

□ 1851

Mr. SULLIVAN changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. MORAN of Virginia changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So, two-thirds not having voted in favor thereof, the veto of the President was sustained and the bill was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on account of official business in my district, I missed votes in this Chamber today. I would like the RECORD to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 384, 387, and 388. I would have voted "no" on roll-call votes 382, 383, 385, and 386.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The message and the bill are referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The Clerk will notify the Senate of the action of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2830, PENSION PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, under rule XXII, clause 7(c), I hereby announce my intention to offer a motion to instruct on H.R. 2830, the pension conference report.

The form of the motion is as follows:

I move that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2830 be instructed—

(1) to agree to the provisions contained in subsections (a) through (d) of section 601 of the Senate amendment (relating to prospective application of age discrimination, conversion, and present value assumption rules with respect to cash balance and other hybrid defined benefit plans) and not to agree with the provisions contained in title VII of the bill as passed the House (relating to benefit accrual standards); and

(2) to agree to the provisions contained in section 413 of the Senate amendment (relating to computation of guaranteed benefits of airline pilots required to separate from service prior to attaining age 65), but only with respect to plan terminations occurring on or after September 11, 2001.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow. The postponed vote on H. Con. Res. 448 will also be taken tomorrow.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 921) condemning the recent attacks against the State of Israel, holding terrorists and their state-sponsors accountable for such attacks, supporting Israel's right to defend itself, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 921

Whereas on September 12, 2005, Israel completed its unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, demonstrating its willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of peace;

Whereas more than 1,000 rockets have been launched from Gaza into Israel since Israel's disengagement;

Whereas in a completely unprovoked attack that occurred in undisputed Israeli territory on June 25, 2006, Israeli Defense Forces Corporal Gilad Shalit was kidnapped and is being held hostage in Gaza by a Palestinian terrorist group which includes members of Hamas;

Whereas Hamas political leader Khaled Meshal, in Damascus, Syria, has acknowledged the role of Hamas in holding Corporal Shalit hostage;

Whereas in a completely unprovoked attack that occurred in undisputed Israeli territory on July 12, 2006, operatives of the terrorist group Hezbollah operating out of southern Lebanon killed three Israeli soldiers and took two others hostage;

Whereas Israel fully complied with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 (1978) by completely withdrawing its forces from Lebanon, as certified by the United Nations Security Council and affirmed by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan on June 16, 2000, when he said, "Israel has withdrawn from [Lebanon] in full compliance with Security Council Resolution 425.,";

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 (2004) calls for the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and the dismantlement of all independent militias in Lebanon;

Whereas despite the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, the Government of Lebanon has failed to disband and disarm Hezbollah, allowing Hezbollah instead to amass 13,000 rockets, including rockets that are more destructive, longer-range and more accurate than rockets previously used by Hezbollah, and has integrated Hezbollah into the Lebanese Government;

Whereas the Government of Israel has previously shown great restraint despite the fact that Hezbollah has launched at least four separate attacks into Israel using rockets and ground forces over the past year;

Whereas the failure of the Government of Lebanon to implement all aspects of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559 and to extend its authority throughout its territory has enabled Hezbollah to launch armed attacks against Israel and recently to kidnap Israeli soldiers;

Whereas Hezbollah's strength derives significantly from the direct financial, military, and political support it receives from Syria and Iran, and Hezbollah also receives important support from sources within Lebanon;

Whereas Iranian Revolutionary Guards continue to operate in southern Lebanon, providing support to Hezbollah and reportedly controlling its operational activities;

Whereas the Government of the United States has enacted several laws, including

the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-175) and the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-172), which call for the imposition of sanctions on Syria and Iran for, among other things, their support for terrorism and terrorist organizations;

Whereas the House of Representatives has repeatedly called for full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559;

Whereas section 1224 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228) withholds certain assistance to Lebanon contingent on the deployment of the Lebanese armed forces to the internationally recognized border between Lebanon and Israel and its effective assertion of authority in the border area in order, among other reasons, to prevent cross-border infiltration by terrorists, precisely the criminal activity that has provoked the current crisis;

Whereas President George W. Bush stated on July 12, 2006, "Hezbollah's terrorist operations threaten Lebanon's security and are an affront to the sovereignty of the Lebanese Government. Hezbollah's actions are not in the interest of the Lebanese people, whose welfare should not be held hostage to the interests of the Syrian and Iranian regimes.", and has repeatedly affirmed that Syria and Iran must be held to account for their shared responsibility in the recent attacks;

Whereas the United States recognizes that some members of the democratically-elected Lebanese parliament are working to build an autonomous and sovereign Lebanon and supports their efforts; and

Whereas both Hezbollah and Hamas refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist and call for the destruction of Israel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its steadfast support for the State of Israel;

(2) condemns Hamas and Hezbollah for engaging in unprovoked and reprehensible armed attacks against Israel on undisputed Israeli territory, for taking hostages, for killing Israeli soldiers, and for continuing to indiscriminately target Israeli civilian populations with their rockets and missiles;

(3) further condemns Hamas and Hezbollah for cynically exploiting civilian populations as shields, locating their equipment and bases of operation, including their rockets and other armaments, amidst civilian populations, including in homes and mosques;

(4) recognizes Israel's longstanding commitment to minimizing civilian loss and welcomes Israel's continued efforts to prevent civilian casualties;

(5) demands the Governments of Iran and Syria to direct Hamas and Hezbollah to immediately and unconditionally release Israeli soldiers which they hold captive;

(6) affirms that all governments that have provided continued support to Hamas or Hezbollah share responsibility for the hostage-taking and attacks against Israel and, as such, should be held accountable for their actions;

(7) condemns the Governments of Iran and Syria for their continued support for Hezbollah and Hamas in their armed attacks against Israelis and their other terrorist activities;

(8) supports Israel's right to take appropriate action to defend itself, including to conduct operations both in Israel and in the territory of nations which pose a threat to it, which is in accordance with international law, including Article 51 of the United Nations Charter;

(9) commends the President of the United States for fully supporting Israel as it responds to these armed attacks by terrorist organizations and their state sponsors;

(10) urges the President of the United States to bring the full force of political, diplomatic, and economic sanctions available to the Government of the United States against the Governments of Syria and Iran;

(11) demands the Government of Lebanon to do everything in its power to find and free the kidnapped Israeli soldiers being held in the territory of Lebanon;

(12) calls on the United Nations Security Council to condemn these unprovoked acts and to take action to ensure full and immediate implementation of United Nations Security Council 1559 (2004), which requires Hezbollah to be dismantled and the departure of all Syrian personnel and Iranian Revolutionary Guards from Lebanon;

(13) expresses its condolences to all families of innocent victims of recent violence; and

(14) declares its continued commitment to working with Israel and other United States allies in combating terrorism worldwide.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, if neither gentleman is opposed to the bill, I request the time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from California opposed to the motion?

Mr. LANTOS. I strongly support this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Texas opposed to the motion?

Mr. PAUL. I am opposed to it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 1 of rule XV, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) will control 20 minutes in opposition.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the time for debate on this measure be extended for 80 additional minutes to be equally divided.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 minutes of my time to the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and I ask unanimous consent that he may be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the world is witnessing yet another violent episode in the glob-

al struggle between civilization and terror.

The cowardly and deadly attacks on Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah have resulted in a vigorous response by Israel. We shouldn't be surprised. A history of precarious existence in a violent region has persuaded most Israelis that wishful thinking carries deadly costs and has convinced them that their survival depends upon their own willingness to act. And so Israel has acted.

As a result, Israel is now the subject of criticism around the world. The standard condemnations will be uttered, the familiar demands expressed. Israel will once again be excoriated for self-defense by governments that cannot be bothered to assist others or which are even the sources of threats themselves.

Instead of offering help to halt these terrorist attacks, too many of the world's governments will yet again demonstrate their irrelevance to the region's problems or to any possible solution by restricting their contributions to making disparaging comments from the sidelines. We can be certain that terrorism writ large is likely to be verbally assaulted. But were verbal disapprovals as deadly a weapon as are missiles and bombs, the violence and slaughter that are the chosen instruments of the terrorists would be quickly eliminated.

At best, a moral equivalence between the terrorist attacks and Israel's response will be asserted. But it is profoundly immoral to equate assault with defense, to erase the bright line between the deliberate killing of innocents and a determination to protect those innocents.

Were we in the position of the Israelis, how would we ourselves react if missiles were launched from Cuba and rained down on Miami? Any government that would allow terrorists to attack its citizens and do nothing in response but protest or beg for mercy would betray its most sacred trust.

□ 1900

Instead, we should take encouragement from Israel's courageous example and hope that others sleeping in their protective cocoons awake and finally see that this conflict holds enormous stakes for us all. Israel must win its battle against terrorism, or we all will lose.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I have taken the time in opposition to this resolution because I very sincerely believe that resolutions of this sort actually do more harm than good. I know that it is very good to condemn the violence, and I certainly do agree with that.

But I am convinced that when we get involved and send strong messages, such as this resolution will, that it ends up expanding the war rather than diminishing the conflict, and that ultimately it comes back to haunt us.

Generally speaking, I follow a policy in foreign affairs called noninterventionism. It is not generally acceptable in this current time that we do this, but I think there is every reason to consider it. It certainly was something that the founders talked about.

The Constitution really doesn't authorize us to be the policemen of the world. And for this reason, we should talk about it. And that is why I take this opportunity to do so, with the sincere belief that we would be better off with less intervention overseas.

The founders talked about that, about rejecting entangling alliances. And we have been involved in a lot of entangling alliances since World War I, especially after World War II, and we have been doing a lot of things, losing a lot of men and women and costing a lot of money; and too often, these events have come back to haunt us. There is blow-back from our policy.

The policy of interventionism, which I object to, really doesn't work. It is well intended, and we have these grandiose plans and schemes to solve the problems of the world, but if you are really honest with yourself and you look at the success and failure, it doesn't have a good record. I mean, are you going to defend the great victory in Korea, the great victory in Vietnam? And on and on. The great victory in Iraq?

And I see resolutions like this step in the wrong direction. Actually, I believe it is going to expand the war in the Middle East.

The other reason why I strongly object to interventionism is it costs a lot of money. And someday we will have to deal with that. Supplemental bills come up now to the tune of tens of billions, and next year, already, they are planning to come up with another \$100 billion for our intervention overseas. But it is off the regular budgetary process, so it doesn't meet the budgetary restraints that we are supposed to follow. So it becomes emergency funding, although we have been in Iraq for 3 years, and with plans to stay endlessly. We are building permanent bases in Iraq. So there is a lot of cost, and eventually that will come home to haunt us, and it already has.

And then there is the problem of unintended consequences. We went into Iraq for all kinds of reasons, some disproven, and all well intended, and who knows what the real motivations were. But one thing was that we would gain access to oil, and oil would be produced and would help pay the bills. Yet oil, when we went into Iraq was \$28 a barrel. Now it is \$75 a barrel. That is an unintended consequence.

We have done more to fall into the trap of what Osama bin Laden wanted in Iraq than anything else. And actually we have helped Iran. Iran is stronger. They have probably already more influence with the grass roots, the democratic process in Iraq, than we do. Those are the kind of unintended consequences that, on principle, I strongly object to.

I believe that the founders were correct in advocating avoiding entangling alliances, to have a strong national defense, to defend this country, I believe that is just plain common sense. Most Americans, if you just flat-out put it to them, think we should not be the policemen of the world. Do you think we should be involved in the internal affairs of other nations? People say no. We shouldn't do this. The Constitution doesn't give us the authority to do it.

And we now are in the business of maintaining an empire. A noninterventionist foreign policy concedes up front that is not our goal. We are not supposed to be going overseas and building permanent bases and staying there endlessly. Even the election campaign of 2000 was won partially on the foreign policy issue that, you know, it was said that we shouldn't be the policemen of the world and we shouldn't be in nation building.

I think those are good ideas and the American people agree. They didn't object to it. But each step along the way we dig a deeper hole for ourselves. And that is the general philosophic reasons why I believe nonintervention is beneficial. Intervention is very, very dangerous. Later there will be a lot of specifics that I would like to mention.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. The conflict now raging in the Middle East is between a stable, pro-Western democracy and the terrorists who seek to destroy it. It is obviously in our country's interest and that of the civilized world as a whole to oppose and denounce the vicious war against Israel by Hezbollah and Hamas. We simply cannot accept a world in which terrorist bands can trigger cross-border conflicts in violation of international law. Even the 22 member states of the Arab League have recognized this fact. They unequivocally denounced Hezbollah for provoking the current crisis because they know that Hezbollah's nihilism threatens not just Lebanon but their own stability.

