

Congressman Ron Paul U.S. House of Representatives May 9, 2002 Statement on the Paul Amendment to H.R. 4546, the Defense Authorization Act of 2003

Not One American Tax Dollar to the International Criminal Court

Mr. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week President Bush took the bold step of renouncing the signature of the United States on the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The Bush Administration, in explaining this move, correctly pointed out that this court has unchecked power that contradicts our Constitution and its system of checks and balances; that the Court is "open for exploitation and politically-motivated prosecutions;" and that "the ICC asserts jurisdiction over citizens of states that have not ratified the treaty" – which undermines American sovereignty.

President Bush, in renouncing the U.S. signature and declaring that the United States would have nothing to do with the International Criminal Court, has put the Court on notice that the United States will defend its sovereignty and its citizens. The president is to be most highly commended for standing strong for American sovereignty in the face of world-wide attempts to undermine that sovereignty with this deeply flawed global court.

But there is no time to rest on this victory. As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated this week, upon our renunciation of the ICC: "Unfortunately, the ICC will not respect the U.S. decision to stay out of the treaty. To the contrary, the ICC provisions claim the authority to detain and try American citizens-U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, as well as current and future officials-even though the United States has not given its consent to be bound by the treaty." Secretary Rumsfeld added, "When the ICC treaty enters into force this summer, U.S. citizens will be exposed to the risk of prosecution by a court that is unaccountable to the American people, and that has no obligation to respect the Constitutional rights of our citizens."

Secretary Rumsfeld is correct. It is clear that the International Criminal Court has no intention of honoring our president's decision to neither participate in nor support their global judicial enterprise. According to the Statutes of the court, they do indeed claim jurisdiction over Americans even though the president has now stated forcefully that we do not recognize the Court nor are we a party to the Treaty.

I have introduced this amendment to the Defense Authorization Act, therefore, to support the president's decision and to indicate that Congress is behind him in his rejection of this unconstitutional global court. It is imperative that we not award the International Criminal Court a single tax dollar to further its objective of undermining our sovereignty and our Constitutional protections. How could we do anything less: each of us in this body has taken an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States?

I am also introducing today a Sense of the Congress bill to commend President Bush for his bold and brave decision to renounce the United States' signature on the Statute of the International Court. We must support the president as he seeks to protect American servicemen and citizens from this court. I hope all of my colleagues here will co-sponsor and support this legislation, and please call my office for more details.

In the meantime, I urge enthusiastic support of this amendment before us. We must speak with one voice in denying the International Criminal Court a single American tax dollar!