

CONGRATULATING SHERIFF ROSIE CORDERO-STUTZ AND CLERK JUAN BARQUIN

(Mr. GIMENEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIMENEZ. Mr. Speaker, Miami-Dade has a new sheriff in town.

I rise today to congratulate my dear friend, Rosie Cordero-Stutz, on being sworn in as the first elected sheriff in Miami-Dade in over 60 years and the first woman and Hispanic to hold the position.

Sheriff Cordero-Stutz has been with Miami-Dade Police Department for nearly 30 years, rising from patrol officer to assistant director. She has what it takes to run the largest law enforcement agency in the southeastern United States.

I also congratulate Juan Barquin on being sworn in as the clerk of the court and comptroller for Miami-Dade County. Clerk Barquin began his career in the Public Defender's Office, and he will now oversee the fourth largest judicial circuit in the Nation. As the watchdog for public records and taxpayer money, I have all the confidence that he will continue to do an excellent job.

I congratulate Sheriff Cordero-Stutz and Clerk Barquin. Godspeed to them both. On behalf of all of the residents of Miami-Dade, I thank them for their service.

□ 0945

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 21

*Resolved*, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS: Mr. Rogers of Kentucky, Mr. Aderholt, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Carter of Texas, Mr. Calvert, Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mr. Womack, Mr. Fleischmann, Mr. Joyce of Ohio, Mr. Harris of Maryland, Mr. Amodei of Nevada, Mr. Valadao, Mr. Newhouse, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Cline, Mr. Reschenthaler, Mrs. Hinson, Mr. Tony Gonzales of Texas, Ms. Letlow, Mr. Cloud, Mr. Guest, Mr. Zinke, Mr. Clyde, Mrs. Bice, Mr. Scott Franklin of Florida, Mr. Ellzey, Mr. Ciscomani, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Alford, Mr. LaLota, Ms. Maloy, Mr. Strong, Mr. Moore of West Virginia.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE: Mr. Latta, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Bilirakis, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Carter of Georgia, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Dunn of Florida, Mr. Crenshaw, Mr. Joyce of Pennsylvania, Mr. Weber of Texas, Mr. Allen, Mr. Balderson, Mr. Fulcher, Mr. Pfluger, Mrs. Harshbarger, Mrs. Miller-Meeks, Mrs. Cammack, Mr. Obernolte, Mr. James, Mr. Bentz, Mrs. Houchin, Mr. Fry, Ms. Lee of Florida, Mr. Langworthy, Mr. Kean, Mr. Rulli, Mr. Evans of Colorado, Mr. Goldman of Texas, Mrs. Fedorchak.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES: Mr. Lucas, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Huizenga, Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Barr, Mr. Williams of Texas, Mr. Emmer, Mr. Loudermilk, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Rose, Mr. Steil, Mr. Timmons, Mr. Stutzman, Mr. Norman, Mr. Meuser, Mrs. Kim, Mr. Donalds, Mr. Garbarino, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Flood, Mr. Lawler, Ms. De La Cruz, Mr. Ogles, Mr. Nunn of Iowa, Mrs. McClain, Ms. Salazar, Mr. Downing, Mr. Haridopolos, Mr. Moore of North Carolina.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS: Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Smith of Nebraska, Mr. Kelly of Pennsylvania, Mr. Schweikert, Mr. LaHood, Mr. Arrington, Mr. Estes, Mr. Smucker, Mr. Hern of Oklahoma, Mrs. Miller of West Virginia, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Kustoff, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Steube, Ms. Tenney, Mrs. Fischbach, Mr. Moore of Utah, Ms. Van Dyne, Mr. Feenstra, Ms. Malliotakis, Mr. Carey, Mr. Yakym, Mr. Miller of Ohio, Mr. Bean of Florida, Mr. Moran.

Mrs. HOUCHIN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2001, and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, of the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) as members of the House Office Building Commission to serve with the Speaker.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, January 8, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on January 8, 2025, at 10:40 a.m., said to contain a message from the President regarding taking additional steps with respect to the situation in the Western Balkans.

With best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,  
Clerk of the House.

TAKING ADDITIONAL STEPS WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 119-6)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message

from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order in order to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001 (Blocking Property of Persons Who Threaten International Stabilization Efforts in the Western Balkans), as amended by Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003 (Termination of Emergencies With Respect to Yugoslavia and Modification of Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001), and expanded in scope by Executive Order 14033 of June 8, 2021 (Blocking Property and Suspending Entry Into the United States of Certain Persons Contributing to the Destabilizing Situation in the Western Balkans).

The order is intended to provide additional prongs for targeting persons for designation under Executive Order 14033 and deter individuals from attempting to evade United States sanctions. This includes amendments to: add attempt as a basis for designation throughout the order; add a prong for leadership of membership in a sanctioned entity; add a prong for ownership or control of a sanctioned person; and add a prong for being a spouse or adult child of a sanctioned person.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, January 8, 2025.

ILLEGITIMATE COURT COUNTERACTION ACT

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 5, I call up the bill (H.R. 23) to impose sanctions with respect to the International Criminal Court engaged in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 5, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 23

*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 "Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States and Israel are not parties to the Rome Statute or members of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and therefore the ICC has no legitimacy or jurisdiction over the United States or Israel.

