

as the hijacking of TWA 847 in 1995 and Hezbollah's role in the 1994 bombing of the Israel-Argentine Mutual Aid Association in Buenos Aires that killed 85, right up to the terrorist attack this summer at a Bulgarian airport that killed six, Hezbollah has shown its propensity to attack civilians and to attack them anywhere in the world. It's also shown its propensity to attack even within Lebanon, where the group is responsible for the 2005 assassination of Prime Minister Hariri.

Hezbollah and its state sponsor Iran continually spread anti-U.S. and anti-Israel rhetoric and excitement, with Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah recently threatening to rain down rockets on Israel "from the Lebanese border to Jordan to the Red Sea, from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat," prompting harsh rebukes from several prominent members of Lebanon's Parliament.

By failing to label Hezbollah a terrorist organization, Hezbollah is free to continue its operations, including recruiting and fundraising in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, we deeply value our relationship with our European allies, including our joint commitment to combatting terror around the globe. We appreciate their partnership in enacting crushing sanctions designed to thwart Iran's nuclear ambitions, but we do not understand the failure of our friends to join together in stopping this organization's reign of terror. That's why we are here this morning speaking about House Resolution 834.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I'd like to thank my friend, Congressman KELLY, as well as Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member BERMAN for their leadership on this issue.

My friend, Mr. ENGEL, the incoming ranking member, I look forward to working with you, continuing to work on these vitally important issues.

I urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to support this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I also have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and thank my good friend Mr. KELLY for authoring it.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution urges the governments of Europe and the European Union to designate Hezbollah a terrorist organization, so that it will not be able to raise funds and recruit operatives in Europe.

Since Hezbollah is one of the most active, dangerous, ruthless, and evil terrorist groups in the world, this should be the most obvious thing in the world for the European governments to do—the minimum action which they should be in a hurry to do on their own, without any urging from anybody.

One reason many European countries have not done so is the ongoing presence of anti-Semitism in Europe. It's a very sad story, but

it's undeniably true that in many European countries large minorities or even majorities of the population hold attitudes that can only be described as anti-Semitic. Regarding this I'd like to recommend to my colleagues a March 2012 study of the Anti-Defamation League on "Attitudes Toward Jews in Ten European Countries." It is shocking but necessary reading—I will be happy to share it with any of my colleagues.

Further, in Europe anti-Semitic opinion doesn't hide its head furtively. Rather people who are not anti-Semitic accept various forms of anti-Semitic statement and attitudes into seemingly "mainstream" discussion, where it's allowed to influence government policy—that is, anti-Semitic public opinion limits what some governments are willing to say and do in fighting anti-Semitism.

So with this resolution we are also urging the European governments, and the European Union, to deal more pro-actively, much more pro-actively, with anti-Semitism in Europe. Denounce anti-Semitic actions and statements whenever they occur—this is a fundamental responsibility of every elected official. As elected officials, we always have a special responsibility to anyone in danger—and this resolution documents very well that Hezbollah is an extraordinarily dangerous terrorist group.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I do want to recognize the many European parliamentarians who have worked hard in fighting anti-Semitism in Europe. I've worked with many of them over the years, particularly in the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE and in the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism.

This resolution, with its careful documentation of the extraordinary danger posed by Hezbollah, will provide Europeans engaged in fighting anti-Semitism with a tool they can take to their governments and demand that they be much more pro-active against anti-Semitism. For it is anti-Semitism that creates the poisonous atmosphere in which Hezbollah operates.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this excellent resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, As a cosponsor of H. Res. 834, I rise to thank Representatives KELLY and DEUTCH for bringing this important resolution to the floor today and to encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the measure.

H. Res. 834 urges the governments of Europe and the European Union to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. According to John Brennan, the deputy national security advisor, Europe's failure to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist group makes it more difficult to defend the citizens of the European Union and the United States because Hezbollah is able to openly raise funds in some European countries and because EU countries are unable to prosecute Hezbollah members suspected of plotting terrorist attacks.

Hezbollah has been implicated in multiple acts of terrorism over the past 30 years, including the bombings in Lebanon in 1983 of the United States Embassy, the United States Marine barracks, and the French Army barracks, the airline hijackings and the kidnapping of European, American, and other Western hostages in the 1980s and 1990s. Before al Qaeda's attack on the U.S. on September 11, 2001, Hezbollah was responsible for killing

more Americans in terrorist attacks than any other terrorist group. Today, Hezbollah is training militants in Yemen and Syria and continues to provide financial and material support to the regime of Bashar al Assad.

