty disengaged Israeli and Egyptian military forces from one another. The Plan of Disengagement would reengage them in a terror-ridden area, thus fueling unintentional and intentional confrontations. It could drag the U.S. unnecessarily into such conflict. Egypt has facilitated/tolerated the smuggling of terror hardware, missiles and mortars into Gaza. It has undermined U.S. interests in Africa, in the Red Sea and in the U.N., and it has spearheaded anti-Jewish Arab/Palestinian hate education (PA hate education employs Egyptian school text books).

13. PLO's Track Record of Inter-Arab Treachery. Abu Mazen Abu Ala', Inc. fled Egypt (late 1950s) for subversive activities. They escaped Syria (1966) for betraying their hosts. They were expelled from Jordan for attempting to topple the Hashemite regimes via terrorism. They exacerbated a series of civil wars in Lebanon since 1975. They spearheaded Saddam's invasion of Kuwait (1990), which hosted them since the 1950s. Their systematic violent violation of the 1993 Oslo Accords have been consistent with their inter-Arab back-stabbing. Disengagement would be viewed—by the PLO/PA as a reward to treachery, which would vindicate the aforementioned track record.

HONORING ARMY PRIVATE FIRST
CLASS JOHN HAROLD BERG

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, last month, I had the honor and privilege of attending the annual Memorial Day Vietnam Wall observance, in which one of my constituents and friends, the late Army PFC John Harold Berg of Rockford, Illinois, was honored for his service to our country. John was gravely injured in

Vietnam, but he passed up his 100 percent disability status when he returned because he wanted to help others. Despite a host of serious medical issues, John served as a veterans representative for 25 years at the Illinois Department of Employment Security before he died in 2003 from cancer caused by shrapnel lodged in his brain from his Vietnam injury. On Memorial Day, I sat with John's widow, Lynn, and several of John's friends as his name was one of just four this year officially added to the Vietnam Wall. It was a remarkable day for a remarkable man. I have attached a newspaper article written by Judy Emerson of the Rockford Register Star that describes John's contributions and his character perfectly:

ADDING SOLDIERS TO THE WALL

One hundred years from now, someone will read the name "John H. Berg" cut into black granite on The Wall in Washington, D.C., and they will assume he died in Vietnam in the spring of 1968. Berg was fatally wounded April 7, 1968, in combat near Khe Sahn, but it took him 37½ years to die. When he did, on Oct. 10, 2003, it was in his rural Rockford home surrounded by family. But the Vietnam War took his life, just as surely as if he had died that spring day long ago as he lay in the dirt with blood streaming from the hole in his skull. Medics postponed his death that day. Military doctors patched him up as well as they could and sent him home to Rockford with a plate covering the hole in his skull and shrapnel still embedded in his brain.

He dragged his left leg, and his left hand was useless. He slurred his words. Back in Rockford, he couldn't find a job. A talented musician, he was bitterly disappointed that he couldn't play piano, organ, violin and guitar, as he once did. But he went to college. He re-learned how to play his instruments with only his right hand and arm. He sought the company of other Vietnam veterans who understood the struggle. He found a job that gave him purpose. For 25 years, he was a veterans representative at the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Over the years, he helped thousands of veterans find jobs and get benefits to which they were entitled. Many were disabled, as he was.

In 2002, doctors found the tumor growing under the plate in Berg's head. His widow, Lynn Berg, said doctors found shrapnel when they tried to carve away the tumor and buy her husband a little more time. Even fighting the relentless growth of a malignant tumor, Berg continued to work. He lived longer than anybody expected.

When he died, his buddies at VietNow, which he'd helped to start, began the process to have his name added to The Wall, the Vietnam Memorial in Washington. The Department of Defense concluded that Berg's fatal wound was incurred in Vietnam in 1968 and that he qualified to have his name listed on the memorial. And so, Berg's name was carved on The Wall earlier this month. A small diamond after the name signifies a confirmed combat death. His name was placed as close as possible to those of other soldiers who suffered their fatal injuries on the same day. The thinking is that they should be together. His father, 86-year-old Harold John Berg, said that the memorial was waiting for his son, despite the 37½-year reprieve from death. "We saw the wall once," the elder Berg said. "And now we go the rest of the way. He's on it." John H. Berg of Rockford was fatally wounded in Vietnam April 7, 1968. He died Oct. 10, 2003. What he did in between is the story.

TALENTED BOY

Harold Berg was a machinist and inspector who retired from Camcar years ago. His health is poor but his memory and spirits are good. His wife, 80-year-old Vergene, has Alzheimer's disease. They spend their days in side-by-side hospital beds in the Cherry Valley home of their daughter Hilary Belcher, who cares for them. Her husband, Nick, and 9-year-old daughter, Chenoa, help.

Young John Berg wanted to be a musician. His mother was a long-time organist for their church, and her firstborn son also played the organ, as well as piano, violin and guitar. A 1965 graduate of East High School, John took some classes at Rock Valley College until he was drafted in the summer of 1967. "We tried to talk him into going into the Air Force, but he thought he'd get this over with in two years," his dad said. By January 1968, 20-year-old John was in Vietnam. His early letters home to his parents, three younger sisters and a brother revealed a diminishing innocence as reality and the futility of the mission sank in. "I only hope this year goes fast and I come back in one piece," he wrote two weeks before his injury.

His wife, Lynn, said John could remember what happened during the firefight on April 7, 1968, up until he was wounded. He was feeding an ammunition belt into a machine gun being fired by another soldier when he turned to dive for cover from incoming mortar. It's still unclear whether he was shot in the head or hit by shrapnel or both. He was unconscious or semiconscious for weeks. The Western Union telegram arrived early one weekday morning as Harold Berg was getting ready for work. "Deep regret . . . very seriously ill list . . . penetrating fragment wound to the head." Vergene couldn't stop crying. Hilary Belcher, who's 15 years younger than John, doesn't remember too much about the time, except that her parents were distraught.

The telegrams kept coming with updates on her brother's condition, and after John was transferred to a hospital in Denver, Colo., the family drove out there to see him. "I remember walking down a long hallway and doorway after doorway, there were all these men with holes in their heads, just like John," Belcher said. "We took him out for a while. You could hardly understand him when he talked." Months later, when he came home, she said, "I ran out to him saying 'John's home! John's home!' He screamed. He thought I was going to knock him down. "I used to run to him and he'd throw me up in the air." There was plenty of trauma to go around.

"Those first eight years, he was very angry," Belcher said. "When you get a head injury, it changes your whole personality." John was bitter that he couldn't play his instruments. His disability was obvious, and nobody would hire him. "It took him years to find a job. He even applied to a gas station to pump gas, but they told him, 'You only have one hand,'" Belcher said. He decided to go back to Rock Valley College. There, he met Reuben Johnson, dean of community services and the producer and founder of Starlight Theatre. Johnson helped Berg learn to play the piano, organ, guitar and violin with one hand.

It was a turning point, as was the job Berg landed in July 1977 as a veterans representative at the Illinois Department of Employment Security. He was good at it, said Jack