(2) On May 20, 2024, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Karim Khan, announced arrest warrant applications for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant and should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

(3) On November 21, 2024, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber issued warrants for the arrest of Netanyahu and Gallant, which should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

(4) The bipartisan American Servicemembers' Protection Act was enacted in 2002 to protect United States military personnel, United States officials, and officials and military personnel of certain allied countries against criminal prosecution by an international criminal court to which the United States is not party, stating, "In addition to exposing members of the Armed Forces of the United States to the risk of international criminal prosecution, the Rome Statute creates a risk that the President and other senior elected and appointed officials of the United States Government may be prosecuted by the International Criminal Court."

(5) The ICC's actions against Israel, including the preliminary examination and investigation of Israel and issuance of arrest warrants against Israeli officials, are illegitimate and baseless and create a damaging precedent that threatens the United States, Israel, and all United States partners who have not consented to the ICC's jurisdiction.

(6) The United States must oppose any action by the ICC against the United States, Israel, or any other ally of the United States that has not consented to ICC jurisdiction or is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the ICC.

### SEC. 3. SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, if the International Criminal Court is engaging in any attempt to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person, the President shall impose—

(1) the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to any foreign person the President determines—

(A) has directly engaged in or otherwise aided any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person;

(B) has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person; or

(C) is owned or controlled by, or is currently acting or purports to have acted, directly or indirectly, for or on behalf of any person that directly engages in any effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person; and

(2) the sanctions described in subsection (b)(2) with respect to the immediate family members of each foreign person who is subject to sanctions pursuant to paragraph (1).

(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this subsection with respect to a foreign person described in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) PROPERTY BLOCKING.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of any foreign person described in subsection (a)(1) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come

within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) ALIENS INADMISSIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—In the case of an alien described in subsection (a), the alien is—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The visa or other entry documentation of an alien described in subparagraph (A) shall be revoked, regardless of when such visa or other entry documentation was issued.

(ii) IMMEDIATE EFFECT.—A revocation under clause (i) shall—

(I) take effect immediately; and

(II) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the alien's possession.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of this section or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out this section shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(d) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10 days after any imposition of sanctions pursuant to subsection (a), the President shall brief and provide written notification to the appropriate congressional committees regarding the imposition of sanctions that shall include—

(1) a description of the foreign person or persons subject to the imposition of such sanctions, including the foreign person's role at or relation to the International Criminal Court;

(2) a description of any activity undertaken by such foreign person or persons in support of efforts to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person; and

(3) the specific sanctions imposed on such foreign person or persons.

(e) WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, on a case-by-case basis and for periods not to exceed 90 days each, waive the application of sanctions imposed or maintained with respect to a foreign person under this section if the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees before the waiver is to take effect a report that contains a determination of the President that the waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report required by paragraph (1) with respect to a waiver of the application of sanctions imposed or maintained with respect to a foreign person under this section, or the renewal of such a waiver, shall include—

(A) a specific and detailed rationale for the determination that the waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States;

(B) a description of the activity that resulted in the foreign person being subject to sanctions;

(C) a detailed description and list of actions the United States has taken to stop the

International Criminal Court from engaging in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons; and

(D) a detailed description and list of actions the International Criminal Court has taken to permanently close, withdraw, end, or otherwise terminate any preliminary examination, investigation, or any other effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons.

(3) FORM.—Each report required by paragraph by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(f) SPECIAL RULE.—The President may terminate the sanctions with respect to the foreign persons described in subsection (a) if the President certifies in writing to the appropriate congressional committees that the International Criminal Court—

(1) has ceased engaging in any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons; and

(2) has permanently closed, withdrawn, ended, and otherwise terminated any preliminary examination, investigation, or any other effort by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute all protected persons.

### SEC. 4. RESCISSION OF FUNDS FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date of the enactment of this Act, any amounts appropriated for the International Criminal Court and available for obligation as of such date of enactment are hereby rescinded.

(b) PROHIBITION ON FUTURE APPROPRIATIONS.—On and after the date of the enactment of this Act, no appropriated funds may be used for the International Criminal Court.

### SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMITTED ALIEN.—The terms "admitted" and "alien" have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES.—The term "ally of the United States" means—

(A) a government of a member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; or

(B) a government of a major non-NATO ally, as that term is defined by section 2013(7) of the American Service-Members' Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7432(7)).

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

(4) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term "foreign person" means a person that is not a United States person.

(5) IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER.—The term "immediate family member", with respect to a foreign person, means the spouse, parent, sibling, or adult child of the person.

(6) INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT; ROME STATUTE.—The terms "International Criminal Court" and "Rome Statute" have the meaning given those terms in section 2013 of the American Service-Members' Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7432).

(7) PROTECTED PERSON.—The term "protected person" means—

(A) any United States person, unless the United States provides formal consent to International Criminal Court jurisdiction and is a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including—

(i) current or former members of the Armed Forces of the United States;

(ii) current or former elected or appointed officials of the United States Government; and

(iii) any other person currently or formerly employed by or working on behalf of the United States Government;

(B) any foreign person that is a citizen or lawful resident of an ally of the United States that has not consented to International Criminal Court jurisdiction or is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, including—

(i) current or former members of the Armed Forces of such ally of the United States;

(ii) current or former elected or appointed government officials of such ally of the United States; and

(iii) any other person currently or formerly employed by or working on behalf of such a government.

(8) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” means—

(A) an individual who is a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States, including a foreign branch of such an entity; or

(C) any person in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) each will control 30 minutes.