This resolution urges the governments of Europe and the European Union to forbid Hezbollah from using EU territory for the purpose of fundraising, recruitment, financing, training and propaganda and it will help protect European and American lives. I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 834.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

REQUESTING EGYPT RETURN NOOR AND RAMSAY BOWER TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 193) calling on the new Government of Egypt to honor the rule of law and immediately return Noor and Ramsay Bower to the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 193

Whereas Colin Bower's 2 young sons, Noor and Ramsay Bower, were illegally abducted from the United States by their mother in August 2009 and taken to Egypt;

Whereas Noor William Noble Bower, age 11, and Ramsay Maclean Bower, age 9, are citizens of the United States of America;

Whereas, on December 1, 2008, prior to the abduction of Noor and Ramsay, the Probate and Family Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts awarded sole legal custody of Noor and Ramsay to Colin Bower, and joint physical custody with Mirvat el Nady, which ruling stipulated Mirvat el Nady was not to remove Noor and Ramsay from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts;

Whereas, in August of 2009, following a violation of the Probate Court's ruling, the Massachusetts Trial Court granted sole physical custody of Noor and Ramsay to their father, Colin Bower;

Whereas Colin Bower has been granted only 4 visitations with his sons in the more than 3 years since the abduction;

Whereas the United States has expressed its commitment, through the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, done at the Hague October 25, 1980, "to protect children internationally from the harmful effects of their wrongful removal or retention and to establish procedures to ensure their prompt return to the State of their habitual residence"; and

Whereas the United States and 69 other countries that are partners to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction have agreed, and encourage all other countries to concur, that the appropriate court for determining the best interests of children in custody matters is the court in the country of their habitual residence: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives calls on government officials and competent courts in Egypt to assist in the safe and immediate return of Noor and Ramsay Bower to the United States.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material into the RECORD on this measure.

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, 3½ years ago, Colin Bower's two sons, Noor and Ramsay, were abducted from the United States by their mother in violation of the custody ruling given by the courts of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The boys' mother used forged passports to remove the boys from the United States and take them to her native land of Egypt, despite the fact that a court ruling stipulated that she was not to remove them from Massachusetts. Last I checked, Egypt was not in Red Sox country.

One of the objectives of the Hague Convention, Mr. Speaker, on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction—of which Egypt and the United States are members—is to ensure that custody rights and access under the law of one contracting state are respected in the others. That means helping to bring Noor and Ramsay home to their father.

The resolution is not calling for anything extraordinary. We are simply appealing to the Egyptian Government to uphold its responsibilities and return these two boys to their rightful home.

I would like to thank my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) for working so diligently to secure the safe and speedy return of these boys to their dad. This bipartisan measure deserves our unanimous support.

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

□ 1300

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 193 and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

This resolution calls on the new Government of Egypt to immediately re-

turn two kidnapped American children to their father in the United States.

In August of 2009, Colin Bower of Wellesley, Massachusetts, received a terrifying phone call that his two children—Noor and Ramsay, ages 9 and 7 at the time—had been abducted to Egypt by his ex-wife, Mirvat el Nady. Mr. Bower was granted sole legal custody of the children after his divorce.

El Nady lost custody over the children because the Massachusetts courts found her to have a drug addiction which put the safety of the boys at risk. She utilized falsified Egyptian passports to smuggle the children out of the country on an Egypt Air flight and is now wanted by Federal and local officials on charges of kidnapping.

The facts of this case are heart-breaking, and I want to thank my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), for working so hard on this resolution and trying to reunite Mr. Bower with his children.

The resolution before us asks for three simple things: first, that Egypt bring about the safe return of Noor and Ramsay Bower to their father, Colin Bower, in the United States; secondly, that Egypt immediately stop using its own security forces to aid and abet the continued unlawful retention of these two United States citizens; and, thirdly and finally, it urges Egypt and all other nations to join and fully participate in The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and to establish procedures to promptly and equitably address the tragedy of child abductions.

During this holiday season, we are reminded that children are our most important and cherished resource, and it is a tragedy for everyone involved when they are taken away and denied access to one of their parents.

