**Why is President Trump Letting Palestinians Off the Hook for Violating U.S. Law?**

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## If President Trump is backtracking on his promise to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem allegedly for the sake of a “peace process,” why is he simultaneously allowing the Palestinians to violate U.S. law and sink peace unilaterally?

American law requires that funding for Palestinians be drastically curtailed if they use the International Criminal Court (ICC) to turn Israelis into war criminals. Though Palestinians have given the ICC a veritable bear hug, hundreds of millions of American dollars are still flowing into Palestinian coffers.

Palestinians are actively using a crooked international legal system as a means to avoid a negotiated end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and an acceptance of a Jewish state. It’s called lawfare — the antithesis of a “peace process.”

Palestinian-led lawfare has two goals: to criminalize Israeli exercise of the right of self-defense, and to criminalize Israelis living on any territory that Palestinians and the UN have unilaterally appropriated.

Congress has understood lawfare to be exactly what it says — namely, war by another means. They have also understood that twisting self-defense against terrorism into a war crime will rebound on American and NATO soldiers. Feeding Israelis to the sharks will be just the first course.

The International Criminal Court Statute was a coup for anti-American and anti-Israeli globalists because it trashed the essence of the reach of international law – namely, the consent of states. For the first time, international law could be used directly against citizens of states that had refused to be bound. Neither Israel nor the United States hase ratified the ICC Statute, but that cannot prevent the ICC prosecutor from going after either Americans or Israelis.

Moreover, the late stages of the drafting process of the ICC Statute – originally conceived as an instrument to target the most heinous acts perpetrated by humankind – were hijacked in 1998 by the Palestinians and their friends. The result is a statute that purports to turn Israeli settlements into war crimes.

Congress, therefore, ostensibly decided to protect Israelis from this international monstrosity by threatening serious financial repercussions to the Palestinian Authority (PA) should Palestinians start down the ICC path.

Each year beginning in 2014, and most recently in May 2017, the consolidated appropriations bills have included a commitment to deny the bulk of U.S. funding to the PA if “the Palestinians initiate an International Criminal Court (ICC) judicially authorized investigation, or actively support such an investigation, that subjects Israeli nationals to an investigation for alleged crimes against Palestinians.”

Palestinians have violated this law. But instead of exacting the mandatory price, the Congressional piper has gone into hiding to avoid being paid.

The PA first tested Congressional resolve in December 2014 when “the Government of the State of Palestine” claimed that it recognized the jurisdiction of the ICC to prosecute Israeli war crimes “since June 13, 2014.” The date was cynically chosen because Palestinian terrorists kidnapped and murdered three Israeli teenagers on June 12, 2014. Subsequently, on January 2, 2015, the “State of Palestine” acceded to the ICC Statute generally.

The UN wasted little time declaring the ICC Statute “entered into force for the State of Palestine on April 1, 2015” – notwithstanding “Palestine” is not a state.

Since then, the Palestinians have actively pursued a policy of using the ICC to subject Israelis to international criminal proceedings – taunting a seemingly paralyzed American government to respond.

On June 24, 2015, the PLO submitted a “first communication” to the ICC Prosecutor alleging “a pattern of systematic interrelated crimes.”

In 2015 and 2016, Palestinian representatives, including PA President and PLO Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, met with the ICC prosecutor and her representatives in The Hague and in Amman, Jordan. Also in 2015 and 2016, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki and Saeb Erekat, Secretary-General of the PLO, each claimed to have submitted files to the ICC.

In the absence of an American response, and spurred on by President Barack Obama’s anti-Israel legacy entrenched in a Security Council resolution during his last month in office, the belligerence has accelerated.

On January 31, 2017, Erekat said the Palestinian leadership will be “sending all the related information to the International Criminal Court urging it to open an immediate investigation into Israel’s settlement enterprise.”

On July 26, 2017, PLO Executive Committee Member Wasel Abu Yousif announced that the PA planned to submit another file on Israeli settlements to the ICC.

On September 20, 2017, Abbas boldly proclaimed to the General Assembly: “[W]e have called on the International Criminal Court to open an investigation and to prosecute Israeli officials for their involvement in settlement activities and aggressions against our people.”

And most recently, on September 25, 2017, the official PA news outlet Wafa reported that the PLO had “asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to start investigating Israel’s settlement activities in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.”

Congress has run out of excuses. A whopping 75 Senators, led by Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), wrote to then Secretary of State John Kerry on January 29, 2015 demanding action: “[T]he United States must make clear that joining the ICC is not a legitimate or viable path for the Palestinians.”

As nothing but furious thumb-twiddling all over Capitol Hill has occurred ever since, in fact the ICC route has proved a very viable path for Palestinians, terrorists and their enablers alike. This isn’t a peace process. And we aren’t “winning.”