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MAST. 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 on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act, a bill that I am proud to have worked on with my colleague and friend, CHIP ROY, a bill that sanctions International Criminal Court officials and their families and anybody who is assisting them.

Why? It is because they are targeting America's allies, who are right now the front line of fighting to bring American hostages home from Gaza.

America is passing this law because, on November 21, 2024, the International Criminal Court's Pre-Trial Chamber issued warrants for the arrest of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israel's former Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant.

Let me explain that in a more detailed way. America is passing this law because a kangaroo court is seeking to arrest the Prime Minister of our great ally, Israel, who is not only responding to an enemy which conducted a genocide, killing as many men, women, and children as possible, even beheading

some of them, on October 7, 2023, but an enemy who still holds 100 hostages, scores of bodies of those that they murdered, including 7 of my fellow Americans. Let me say that again. Israel is the tip of the spear in bringing the fight to an enemy who currently holds and has killed our fellow Americans.

Israel has conducted this war with as much restraint as war can allow. In the face of horror, they have shown humanity. We know that for Israel, any civilian dying is a tragedy, and we know that for Hamas and the Palestinians who support them, civilians dying is quite literally their strategy for victory.

Hamas' strategy uses hospitals and schools as bases for combat operations. It is not that some fighter accidentally walked into a hospital for 5 minutes carrying their machine gun. No, they build hospitals and schools into fortified launching points for attack. In clear violation of the laws of armed conflict, Hamas deliberately targets civilians.

What the ICC is doing with their arrest warrants is legitimizing the false accusations of Israeli war crimes in order to do something to stop the overwhelming success of Israeli military operations.

Mr. Speaker, I don't care if a person is a terrorist in a cave or if they are a lawyer in The Hague. If they are getting in the way of bringing home our Americans or bringing home our allies who are, as we speak in this very moment, bound, blindfolded, tortured, raped, enslaved, starved, facing execution, if you are getting in the way of bringing them home, then we will give you no quarter. We will certainly not allow you to be welcomed to American soil.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank the gentleman from Florida for his opening and congratulate him on his new chairmanship. I hope that there will be occasions where we can work together on issues that will advance the cause of human rights and promote stability in the world, but unfortunately, today is not one of those occasions.

Mr. Speaker, of all the ways that Republicans have shown this country how messed up and backward their priorities are, I have to say that this bill that we are debating today to sanction the International Criminal Court, the ICC, really takes the cake.

We have a natural disaster unfolding in California right this second as 100,000 people are fleeing a climate change-driven fire that is burning up entire neighborhoods. We have a gun violence epidemic, as we see massacres in our schools nearly every single day. Families are unable to make ends meet because they are being ripped off by billionaire corporations that don't care about anything but the bottom line.

There are over 40 million hungry people in this country who don't know where their next meal is going to come from. There are 40 million hungry people in the richest country on Earth.

All those challenges and this is what the out-of-touch, elitist, billionaire Republican Party wants to waste time on, sanctioning the ICC.

I actually listen to people in my district, Mr. Speaker, and I ask them what they want Congress to work on. Not once, never ever, have I heard them talk about sanctioning the ICC as one of their priorities. They talk about their bills. They talk about healthcare costs. The farmers in my district talk to me about climate change. They talk about global problems, but they don't talk about sanctioning the ICC.

Republicans think this is so very important, such an emergency, that we have to debate it during the first week of Congress—during Jimmy Carter's funeral, by the way, which is offensive considering his record on actually standing up for human rights, which is the opposite of what this bill does.

I would say to America, no, don't worry about climate change because Republicans are going to sanction the janitors at the ICC. While they are at it, they are going to rename the Gulf of Mexico. That is really going to help people pay bills and keep the lights on.

All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that this is not what America voted for. This Republican majority is not what people asked for in the last election. Maybe that is why Republicans lost multiple seats, because they keep bringing up lousy bills like this one.

Nonetheless, let's talk about the matter at hand.

Mr. Speaker, the terror attacks on October 7 were unconscionable and unacceptable. The victims on that dark day were overwhelmingly civilians, 62 of whom are still being held illegally as hostages in unknown circumstances. I would hope that every single Member of this Chamber would demand their immediate and unconditional release.

It was an attack, I think, that rises to the level of war crimes and crimes against humanity. That is the reason that the International Criminal Court applied for arrest warrants against three Hamas leaders in May 2024. No one seemed to criticize the ICC for that decision.

Now, Republicans want to sanction the ICC simply because they don't want the rules to apply to everyone.

I want to be very clear here, Mr. Speaker. Prime Minister Netanyahu has an absolute right to defend his people, but there is no international right to vengeance, and what we are seeing in Gaza is vengeance.

I mean, where is our humanity? Have we just given up on the idea of human rights?

At least 45,000 people have been killed in the war in Gaza, and I fear that number is much higher. Mr. Speaker, 85 percent of the people there have been forcibly displaced, often repeatedly. Last September, a group of

physicians estimated 62,000 had died of starvation. Hospitals, schools, mosques, churches, and libraries have all been destroyed.

Food is not getting in. Water is not getting in. Medicine is not getting in. People are dying. Children are dying. Babies are dying, some of them from the bombs, some from starvation, some from the cold.

The war has not shrunk. It expanded to Lebanon, where I hope the recent truce continues to hold.