Egypt's Government must do better. What the Mubarak and now Morsi governments have done is actively work to make sure Mr. Bower is not part of his children's lives. This is unjust, illegal, tragic, and unacceptable; and sadly, Mr. Speaker, this is but one of 31 separate cases involving American children wrongfully removed from the United States to Egypt.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues join me in supporting this important resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, my thanks go to the chair of the committee, the gentlewoman from Florida, the ranking member from California (Mr. BERMAN), and the new ranking member from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for giving us a chance to try to achieve not just justice but love, the love of a father for children for whom he grieves daily because they were illegally and abusively kidnapped.

As the gentlewoman from Florida pointed out, this kidnapping was in violation of a decision by the family court in Massachusetts giving full custody to the father. Members will not be surprised to learn that there have been very few complaints, that I've ever heard of, of there being a bias in favor of fathers in those courts. Some say there's a bias in favor of mothers. There is certainly a presumption, as I understand it, in favor of mothers. So for a court to say unequivocally that the father gets sole control is a strong indication of the unfitness of the mother.

And so the case is very clear; but I want in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, to address the Government of Egypt. There's a new government in Egypt. There are points of friction between Egypt and the United States. We have a great interest in a good relationship. The foundation of peace in the Middle East began in 1979 with the Camp David Accords. America has consistently provided Egypt with more foreign assistance than all but a handful of nations. And in this current period when there are issues that could arise that could divide us, I urge the Egyptian Government not to put or keep in place a serious problem, not an irritant. It's more than an irritant when a loving father who has been given custody of his children because of the court's decision that the mother is unfit by virtue of a drug addiction, when he is denied the ability to have his paternal instincts honored, to be able to honor and protect his children. And I urge the Government of Egypt: do not minimize the extent to which this will be an obstacle.

I will not be here in a week, Mr. Speaker. I didn't think I'd be here this week. But I know that my successor in Congress, Mr. KENNEDY, and my colleagues, the chair of the committee and the ranking member, will not forget this. The Government of Egypt will be seeking from this House support of measures, and there are a lot of reasons why we want to work together. I plead with them, do not allow what to us is a very serious issue—perhaps to some in Egypt it appears minor—but to have a father's children taken away from him and kidnapped with the implicit cooperation of the prior Egyptian Government is a grave problem. If the current Egyptian Government does not correct this situation, it will be an obstacle to the kind of cooperation that is in our mutual interest.

I hope we get a very large, indeed unanimous, vote for this resolution and the Egyptian Government understands that it is not just justice but its best interests that call for compliance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to again reiterate the fact that I support this bill very strongly and also, since Mr. FRANK spoke before me, I want to, as I mentioned before with some of the other people, tell him

how much I appreciate being his colleague through the years and how much not only I will miss him and the Congress will miss him but that the country will miss him. It's been wonderful to call him a colleague, even better for me to call him a friend, and I wish him the best in all future endeavors. Thank you very much, BARNEY.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I also will miss Mr. FRANK for his friendship and his great insight on many of the issues, and I thank him so much for caring deeply about constituents in his district, and we will continue to fight on their behalf.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 193, calling on the new government of Egypt to honor the rule of law and immediately return American citizens Noor and Ramsey Bower to the United States. It is absolutely appalling and inexcusable that more than three years after a textbook abduction, the new government of Egypt has yet to right the terrible wrong that has been perpetrated upon Noor and Ramsey, as well as upon their father, Colin Bower.

Noor and Ramsey were abducted and hidden with the assistance of the previous Egyptian government August 2009. The boys' mother had lost custody of the children in the United States because of her drug use and psychological problems. Their father, Mr. Bower, was their primary caregiver.

For the last three years, Colin Bower has been doing everything in his power to find out if his sons are safe and to be reunited with them. In July of 2011, he testified before my subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights—and conveyed his frustration over the lack of priority abduction cases receive in U.S. foreign policy.

This sentiment is shared by the thousands of American parents whose American children have been abducted to foreign jurisdictions, often in violation of valid U.S. court orders. Every year, more than a thousand additional families are anguished by an abduction. We are losing our children and are not bringing them home.

At that same hearing, we heard from Michael Elias, an Iraqi veteran from New Jersey, who told this committee of his anguish after his ex-wife used her Japanese consulate connections to abduct Jade and Michael Jr., after the New Jersey court had ordered surrender of passports and joint custody.

His ex-wife flagrantly disregarded those valid court orders telling Michael Elias, "My country [Japan] will protect me." She was right. Both the U.S. embassy personnel and Mr. Elias have been unable to even see the American citizen children since 2008—much less return them to their home.