Hezbollah's contempt for human suffering is total, as it showed once again this morning when its rockets murdered two Israeli Arab children in Nazareth.

Mr. Speaker, Israel is doing all it can to limit the civilian suffering as any civilized, responsible, legitimate government would do. Its air bases, weapons and other military assets are located as far from population centers as they can be. But Hezbollah and Hamas have deliberately placed their weapons among the people, in their homes, in their schools, in their mosques. In a struggle between the two sides, the risk of civilian casualties is naturally disproportionate. The terrorists care nothing for human life, and care only to the extent that they can cynically leverage the damage in their favor in the court of public opinion.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, Israel is not facing just the terrorists Hamas and Hezbollah. Those criminal groups are merely proxies for the real masters of terror, Syria and Iran. If there was ever any doubt as to whether Hezbollah is a wholly owned subsidiary of Iran, it has now been put to rest. The unprovoked murder and kidnapping of Israeli soldiers on undisputed Israeli territory clearly served Tehran's interests. It occurred just days before the G-8 summit in St. Petersburg, which was set to focus on Iran's nuclear projects and transgressions. And, Mr. Speaker, the plot worked. The G-8 was indeed preoccupied with events in the Arab-Israeli arena, rather than with Iran's unrelenting march to secure nuclear weapons. But it is a mark of how alarmed the G-8 members were at the current situation that even Russia joined in the final communiqué condemning Hezbollah's actions.

Mr. Speaker, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559, passed in 2004, declared that all foreign forces should be removed from Lebanon, all militias dismantled, and the Lebanese Armed Forces be deployed to the entire border with Israel. In fact, none of this happened. Iranian Revolutionary Guard troops roam freely. And thanks to Hezbollah, Iran has established, effectively, a base in southern Lebanon right on Israel's border.

This is the same Iran that has called for Israel to be wiped off the map, the same Iran that has armed Hezbollah with 13,000 deadly missiles.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, the Lebanese Government stands by, helplessly watching its sovereignty evaporate. Hezbollah and Iran are holding Lebanon hostage as surely as they are holding the two Israeli soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, there will never be real Lebanese democracy or real Lebanese sovereignty as long as Hezbollah is armed and occupies southern Lebanon.

We also know that Syria is the primary culprit behind the Hamas kidnapping of an Israeli soldier, which also took place, unprovoked, on undisputed Israeli territory. It strains credulity to believe that the Syrian regime is merely a passive host for the Damascus-based Hamas leader, Khaled Meshal. Syria is his master.

Mr. Speaker, how often have we heard the complaint that there would be peace in the Middle East if only the Israelis ended their occupation?

The watchword of this school of thought was land for peace. But as events of the last week have shown, it should have been land for war. Israel ended its occupation of Lebanon and of Gaza. There was not one Israeli citizen in either Gaza or Lebanon when this murderous and cynical pair of attacks took place. And where did the murderers and kidnappers attack from when they invaded Israeli territory? The very places from which Israel withdrew.

How are we ever to establish peace?

How will decent people in the region ever believe in peace if Arab terrorists

interpret every gesture of peace as a display of weakness and then act accordingly?

□ 1915

Israel has withdrawn from Lebanon and Gaza. But where is the goodwill on the other side? Since Israel evacuated Gaza, more than 1,000 Hamas rockets have been fired at Israeli homes and Israeli schools. Since Israel evacuated Lebanon, the terrorist gang Hezbollah that occupies south Lebanon has stockpiled 13,000 rockets. As we have learned in recent days, these rockets travel farther and are far more deadly than had been previously believed. No wonder, Mr. Speaker, that Israeli support for Prime Minister Olmert's plan to withdraw from large areas of the West Bank has been plummeting even while Olmert himself enjoys wide support among his people.

Given the stakes, I believe that the United States must support Israel in combating enemies who will not be mollified by anything less than Israel's total destruction. Any result of this fighting that leaves Hezbollah in occupation of southern Lebanon will be a victory for Iran and for Syria, for fanaticism and for terror, and the defeat for Lebanon and for Middle East peace.

That, in my view, is the message of the resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker. And that is why I strongly support this resolution, and that is why I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do likewise.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), our distinguished majority whip.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for recognition. And I am grateful to Chairman HYDE and Mr. LANTOS for the hard and thoughtful work they have done on this resolution, for the comments that they have already made, and many of those comments are not going to be better made this evening.

Clearly, we stand here understanding that no country in the world knows more about the importance of a safe society than Israel, knows more the need to protect its borders and citizens than Israel.

The conflict being waged is not one that Israel asked for. It is being fought out of necessity and out of self-defense. No country would tolerate the type of armed aggression that Israelis have witnessed in recent weeks. These deadly rocket attacks have been launched against civilians in Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah with the direct backing, as Mr. LANTOS has said, of Syria and Iran.

In fact, just last night word came out of the region that the Israelis had found and destroyed a truck convoy carrying new deadly rockets across the Syrian border into Lebanon. Those weapons, which reportedly were produced in Iran and transported through

Syria under the knowing eye of that country's government, are the instruments being used by Syria and Iran to wage a proxy war against Israel.

All responsible members of the international community must demand that Syria and Iran immediately cease their financial and military support for these terrorist organizations or face the kind of global isolation and action by the Security Council that they deserve.

Innocent citizens of Lebanon have also been the victims. The Lebanese Government has not been able to gain control over its own security and disarm Hezbollah, as demanded by the United Nations. I believe the Cedar Revolution was real, but democracy is still weak, and the Lebanese Government must resist terrorism or it does not govern.

As Israel engages in a two-front conflict to defend its borders, I am confident that its government is doing all it can to minimize the loss of civilian life. Unfortunately, Lebanese and Palestinian civilians are being caught in the middle. I talked today to friends of mine in Nazareth who were witnesses to the attacks on Nazareth today where innocent Arabs living in Israel have been killed by these terrorist factions. We must put a stop to this. We must stand strong. This is exactly the kind of Islamic totalitarian view of the world that we resist today in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me this time.

I would like to stipulate that in the 12 years I have been in the House, I have visited Lebanon on 10 occasions, and 2 years ago when I was there, I called upon the President of Lebanon, who has the same name as I do, although he is no relation, that he should not extend his term as President of the country, and that troops should be moved into the southern part of the country. I want to stipulate that now so people understand.

I believe this resolution does not go far enough, and I believe the resolution should stipulate some humanitarian interest in the Lebanese people who are the ones that are being injured and killed by the attacks on the country. But I do not believe the current President should be in office. He has extended his term, and that should not have been. They should have moved troops into the southern part of the country and gone after Hezbollah, but that has not happened.

But over the last 10 years, the country of Lebanon, in particular Beirut, has been rebuilt. It has been rebuilt primarily by the assassinated former Prime Minister, who did an extraordinary job and showed extraordinary

leadership over the last several years in helping to rebuild the country and helping to rebuild, in particular, the city of Beirut.

Late last week I decried the capture of two Israeli soldiers, and I decried the Hezbollah for doing that. But I also decried the idea that the attacks that are being made are well beyond the boundaries of where Hezbollah is at, well beyond the boundaries of the southern part of Lebanon, to completely shut down the airport, to bomb every road so there is no way for peace-loving people who have no fight in this battle at all to exit the country.

Over 25,000 Americans are trapped in Lebanon, many students, many American students, who go to school at American University of Beirut. And also many peace-loving Americans who are there, many from my home community of Peoria, over 300, who traditionally go to the country in the summertime to visit their mothers and their fathers and their aunts and their uncles, are trapped there.

Now, I give the administration credit for allowing these cruise ships now to come to the Mediterranean and help them exit. But the point that I want to make here is there is nothing in the resolution about the innocent people that are being killed. Over 300 people have been killed in the last 7 days who have no fight in this. They do not live in the southern part of the country. And there are many people that are trapped there. And I wish the resolution would have allowed for some idea that you can go into the southern part, you can go after Hezbollah, you can run them out of the country, and we are well within our right to do that, but not to shut down every way and every means of people to escape the country, not to kill innocent people, not to go into neighborhoods where there are absolutely no Hezbollah.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, will my friend yield?

Mr. LAHOOD. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LANTOS. I thank my friend for yielding.

First, let me react to your comment that the resolution does not deal with the loss of innocent life. The resolution expresses its condolences to all families of innocent victims of recent violence.

Secondly, it is critical to prevent the resupply of deadly rockets from Iran and Syria. Unless the airport is closed down, unless the border with Syria is closed down, these deadly weapons will be resupplied in no time. That is why the airport was attacked. That is why the border crossings with Syria were attacked.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I would say the resolution is not specific to the Lebanese innocent people. It mentions innocent people, but there is no specificity about those Lebanese people, particularly Lebanese Americans who are there visiting their families and the students that are there.

The only road that was not bombed, the only road that was not closed, is the road that goes to Syria. And I know people and I have talked to them that have exited the country through Syria, and the Syrian Government is allowing them to go into Syria, go into Damascus, and take flights out to other parts in order to get back to the United States.

I have served on the Intelligence Committee now for 8 years. There is something I think I know. Hezbollah is well armed. They have all the ammunition they need, and we need to shut them down. We need to eliminate them from the southern part of Lebanon.

I do not buy this idea that they were going to be able to ship arms in through the airport. They have all they need. They have the kind of capability, and they have shown that.

So I have heard that argument that the airport was bombed. I believe it was bombed so you could close off a way for people to get out of there. And I do not quite buy the argument that it was bombed so that they could be resupplied. They do not need to be resupplied. They have got all they need.

Look, I have said pretty much what I wanted to. I know what the debate is going to be about. My obligation is to peace-loving people who live in Lebanon, who have made their homes there. My grandfather on my father's side came to this country in 1895 to Peoria, Illinois, from Lebanon. We have a large Lebanese population in Peoria. And I hope there are others, I think there will be, that will speak up for the common, ordinary, decent people of Lebanon who are suffering as a result.

They want Hezbollah out of the country, and there is no argument with that, but they do not want to see their own neighborhoods, where there is no presence of Hezbollah, to be bombed and innocent people killed.

If this were going on in Israel, which it is, the resolution stipulates that our hearts go out to those people. The innocent, peace-loving people of Lebanon in neighborhoods where Hezbollah does not exist, they get no recognition in this resolution. With all due respect, Mr. LANTOS, they simply do not. They did in a resolution that was prepared earlier on, but that language was taken out.

So I think the resolution is inadequate, and I want to stick up for the people of Lebanon. I want to also compliment the administration for waiving the fees that they were going to charge innocent people for getting outside of the country. Obviously, that was a no-brainer. For getting the cruise ships to come in, to allow helicopters to transport people from the embassy over to Cyprus, all of these things are good things.

I have talked to the administration. I have asked Secretary Rice and her team to talk more about restraint, particularly in the parts of Lebanon that do not deserve to be bombed, where innocent people do not deserve to be killed.

I am just going to wrap up. It is going to take millions of dollars to rebuild areas of Lebanon that have been damaged. I mean, it is going to take millions of dollars to rebuild bridges and roads and infrastructure that have been built over the last 10 years. Beirut was so well positioned. This year in the city of Beirut, they had more tourism. The economy was booming. And now when you see what is happening, not only the innocent life, but so much of the infrastructure has been destroyed. I hope our government is going to be willing to step up and provide some of the dollars to help rebuild the country.

So my objection is that I think the resolution is inadequate, and I want to speak up for the people of Lebanon.

I thank the gentleman from Texas very much for yielding me this time.

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

Before yielding to our distinguished whip, I would like to make a couple of observations. I first visited Lebanon in 1956, in the summer of 1956.

□ 1930

It was the jewel of the Middle East. And what has destroyed Lebanon during the course of the last half century were various terrorist groups, first Arafat's PLO and now Hezbollah.

No one is in favor of hurting a single innocent human being. The fact is that with Hezbollah placing its weaponry in the midst of population centers, collateral damage is unavoidable. Israel has gone to every length to minimize collateral damage.

As a matter of fact, the difference between the tragedies befalling the Lebanese people and the tragedies befalling the Israeli people is very simple: Hezbollah deliberately, deliberately, attacks civilians. Israel does its utmost not to attack innocent civilians.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LANTOS. I am glad to yield to my friend, the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I agree with everything you have said, Mr. LANTOS. My only problem is, why not give the same kind of consideration in the resolution to the common, ordinary, decent people of Lebanon who are being hurt by these attacks? That is really all we were asking earlier on when we presented a resolution to the majority leader's office.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished Democratic whip, my good friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California.

Mr. Speaker, first let me say that, unfortunately, there wasn't as much bipartisan drafting of this resolution as I would have hoped.