Mr. Speaker, I have sharply critiqued my own government for our conduct when we have been at war because right is right and wrong is wrong, no matter what side you are on.

What is going on in Gaza right now is wrong, and I especially call it out because if we stand for freedom and human rights, then we need to stand for freedom and human rights all the time, not just when it is convenient.

That is why the nations of the world set up the International Criminal Court in the first place. This is an institution designed to make sure the horrors that we saw all too often in the 20th century do not repeat themselves in the 21st century.

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We have international humanitarian law to prevent this kind and this scale of destruction. Just because someone doesn't like the law doesn't mean they get to break the law.

As a court of last resort, the ICC can only become involved when and where a country has demonstrated unwillingness or inability to hold its people to account for crimes within the ICC's jurisdiction. When the warrants were issued, the ICC appealed to the Israeli courts to take up and investigate these charges under their own jurisdiction. There is still time for the Israeli courts to do that.

In fact, my understanding is that the Israeli Government is appealing these arrest warrants at the ICC. Ironically, these sanctions could actually undermine those efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I want the United States and Israel to have an amazing relationship and friendship, but friendship means we tell the truth. It means we hold ourselves and our allies to the same high standards.

I understand why people want vengeance. I have been to the region that Hamas attacked. I have met with the families of hostages and the victims of October 7 whose lives have been destroyed by what happened; many, by the way, who are furious at Prime Minister Netanyahu for the way he has conducted this war and for his failure to bring home their loved ones.

I have met with people in my district who have been deeply impacted by this horrific tragedy, including too many who are justifiably afraid about the rise of anti-Semitism in this country and around the world.

The overwhelming majority of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, has voted to

support basically unlimited military assistance and offensive weapons to Mr. Netanyahu, but even if someone approves of that military assistance, they should vote against this bill.

I have long considered myself a friend of Israel. I have traveled there. I believe Israelis deserve security. They deserve peace. They deserve safety.

However, turning a blind eye to what is happening in Gaza and saying that all these civilian casualties are somehow okay, in my opinion, does not make Israel more safe. It makes Israel less safe, less secure.

Sanctioning and attacking the ICC is not only bad for Israel, but it is bad for the United States. It is bad for the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

We are the people's House. Let me translate what was just said: It is not a priority for the people's House to do everything possible to get our people home, to include getting in the way of those who are getting in our way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY), the genesis of and the lead sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida, the chairman, for his support on this legislation. I thank him for his statesmanship on this particular issue, which is critically important for not just our friendship with our ally, Israel, but also our own national security, the protection of our own men and women in uniform.

Let's be clear about what is happening at the so-called International Criminal Court right now. It has taken unprecedented action of issuing arrest warrants for the sitting Prime Minister and former Minister of Defense of our friend and ally, Israel. Let that sink in for a minute.

The International Criminal Court is an entity that has no jurisdiction over the people of the United States and should have no authority over our people, no authority over the Prime Minister of Israel, yet it is extending into the people of Israel's business in defending their interests against a violent attack by Hamas, which we define as a terrorist entity. As the chairman just pointed out, Hamas has killed American citizens and holds American citizens hostage as we sit here today.

Somehow, it is not a priority for the people of our country that we represent for us to be here on the floor of the House defending our men and women in uniform, defending our citizens, defending our ally, Israel, and the Prime Minister of Israel from a politicized witch hunt by the International Criminal Court which, again, should have and doesn't have any jurisdiction over our people or the people of Israel.

I would remind the gentleman from Massachusetts that 42 Democrats voted for this legislation last year. If this is

such a crazy piece of legislation, perhaps the gentleman would like to have an inward-facing conference on his side of the aisle. It is very clearly a bipartisan interest to protect our people and the people of our friends in Israel.

I would note that our problems aren't just the dangerous terrorist organizations like Hamas, but these international organizations given power over our citizens and our way of life; not just the International Criminal Court, but, for example, UNRWA and other international organizations without which Hamas wouldn't have many of the resources it needs to conduct these violent attacks on Israel and our own people.

When the gentleman from Massachusetts talks about the plight of the people in Gaza, we should be reminded of the massive piles of food and relief that are stacked up because the United Nations is too incompetent to move those pallets and remind our friends of the extent to which Hamas has been taking those resources and not distributing them to the people in Gaza.

The fact of the matter here is, this legislation is inherently America first. We have had situations where we have had American soldiers and our people targeted by the ICC. It will happen again if the House of Representatives and the Senate and the President don't take action to sanction the ICC to prevent this from happening again in the future.

I appreciate the support of the chairman. I appreciate the support of virtually every Member on the Republican side of the aisle. I appreciate the support of the 42 Democrats last summer. I look forward to a larger amount of support from Democrats when we vote on this today.

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

First of all, to the gentleman from Texas, yeah, I don't know how the vote on this will come out. I am sure some Democrats may vote for it. Actually, on our side, we welcome debate, and we welcome ways to improve the legislation. I am told that there were negotiations going on to try to actually improve this legislation, and then the Speaker made a unilateral decision to go with the most extreme version.

This was not marked up in committee, and there were no amendments to this. It didn't come to the Rules Committee, so nobody can offer an amendment, nobody can make a suggestion. It is take it or leave it. I mean, I guess that is the way the Republicans are going to want to run the House.