The U.S. talks about the problem with Japan, and talks, and talks—but Japan has yet to issue and enforce a court order to return a single American child.

In the case of Egypt, we have provided more than \$4 billion in aid and debt relief since the abduction of Noor and Ramsey in 2009—despite the fact that Egypt has continued to flagrantly violate valid U.S. court or-

ders, prevent Mr. Bower from seeing his sons, and otherwise aid and abet a kidnapping.

The United States can and must do more to demand that our would-be allies respect the rule of law and return our abducted children. H. Res. 193 is a step in the right direction. Specifically, H. Res. 193 "urges Egypt and all other nations—such as Japan—to join and fully participate in the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, and to establish procedures to promptly and equitably address the tragedy of child abductions, given the serious consequences to children of not expeditiously resolving these cases and of denying them access to a parent."

H. Res. 193 also urges the House of Representatives to take other appropriate measures to ensure that Hague Convention partners return abducted children to the United States in compliance with the Hague Convention's provisions—and to work aggressively for the return of children abducted from the United States to countries that are not Hague Convention Partners and for visitation rights for left-behind parents while return is negotiated, establishing memorandums of understanding where necessary for the expeditious return of children.

Mr. Speaker, it may soon be time for this body to consider additional steps if we do not see immediate cooperation from our would-be allies in the return of American children. H. Res. 193 is ample warning to Egypt, Japan, and other nations that American patience with abductions has run out. I strongly support the passage of H. Res. 193—and the passage of additional steps if the warning is not heeded.

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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 193, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the resolution was amended so as to read: "Calling for the safe and immediate return of Noor and Ramsay Bower to the United States."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NAVAL VESSEL TRANSFER ACT OF 2012

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6649) to provide for the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign recipients, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6649

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 "Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2012".

SEC. 2. TRANSFER OF NAVAL VESSELS TO CERTAIN FOREIGN RECIPIENTS.

(a) TRANSFERS BY GRANT.—The President is authorized to transfer vessels to foreign countries on a grant basis under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321j), as follows:

(1) MEXICO.—To the Government of Mexico, the OLIVER HAZARD PERRY class guided missile frigates USS CURTS (FFG-38) and USS MCCLUSKY (FFG-41).

(2) THAILAND.—To the Government of Thailand, the OLIVER HAZARD PERRY class guided missile frigates USS RENTZ (FFG-46) and USS VANDEGRIFT (FFG-48).

(3) TURKEY.—To the Government of Turkey, the OLIVER HAZARD PERRY class guided missile frigates USS HALYBURTON (FFG-40) and USS THACH (FFG-43).

(b) TRANSFER BY SALE.—The President is authorized to transfer the OLIVER HAZARD PERRY class guided missile frigates USS TAYLOR (FFG-50), USS GARY (FFG-51), USS CARR (FFG-52), and USS ELROD (FFG-55) to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office of the United States (which is the Taiwan instrumentality designated pursuant to section 10(a) of the Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3309(a))) on a sale basis under section 21 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2761).

(c) ALTERNATIVE TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding the authority provided in subsections (a) and (b) to transfer specific vessels to specific countries, the President is authorized, subject to the same conditions that would apply for such country under this Act, to transfer any vessel named in this Act to any country named in this Act such that the total number of vessels transferred to such country does not exceed the total number of vessels authorized for transfer to such country by this Act.

(d) GRANTS NOT COUNTED IN ANNUAL TOTAL OF TRANSFERRED EXCESS DEFENSE ARTICLES.—The value of a vessel transferred to another country on a grant basis pursuant to authority provided by subsection (a) or (c) shall not be counted against the aggregate value of excess defense articles transferred in any fiscal year under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321j).

(e) COSTS OF TRANSFERS.—Any expense incurred by the United States in connection with a transfer authorized by this section shall be charged to the recipient notwithstanding section 516(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321j(e)).

(f) REPAIR AND REFURBISHMENT IN UNITED STATES SHIPYARDS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the President shall require, as a condition of the transfer of a vessel under this section, that the recipient to which the vessel is transferred have such repair or refurbishment of the vessel as is needed, before the vessel joins the naval forces of that recipient, performed at a shipyard located in the United States, including a United States Navy shipyard.

(g) EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority to transfer a vessel under this section shall expire at the end of the 3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material in the RECORD on this bill.

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