Hopefully there is no one in this Chamber who does not empathize with those who want peace, those who work for peace, those who are caught in the

environment of hate, those who are caught in the environment of attacks on innocent people, those who are harboring in their midst those who attack a nation because of the religion and ethnicity of their population. All of us have empathy for innocent people caught in the grip of terror and terrorism.

But all of us also ought to have the expectation that those people would exorcise from their societies those who undermine peace, security and safety, and the Lebanese people have not done that. They have either not done it because they are incapable of doing it, or they have not done it, as too often I hear verbalized, I tell my friend, because of their sympathy for Hezbollah.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution condemning the recent terrorist attacks against our Nation's staunchest democratic ally in the Middle East and supporting Israel's inherent right for self-defense, and I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to support this resolution as well.

Israel is absolutely justified in undertaking the defense of its territory and its people. As the Israeli columnist Ari Shavit recently wrote, Israel's actions are "not a war of occupation, but rather a war of defense. Not a settlements war, but rather a green line war. A war over the validity of an international border that was drawn, defined and recognized by the United Nations."

No one should be mistaken: The actions taken by Israel over the last 8 days have been a direct response to the premeditated, unprovoked attacks of Hamas and Hezbollah, terrorist organizations which are underwritten and encouraged by their sponsors, Syria and Iran.

Palestinian militants, including members of Hamas, dug a tunnel 300 yards inside of Israel territory. And when, on June 25th, militants emerged from that tunnel, they killed two Israeli soldiers, wounded three and kidnapped one.

Then last Wednesday, July 12, Hezbollah terrorists crossed Israel's internationally recognized northern border, and in a brazen daylight attack killed three Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two. Another five Israeli soldiers were killed by Hezbollah terrorists when they tried to retrieve the bodies of their fallen comrades.

Mr. Speaker, these premeditated, unprovoked terrorist attacks on Israel are indefensible. One can only imagine the American response if a terrorist group attacked and killed American citizens from just across our border.

It also must be noted that Israel has exercised great restraint over the last year, during which Palestinian militants, as has been referenced on this floor, have launched over 1,000 rockets from Gaza into Israel and Hezbollah has launched four separate attacks on Israel.

While I am convinced that Israel is using every possible effort to avoid civilian casualties, it is clear that the

terrorists in Hamas and Hezbollah purposely, purposely, staged their actions from within civilian communities, thereby putting civilians at grave risk.

Furthermore, while Israel makes every effort to minimize civilian casualties, it is clear that the terrorists of Hamas and Hezbollah deliberately attempt to maximize such casualties by indiscriminately firing rockets upon Israeli population centers.

Mr. Speaker, as a first step towards restoring calm, it is absolutely imperative that Israel's soldiers in Gaza and Lebanon be returned unconditionally and unharmed and that indiscriminate rocket attacks on Israeli civilians by Hamas and Hezbollah cease immediately.

It is also long past the time for the international community to facilitate the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559. If that U.N. resolution had been carried out, there would be no innocent citizens on either side being killed this day. The tragedy of our international community is the United Nations talks a much better game than it ever plays. That resolution, which was adopted in September of 2004, calls for the Lebanese army to control southern Lebanon's border, and for all militias, including Hezbollah, to be disabled and disbanded.

So long as the international community fails to ensure the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559, I believe Israel as a sovereign nation with an inherent right of self-defense has every right to strike armed terrorists which seek her destruction. Disarming and disbanding terrorist organizations is essential to Middle East peace.

We empathize, we sympathize, we have deep concern for those caught in this web of violence and terror, but that will not rationalize nor will it excuse the lack of action to exorcise those terrorists from the body politic of the Middle East. Until that happens, innocent civilians will ever be at risk.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 2 minutes to my colleague the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), who is a staunch supporter of Israel and who has been there many times.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to associate myself with the previous speaker and his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my steadfast support for Israel during this time of crisis and escalating violence. In the strongest possible terms, I condemn Hezbollah's unprovoked attack on Israel.

On July 12, 2006, Hezbollah assaulted northern Israel. This attack killed eight soldiers and took two others hostage. The kidnapping and killing of Israeli soldiers symbolizes a clear act of war by Hezbollah, which the government of Lebanon has failed to take apart and has even included in its cabinet.

Hezbollah's continued violence against Israel is financed and supported by Syria and Iran. The United

States Department of State said that Iran supports Hezbollah with financial, political and organizational aid, while Syria provides diplomatic, political and logistic support. Syria and Iran should be held responsible for the violence that has ensued in the region as a result of their support of Hamas.

Like the United States and other sovereign nations, Israel has the right to defend itself and its people from the attacks by these terrorists. Hezbollah fired at least 100 rockets at Israel just yesterday, with an estimated 720 Hezbollah rockets reported fired since the current crisis began. Israel air strikes continue and Israel defense forces conducted cross-border raids overnight. Over 230 Lebanese and 25 Israelis have been reported killed since hostilities began. Estimates of Lebanese displaced by the violence vary widely, from tens of thousands to as many as 400,000.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the United States must continue our efforts to support the State of Israel. These are the same killers who blew up our Marine barracks in Lebanon and killed 260 of our finest United States Marines.

An Israeli win is a win for the United States. Our future, as well as Israel's future, is wrapped up in the future of this conflict. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment just briefly on the comments made by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), because I think his point is well taken about the emphasis on this legislation, and to deny that would be just trying to fool one's self.

It is very clear that if one were objective and read this resolution, all the terrorists are on one side and all the victims and the innocents are on the other side, which I, quite frankly, find unfair, especially coming from the position that I want to advocate, neutrality, rather than picking sides.

But he also mentioned the fact about trying to change the resolution. I would like to emphasize also that being on the International Relations Committee, I was anxious to see the resolution, but characteristically it was very difficult to get. We didn't hold hearings and we didn't debate it and we didn't get a chance to have amendments to it, and even last night I couldn't receive it. There were some news articles very early this morning. Lo and behold, they had copies of it. It took me until about 9 o'clock this morning to get it.

So I think it would be fairer within this Congress to allow us to have a chance to debate these in the committee, to bring them to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, it was 24 years ago almost to this very day that I led an offi-

cial congressional delegation to the Middle East, appointed by then Speaker Tip O'Neill. This six-nation tour included meetings with heads of state in every one of the countries we visited, including the Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Began.

We were in Beirut those first days of August 1982 when Israeli bombs were falling all over the country and all over the city, as they are this very day. The Israeli aim at that time was to rid Lebanon of the PLO.

Then President Ronald Reagan got on the phone to then Prime Minister Menachem Began and said enough is enough. Stop the bombing. President Reagan had that courage, had that sense.

There immediately ensued negotiations and a peaceful evacuation of Americans in the area, and we initially sent over marines, maybe a month later, at which point in time we were considered peacekeepers and all the Lebanese were welcoming the American presence. That later turned sour. That is part of history and I shall not go there.

But I have written President Bush last Friday urging him to take this same action as President Ronald Reagan took 24 years ago.

□ 1945

I commend him for calling Arab leaders as he is and asking the Arab leaders to urge restraint upon Hezbollah and to urge the release of the hostages, which is a proper action. I also asked the President that should he not be calling the Israeli Prime Minister at the same time. What is wrong with this course of action?

The point where we are today is a point that is unfortunate. It was stupid of Hezbollah, Hamas to take the actions they took. I condemn the hostage taking.

Israel has a right to defend itself. It has the right to pursue to the nth degree those that abduct their soldiers. The Israeli action of current days, and as we speak in Lebanon, however, has other repercussions than just the stated agenda of destroying Hezbollah. That is not going to happen. We know that there is no military action that is going to wipe out every member of Hezbollah, that is going to wipe out every member of Hamas.

That is not the way this problem is going to be resolved. It is time for cooler heads to prevail if peace is to have a prayer. It is time for a cease-fire. It is time for Secretary Rice to go to the region. It is time for Hezbollah to, as the first step, simultaneously with the calling of a cease-fire release the hostages. That must be done, step number 1, with the calling of a cease-fire, and then negotiations should continue.

As to whether there will be future and sequential release of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by the Israelis, many of whom have not even had the first charge read against them yet, but that is for later, Israel has

done this in the past, to their credit. Yes, we do not negotiate with terrorists, but we do. We know the reality.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that the current actions of Israelis have gone beyond going after Hezbollah. This resolution that is before us seems to hint at that pretty strongly. The Government of Lebanon is targeted in many different points in the resolution before us. The Government of Lebanon is demanded in this resolution to disarm Hezbollah. That is something that 18 years of Israeli occupation of Lebanon could not achieve. The Israelis cannot do that. But we are demanding now that a year-and-a-half-old Lebanese Government, prodemocracy, pro-American, so much hope after the Cedar Revolution of a year and a half ago, we are now demanding that they disarm Hezbollah in this resolution. Not realistic.

Who are the losers if a cease-fire is not immediately implemented? Who are the losers in this fighting and the loss of innocent lives and civilian infrastructure continues? The losers are the moderates. The losers are the Siniora government in Lebanon, a government that has not approved, has not condoned the taking of hostages, as a matter of fact has spoken against it; a government that cannot at this particular point in time control fully its borders, but was getting its act in order previous to the current invasion.

In the Palestinian territories, who are the losers? The moderate Palestinian leader Abu Mazen is the loser, an individual who was negotiating with Prime Minister Olmert, very close to a deal on prisoner exchange, when all of a sudden this kidnapping occurred, and that almost deal went down the tubes. So the moderates are the losers the longer the fighting goes on, the longer we are without a cease-fire.

The likely scenario, of course, is that the Israelis will continue. They did a massive hit just as we speak against a Hezbollah bunker in south Beirut. It remains to be seen whether they got the head of Hezbollah or not, but there will be some mopping-up operations in the next week or so, and then Secretary Rice will go to the region and be the big peacemaker. I hope that is the scenario and that it is over that quick. I hope indeed that is what will occur.

But we must request and we must demand that Hezbollah release the kidnapped soldiers as the first step with the simultaneous announcing of a cease-fire and let cooler heads prevail if we are going to give peace a chance.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 921.

Throughout its history, Israel has had to defend itself from groups that want to wipe it off

the map. Hamas and Hezbollah do not want to negotiate a two-state solution, they want to go back to before 1948. That is not going to happen. The United States first recognized Israel and will continue to help Israel defend herself.

The recent attacks, murders and seizure of soldiers by Hezbollah and Hamas are no different, and this House must affirm its commitment to Israel and stand behind that nation's right to defend itself.

Less than three weeks after the June 25 abduction of Corporal Gilad Shalit by Hamas in undisputed Israeli territory, Hezbollah opened a second front against Israel by attacking, killing and abducting more Israeli soldiers in northern Israel.

Israel's response was no different than the U.S. response would have been if someone had attacked across our border.

Israel completely withdrew from southern Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 425.

Despite this move to facilitate the peace process in the region, and despite U.N. Security Council resolution 1559—which required Lebanon to take control of this region and to disarm and disband any militias in the country—Lebanon allowed Hezbollah to operate in southern Lebanon, and receive material and funding from Iran and Syria.

Hezbollah launched four separate attacks earlier this year against Israel.

Israel has been forced to defend itself from these terrorist groups to protect its borders and its people which have been targeted by Hezbollah rockets.

Unlike Israel, which has carefully targeted Hezbollah members who hide and operate among the civilian populations, Hezbollah has indiscriminately fired rockets at northern Israeli civilian populations in cities like Haifa, Nazareth, and Nahariya.

Mr. Speaker, these attacks by the terrorist groups Hezbollah and Hamas on Israel's borders, military, and civilian population have forced Israel to respond.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution reaffirming our support for Israel's right to defend itself.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to my friend from Massachusetts, I yield myself such time as I may consume to make a comment about Mr. PAUL's observation as he calls for neutrality.

Calling for neutrality between a democratic ally of the United States and a gang of terrorists is not worthy of this body. There is no neutrality between a gang of terrorists who indiscriminately kill and the democratic state.

May I also say that it was Hezbollah terrorists who killed the largest number of U.S. Marines in Beirut a quarter century ago. Some of us were there visiting with them just a couple of weeks before they were all killed. Lee Hamilton, a distinguished former Member of this body, and I visited with our marines just days before they were all killed by Hezbollah terrorist activity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the distinguished ranking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, first, this Israeli retaliation

did not come in the abstract. Let's be clear what happened. I speak here as someone who has been critical in the past of Israeli Governments that were, in my judgment, sufficiently willing to take risks for peace. I have been an advocate of giving up land in the interests of a comprehensive settlement.

What happened tragically in the last couple of weeks is that Israel was attacked by entities who do not think there should be any Israel at all. It was attacked by people dedicated to the abolition of the Jewish State in the Middle East from two territories from which it had withdrawn.