To the distinguished chairman of the committee, I think he must have misinterpreted me. He said something like: This is the people's House, so let me translate what the gentleman, meaning me, just said in my opening remarks. He said bringing the hostages home should not be a priority.

Now, I know I am from Massachusetts and you may have a tough time

understanding my accent, but the bottom line is, that is not what I said. In fact, I said very clearly that the taking of hostages is a war crime. What I said very clearly is that the hostages should be released immediately and unconditionally. I have said that over and over and over again.

I don't think, like many of the families of the hostages have expressed to me, that increased bombing is going to result in getting their loved ones home. That is the message that many of them have delivered to me personally when they have visited here in Washington.

Again, please don't kind of manipulate what I have said here today. The taking of these hostages is horrific, and they must be released immediately and unconditionally. I hope that no-body disagrees with that.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, what the gentleman did say very clearly was that this legislation is not a priority, and this legislation is meant to get in the way of those who are getting in our way from getting our Americans home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT).

Mr. BURCHETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and Mr. ROY for bringing this important piece of legislation to us.

Let's be clear. H.R. 23 is very clear: The International Criminal Court, the ICC, don't believe Israel has the right to defend itself from terrorists or those that threaten to destroy Israel's way of life.

The United States and Israel are not members of the ICC for good reason and without accident. Mr. Speaker, it is a dadgum sham court is what it is. These decisions by the ICC are reckless, and they not only put Israel at risk, they put Americans at risk as well.

The United States, with our new Congress and new administration, is not going to put up with these international organizations putting us and our allies in harm's way. Hamas chose war, and dadgummit, Hamas got war.

The ICC prosecutor, Karim Khan, has made a parody of justice, and he needs to find his place or we will help him find it. I know when I get back to the office, I am going to get texts or contacts from people saying that my AIPAC handler told me to do this, and I will probably get my AIPAC handler in trouble, but I don't even know who the heck he or she is.

The truth is, this is right. America should be on the side of the right. Anyone standing in the way of this important piece of legislation, I think, owes the American public an explanation and owes especially your Jewish constituency an explanation.

I fully support H.R. 23, and I look forward to passing it here shortly.

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

Mr. Speaker, again, I am going to respond to the chairman of the com-

mittee. Yeah, we do disagree on the impact of this bill. I disagree that this bill is going to do anything to get the hostages released. Every time we have seen hostages released, it has been during a cease-fire and not in the middle of intense bombing.

Again, as many families of the hostages have expressed to me directly, they worry very much about the Prime Minister's continued policy of all-in in terms of military attacks in Gaza because they worry very much that it decreases the likelihood that their loved ones will be freed. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAWLER), a patriot.

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I would note that the gentleman from Massachusetts is talking about the Prime Minister.

What about the President of the United States?

We have seven Americans still being held hostage; four deceased, three presumed living.

Where is Joe Biden? Where is the President of the United States to make sure that American hostages are being brought home?

It is shameful the way this administration has allowed these hostages to languish. They have not put adequate pressure on our allies. They have failed miserably in their responsibility to get Americans home. When, in fact, there have been cease-fires and when, in fact, hostages have been released, Americans have not been released. It is shameful.

I rise in support of the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act to reimpose sanctions on officials working for the International Criminal Court. This institution has continually abused its authority and demonstrated blatant hostility toward our allies and American values, as Israel has continued to defend itself against terrorists in the Middle East, over the objections of this administration, by the way.

Let's be clear, Sinwar and Nasrallah would still be alive if Netanyahu listened to this administration.

The ICC has joined the U.N. in showing a clear bias against Israel. This culminated in the ICC seeking arrest warrants of the Prime Minister and other members of his cabinet.

The Israelis have been working tirelessly for over a year to rescue hundreds of hostages still held by Hamas and to defend their own people from further attacks.

□ 1015

The ICC's actions amount to a little more than a political smear campaign cloaked in a veneer of international law. This pattern of behavior from the ICC is not new. This is the same body that has repeatedly targeted the United States and our servicemembers, attempting to investigate and prosecute Americans who have risked their

lives to defend our freedom around the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this critical measure and ensure that the U.S. remains steadfast in defending our allies, protecting our existence, and upholding the tenets that have long defined our leadership on the world stage.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, that was a great speech for social media, but it will do nothing to get the hostages released, just like this bill.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 18 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I would remind everybody that every time my colleagues across the way rise, they rise to oppose legislation that would get in the way of those getting in our way of bringing Americans home. That is what they are standing against. That is what they are rising against.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the unprovoked and barbaric attack on Israeli civilians on October 7 presented Israel with a fundamental moral obligation to annihilate the forces that had unleashed such depravity.

Ironically, the United Nations was conceived in the aftermath of the Holocaust, precisely to stand behind the civilized nations of the world when the forces of evil threatened.

Tragically, it has become grotesquely perverted. UNRWA's staff actively participated in the attack of October 7, and its ICC has now become a kangaroo court, waging lawfare against Israel's wartime leaders.

The ICC has thus made a mockery of every hope and dream that gave birth to the United Nations and has declared by its own obscene acts to be, itself, a threat to world peace, international order, and the rule of law.

I wholeheartedly support this bill, sanctioning anyone who gives it aid and comfort in pursuing its twisted agenda.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my fellow Texan calling for sanctions on the International Criminal Court officials who dare to target U.S. citizens or our allies, especially our ally, Israel.

