

our ties to the world's largest democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am proud we are considering this excellent measure written by our dear friend, John Lewis. I know we all miss John dearly, but his legacy of advancing the cause of righteousness and justice lives on, and this is a good example.

John championed the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act to further the teachings of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Their work on civil rights and social justice should be a beacon for us all, and I am pleased we can pass a measure today to continue their invaluable work for humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and partner, Mr. McCaul. It is a pleasure once again to work with him on the committee and to work on legislation for the country and the world.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a co-sponsor and a member of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5517, the "Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act", which establishes an exchange initiative between the United States and India to study the work and legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

First and foremost, I wish to express my gratitude and fondness for my former colleague and dear friend, John Lewis, who passed away a few months ago, for introducing and leading this vital piece of legislation.

By passing this bill today, we authorize the U.S. Department of State, in cooperation with the Indian Government, to incorporate three new programs:

the Gandhi-King Scholarly Initiative, which creates an annual educational forum for scholars from both countries that focuses on the legacies of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr;

the Gandhi-King Global Academy, a United States Institute of Peace (USIP) program tasked with developing a professional development training initiative on conflict resolution based on the principles of nonviolence; and

the United States-India Gandhi-King Development Foundation, which establishes a foundation to address social, environmental, and health priorities in India.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman Lewis was a giant among us mere mortals.

Not only was he the conscience of the Congress, widely beloved and revered on both sides of the aisle, but he was also one of the Original Big Six, a pillar of the Civil Rights Movement, and a lifelong warrior for a more just, equitable, and better America.

Like Gandhi and Dr. King, Congressman Lewis shaped the world through his actions of nonviolence, and it is in his honor that we gather here today to vote on a bill he championed.

To quote Congressman Lewis, "Both Gandhi and King were inspired human beings who believed deeply in the power of nonviolent resistance to injustice as a tool for social change."

It is because of their courage, commitment, and vision of a more tolerant and equitable world that we are all able to enjoy and practice our most fundamental democratic freedoms.

As the world's oldest and largest democracies, the United States and India have long traditions of upholding these shared values of nonviolent revolutions championed by figures like Gandhi, King, and Lewis.

But as we have seen over the past few years, both countries have experienced significant affronts to the fundamental democratic principles, which threaten to erode the values that these men and many others have given their lives to protect.

Mr. Speaker, the "Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act" seeks to apply the philosophies of Gandhi and Dr. King to conflict resolution efforts and current policy challenges.

With this legislation, we seek to embody the best of what we saw of Gandhi, Dr. King, and Congressman Lewis in their fight for equality and justice as well as seek to preserve these values so that future generations are empowered and able to continue the fight against injustice.

Just a few months ago, the world was reminded of the power nonviolent resistance has to effect positive change in the face of grave injustices.

In the wake of George Floyd's murder, millions of people across the world and in all 50 states within the U.S. gathered together to peacefully protest against police brutality.

People of different races, socioeconomic classes, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations came together to demonstrate in the most democratic way possible.

Mr. Speaker, those marches, which were, without a doubt, inspired by the marches led by Gandhi and Dr. King, have resulted in a genuine dialogue about institutional racism in this country and have awakened efforts to reform the system, so that it truly benefits all people.

I am honored to be a leader on this bill, and I urge all Members to join me in voting for H.R. 5517, the "Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5517, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WAR CRIMES REWARDS EXPANSION ACT

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1819) to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to provide for rewards for the arrest or conviction of certain foreign nationals

who have committed genocide or war crimes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1819

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 "War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act".

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF STATE REWARDS PROGRAM.

Paragraph (10) of section 36(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(b)) is amended by striking "defined under the statute of such tribunal;" and inserting the following: "defined under—

"(A) the statute of such country or tribunal, as the case may be; or

"(B) United States law;".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCaul) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1819, the War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act, and I thank Congresswoman Foxx for her hard work on this bill.

This bipartisan measure enhances the War Crimes Rewards Program, which enables the United States to pay rewards to individuals who provide information that leads to the arrest or conviction of foreign nationals who commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide.

This initiative has led to the capture of fugitives who committed atrocities in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. This War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act will strengthen this rewards program and ensure that it can be used to bring perpetrators to justice, whether it is in domestic courts or international tribunals.

Mr. Speaker, American foreign policy should reflect our values, including the promotion of human rights, and we must do everything possible to bring justice to victims of atrocities and hold perpetrators accountable. This legislation is an important step in that direction, and I am pleased to support it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, sadly, we live in a world where crimes against humanity still occur. We have seen two declared genocides in just the last 20 years—in Darfur in 2004, and by ISIS in 2016.

We have seen the horrific ethnic cleanings against the Rohingya in Burma. We have seen the atrocities committed by Assad against his own people in Syria. But bringing the criminals behind these massacres to justice can be difficult. That is why 35 years ago, we enacted the State Department's Rewards program. It authorizes the Secretary of State to offer rewards for the arrest or conviction of some of the most dangerous people in the world.

Originally written to be used against international terrorists, the successful program has since been expanded to include drug traffickers, war criminals, and perpetrators of genocide. As the world changes and as the international criminals evolve, we need to make sure this important program evolves with them. And that is why I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act.