What was attacked was not just individual Israelis, but those in Israel within that democratic nation who have pushed for peace. In April, after the withdrawal from Gaza, very controversial, the people willing in Israel to withdraw from territory in pursuit of peace won an election. Those in Israel who would reject that approach lost. Sadly, the rejectionists then won in the Palestinian Authority. So you have people who had risked themselves in a democratic nation for peace now being undercut by those who use those very territories from which they withdrew for attacking them. And again these were not disputes over specifics.

Hamas and Hezbollah both agreed there should be no Israel. These are people who want to return not to the borders of 1967, but to the borders of 1947 when there was no Israel. Now, no democratic nation can be expected to not respond, and that is what we have, a response to attacks across the internationally recognized border of Israel by people committed to destroying its very existence from territories from which they withdrew. So the attacks were clearly justified.

Then the question is, well, how have they conducted the war? I think there were things that they should not have done. I wish they had not bombed the power plant in Gaza. But, you know, I look at what Israel is doing in Lebanon, and I must tell you what it most resembles in my recent memory, the American action in Yugoslavia when we bombed and bombed and bombed Belgrade and much of Yugoslavia, much of Serbia, to get them to withdraw from Kosovo. That was not a conventional military action. Now, I must note that Israel has not at this point taken out any embassies. We in the Yugoslav war took out the Chinese Embassy. We bombed convoys.

Sadly, when people go to war, innocent people die. That is why I am very reluctant to vote for war. But that happens. But what happened in Serbia was America punishing the Serbian territory to get them to withdraw from Kosovo, and it worked.

Now, I understand the pride of the Lebanese Government, but let me say this, first of all, in response to my friend from West Virginia. The resolution does not demand that the Lebanese Government disarm Hezbollah. It demands that the Lebanese do every-

thing within its power, within its power, to change things.

In contrast, the resolution does make an unconditional demand of Syria and Iran that they do the right thing. So it does differentiate between Lebanon and Syria and Iran.

Now, let me say, with regard to Lebanon, I am struck by the pride of the Lebanese people, but I have to say this. Many of those who are now critical of Israel and say, what do you want from poor Lebanon, where were they when poor Lebanon needed them? Where were they when the Lebanese were unable to get Hezbollah to move? Why did they not get involved then?

In defense of the Israelis, what they are saying is this: Look, a U.N. resolution said get Hezbollah away from us, because if they keep this up, we will have to retaliate, and nothing happened until they started killing Israelis inside Israel, and then Israel retaliated.

So those who now say, well, you know what, do not blame the poor Government of Lebanon, I do not. I blame those in the Arab world and elsewhere who could have gone into that situation and avoided this.

So now the question is what do you do? A simple cease-fire that leaves Hezbollah on the Israeli border, in violation of a U.N. resolution, free to continue to kill across that international border in their pursuit of their effort to destroy the State is not good enough. I would like to see us be involved.

What the resolution says is have Syria and Iran be pressured by the rest of the world, including those great humanitarian nations of Russia and China and elsewhere that have expressed opinions here; let them intervene not simply to stop the shooting, but to get Hezbollah away from that border. Then it will be reasonable to ask Israel to stop, and I believe they want to.

So it is not simply release the soldiers today so four more can be captured and more people killed tomorrow. Let the international community show its real concern for the Government of Lebanon by providing them with the assistance they need to move Hezbollah away.

Let Hamas honor the fact that Israel withdrew at great political internal cost from Gaza and not use that as a launching pad for their efforts to destroy Israel.

So I must say, I think it is justified in terms of the response, in terms of the way it is conducted. Yeah, it is messy and bloody, and innocent people die, and that is why you try to avoid those situations, and why Syria and Iran should be pressured to get Hezbollah to move back so we can put an end to it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, Hamas and Hezbollah attacks against one of our closest friends and best allies, Israel,

are acts of war, and they have Iran and Syria's fingerprints all over them.

As chairman of the National Security Subcommittee with direct focus on the Middle East and the Islamist terrorists that breed there, I am grateful we are promptly considering this bipartisan resolution to say to Israel, to the international community, and, most importantly, to the terrorists and the nations who support them that this Congress unequivocally stands by Israel.

We condemn the terror attacks against it, and we pray for the peaceful resolution of this crisis and to the end to the loss of innocent lives on both sides.

The prisoner exchange called for by some must be put off the table. Doing so legitimizes Hamas and Hezbollah's actions and will only embolden them and the Syrian and Iranian Governments that back them to launch similar attacks in the future. The resolution of this crisis must include the nonnegotiable safe return of the kidnapped Israeli soldiers, and the guarantee of the security of Israel's borders, including the full implementation of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) derogatorily said there is no room to talk about neutrality, as if it were a crime. I would suggest there is room for an open mind to another type of policy that may save American lives.

I was in the Congress in the early 1980s, and then I left Congress, and I just come back recently. But I was here when the Marines were sent in to Lebanon, and I strenuously came to the floor before they went, when they went, and before they were killed, arguing my case. And then they were killed. Ronald Reagan, when he sent the troops in, said he would never turn tail and run.

□ 2000

Then, after the marines were killed, he had a reassessment of the policy. When he wrote his autobiography a few years later after leaving the Presidency, he wrote this.

He says, "Perhaps we didn't appreciate fully enough the depth of the hatred and the complexity of the problems that made the Middle East such a jungle. Perhaps the idea of a suicide car bomber committing mass murder to gain instant entry to Paradise was so foreign to our own values and consciousness that it did not create in us the concern for the marines' safety that it should have."

In the weeks immediately after the bombing, I believe the last thing that we should do was turn tail and leave. Yet the irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policy there. If there would be some rethinking of policy before our men die, we would be a lot better off. If that policy had changed towards more of a neutral

position and neutrality, those 241 marines would be alive today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, let me start by commanding the esteemed chairman of the International Relations Committee and the distinguished gentleman, the ranking member, for bringing this very powerful resolution to the floor.

I agree with this resolution. I vehemently, vehemently condemn the violence and terrorist activity of Hamas and Hezbollah. I also vigorously support the right of Israel to defend itself against these terrorist acts and to do what is necessary under these dire circumstances.

But let me also say that this resolution is incomplete, and I don't think it is fully reflective of what U.S. policy should be. Much has been said about Resolution 1559. Much has been said about Lebanon, that poor small country that has been victimized time and time again.

What of Lebanon? There is a nascent democracy there, despite the challenges, despite the years of conflict, a nascent democracy that is budding. I think this resolution should give lip service to those Lebanese patriots who are trying to build this democracy. The Siniora government, we should not do anything that would undermine this nascent democracy and Prime Minister Siniora's attempt to build an economic country, a country that is going to have opportunity.

Security Council Resolution 1559, whose fault is it? We know that this nascent democracy in Lebanon doesn't have the capability to defend itself. It doesn't have a very well-formed armed services. We know that Israel could not drive Hezbollah out.

How can the small force that Lebanon has do such? Whose fault is it? The international community, the U.S.? This has been a failure of policy. One thing that is clear is that this Security Council Resolution 1559 has to be enforced unequivocally, and Hezbollah must be disarmed in any way that is possible. This is going to take an international effort. Once there is international consensus that this resolution will be enforced, then we need to put together the coalition to enforce it.

I am going to conclude. I am not going to take the full time, but I am going to say that America should not turn its back on any of its allies, and that certainly includes Israel. But it should also include that vulnerable State of Lebanon.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my good friend from Louisiana for his very thoughtful statement, and let me just add that if Hezbollah is, in fact, defanged, the primary beneficiary will be the people and the State of Lebanon.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3½ minutes to my distinguished friend from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. I thank my colleague from California, and I strongly support this resolution. Mr. Speaker, on June 25, Palestinian militants from Hamas kidnapped and later executed an Israeli soldier. On July 12, Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers.

In both cases, terrorist militias affiliated with democratically elected governments, violated internationally recognized borders and seized three soldiers. In both cases, they were acts of wars. These acts turned on its head 25 years of agreement that if Israel would leave territories to internationally recognized borders, there would be peace.

It is this turning on its head the reason for the reaction by both Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan because it has violated what happened in 1978 with the giving of the Sinai. It violated what happened in 1993 with the Oslo Agreement, and it violated what happened in 1994 with Jordan.

What happened here, and nobody should underestimate the consequences, is it totally violates not only the internationally recognized border but the bipartisan effort, internationalized effort, to bring peace to the Middle East, and specifically to the Arab and Israeli conflict. That is, Israel would move to internationally recognized borders. Those borders would be recognized and peace would happen.

That effort, if it doesn't end here, and this doesn't get upturned with the return of soldiers, that effort of giving up peace by giving up real estate, recognizing internationally recognized borders, will come to an end. That is why three Arab governments, allies of the United States, have acted the way they have acted and recognized the consequences and the deep meaning of what happened here.

That being said, nobody should lose sight for one moment also of what has happened here. The so-called democratically elected governments on the West Bank and in Lebanon have militias affiliated with those governments. So those are democracies. They are not truly democracies, they are totalitarian entities with militias and terrorists acting as democracies.

As we talk about bringing democracy to the Mideast, understand that that button should be paused for a second and understand the consequences here. That what has happened is Saudi Arabia, most importantly, Egypt and Jordan, have brought peace and have come to a peace agreement with Israel. Those who have violated that peace are, quote-unquote, democracies, as we spread democracy in the Mideast.

Understand what that means here, and the consequences of what has happened here, is that you cannot allow this violation of internationally recognized borders, three soldiers to be seized, and think there will be no act of war. That is what has broadened, and yes, many of its citizens will be hurt.

I want to see an end to the violence that is engulfing Israel and Lebanon,

but it will not end this violence at the ballot box. It will only end with the emergence of true partners who recognize the importance of peace and the end of terrorist regimes founded on hate.

I strongly support this resolution, its spirit, as well as its letter.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in strong support of the resolution before us, introduced by our distinguished majority leader and two foreign policy giants, our International Relations chairman, HENRY HYDE and our ranking member, TOM LANTOS. We wish that circumstances were different in the Middle East, and we regret the loss of innocent human life.

However, silence on our part in the face of these outrageous attacks against Israel would only serve to embolden these Islamic terrorists and their neighbors. Our stance, therefore, must be clear, Mr. Speaker; we condemned these armed attacks against Israel.

We fully support Israel's right to take appropriate action to defend itself in the face of these existential threats, and we must hold not just Hamas and Hezbollah but also Iran and Syria accountable.

Mr. Speaker, the current conflict in the Middle East is not simply the result of these most recent developments. Rather, it results from the efforts of the chain of interrelated extremist entities and their state sponsors who threaten not just Israel but our own security interests as well.

It stems from a deep-seated desire to destroy the State of Israel, or, as the Iranian leader has said, to wipe Israel off the map. It stems from Iran's desire to export its revolution and to exert regional domination. It is based on a world view that led to the taking of American hostages in 1979, who were held for 444 days, and that hatred against the U.S. as not gone unabated.

The events of the recent weeks find their roots in an alliance between Iran and Syria and their terrorist proxies, which, throughout the years, have caused the deaths and injuries of countless Israelis and Americans alike. Current developments are also linked to the failure of the United Nations to ensure full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 requiring Hezbollah to dismantle and disarm.

Over the past year, Israel has shown tremendous restraint in the face of continued assault from Islamic extremists. Despite Israel's withdrawal from Gaza last year, terror attacks targeting innocent Israeli civilians continued and, in fact, have increased.

In the last year extremists in Gaza have launched over 1,000 rockets at Israelis. Weapons, money and manpower were smuggled to Gaza through tunnels, enabling continued terrorism and transforming the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority into ha-

vens for international terror groups like al Qaeda.

Hamas and other jihadist groups use such underground tunnels to sneak into Israel, to kill two soldiers and kidnap Corporal Shalit in order to exchange him for imprisoned, condemned, Palestinian terrorists. The situation intensified on July 12 when members of Hezbollah, without a hint of provocation, went into Israel and killed three Israeli soldiers and took two others hostages.

Again, this was not an isolated incident by Hezbollah. In the past year these extremists launched at least four attacks into Israel. One of these took place on November 2005 when Hezbollah launched rockets into Israel while a large number of its jihadists infiltrated and attacked an Israeli village.

The enemy should not and must not be underestimated. Iran and Syria and other terrorist enablers are engaged in a never-ending struggle to improve their relative power position. They have declared war on freedom and democracy, and will use any means available to them to achieve their ends.

They not only present a threat to Israel and to the U.S., but also to moderate reforming Arab governments in the region. In turn, we must resolve, as this resolution clearly states, to work with Israel and other U.S. allies to fight these extremists worldwide.

As Robert Satloff of the Washington Institute for Near East Policies recently said, defeat for Israel is a defeat for U.S. interests. It will inspire radicals of every stripe. It will release Iran and Syria to spread more mayhem inside Iraq, and make more likely our own eventual confrontation with this emboldened alliance of extremists.