Mr. Speaker, the ICC is nothing more than a kangaroo court. Their absolute

blind obsession in pursuing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu notwithstanding Hamas' unspeakable atrocities reveals the ICC's true loyalties. Their actions signal a dangerous complicity with terrorist groups, like Hamas, as well as others I might add.

The ICC's ignorance of reality disqualifies them from passing judgment on those defending themselves against pure evil. I can't say that strongly enough: against pure evil. It is that pure and simple. The ICC doesn't get it.

I have been to Israel since the horrific October 7 attacks, Mr. Speaker. On the other hand, the ICC has not only not witnessed firsthand, as I have, the devastation and terror inflicted on innocent lives, they have not been there.

Our message is clear: The ICC is a disgrace. It is a sham, and its officials need to find real jobs. They have no authority to target Americans or our allies, especially Israel, and we won't stand for it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to passing this bill and encouraging the Senate to pass it in time for President Trump to sign it on day one.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, neither the United States nor Israel recognize the legitimacy of the ICC. We are not members. The ICC has no authority to violate the sovereignty of either of those nations.

This bill is essential for protecting American citizens, servicemembers, our allies, especially Israel, from these politically motivated, punitive prosecutions by the ICC.

Israel and its leaders have an inherent right to defend themselves against these terrorist attacks that occurred from Hamas, and they get to also attempt to rescue these hostages, but the ICC's attempts to interfere with Israel's self-defense and issue arrest warrants for the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, and their minister of defense, undermines justice.

As the only Member of Congress who actually attended the Rome Conference that formulated the ICC document in the summer of 1998, I can attest that the ICC is hopelessly biased and is illegitimate. It claims authority it does not have. It attempts to claim jurisdiction and issue sanctions against Israel as we could have predicted, and many of us did who were at that conference watching this ICC form.

The ICC is an institution without a mandate from the international community, and the ICC must understand that the United States will not allow its overreach to harm U.S. citizens or our allies.

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

Mr. Speaker, just for the record, I just want the record to reflect that I

remember hearing widespread support from many of my Republican colleagues when the ICC issued a warrant against Vladimir Putin for the kidnapping of Ukrainian children, as well as when they issued a warrant against Bashir for genocide in Sudan.

I guess what we are hearing here is that we want to pick and choose on their side how we are going to react to the ICC based on what they do. I mean, the bottom line is this is the beginning of a process. It is not the end of a process.

This bill will do nothing to help get the release of our hostages, including those Americans who are held hostage, and it will isolate us within the world community, especially with many of our allies.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I remind my friends across the aisle that Americans are being held and tortured. Get with the American team, and get in the way of those that are getting in our way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the gentleman from Massachusetts is well out of his depth when it comes to military warfare and how to conduct an operation. I will let that speak for itself.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation. In November of 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on baseless and reprehensible charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

These charges are not only morally indefensible, but a blatant bias of justice. Israel does not deliberately target civilians as terrorists harbor them in mosques, churches, in schools, hospitals, and so many more. The Israeli Government has taken unprecedented steps to minimize civilian harm during conflicts, a commitment that is unparalleled by any other nation facing terrorists.

The acquisition that Israel uses starvation as a weapon of war is a blatant lie, ignoring the immense humanitarian aid Israel has provided to Gaza despite ongoing attacks.

This illegitimate attack on Israel emboldens terrorist organizations like Hamas. Both President Biden and President Trump have rightly condemned these charges, recognizing their destructive implications. This critical legislation, which has previously passed this body with strong bipartisan support sends a clear and unequivocal message: The United States will not tolerate the ICC's abuse of power against our allies or our citizens.

Once again, the ICC has no jurisdiction over the United States of America or the people of Israel. They need to call this what it is: anti-Semitism. That is what this is. That is what the

ICC is going after, and that is what you are condoning, from the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I see the support on the other side of the aisle with all your colleagues sitting next to you fighting right alongside.

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

Mr. Speaker, two things to the gentleman who just spoke: The reason why my colleagues are not here is because the Republicans scheduled this debate during President Carter's funeral, which I find to be incredibly disappointing given President Carter's stature in this country and his commitment to human rights.

To the chairman of the committee, I was a little bit startled when he said get with the American team; because we have a disagreement, that somehow I am not with the American team. Last time I checked, we are still a democracy, at least for the time being. You can have disagreements on this issue, and we can still respect each other's point of view.

If I thought for one second that this bill that we are debating today would help get the release of the hostages and the American hostages, I would be with you, but it won't. It complicates things even further, and it isolates us in the world community at a time, quite frankly, when we need allies, and we need everybody working to try to resolve the conflict in the Middle East, to get all the hostages released, to ensure that Israel has its security, and to ensure that the Palestinians have a future, as well.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman across the aisle is right. We need everybody working to get hostages home to get this resolved. That means not giving an iota of recognition to kangaroo courts, like the ICC, who are trying to prevent Israeli military success, who are conducting their brand of anti-Semitism against Israeli leaders, preventing Americans and our allies from being returned home.

Again, Israel is the tip of the spear in bringing American hostages home, and anybody who gets in their way is getting in our way.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The gentleman from Florida has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 16½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, since I have 10 minutes remaining, I am going to sit here in silence for 2 minutes and see if my colleague from Texas shows up.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman must remain behind the mike.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, that is a good lesson. Thanks. I will remain standing here.