Mr. Speaker, the bill makes clear that these rewards are not just meant to support international tribunals. They can also be used to bring these dangerous criminals to justice here in the United States, under United States law.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the author of this bill, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), and my good friend, Chairman ENGEL, for considering this bill today, which deserves our support.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I echo the words of Mr. McCaul. I am pleased to support this legislation, and I urge all Members to do the same.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1819.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT YEVGENIY PRIGOZHIN AND HIS AFFILIATED ENTITIES POSE A THREAT TO INTERESTS AND SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 996) expressing the sense of Congress that the activities of Russian national Yevgeniy Prigozhin and his affiliated entities pose a threat to the national interests and security of the United States and of its allies and partners, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 996

Whereas Yevgeniy Prigozhin is a Russian national who has maintained close personal ties with President Vladimir Putin since the early 2000s;

Whereas Yevgeniy Prigozhin is the patron and founder of the Wagner Group, also known as the Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner, a Russian mercenary organization staffed by current and former military and intelligence officers, and the Internet Research Agency (IRA), an organization engaged in online influence operations;

Whereas the IRA has conducted online information operations against the United States in an attempt to sow division and discord among the American electorate, as well as the electorates of our European allies and partners;

Whereas entities funded by Yevgeniy Prigozhin have been used by the Government of the Russian Federation to conduct military action, subversive operations, and disinformation campaigns on its behalf while giving it an appearance of plausible deniability;

Whereas the Wagner Group was involved in the Russian Federation's military invasion and attempted annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region in February and March 2014, and in the subsequent insurrections in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk;

Whereas the Wagner Group has been providing military support to the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria since 2015, fighting alongside its forces and helping it recapture significant parts of the country;

Whereas, on February 7, 2018, the Wagner Group led an armed assault on United States troops near the city of Deir al-Zour in eastern Syria, prompting a United States counterattack, in what has been described as "the deadliest U.S.-Russia clash since the Cold War";

Whereas the Wagner Group has supported Khalifa Haftar and his "Libyan National Army" by providing mercenaries, artillery, tanks, drones, and ammunition, with Yevgeniy Prigozhin personally attending a meeting between Haftar and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in Moscow on November 7, 2018;

Whereas a United Nations report made public on May 6, 2020, concluded that the Wagner Group has operated up to 1,200 military contractors in Libya, including snipers and specialized military teams, serving as "an effective force multiplier" for Haftar's army.

Whereas mercenaries from the Wagner Group were deployed to Venezuela in January 2019 to provide support for the regime of Nicolas Maduro in the face of popular protests against his dictatorship;

Whereas Yevgeniy Prigozhin and his affiliated entities have spearheaded operations with the intent to influence political processes in Africa on behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation in several countries, including Madagascar, South Africa, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and the Central African Republic;

Whereas the Wagner Group has deployed mercenaries to the Central African Republic since 2018 and has provided security detail for Central African Republic President Faustin-Archange Touadera, including Russian national Valery Zakharov, a former security official with close ties to the Wagner Group, who serves as the National Security Adviser;

Whereas, on July 31, 2018, Russian journalists Orkhan Dzhemal, Kirill Radchenko, and Alexander Rastorguyev were murdered in the Central African Republic while working on a documentary about the activities of the Wagner Group in that country;

Whereas according to an investigation by the London-based Dossier Center, the journalists had been tracked by officers of the Central African Republic gendarmerie who were in close communication with Russian nationals tied to the Wagner Group, including Valery Zakharov and Alexander Sotov;

Whereas associates of Yevgeniy Prigozhin were reported to discuss plans to set up camps "for combat prep and training in sabotage" with the goal of stoking racial violence and carrying out domestic terror attacks in the United States in the run-up to the November 3, 2020, presidential election;

Whereas associates of Yevgeniy Prigozhin have set up online influence operations based in Ghana and Nigeria to target social media audiences in the United States with the goal of inflaming racial tensions and provoking social unrest in the run-up to the November 3, 2020, presidential election;

Whereas, on December 20, 2016, the Department of the Treasury designated Yevgeniy Prigozhin under Executive Order 13661, "Blocking Property of Additional Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine", for having "materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, senior officials of the Russian Federation";

Whereas, on June 20, 2017, the Department of the Treasury designated the Wagner Group under Executive Order 13660, "Blocking Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine", for being "responsible for or complicit in, or having engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine";

Whereas, on March 15, 2018, the Department of the Treasury designated Yevgeniy Prigozhin, his affiliated entities, including the Internet Research Agency, and his subordinates under Executive Order 13694, "Blocking the Property of Certain Persons Engaging in Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities," for being "involved in interfering with [U.S.] election processes or institutions";

Whereas on July 15, 2020, under Executive Orders 13848, 13694 (as amended), and 13661, the Department of the Treasury designated entities located in Sudan, Hong Kong, and Thailand that have enabled Yevgeniy Prigozhin's ability to evade United States sanctions as well as Prigozhin-linked entities that have attempted to suppress and discredit protestors seeking reforms in Sudan;

Whereas, on September 23, 2020, pursuant to Executive Orders 13848, 13694 (as amended), and 13661, the Department of the Treasury designated a network of entities and individuals working on behalf of Yevgeniy Prigozhin seeking to advance Russia's influence in the Central African Republic;

Whereas, on October 15, 2020, the European Union sanctioned Yevgeniy Prigozhin for engaging in "and providing support for Wagner Group's activities in Libya, which threaten the country's peace, stability and security"; and

Whereas current and former Administration officials have affirmed that the malign activities of Yevgeniy Prigozhin around the world pose a significant threat to United States national security interests: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns any and all attempts by the Government of the Russian Federation and associated actors to influence the domestic politics of other countries and sow division among their peoples, particularly the United States and its allies and partners;