By contrast, Satloff adds, victory in the form of Hezbollah disarmament, the expulsion of Iran's military presence from Lebanon, the eviction of Meshal and friends from Damascus, and the demise of the Hamas government in Gaza is, by the same token, also a victory for the U.S. and for Western interests.

Mr. Speaker, this says it all. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

□ 2015

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I also ask unanimous consent that the time for debate on this measure be extended for 40 minutes, to be equally divided between the proponent and opponent.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL of California). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, further, I yield 10 minutes of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, and ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

I just want to make a couple of comments before yielding. It has been well advertised about the three prisoners that have been taken, the three Israeli prisoners. Everybody in the country knows about it. What I find a bit interesting is that some people estimate between 8,000 and 10,000 Palestinians and Lebanese are in prisons and under the authority of the Israeli police and government.

It is also known that one-third of the Cabinet of Palestine have been arrested and held hostage by the Israeli Government, and once again, I think this is a distortion of what is going on. It is hard to get the information out to find out exactly what is happening in this area.

Also, I would like to make one additional point that it is very easy to criticize the Government of Lebanon for not doing more about Hezbollah. I object to everything Hezbollah does because I am a strong opponent to all violence on both sides. So I object, too, but I also object to the unreasonable accusations that the Government of Lebanon has not done enough, when we realize that Israel was there for 18 years, and Hezbollah did not get any weaker, and they are stronger than ever. So I think, again, a little bit of balance is worth considering.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

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

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding, and yielding, I note, time in opposition.

I will be voting for this important resolution, not because it is perfect. As a matter of fact, I think the one consistent thing that, Mr. Speaker, you are going to see tonight is not one, not two, not three, but all four of the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle whose families emigrated from Lebanon basically 100 years ago or more are finding that this resolution does not say enough.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention and will be including in my remarks H. Res. 926, which was submitted as a draft to the Committee on International Relations and to the Subcommittee on the Middle East on which I serve on both.

For those who think that Members of Congress who come from Lebanese ancestry would somehow think differently than many of the rest, I would like to share just a few short portions.

First of all, the opening of the resolution: "Condemning the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers by Hamas and Hezbollah, affirming the right of Israel to conduct operations to secure the kidnapped soldiers, urging all parties to protect innocent life and civilian infrastructure, and for other purposes."

Many of the passages are similar, but some notably are different than the

resolution being considered tonight. It goes on to blame directly Nasrallah, the Secretary General of Hezbollah, responsible for these attacks and responsible for taking hostages.

It further, in its whereases: "Whereas Iran, Syria, and elements of the Government of Lebanon have a well-documented history of supporting the terrorist groups responsible for these kidnappings."

And, Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the Lebanese Americans were the first to come out and say in no uncertain terms that the elements in Lebanese society, including those who were elected from the occupied south, not occupied by Israel any longer, but occupied by Hezbollah, did send representatives sympathetic to Hezbollah.

But I think what is not said in this resolution and has not been said well enough here tonight, in my opinion, is that the Cedar Revolution clearly denounced that direction. It went against the illegally reelected or illegally extended Presidency of Emile Lahoud, and it made very clear by backing the so-called Saad Hariri bloc, the bloc of the assassinated former Prime Minister in securing a multidenominational, across-the-board, including Shi'a, government that wants a sovereign, independent and peaceful Lebanon.

Unfortunately, the resolution we are considering tonight does talk about the failure of the Lebanese Government. I think that is fair, but it is only fair if we also include the failure of the United States Government.

We have provided nothing to the Lebanese since they bravely stood up to Syria, demanded their withdrawal, rioted in the street, were bombed and killed for their attempt to give themselves that freedom and liberty. We have not provided them any kind of capability of going to the south and enforcing. We have talked about it. We have planned to do it. The administration has prepared to do it. Our committees have explored it, but today, as of yet, we have not yet done what we must do.

Mr. Speaker, I call on this committee that is here today on this floor to dedicate itself to immediately upon us coming back to work in the morning begin the process of providing the lawful Government of Lebanon the ability to, in fact, send those troops to the south to, in fact, displace Hezbollah. It is going to take time, energy, money and training.

We are spending billions of dollars every month arming the Iraqi people so, in fact, they can replace a government that we had to topple. The Lebanese already toppled a government that had been a puppet of Syria and Iran for a long time, and they, in fact, were the movement that led to Syria being forced out after decades of occupation.

The Lebanese have earned the right, and this resolution in part says that, they have earned the right to have that ability, and we have to give them that ability.

So I go further than simply say I hope we will. I demand that if we care enough about the words we say in our resolution tonight and in H. Res. 926, which is the underlying document submitted by four Lebanese Americans, if we care enough to denounce Hezbollah for what they have, and Iran and Syria for what they have done, then we have to be willing to confront them in Lebanon, something we have not been willing to do.

So, tonight I stand with Israel's right to get its kidnapped soldiers back. I stand with Israel's right to reduce the ability of Hezbollah to rain rockets down on Israel, but I also stand with the people of Lebanon who have been traded like pawns again and again and say, yes, let us pass this resolution, but let us also start in the morning to do the job so that the next resolution, when it says the Lebanese Government has failed to do something, it will not also have the right to say the Lebanese Government did not have a snowball's chance in a summer in Hades of actually doing it.

A government with armored personnel carriers donated by the U.S. Government in the 1970s made of aluminum is not going to take on Hezbollah, not if tanks from Israel could not do it in 18 years.

So, yes, I am voting for this resolution. I appreciate the gentleman giving me time from the opposition, but I want to include H. Res. 926 in this debate, and I want to include the statement by the four Lebanese Americans that, yes, we will support Israel, but we want to support Lebanon's ability to be free and independent, and that will take a commitment starting tomorrow morning.

H. RES. 926

Whereas on June 25, 2006, Israeli Defense Forces Corporal Gilad Shalit was kidnapped and taken hostage by a Palestinian militant group that included members of the military wing of Hamas;

Whereas Hamas political leader Khaled Meshal, in Damascus, Syria, has acknowledged the role of Hamas in holding Corporal Shalit hostage;

Whereas on July 12, 2006, operatives of the terrorist group Hezbollah carried out an attack in Israel, killing three Israeli soldiers and taking two others hostage;

Whereas Hezbollah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has acknowledged Hezbollah's responsibility for the attack and taking hostages;

Whereas Iran, Syria, and elements of the Government of Lebanon have a well-documented history of supporting the terrorist groups responsible for these kidnappings;

Whereas President George W. Bush stated on July 13, 2006, "[t]he democracy of Lebanon is an important part of laying a foundation of peace", that the government of Lebanese Prime Minister Faouad Siniora must not be undermined during the current crisis, and that Syria and Iran must be held to account for their shared responsibility in the recent hostage taking; and

Whereas Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated on July 12, 2006, "All sides must act with restraint to resolve this incident peacefully and to protect innocent life and civilian infrastructure." Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns Hamas and Hezbollah for engaging in the reprehensible terrorist act of taking hostages;

(2) affirms the right of Israel to conduct operations, both inside and outside its own borders and in the territory of countries supporting the hostage takers, in pursuit of the release of hostages;

(3) notes that all governments that have provided continued support to Hamas or Hezbollah share responsibility for the hostage taking and urges these countries to use all efforts to secure the unconditional release of the hostages;

(4) urges all parties to protect innocent life and civilian infrastructure;

(5) declares its continued commitment to aiding Israel and the administration of President George W. Bush in battling terrorism and securing the unconditional release of hostages; and

(6) expresses its condolences to all innocent victims of recent violence in Israel, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territories and their families, including those of the three Israeli hostages.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my friend from California for his very thoughtful observations, and I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the distinguished ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee, my very good friend.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for this opportunity.

I stand in strong support of this resolution. Some may say, well, how could you be against the war and supporting this? Well, I think it is good historic sense, it is good moral sense, that any sovereign nation that gets attacked should have the opportunity and be given support for defending herself.

Clearly, when we went into Iraq, we had no clue as to who the terrorists were. They certainly were not in Iraq. There were no weapons of mass destruction, no connection between Saddam Hussein and 9/11.

But here we have a nation that has been invaded. People have come into their country, killed their soldiers, kidnapped their soldiers, and rain rockets on them, and the surprising thing that we find here is that we find something to that. As an American, I cannot imagine the hostility I would feel and the support I would give in retaliation if something like that happened to our country.

What amazes me, however, is that for the first time people have recognized that the terrorists are not just after the United States and Israel. The terrorists are after every decent thing that we believe in, and at long last the Governments of Jordan and Egypt and Saudi Arabia has seen that these terrorists, that somehow we found out that they believe that not being at war with Israel is the same as being at peace with Israel, but recognize in that area some of the Arab countries that we give support to, economic and trade support, still held hostile the people in Israel and resented the right for Israel to exist.

I think this is a great opportunity to bring those Arab nations together, to

let them know that they are just as vulnerable for the people that they have supported, and even though the animosity seems to be going toward Israel, is toward them, is toward the United States, is toward everything that we believe.

So, if we do have crown princes and kings and Presidents unable to go to the ranch and discuss whatever they do, and if Israel does not come up as a place where they teach hatred and anti-Semitism, why not take advantage of this opportunity to tell the Arab countries in the region that this is the time for all of us to come together not just in a willing coalition, but in a coalition for peace, and to make certain that we cut this cancer out not just because of Israel, but because of the free world?

The Hamas and the Hezbollah have to really cut this cancer out of our society now, and it gives us an excellent opportunity to bring the friends of the United States and the so-called friends of Israel together to see whether or not we can make certain that these people are not a threat to Israel and not a threat to the neighboring countries and not a threat to the great United States of America.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. I rise in support of H. Res. 921, condemning the recent attacks against the State of Israel.

On June 25th, Israeli soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit was kidnapped and is still being held hostage in Gaza by Hamas.

On July 12th, Hezbollah in southern Lebanon killed three Israeli soldiers and took two others hostage and began bombarding Israel with rockets.

In the past week, over 700 rockets and mortars from Gaza and Southern Lebanon have hit Haifa (Israel's 3rd largest city) and numerous other cities and towns.

These unprovoked attacks appear to be coordinated by Iran and Syria—probably to take the issue of Iran's nuclear development off the front burner.

When Israel withdrew from Southern Lebanon several years ago, it did so with the understanding that the Lebanese Army would secure the area from Hezbollah. To this date, the Army has yet to move into the area and take control.

Some have suggested that the U.S. urge Israel to restrain itself—that it should negotiate and stop their attacks. The problem is, as Amb. Bolton said today, there isn't anyone to talk to. The Palestinians are being governed by Hamas and Lebanon is still being controlled by Syria—both terrorist regimes.

Israel must take any action it sees fit to defend themselves and prevent the abducted soldiers from being taken to Damascus or Tehran.

Iran needs to be put on notice. We know what you are doing and it is not going to work.

I know that the Palestinian and Israeli people are committed to peace. The Hezbollah

and Hamas scourge, who are the only ones undermining a long-term peace, must be wiped off this earth.

I pray that this situation resolves itself quickly and that we can continue to move forward with the Middle East peace process.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the events in Lebanon during the past week are yet another wake-up call to those who have perhaps complacently thought or believed that the global war on terrorism has somehow abated. It has not. Israel is, in fact, on the front lines of this war as we meet.

Mr. Speaker, we all know there is nothing whatsoever benign or noble or praiseworthy about the terrorist groups such as Hamas or Hezbollah and their state sponsors Syria and Iran. They not only refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist, they want Israel wiped off the face of the map.

They actively seek Israel's demise, its destruction, by both their words and their deeds. Their hate-filled, fanatic, perhaps even psychotic, suicide bombers bomb, shoot and wreak havoc on the lives of countless unarmed innocent men, women and children through the terrorist intifada campaign.

It is abundantly clear that Hezbollah has violated the sovereign territory of Israel by launching unprovoked rocket attacks and ground forces incursions into undisputed Israeli territory, resulting in the death and hostage-taking of Israeli soldiers.

□ 2030

While Israel has withdrawn from Lebanon, in full compliance with U.N. Security Resolution 425 in June of 2000, and unilaterally withdrawn from Gaza in September of last year, the Government of Lebanon has been unable or unwilling to disband and disarm Hezbollah in implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559.

I want to thank Dr. Boustany for his comments earlier. And I think it was important that he injected it into the debate that there is this inability, perhaps, on the part of the government. And I think we need to do more ourselves to help them to rid themselves of this cancer called Hezbollah. Hezbollah clearly is not only a grave threat to Israel, as we all know, but it is a grave threat to the freedom-loving people of Lebanon as well.