Mr. Speaker, it appears we will have no more speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as I close debate, I want to reiterate my opposition to this misguided legislation. The International Criminal Court exists to hold the world accountable to prevent atrocities and to serve as a reminder that no one is above the law.

Abandoning the ICC, as H.R. 23 proposes, undermines our values, undermines our alliances, and undermines our credibility on the world stage.

This is a moment to reaffirm our commitment to human rights, to international law, and to the partnerships that have defined American leadership, and this bill fails that test.

By sanctioning officials of the ICC and anyone who has done business with them, this bill would have a chilling effect on America's work to support human rights and rule of law around the world.

It would hamper the ICC's efforts to prosecute serious atrocities that have wrecked lives and destabilized countries in many places around the world, from Ukraine to Uganda to Darfur.

NGOs would be chilled from sharing evidence of the grave crimes committed in these places. Many of us celebrated in March of 2023 when the ICC judges issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and another senior Russian official for abducting thousands of Ukrainian children.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, Congress even passed legislation to enable the United States to provide financial support to and share information with the ICC to investigate and prosecute Putin and his regime for his heinous crimes in Ukraine. The bill we are considering today would undermine that work and rob it of its legitimacy.

If passed, this misguided legislation would bluntly curtail our ability to engage the ICC, to advance our interests in supporting justice and accountability, and, crucially, to share relevant information with our partners and allies.

Speaking of our allies, this bill is so absurdly broad that it would sanction our own allies. Read the bill. Our allies would be sanctioned for supporting the ICC if this were to pass.

The largest funders of the ICC are America's closest allies: the U.K., France, Germany, Italy, Japan. As drafted, the leaders of these countries would be sanctioned for providing material assistance to the ICC. That is truly nuts. It doesn't make any sense to me.

The legislative bodies of these countries could also be sanctioned for appropriating funds for the ICC. By some interpretations, interparliamentary travel to Europe could become a sanctionable activity.

Did anybody think this through? Is sanctioning the leaders of our closest friends and allies really the best we can do here?

Not only that, this sanctions over 900 members from approximately 100 countries at the court, from judges and prosecutors to administrative staff, including nationals of close U.S. allies and partners who collectively work to prosecute war criminals all around the globe.

The language in this bill is so broad that even cafeteria workers and janitors and their families could be construed as having supported or "materially assisted" in these prosecutions by providing services to the ICC. This is nuts.

Mr. Speaker, what would happen next? I can tell you. American companies would be banned from doing business with the ICC if its top officials are sanctioned, and their Chinese competitors would rush in to fill the gap. Not only does this undermine America's interests, but it bolsters Russia and helps China.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad bill. Not only is it a bad bill, but nobody had any opportunity at all to amend it. This has been brought to the floor under a completely closed process. We can't address all the faults that I have just outlined. We can't address them because of the way this majority is bringing this bill to the floor. Zero amendments are allowed because Republicans brought it up under a closed rule—again, another wasted opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. In my opinion, behind-the-scenes diplomacy with the International Criminal Court, alongside our partners, is far more likely to yield a result than the approach put forward by this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, the statement of the gentleman from the other side is as untrue now as it was when he gave the same speech a few months ago on this very floor.

I would say the message is clear to everybody: Don't get in America's way as we are trying to work with our allies to get our Americans home and our allies home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, on October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists brutally murdered and kidnapped hundreds of innocent Israelis. Over a year later, Hamas still holds hostages—some dead but many alive.

In response to these truly horrific attacks, Israel has defended itself from Hamas and other Iranian terrorist proxies.

I would have expected the international community to unequivocally condemn these barbaric terrorist attacks by Hamas and support Israel's fight for survival. However, corrupt international organizations like the

International Criminal Court have issued arrest warrants against Israeli officials for simply trying to defend themselves and defend their country.

The ICC's anti-Semitism speaks volumes. This is an unacceptable attack against our greatest ally, and the United States must make it clear that those who participate in these illegitimate prosecutions from the ICC are subject to the strongest possible sanctions.

America needs leadership, and this is where we need it. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand with Israel and to vote for H.R. 23.

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

Mr. Speaker, if the United States of America stands for anything, we need to stand out loud and foursquare for human rights. That means we have to hold ourselves accountable, our allies accountable, and our adversaries accountable when they don't live up to those standards.

The International Criminal Court is there to hold countries accountable and to hold entities accountable when they commit human rights crimes. They are there to investigate, and they are there to prosecute.

For us in Congress to get involved in sanctioning the ICC because we don't like the fact that they are pointing out some of the serious issues in Gaza committed by one of our closest allies, for us to sanction them because of that, undermines the court, undermines our credibility in the world, and undermines our credibility on human rights. Why would we do that?

This bill does nothing to help get the hostages released. It does nothing at all. Again, let me be clear: All of us should be saying as loudly as we possibly can that all the hostages should be released immediately and unconditionally. They have arrest warrants out for the leadership of Hamas precisely because of what happened on October 7. The ICC wants to hold them accountable.

What we are doing here doesn't make any sense to me. It doesn't make any sense to me. Again, the bill as it is written is so flawed. If it went through regular order, if you brought it to the Rules Committee and we made a few amendments in order, we might be able to fix some of the flaws I pointed out.

Instead, keeping to the tradition of this Republican leadership, which oversaw the closest Congress in the history of the United States in the last session, I guess we are going to expect more of the same—take it or leave it, my way or the highway.

