Protect Americans, Repudiate The ICC

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The Bush Administration just took a welcome step to disentangle the United States from the global legacy of the late, unlamented Clinton Administration. The State Department's ambassador at large for war crimes issues, Pierre Prosper, announced that "the U.S. is not and will not be part of the ICC," and he indicated that the Administration is considering "unsigning" the treaty.
A prime example of mischief so characteristic of New Year's Eve frivolities was Bill Clinton's midnight signing of the International Criminal Court treaty. While neither Clinton nor George W. Bush will ever submit the ICC to the Senate for ratification (because it would be rejected), the pompous bureaucrats in the Hague are claiming jurisdiction over U.S. citizens based on the signing.

William Pace, the head of the International Coalition lobbying for the ICC, expressed his disdain for America. He said, "The world is about to show themselves and the U.S. they can start a major organization without U.S. political and financial leadership."

The United Nations set April 11 as the date when 60 nations will have ratified the ICC treaty and it thereby will go into effect. The globalists are holding their collective breath; Panama ratified last week bringing the total as of this writing to 56.

The ICC would be an enticing venue for anti-American sentiment. Some are probably already licking their chops at the prospect of indicting Bill Clinton for his 78 days of bombing civilian territories in Yugoslavia, Henry Kissinger for his intervention in Chile, and U.S. service personnel for the "collateral damage" they inflict when they are fighting to save other nations from terrorists.

The model for the ICC is not the International Court of Justice that has been functioning since World War II; it can try only countries, not individuals. The ICC plans to be a successor to the tribunals set up by the United Nations to prosecute war crimes in Rwanda in 1994 and the former Yugoslavia in 1990.

Those two courts cost $100 million a year to operate, and there is no end in sight. In addition to the cost and the perpetuation of jobs for the bureaucracy, their procedures are political show trials conducted with rules that Americans accustomed to Bill of Rights protections should never condone.

Those who think that the ICC would limit itself to the really bad thugs of the world, the Pol Pots, the Foday Sankohs and the Idi Amins, have their heads in the sand. The expansive jurisdiction claimed by the ICC would put every U.S. serviceman and woman, and even U.S. travelers especially if they are or have been public officials, at risk of being grabbed for trial by judges from Sierra Leone, Sudan, Iran, and other nations hostile to the rule of law.

The ICC is not an isolated project or aberrant endeavor of do- gooders in small European countries who have delusions of playing a big role on the world stage. The ICC is part and parcel of persistent plans to erase the borders of national sovereignty by globalizing governments, economies, judicial systems, peacekeeping, and so-called humanitarian escapades.

NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana boasted that the Yugoslav war moved us into "a system of international relations in which human rights . . . are much more important than sovereignty." Czech leader Vaclav Havel called the Yugoslav war "an important precedent for the future" in which "state sovereignty must inevitably dissolve."

It's a pity that Margaret Thatcher won't be speaking out any more. She was forthright in excoriating the globalists' attacks on national sovereignty, such as the plan to create a separate army for the European Union or the United Nations.

Our erstwhile allies want to lock America into a European political, judicial and military structure in which the United States would have only one vote. They already have conned us into joining the World Trade Organization where we have only one vote while the European Union has 15 votes and thus can easily manipulate the WTO's judicial system, which operates in secret.

The ICC plans to prosecute charges of war crimes, genocide and other crimes that have not yet been defined, in procedures that violate every U.S. constitutional safeguard. The ICC is accountable to no one, not even to the United Nations, whose charter recognizes the sovereignty of nation-states and where we have our Security Council veto.

Senator Jesse Helms and Majority Whip Tom DeLay have tried valiantly to get Congress to pass an American Servicemembers' Protection Act to protect our troops from the ICC. This bill would cut off U.S. military aid to any country that ratifies the ICC, prohibit U.S. forces from participating in UN peacekeeping operations unless expressly immunized from ICC jurisdiction by a UN Security Council resolution, and authorize the President to take any means "necessary and appropriate" to free U.S. servicemembers from ICC captivity.

Versions of this bill have passed both Houses of Congress and been endorsed by the Bush Administration, but it has never become law. April 11, when the ICC sanctimoniously proclaims itself the world's super court, would be a good day to protect American citizens by finalizing this legislation.