This resolution puts us clearly on the record stating where we stand, and I am so glad that I think there will be great support for it.

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

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of accusations made about who precipitated the crisis, the charges made that

it all occurred because three prisoners were taken, and that Hezbollah and Hamas deliberately provoked the situation. And it may well be true. I have no idea exactly what is true.

But there are others who have indicated that they believe that it was precipitated mainly with the intent of our foreign policy, along with Israel's foreign policy, as an initial step to go into Iran. We have talked about Iran around the House and around Washington, and there are a lot of people very, very concerned. Our administration talks about it all the time; taking out Iran, taking out the nuclear sites. But to do that, the theory is that these missiles had to be removed and, in a practical military sense, that seems very reasonable. So there could be the deliberateness of Hamas and Hezbollah precipitating the crisis for whatever gain they think, or deliberately precipitated by both the United States and Israel with the intent to follow up with bombing in Iran. And I am frightened about that. I think that may well occur.

I have talked to a lot of military people, a lot of CIA people, who actually believe this is a possibility within months. And this is the reason I have such great concern about what is happening in this area of the country, because if us going into Iraq didn't go so well, can anybody imagine what is going to happen when the bombs start to fall on Iran? I think it is going to be catastrophic. And there has been talk on television this past weekend, the beginning of World War III. And this war is about to spread, and this is the reason that I oppose this resolution, because, deep down in my heart, I believe that what we do here helps to provoke things and agitate things and bring us closer to a greater conflict. And I am just arguing that there is an alternative other than violence to settle some of these problems.

Now, a lot of bombs have fallen on both sides, and of course, if they are coming from Lebanon, Syria and Iran are blamed, and they may well deserve the blame. But we haven't talked about who gets the blame for the other side. More people are getting killed on the other side. And as we mentioned before, innocent people are killed, and a lot of nonmilitary targets have been hit, farms and buildings and electrical plants and airports that have nothing to do with the military.

And yet the reason I believe this is going to be worse is because we see it in this country the way we want to see it. And we have no willingness to think about how it might be seen elsewhere, like how is it going to be seen by 1 billion Muslims around the world? And you know, quite frankly, every single bomb that is dropped by Israel, by their calculation, and they have reason to believe so, those are U.S. bombs. Those are our airplanes. We paid for them. And they get the money to buy these weapons. So whether it is deliberate or whatever, it doesn't matter. It is the perception by the Muslims who are radicalized by this.

You can't deny it. There are more radicals today than there were 2 or 3 years ago. And the reason why I am worried about this is we are now getting the information about the reaction to 9/11. 9/11 occurred, and the immediate response by many of our leaders and the administration said, let's go to Iraq. People would say, well, why Iraq? Well, we have been planning on it all along. This is the opportunity.

As soon as this crisis built, we heard very similar comments. Let's go to Iran, you know, to go forward.

There are others who suggest that this crisis has come about not out of our strength, but out of our weakness. If Hezbollah and Hamas has deliberately done this, they might have calculated we have been stretched fairly thin around the world and with Iraq, and know that a lot of the American people and the taxpayers are getting tired of the war, so they may have seen this as a sign of weakness on our part. But then the "neocons" say, yeah, that may well be true, that is why we have to be tougher than ever. We have got to unleash the bombs. We have got to consider nuclear weapons, and back and forth and back and forth, until one day we are going to get ourselves in such a fix that World War III will be here and it will be irrevocable.

And there are some people who sort of like this idea. There are some "neocons" who thrive on chaos, because their theory is they want regime change. They want regime change in Syria, and they want regime change in Iran. They wanted it in Iraq. And we are, by gosh, we are going to have regime change, and they are going to be our friends and they are going to be democrats. We are going to have democratic elections.

So we go to war and our men and women die. We spend all this money, and we have elections. And then sometimes we don't like the results of the elections, so we ignore them.

What if we had elections in Saudi Arabia? What if we had elections in Egypt? And then what if their radicals were elected?

So we are fighting and dying to spread democracy. And it is probably one of the most dangerous things for us with our current foreign policy, is that when they do vote and elect Hezbollah and Hamas, then we have to reject the principle of democracy.

Self-determination is a great principle, and we should permit it and encourage self-determination. But encouraging elections under these circumstances, and by force, in hopes that we get our man in charge just doesn't work.

I think we are going to have regime changes, a lot more regime changes than most people want around here. I think the regime changes are coming in Saudi Arabia, and I think there will be a regime change maybe in Egypt. Who knows? In Libya. And you are going to be very unhappy with those regime changes.

So, yes, it was well intended to have regime change in Iraq. But what has it gotten us?

And now we want to spread that philosophy and have more regime changes, and who knows what the results are going to be? They are not going to be good. They are going to backfire on us.

You know, when Osama bin Laden responded to why, he had a list of reasons on why he encouraged or directed the attack on 9/11. And the one thing that he listed we shouldn't ignore, because as bad as that individual is, and as violent as he is, nobody has ever proven he tells lies. Nobody has ever proven this. Nobody says he is a liar. So we ought to listen to what he says.

And one of the reasons that he listed for this was back in 1982, back to the problems we had in Lebanon, there were 18,000 Lebanese and Palestinians killed. And who knows whose bombs and who was doing it? But you know, we were in there, although our troops weren't fighting and we left, but Israel was involved, 18,000. But regardless of whether or not we directed it or wanted it is irrelevant. The conclusion was that we were participants, and it rallied his troops and helped him organize to get people so hateful that they were willing to commit suicide terrorism and come here.

Now, we can ignore it and say, well, he is a liar. That is not the reason they did it. But we do that at our own peril.

Now, one of the reasons why I believe that it wouldn't be difficult to put the label USA on these weapons, obviously the airplanes have been built here. But what about the money? How much money have we given for weapons?

Between 1997 and 2004, and that doesn't even count the last 2 years, we gave over \$7 billion in weapons grants. It wasn't a loan. It was a weapons grant.

Now, the neat thing about this, this was an economic deal because it was beneficial because under the foreign military financing program that we have, Israel is required to spend 74 percent of that back here. So you are talking about a military-industrial complex, a pretty good deal. You know, we subsidize them, send the money over here, it comes over here, and our arms manufacturers make even more money and then dig a bigger hole for us in foreign policy and contribute to the many problems that we have. And that amount of money, they get \$2.3 billion of these military grants, and they automatically increase it \$60 million per year. So it is locked in place.

Now, you say, well, that is money for our ally. And fine, if it was used for defense, maybe. But if it is used to antagonize 1 billion Muslims and there is no willingness to even consider the fact that we should look at it in a balanced way, and instead it is ridiculed and said, oh, this is ridiculous to think of neutrality or balance and think about both sides, and the innocent people dying on both sides should be considered.

So we are moving toward a major crisis, a major crisis financially and a major crisis in our foreign policy. I don't believe we can maintain this.

So even if you totally disagree with our aggressive empire building and policing the world, let me tell you, I am going to win the argument, because we are running out of money. We are in big debt, and we are borrowing it. We borrowed \$3 billion a day from countries like China and Japan and Saudi Arabia to finance this horrendous debt. And it won't be, it can't be continued. The dollar will eventually weaken. You are going to have horrendous inflation. Interest rates are going to go up, and it is going to be worse than the stagflation of the 1970s.

And domestic spending is never curtailed. We have been in charge of the Congress and the Presidency for several years now, and the government gets bigger, probably faster than it was getting before.

So we are facing a crisis that is liable to escalate and get out of control in the Middle East. At the same time, it has a bearing on our finances, because when it contributes to the deficit, there is a limit to how much foreigners will loan to us. We have to print the money. We have to go to the Fed, create new money. That is the inflation.

And what does it do to the cost of oil? Inflation pushes the cost of oil up. That should be a concern to everybody. And at the same time, the production of the oil didn't work. I mean, the oil production went down in Iraq.

What happens if this happens to be true? I actually pray that I am completely wrong about this. And you can say, well, you are, so don't sweat it. But what if I am right? It is frightening, because if this leads to bombing in Iran, look for oil at \$150 a barrel. Then the American people will wake up. They will say, hey, what's going on here? Why is gasoline so expensive? It is expensive because we have less production out of Iraq, and it is expensive because the value of the dollar is going down. And it is expensive because they are anticipating that this crisis is not going away, and what we do are antagonizing the world.

So, once again, I come to this from a slightly different viewpoint than those who like to pick sides. There is nothing wrong with considering the fact that we don't have to be involved in every single fight. That was the conclusion that Ronald Reagan came to, and he was not an enemy of Israel. He was a friend of Israel. But he concluded that that is a mess over there. Let me just repeat those words that he used. He said, he came to the conclusion, "The irrationality of Middle Eastern politics forced us to rethink our policy there."

I would like you to rethink our policy, not only there, but the kind of policy that led to 60,000 people dying in Vietnam and then walking away. And what happened after we walked away? We are better off than ever. We had a naval ship going into Vietnam just recently. We trade with them. We do

deals with them. Yet it was a total fiasco and a total loss because of the way we went to war.

And this is also the reason that I am determined to persist that if we take our country to war, that we ought to be responsible. We should never send these kids and young people to war without a declaration, win the war, and get it over with. When we don't declare it, it goes on and on and on. We don't win them.

And literally, this Persian Gulf War, and this Iraqi war, it has been going on since 1990. We never stopped bombing Iraq, never stopped bugging them, and antagonizing them and inciting them.

So it is not a sign of weakness to talk about neutrality. It is a sign of strength that you have a little bit of courage and you believe in your own system. If we want to spread our values, it is a good way to do it. Set a good example. Put our financial house in order. Treat people evenly, and trade with people, and talk to people and travel.

But don't think that we can force our values at the point of a gun, and think they are all going to be democratic elected governments that we are going to be pleased with. It is not going to happen.

So there is reason to reconsider the total policy that has been followed in this country essentially for 100 years. And it hasn't been productive for us. Essentially, Woodrow Wilson started it. We are going to make the world safe for democracy. And look how safe the world has been since Woodrow Wilson introduced that. We are less safe than ever. And our financial condition is worse than ever.

And we are running our program, whether it is our domestic welfare program or our foreign policy, it is being run on borrowed money. It is borrowed money from overseas, and it is also from inflated currency. And we can get away with it for a while longer, but let me tell you, there is a crisis coming, and it is going to be dealing with the dollar and it is going to involve our foreign policy. And then we will, as a sign of weakness, we will have to come home. We will have to come home because we can't afford the empire. It is not wise to have it, and we should have more confidence and more belief that what we have in this country, and what America used to stand for, that we should spread that message more by setting an example and through a voluntary approach. And when that time comes, I think that maybe more people will reconsider it.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN), ranking member of the International Relations Committee.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, imagine for a moment that there was a gang, an organization of Mexican nationals who believed zealously and fanatically that

the Southwest of the United States had been stolen from them; and that this group of people committed to murdering in order to right that wrong, was funded and controlled by countries that were dedicated to the destruction of the United States; that this group had stockpiled thousands of offensive weapons that could be unleashed on our citizens with little or no warning; that it launched an unprovoked, cross-border attack from Baja, California, kidnapped two of our border patrol agents and killed several others. And it then unleashed a massive barrage of missiles on San Diego with the sole intent of killing innocent civilians. The American people would demand immediate and decisive action. The Congress would overwhelmingly approve a resolution authorizing the President to use force, just as we did after 9/11. And none of us would be satisfied with a cease-fire that allowed the terrorists to regroup and rebuild their weapons stockpile. For America at this point, this is just a fantasy. But for Israel, this is daily reality.

For years Israel has lived with Hezbollah's sword of Damocles hanging over its head, and it has shown extraordinary restraint in the face of repeated attacks. But this latest attack and the kidnapping of its two soldiers is a naked act of aggression. Israel did not seek this conflict, but it is compelled to take forceful action to defend itself, just as the United States or any other sovereign nation would do in this situation.

The loss of innocent lives on both sides is tragic. When I hear Mr. RAHALL and Mr. LAHOOD and I watch the images on television, one cannot help but want to cry for the damage and the death and the carnage that that conflict brings. But there can't be any moral equivalence between Israel and Hezbollah. Israel goes to extraordinary lengths to minimize civilian loss, while Hezbollah deliberately targets the innocent.

When we talk of disproportionate response, I would like for someone to tell me what the proportionate response is in this particular situation.

Once again, what this does is highlight the central role played by Iran and Syria in promoting terrorism throughout the Middle East.

As Dennis Ross recently observed when Lebanon was withdrawn from, when Gaza was withdrawn from, what did Israel get? It wasn't land for peace, it was land for war.

□ 2045

I urge this body to speak strongly in support of expressing its solidarity with Israel in these difficult times, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the chief deputy whip.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I

recognize her leadership and her staff as well as that of the gentleman from California in bringing this resolution forward, and congratulate them on that.