This is about a sound bite, I guess, more than it is about trying to achieve peace in the Middle East, trying to get the release of our hostages, or trying to uphold a high standard of human rights. I find this really disappointing. I really do.

Again, I said at the opening of my statement to the new chairman that I

hope we can find areas where we can work together to help improve the quality of life for people all around the world. This bill is not going to do that.

I think we can do so much better here. This is not about whether you support Israel or not. This is a whole different discussion that we are having here today. This is about whether you want to delegitimize the International Criminal Court, a court, by the way, which many Republicans supported when it went after al-Bashir in Darfur and Putin for kidnapping children.

Again, we are entering a very dangerous time when we are bringing legislation to the floor to demagogue issues rather than to be constructive. We have to take a deep breath around here because some of the stuff that has come to this floor is really beneath this institution.

Again, I regret that we are doing this here today. I urge everybody, and I hope some of my Republican colleagues will join with us, to oppose this legislation. We can do better. We need to do better.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill sends an incredibly important message across the globe when we make this law: Do not get in the way of America or our allies trying to bring our people home. Do not get in our way. You will be given no quarter. Again, you will certainly not be welcomed to American soil.

This bill is even more urgent today than when it was first passed back in June of last year. In June, the ICC's prosecutor had only just requested warrants. The warrants had not yet been issued or approved. There was still time for the ICC to abandon this shameful effort. Instead, the ICC's attempt to obstruct Israel's right to defend itself has only prolonged the war and prevented the release of American hostages by boosting the morale of Hamas. If you are boosting the morale of Hamas, you are on the other team.

In November, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber approved the arrest warrants. We have to pass this bill today to prevent this travesty from moving any further and to deter any more illegitimate actions by this kangaroo court to halt or stall the military success of our allies trying to bring hostages home, American, Israeli, and others.

Mr. Speaker, for that reason, I call on every single one of my colleagues to put America first by voting for this legislation today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise. I rise today as a proud American and a staunch believer in the noble ideals this country was founded upon. This country, which was built on the idea of equality and justice, today is a leader on the world stage that can boast of its commitment and success in spreading these values. We have established a world order based on the rule of law, a commitment to advancing human rights, and deference to international institutions.

Yet, flagrantly contravening all of these principals, the House of Representatives has before it a bill that would punish the International Criminal Court (ICC) as it seeks justice for the Palestinian people. This legislation explicitly imposes sanctions on the ICC for "any effort to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute any protected person of the United States and its allies".

I love my country, and I truly believe that at our core, Americans do want global peace. For this reason, I staunchly oppose these efforts to undermine the international order merely because the agents of that order are taking legal action against one of our allies. Many of our closest allies are intimately involved with the funding and proceedings of the ICC, meaning they would be exposed to the sanctions created by this bill. This includes many of the United States' closest allies, such as Germany, France, Japan, and the United Kingdom, where the current Chief Prosecutor of the ICC is from.

This partisan bill is evidently not concerned about protecting all American allies, who would face severe sanctions should this legislation pass into law, but rather one American ally in particular. While Palestinians in Gaza continue to endure the most dire of circumstances and as their death toll for children only continues to tick upward, this Congress is instead intent on protecting Israeli politicians from scrutiny at the expense of maintaining the international order at large that we helped establish. I continue to ask for mercy for the Palestinian people and hope that all people of the region, both Israeli and Palestinian, receive the justice that they deserve.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I wish to underscore my strong support of H.R. 23, the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act, and highlight the immediate need to sanction the International Criminal Court (ICC) for its dangerous abuse of power and for the United States to repudiate these actions.

The ICC's outrageous issuance of arrest warrants for Prime Minister Netanyahu and Minister Gallant is a grotesquely bad decision by a court that is corrupted by blatant antisemitism.

Israel's right to defend itself from this brutal invasion is absolute. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said in the past that he would never allow a second holocaust—nor should we.

Antisemitism is at the root of Hamas violence against Israel and every Jewish man, woman, and child, and is explicitly expressed in Hamas' 1988 Charter which demands the absolute destruction of the state of Israel and proclaims: "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it."

In its 2017 charter, Hamas reiterates its goal of wiping Israel off the face of the earth: "There is no alternative to a fully sovereign Palestinian State on the entire national Palestinian soil, with Jerusalem as its capital."

Mr. Speaker, the ICC's actions support Hamas' explicitly antisemitic and genocidal campaign of terror against Israel, and Congress must respond in the most forceful way possible.

The ICC is a rogue actor on the world stage, and the United States must have a more effective long-term approach for how to respond to it.

Their latest action is a further manifestation of the same antisemitism that is rampant at

the United Nations and related international organizations. Last Congress alone, I chaired four congressional hearings on how they are absolutely infiltrated by antisemitic personnel who on a daily basis go after Israel with such cruelty.

Israel needs the ability to defend itself—and they need friends and partners who will stand beside them.

It is long-past time the United States held international organizations accountable for their antisemitism and their corruption. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon the United States to use its full voice to support Israel and ensure international organizations and venues are not used to promote antisemitism and the persecution of the Jewish people, and encourage our allies to do the same.

I thank Congressman ROY for introducing this legislation, underscoring this House's resolve to stand by an ally.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 23.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 5, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MAST. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 42 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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□ 1145

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST) at 11 o'clock and 45 minutes a.m.

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#### ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 22

*Resolved*, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives: