

American people's attention. I also want to specifically point out what they are not saying. There have been some pretty wild claims made by some African politicians and the army of lobbyists and PR firms that they have hired.

They warn that a boycott of diamonds could hurt some countries that depend on the legitimate trade, and they are right. But no one is calling for a boycott of diamonds, Mr. Speaker. I am not. My colleagues are not. Certainly, the ones who support the Clean Diamonds Act are not. Human rights activists are not.

With that said, any feeling human being knows that if this butchery continues, American consumers, who are the primary source of rebels' funds, will recoil in horror. I do not know what they might do; at a minimum, they probably will think twice before they buy a diamond.

That is the reality that the diamond industry, African countries and U.S. diplomats need to grapple with. They had a good start last summer, but that effort has evolved in meetings about when the next meetings might be and about what report on the situation they might write up before this year ends.

That is simply not enough, Mr. Speaker. That approach does nothing to help the 70 million people of these embattled nations. It does nothing to help, for example, this young lady here and people like her who have lost their hands and so many people that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and I have seen who have lost their ears and nose and feet, because of the horror of what we call blood diamonds. In this instance and in thousands of others, diamonds certainly are not a girl's best friend.

The legitimate diamond industry has been complicit in funding these atrocities for years and years.

Without its eagerness to launder rebel diamonds in violation not only of human decency but of U.N. sanctions and long-standing international trade law, the rebels in Sierra Leone could not have transformed themselves from a gang of 400 into a well-equipped force of 20,000.

Without the help of otherwise honorable diamond dealers, the rebels in Angola would not have earned nearly \$4 billion in recent years, money which has gone into buying land mines and attacking anyone who gets in the way of the diamond mining.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of terrible things that are going on in Africa and in desperately poor places. Usually, it is hard for us to figure out what we can do. The problems are usually so awesome and bedeviling and so enormous that we kind of throw up our hands. But this is not one of those cases.

There is something we can do sitting at home in America about diamond wars, because we buy two-thirds of all the diamonds in the world, and as this

industry's biggest consumer, Americans have enormous clout.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and others who are listening to go to their local jewellers and tell them to do something to bring an end to these diamond wars and peace to Africa and do it without any further delay.

H.R. 918, THE CLEAN DIAMONDS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this is a young girl whose arm was cut off that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) and I saw while we were in Sierra Leone.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) is exactly right, and I want to congratulate him for that. I also want to send a message to the lobbyists who have been hired by some of the powerful firms in this city and in this country, when you lobby for the diamond industry against the bill of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), you are, in essence, validating the cutting off of the arm of this young child.

Having practiced law in this town for a number of years, I will tell my colleagues the law firms that are being hired will some day be held accountable for what they are doing, because they have within them the ability to bring about the passage of Mr. HALL's legislation and keep the diamonds and the war and the killing to stop, not only in Sierra Leone, but in Angola and in the Congo.

I rise today with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), my colleague and good friend, to speak in support of this bill to address the trade in blood diamonds.

Millions have died in Africa because of the blood shed with regard to diamonds. Rebel groups, as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) said, in Sierra Leone, Angola, the Congo, where I just visited have committed horrible atrocities to gain control in and to profit from diamonds and the diamond mines, with regard to drugs, with regard to weapons and diamonds.

Last year, traveling with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), we went to Sierra Leone and saw the devastation. This is an individual whose picture a staff member from the office of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) took while there and other men and women who have their arms off. Some talked about their ears were off.

Others were asked do you want to short sleeve or a long sleeve. If they said a short sleeve, their arm was cut off here; a long sleeve, it was cut off there.

In Sierra Leone, an estimated 75,000 have died because of the rebel campaign. Diamonds are fueling this issue in the Congo and Sierra Leone and in Angola.

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In the Congo where I visited, the same effect is taking place. These diamond wars are notorious for the atrocities and aggressors committed against innocent victims. In all three countries, the civilian population has been the victims of the war crimes.

So I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), and I see the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman, who was there who has done such a great job on this issue, who have led the way on how the Congress in this country and hopefully this administration treats Charles Taylor who is, in essence, a war criminal in Liberia who is funding the efforts.

I will just say that passage of this bill will stop the killing, stop the maiming.

If you are a lawyer downtown and the diamond industry comes to you and asks you to represent them to oppose the bill of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), think about it. Because, in essence, you are representing the people, the people that have been responsible for this.

The bill of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) is a responsible bill. It is a balanced bill. I think he is exactly right. We do not want to see a boycott against the diamond industry. We do not want to hurt the jewelers in this country. We do not want to hurt the legitimate diamond merchants in the world and some of the good places in Africa that are doing it.

So by the passage of the bill of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), we can resolve this issue and stop the killing of people and the cutting off of arms.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONFLICT DIAMONDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL) for focusing our attention on this very important issue. They have been tireless in their efforts to raise awareness of conflict diamonds.

Over the last year, increasing attention has been given to the issue of conflict diamonds in Africa. The gross misuse of these resources in countries like Sierra Leone and Angola raise the stakes in Africa's all too many wars, making these conflicts more deadly by funding otherwise unaffordable weapons that are purchased overseas.