Very briefly in response to my good friend from Texas and his view and addressing so many different issues, I would just like to say this clearly is not a conflict, I think, that Israel finds itself in by its own making or its asking.

As the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) indicated, Israel was once again attacked. It was forced by its enemies, who wished to see it wiped off the map, to respond. The actions taken by Hezbollah and Hamas are tantamount to nothing less than an act of war against a sovereign country. Israel has the right to use every military tool in its arsenal to protect its citizens from this invasion and to incapacitate its enemy to prevent future attacks.

This latest conflict of the waging war against the terrorists in the Middle East is evidence again that we cannot hope to win that war against the Islamic fascists if we ignore their state sponsors. Make no mistake about it, Syria and Iran are to blame for the outbreak of war in the region, and they must be held accountable. They support Hezbollah and Hamas both financially and militarily. The line of terror and violence occurring in Israel today and in Lebanon today runs straight back to Damascus and Tehran. These state sponsors of terror must know that their actions are unacceptable and that the free world will no longer ignore or tolerate their actions.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution and stand beside our ally Israel as it fights the terrorists. This is a battle the free world cannot afford to lose.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am going to yield 3 minutes to Mr. RAHALL, but first I would ask how much time I have left after I yield the 3 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL of California). The gentleman from Texas has 25½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 25½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Dr. Paul for yielding me that time, and I yield 12½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas and the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding me the time, and I commend him. The plethora of scenarios that he has just taken this body through, some of which are scary, are certainly scenarios of which we need to bring to the American people's attention.

We have seen the neocons have their way much too often in this administration. They got us into the war in Iraq, with some prodding from our allies in the region. And now those same individuals would have us strike at Iran. Yes, Iran, Syria are culprits in this recent kidnapping. There is no doubt in my mind, although there probably is not proof out there. Earlier I condemned Hezbollah and Hamas for these kidnappings. Were they taking their directions directly from Damascus, directly from Tehran? Probably, or at least some wink along the way. Or was Nasrallah going off on a tangent on his own? I am sure he did not expect the Israeli response that he got.

I am sure the Israelis have learned something from this latest fighting, just what is in the Hezbollah arsenal, missiles that perhaps both Israeli Army intelligence and our own did not forecast.

So perhaps this current scenario that will play out hopefully over another week or 2 is a learning experience, a feeling-out experience on both sides to determine just what other surprises are up one's sleeve.

But regardless of that, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) just accused, and it is a reality, that Hezbollah rockets have hit civilians in Israel. Unfortunate. Were they targeted? I hardly think the Hezbollah missiles are of the same guidance technology as Israel missiles. For the most part, these Hezbollah missiles have been landing in barren deserts. That does not seem to be a targeting of civilians. And when they do find a target, yes, unfortunately there have been civilians that have been hit. Israeli technology and Israeli IDF are certainly much more advanced, much more advanced in their guidance procedures and in their ability to target their targets.

The response is Hezbollah has their weapons, their missiles in civilian populations, in mosques, in innocent civilian homes. I have no doubt that that is accurate. And where that is proven to be, those targets are fair game and should be hit. But the Beirut airport, hardly a hideout for Hezbollah missiles, hardly a place that Hezbollah would use to receive arms, hardly a place that they would take their hostages for transportation elsewhere.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this debate, the tenor of the debate. The quality of the debate has been superb. The time that all sides have agreed for an extension is great. This is an important issue, and it should be debated as much as this body wishes to.

But the fact is that the country of Lebanon has never taken any hostages.

Lebanon has never attacked anybody. Lebanon has been used as a chessboard upon which all other countries in the region play their games and seek their own motives, whatever those motives may be. The Iranians have their motives. The Syrians have their motives. The Israelis have their motives.

□ 2100

The other Arab countries in the region certainly have their motives. But Lebanon, the innocent bystander, is the one suffering the damage here. They have suffered an unmeasured response.

The gentleman from California, Mr. BERMAN, again asked what should a response be then if Israel, as I have said, does have the right to go after their kidnapped soldiers, and how do you measure what is appropriate and what is inappropriate?

I happen to believe that the Israeli intelligence, as I have said, and their technologies, are far superior to Hezbollah, are far superior to any country in the region, far superior, and they can use that ability, that superiority, to better track where their soldiers may be and where they are unlikely to be.

It is that type of response that they have the right to pursue to the fullest extent to go after their soldiers. Not in Christian suburbs of Beirut that were hit today. I hardly think that is a hiding point for Hezbollah rockets and missiles. I hardly think you are going to find Hezbollah there. There were none found there. Yet a very pro-Christian, previously thought safe section of Beirut was hit just this afternoon by Israeli missiles. So there can be a better consideration of the innocent civilians.

The resolution to which Mr. ISSA referred, which we Lebanese-Americans support, H.R. 926, mentions that protection of innocent life and civilian infrastructure in the very beginning up in the first paragraph, not the next to the last paragraph, as the current resolution before us does.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 7 minutes to the distinguished member of the International Relations Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN).

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

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an old photograph, tattered and torn. Its color is sepia, indicating that it is over 90 years old, and it hung on the wall in my mom's apartment. She would point it out to me when I was a little boy and say, "This was your grandmother, who you never knew. It is a picture of their wedding." And the little children who sat in front of this wedding portrait were 5, 6, 7, 8 years old, a lot of little kids, and she said, pointing to one of them, "This is my Aunt Rachel," and to another she said, "This is my Uncle Joseph."

I was tiny. I didn't understand. I said, "Mom, how can that be your aunt and

uncle? They are only children." And she said, "They will always be children." I didn't understand quite what she was getting at until I was quite a bit older.

When World War II broke out, there were 1.6 million Jewish children throughout Europe. At the end of the Holocaust, that number became under 100,000. The Jewish people were almost eradicated from the face of the Earth by the people of the National Socialist Party of Germany, the Nazis, who were intent on wiping the Jews from the face of the Earth, claiming they had no right to live, no right to exist, in their country or anyplace else, and set out on a pogrom. They were nearly successful.

Nobody came to the aid of the Jewish people. People were put in gas chambers, their bodies burnt in ovens by the millions throughout the world. Nobody came to their aid. Nobody cared. The annihilation of an entire people by people who were pure evil.

It wasn't until the end of the war when the Jewish people and others who were in these concentration camps saw their first Americans and America's allies when they were liberated from those camps, alive because of happenstance and circumstance.

Our good friend, TOM LANTOS, and his wife, Annette, a distinguished moral force in our Congress, is alive today along with his wife as the beneficiary of a noble act of Christian charity by somebody who was a stranger. The luck of the draw.

The Jewish people weren't even organized enough to fight. They weren't fighters. They didn't know any better. They had no country. They were scattered.

The world looked at them at the end of the war and said we have to do something about this, and they took the area of Transjordan and they divided it and created the country of Jordan and the country of Israel, a Jewish state, so Jews could have a place to be where they could live safely within secure borders. And I know many things have happened and part of those borders are disputed today, but that is beside the point.

Suddenly in this very day and age, what seems to be eons from the Nazis and that era, another people rise up and make claim to the world out loud, clearly and unambiguously, that the Jewish people have no right to be anywhere; that they will wipe them from the region, kill them, eradicate them, and drive them from the planet. No different than the Nazis.

Now, those of my friends with such good intentions, and there are some here and I have spoken to them and I have listened to them, who talk about proportionality, who talk treating everybody equal, who talk about measured response, who talk about a ceasefire and going back to the status quo, they are well-intentioned, but I want them to look me in the eye and tell me what a proportional response means.

How do you negotiate with somebody whose goal is your eradication? Take half my family? Kill every other one of us? What is there to negotiate? Do we tell the victim of a violent crime that they have no right to fight back as forcefully as they can? Do we tell the rape victim that she has no right to fight with all her strength against the accused rapist? Nonsense.

We don't tell that to any other country. And there is only one Jewish state on the planet. Don't tell that to Israel. People of the Jewish faith and everybody else living in Israel have the right to exist, the same right as anybody else, and they have that right to respond. How can you deny that?

Thank God Israel doesn't stand alone anymore. It has one good friend in this whole world, and that is this United States. And we are so thankful for that. I am very pleased with this resolution. It does have the right balance.

Innocent people die in wars. Not every German was a Nazi, and yet we had to fight them because they represented the Nazis. They put them in power. They elected them in a democratic election. Elections have consequences. Just because you participate in an electoral process doesn't absolve of you of your crimes or your sins, especially if you rededicate yourself to them. That is what we are facing right now.

I urge your serious consideration of this resolution and all that it implies. Justice demands no less.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. And let me note to my friend, Mr. ACKERMAN, that we understand that quite often throughout history, an accurate description of history and a look at history will show that there have been many sins committed against the Jewish people, and perhaps we can say the most recent one is the one that we are just now discussing with these rocket attacks.

But let us also realize that there have been sins committed against the Palestinian people as well. They are people, and they were there. And this is a dispute, this is a dispute between the Palestinians and the Israeli people that is being exploited by outsiders.

Let me say that in the past when Israel has been in the wrong I have not hesitated to criticize Israel. This is not one of those occasions. Israel is not in the wrong. And while we recognize there are people who have done good things and bad things, that there are heroes and sinners on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, tonight we are talking about a situation that was created intentionally by those people who launched rockets on Israel and left the people of Israel with no other choice but to respond militarily.

Those people who launched those rockets on Israel knew exactly what they were doing. In fact, about a month ago the word was spread that Hamas was on the verge of cutting a deal with Israel. Then elements in Hamas and Hezbollah ratcheted up the violence specifically to undermine any opportunity for peace in the region.

Peace will not be achieved in the Middle East unless we are bold enough not just to condemn terrorism, the terrorism specifically that leads to the type of violence and bloodshed and chaos that is now evident in the Middle East, but we must also back those who act when confronted with this type of violence, and in this case it behooves us to back Israel in what they are doing today as a result of those rockets and those attacks that were made upon Israeli citizens.

Our sights, however, should not just be set on Hamas and Hezbollah. The rockets that slammed into Israel were made in China. They were provided to the terrorists who launched them by the mullah regime in Iran.

Long ago, we should have been supporting those pro-democratic elements in Iran which totally reject the corruption, repression, incompetence, and, yes, terrorist aggression of the feudalistic mullahs who rule over them. Now is the time for us to back those democratic elements in Iran and put the Iranians on the defensive, rather than letting them supply missiles to undermine peace in the Middle East.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, for 10 years I have come to this floor to explain Israel's peril and justify its action. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Hezbollah and Hamas for doing a far better job than I ever could, for they have announced that their policy is the destruction of Israel, the ethnic cleansing of the Middle East of all Jews. Ultimately it is a program of genocide. And they are now using the very territory from which Israel has withdrawn to kill as many Israeli civilians as possible.

If their efforts have not yet risen to the level of genocide, it is only because their rockets often fail to hit their targets. And let's not mince words, their targets are always Israeli civilians.

□ 2115

Israel withdrew from Gaza; kidnappers and missiles come from Gaza into Israel. Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, and now kidnappers and missiles come into Israel from southern Lebanon, not just recently, but continuously over the last 6 years.

Five kidnapping raids, thousands of missiles, 6 years of attacks. If anyone is going to say that Israel's reaction is disproportionate, let them say that Israel is doing too little.

Let me speak to those who may be skeptical of this resolution. We all

want peace, and peace can only come if Israel withdraws from certain territories. Yet the Israelis must know that when they vacate a territory, that territory will not be used as a rocket-launching pad against Israel, and that if it ever is, that Israel will have the full support of the United States and of this Congress. We cannot have peace, we cannot have any Israeli territorial concessions unless we show Israel that we will support them when they have made those concessions.

There are those who urge a ceasefire. I hope we get there soon. But this all started with rockets and kidnapping, and it would be a phony cease-fire unless the soldiers are returned, and unless Hezbollah is disarmed as required by U.N. Resolution 1559.

There are those who talk of prisoner exchanges, but we should not tell Israel to exchange the guilty for the innocent, nor should we tell them to release those who would resume their terror.

We in Congress should call every major ambassador from Europe and demand that Europe list Hezbollah as a terrorist entity and stop Europeans from sending money to Hezbollah.

And, finally, we all need to call the World Bank and say that it is time for the World Bank to stop making loans and giving aid to Iran, which, after all, is the source of the money and the missiles that Hezbollah is using. It is time for the World Bank to stop its loans to Iran, and to not disburse funds that have already been approved until that government changes its policy.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation.

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation, I rise in support of this vital resolution in support of democratic Israel, who is facing terrorist attacks on two fronts, from Hamas and Hezbollah.

