

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the matter just considered.

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE CONCERNING NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL TO TRY MEMBERS OF IRAQI REGIME

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 137) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the urgent need for an international criminal tribunal to try members of the Iraqi regime for crimes against humanity.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 137

Whereas the regime of Saddam Hussein has perpetrated a litany of human rights abuses against the citizens of Iraq and other peoples of the region, including summary and arbitrary executions, torture, cruel and inhumane treatment, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, disappearances and the repression of freedom of speech, thought, expression, assembly and association;

Whereas Saddam Hussein and his associates have systematically attempted to destroy the Kurdish population in Iraq through the use of chemical weapons against civilian Kurds, the Anfal campaigns of 1987-1988 that resulted in the disappearance of more than 182,000 persons and the destruction of more than 4,000 villages, the placement of more than ten million landmines in Iraqi Kurdistan, and the continued ethnic cleansing of the city of Kirkuk;

Whereas the Iraqi Government, under Saddam Hussein's leadership, has repressed the Sunni tribes in western Iraq, destroyed Assyro-Chaldean churches and villages, deported and executed Turkomen, massacred Shi-ites, and destroyed the ancient Marsh Arab civilization through a massive act of ecocide;

Whereas the status of more than six hundred Kuwaitis who were taken prisoner during the Gulf War remain unknown and the whereabouts of these persons are unaccounted for by the Iraqi Government, Kuwait continues to be plagued by unexploded landmines six years after the end of the Gulf War, and the destruction of Kuwait by departing Iraqi troops has yet to be redressed by the Iraqi Government;

Whereas the Republic of Iraq is a signatory to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and other human rights instruments, and the Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War of August 12, 1949, and is obligated to comply with these international agreements;

Whereas Saddam Hussein and his regime have created an environment of terror and fear within Iraq and throughout the region through a concerted policy of violations of international customary and conventional law; and

Whereas the Congress is deeply disturbed by the continuing gross violations of human

rights by the Iraqi Government under the direction and control of Saddam Hussein: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the Congress—

(A) deplores the Iraqi Government's pattern of gross violation of human rights which has resulted in a pervasive system of repression, sustained by the widespread use of terror and intimidation;

(B) condemns the Iraqi Government's repeated use of force and weapons of mass destruction against its own citizens, as well as neighboring states;

(C) denounces the refusal of the Iraqi Government to comply with international human rights instruments to which it is a party and cooperate with international monitoring bodies and compliance mechanisms, including accounting of missing Kuwaiti prisoners; and

(2) the President and the Secretary of State should—

(A) endorse the formation of an international criminal tribunal for the purpose of prosecuting Saddam Hussein and all other Iraqi officials who are responsible for crimes against humanity, including unlawful use of force, crimes against the peace, crimes committed in contravention of the Geneva Convention on POW's and the crime of genocide; and

(B) work actively and urgently within the international community for the adoption of a United Nations Security Council resolution establishing an International Criminal Court for Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. HASTINGS] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1400

Madam Speaker, the resolution before us today, House Concurrent Resolution 137, which I introduced, along with our colleague the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], cochairman of the Human Rights Caucus, expresses a sense of the House concerning urgent need for an international war crimes tribunal to try Saddam Hussein and members of his Iraqi regime for crimes against humanity.

I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for his leadership on this important issue. The critical need for this measure is highlighted by the events taking place just as we speak. House Concurrent Resolution 137 notes that dictator Saddam Hussein

has perpetrated a litany of human rights abuses against the citizens of Iraq, including arbitrary executions, torture, cruel and inhumane treatment, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and disappearances.

Saddam Hussein has attempted to destroy the Kurdish population in Iraq through the use of chemical weapons. He has repressed Sunni tribes in western Iraq, destroyed Assyro-Chaldean churches and villages, executed Turkomen, and massacred Shiites. Saddam Hussein has also continued to commit ecocide against the ancient Marsh Arab civilization.

Saddam Hussein's brutality is not limited only to his fellow Iraqis. We recall the dark days of the Gulf War, which witnessed Saddam's holding Kuwait and its innocent citizens hostage for so many months. The whereabouts of more than 600 Kuwaitis who were taken prisoner during the Gulf War still remains unknown and unaccounted for by the Iraqi Government.

House Concurrent Resolution 137, therefore, expresses a sense of Congress deploring the Iraqi Government's pattern of gross violations of human rights and denounces Saddam's refusal to comply with international human rights documents to which Iraqi is signatory. This bill also endorses the creation of an international criminal tribunal to prosecute Saddam Hussein and his henchmen and urges the President and Secretary of State to work actively toward the adoption of a United Nations Security Council resolution establishing an international criminal court for Iraq.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge our colleagues' strong support for the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 137.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Chair and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] for their efforts on this timely resolution. And I know that I speak for my colleagues, particularly the ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], in indicating our feelings with reference to this particular resolution.

We do not oppose this resolution. I join the chairman at this time in condemning Iraq's gross violation of human rights. Those who commit such crimes should be brought before an international criminal court, as this resolution correctly states. I do question, however, and several of us do, whether this resolution is likely to have much impact.

The resolution calls for an international court to bring Saddam Hussein to justice. But this resolution does not tell us how we get from here to there. The chief concern that I wish to express is that this resolution will raise expectations, especially in Kuwait, that such an international court