It is important to have a clear focus on the threat posed by Hezbollah. Former Deputy Secretary of State Armitage testified Hezbollah may be the A team of terrorists, and maybe al Qaeda is actually the B team.

The former Director of Center Intelligence called Hezbollah a notch above al Qaeda organizationally, in part because of its deadly ties to Iran.

Hezbollah receives \$100 million annually from Iran, including 13,000 rockets. These rockets, which have rained down on Israeli citizens, are hidden in homes of supporters and in small factories scattered across Lebanon. Hezbollah launches unmanned aerial vehicles.

Hezbollah's TV station, a vehicle for hate which the U.S. has placed on its terrorists exclusion list, has 10 million viewers around the world.

Hezbollah is no ordinary terrorist group. Indeed, Israel is confronting Islamist terrorism's A Team. Before

9/11, Hezbollah was the terrorist group that had killed more Americans than any other. It has support cells in Europe, Africa, South America, Asia and here in North America. Dismantling Hezbollah is critical for U.S. and Israel's security.

Iran no doubt hopes that the current crisis will distract the world's attention away from its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Yet today's crisis shows exactly why Iran's ambition must be thwarted, because an Iran with nuclear weapons will be even more aggressive in supporting terrorism in the Middle East and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, Israelis are suffering. Lebanese, some of whom, as this resolution points out, are being used as human shields, are suffering. Too many are suffering at the hands of the Hezbollah terrorists. Hezbollah must be disarmed.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Democratic leader (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, Mr. LANTOS, it is very hard to capture the words to express the difficulty that Israel is facing now for all of us. But for you, it must be particularly difficult. I know that you are an idealist, I know that you are a realist. I thank you for your leadership. We could not be better served than by having you here at this very difficult time for the world really, especially difficult time for Israel. Thank you for your leadership.

And at this very difficult time for the State of Israel, this resolution reaffirms our unwavering support and commitment to Israel, and condemns the attacks by Hezbollah.

I support this resolution because I believe that the seizure of Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah terrorists was an unprovoked attack, and Israel has the right, indeed the obligation, to respond.

Hamas and Hezbollah are committed to the destruction of Israel. What more do you need to know? It is clear that Iran and Syria aid have helped the effort to achieve that goal.

The United Nations Security Council has already spoken on the issue of dismantling Hezbollah. The Security Council's resolution must be enforced by the international community. Syria has repeatedly demonstrated it is a rogue state, which is why we passed Mr. RANGEL's Syria Accountability Act more than 2 years ago. However, we must now fully implement all sanctions spelled out in that legislation.

In order to address the Iranian support of the terrorists, I urge the passage of the Iran Freedom Support Act.

We must ensure that Iran and Syria understand the depth of commitment of the United States to the State of Israel by using every diplomatic tool at our disposal. For a time in recent years, there was a hope that a corner had been turned in the Middle East. The Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, the emergence of a democratic process

in Lebanon, and the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza were hopeful signs that the future could be different from the past.

Those indications of progress, however, were seen as threats by Hezbollah and Hamas, organizations that have a greater interest in maintaining a state of hostility with Israel than improving the lives of the people they claim to represent. Now, the lives of those people and tens of thousands of others in the Middle East, including thousands of American citizens in Israel and Lebanon, have been put at risk by the aggression of Hamas and Hezbollah.

As the fighting rages, it is imperative that the combatants take whatever steps they can to lessen the risk to innocent civilians. The world knows too well the horrors of war. It also knows that there are ways to offer some degree of protection to civilians, and it is right to insist that those ways be chosen. Using civilians as shields by concealing weapons in civilian areas, as done by Hezbollah, is inconsistent with affording those protections. The resolution we are considering properly condemns that action.

Protecting civilians also means getting our citizens out of harm's way as quickly as possible. I urge the administration to expedite its efforts to bring to safety those Americans who want to leave Lebanon.

When the fighting ends, and I hope that that will be soon, the United States must engage in a concerted, sustained effort with other nations seeking a joint resolution of the differences between Israel and its neighbors. Israel's right to exist is the nonnegotiable starting point for that effort.

I thank again those who were responsible for bringing the resolution to the floor, and again commend Mr. LANTOS for his leadership, for his compassion, and for his wisdom.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, tonight I rise in strong support of this resolution and to condemn the recent attacks upon Israel by Hezbollah. All of us tonight have the earnest prayer that the current wave of violence can end quickly.

Innocent civilians are being lost in Lebanon and Israel, and the word "tragic" never does the situation justice. But peace can never be achieved by asking Israel to put at risk its security and the safety of its people. Let there be no doubt, this latest conflict began with Hezbollah. Rockets have now rained down upon Israel. Israel has been forced to defend her citizens and sovereign territory, and I believe that Israel has the moral, historical and legal right to do so.

Holding the keys to peace in this situation are Hezbollah's state sponsors in Damascus and Tehran. They can and must use their influence to convince

Hezbollah to return the kidnapped Israeli soldiers. By doing so, Syria and Iran will finally demonstrate that they are prepared to join the world community. Should they not, however, the world community must hold them fully accountable for being state sponsors of a terrorist organization.

Also critical to achieving a lasting peace in the region is international support for the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. Passed by the United Nations Security Council in 2004, the resolution calls on all foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon, and for all militias within Lebanon to be disbanded. Its full implementation, Madam Speaker, will promote greater independence for Lebanon and greater security for Israel, not to mention the rest of the world.

Since 1948, the United States has stood with and supported the State of Israel, as it has defended herself from these who seek her destruction and deny her very right to exist. In return, Israel has been our staunchest ally in the region as well as a full partner in the global war on terror. Let us pass this resolution and assure Israel that we will continue to stand by her side in the face of terror.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to my good friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

While I share a commitment to the survival of Israel and the right to security, I am not going to assert that I know more than my good friend Mr. LANTOS or my good friend Mr. ACKERMAN, that I know more about the suffering of the people of Israel.

But I can have compassion for those who have suffered and for not just Israelis, but the Lebanese and the Palestinians as well. And it is in that spirit that I share with the House my concerns that the situation in the Middle East is spiraling out of control, and this resolution may not diffuse this crisis.

I deplore the fact that in the past 8 days, 13 Israeli civilians have been killed, 2 Israeli soldiers have been captured, and many more killed in raids. I also deplore the fact that in the past 8 days, 300 Lebanese people have been killed, 1,000 have been wounded, and a half million have been displaced from their homes.

In the past 8 days, democracy in Lebanon has been attacked, perhaps grievously. The Prime Minister hinted today in a speech to foreign ambassadors that his government may not be able to survive. No government can survive in the ruins of a nation, he said.

The past 8 days of crisis in Lebanon and north Israel follow months of escalating violence in Gaza. Numerous innocent Palestinians have been killed. Between June 4 and June 13, 14 Palestinian civilians, including 5 children, were killed in Gaza.

On June 9 at a Gaza beach, a blast killed eight Palestinians, including an entire family of 7-year-old Huda Ghaliya. Numerous innocent Israelis have also been killed.

On Sunday, July 25, a group of Palestinian fighters, including members of Hamas's armed wing, attacked an Israeli post near the Kerem Shalom border, which resulted in four Israeli casualties and the kidnapping of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

□ 2130

Israel began an offensive in Gaza on June 28. Since then, Palestinian militants have fired 17 homemade rockets towards Israel. The Israeli Army has carried out 168 air strikes and fired more than 600 shells into Gaza.

The Government of the Palestinian Authority is breaking, as lawmakers, ministers and members of the police force have been arrested. In today's Washington Post, Harold Meyerson published an op-ed called, "The Guns of July," comparing the past week's escalation of violence in the Middle East to the escalation of violence over the course of a month in Europe, that began with the assassination of Austrian Archduke Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist terrorist and led to World War I.

He said we are in the midst of what "may be the brink of a cataclysmic regional war with ghastly global implications." He wrote, "While the two crises and sets of conflicting forces are by no means parallel, in each the power of nationalism, the sense of national victimization, the need for revenge, the opportunity for miscalculation, the illusion of obtainable victory and all-around fear and rage loom large. More inexplicably, so does the American absence."

The resolution before us today does not rein in the chaos in the Middle East. This resolution, it could be said, is limited in its ability to rein in war and destruction, which unfortunately may continue. Furthermore, by condemning Syria and Iran, this resolution threatens to bring the U.S. into a regional war in which everyone would lose, including Israel, a longtime friend and ally.

Moreover, condemning Syria and Iran closes the door for possible diplomacy that would be needed to end this conflict. President Bush himself acknowledged the value of Syria just yesterday, when he said that Syria has the potential to stop the ongoing crisis.

If the United States wants to help stabilize the region, as we should, we must act as an honest broker to all parties involved, the Israelis, the Palestinians and the Lebanese. We can do this without abandoning our affection and our commitment to the survival of Israel.

Moreover, the United States should bring in equipment, and Jordan to help to mediate this escalating conflict. Recently, Egypt's President Mubarak dispatched his intelligence chief to help

calm the situation between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The intelligence chief demanded that a doctor be allowed to see the captive Israeli soldier and is trying to mediate between the factions. The U.S. is in a good position to mediate as well between the Israelis, Palestinians, and Lebanese.

The U.S. has a history of trying to mediate between the Israelis, our long-time ally, and the Palestinians.

Regarding the Lebanese, it was just over a year ago that this House passed multiple bills supporting the people of Lebanon. One bill, House Resolution 91, condemned the attacks that killed former Prime Minister Hariri and killed and wounded other Lebanese victims.

The United States stood with the Lebanese people then. Today, nearly 300 Lebanese people have been killed. The government is on the verge of collapse. The Lebanese people need the support of the United States now, just as the Israelis need our support.

What they need and all parties need, what the region needs and what the world needs, is for the U.S. to call upon all sides to quickly stop the violence. But today's resolution fails to support the Lebanese people in their hour of need.

Today, I introduced a bill, H. Con. Res. 450, calling upon the President to appeal to all sides in the current crisis in the Middle East for an immediate cessation of violence and to commit U.S. diplomats to multiparty negotiations. Only by acting as an honest broker can the United States have any authority and success in bringing peace to the region, which is crucial at this critical time.

Remembering the lessons of World War I, if everyone has taken a side in a conflict and can't see the need for even-handedness, then cataclysm can follow. It is important to be a strong ally. It is fine to be a strong ally, but it is not fine to get pulled into a conflict because we lacked the vision to be more than one-sided.

This latest conflict in the Middle East will not be solved militarily. The solution will have to come back to diplomacy. The current violence makes a diplomatic solution even harder to achieve. Yet the resolution before the floor doesn't commit the United States to any diplomatic action that could quell the violence and resolve the conflict. This is a grave missed opportunity.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor my bill, H. Con. Res. 450 to bring about peace in the Middle East before the crisis spirals further out of control, further damaging the hopes of all people in the region and the world.

I again want to thank Mr. LANTOS for his unstinting and unwavering commitment to the survival and hopes and dreams of people of Israel, because I think that, Mr. LANTOS, you and everyone who has spoken in defense of Israel, I think all of us want the same thing. We want peace, and we want the survival of Israel and all the people.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, just a few short weeks ago, the Prime Minister of Israel addressed a joint session of Congress. He said, in part, and I quote, "There has not been 1 year, 1 week, or even 1 day of peace in our tortured land." He went on to say, Madam Speaker, "Over the past 6 years, more than 20,000 attempted terrorist attacks have been initiated against the people of Israel."

Madam Speaker, less than 2 weeks ago, the war which has gone on for more than a half century was rekindled with the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers, with the strategy manipulated by Iran and Syria, by a cynical, sick, cycle of violence that diplomacy has not cured.

I listened with great interest to my friend from Ohio who preceded me, who again said that diplomacy was the solution.

Madam Speaker, Israel was told by the international community, you must give up land for peace, land for peace. Israel gave up land, and there is no peace.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues, I rise in strong support of this resolution, not to embrace war or violence for its own sake, but instead to pursue a true peace and to reaffirm.

Madam Speaker, I stand in this well at this hour to reaffirm the basic truth of this resolution and the right of the sovereignty and existence of the State of Israel from a historical, from a legal and, yes, from a scriptural perspective. Let it be clear from this, the last best hope of mankind on Earth, that we stand foursquare with our allies in Israel, and we understand the nefarious misbegotten schemes of those who seek to spread Islamofascism and terror around the globe, and we categorically reject that behavior and those actions as we stand in solidarity with our ally, a democracy, an oasis of democracy in a desert of desolation.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join us in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, how much time do we have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss McMORRIS). The gentleman has 1½ minutes.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that this is one of the most substantive debates of the year, that colleagues have been waiting for a long time, I respectfully ask unanimous consent that we extend the debate by 40 minutes, equally divided between Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and myself.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the distinguished member of the International Relations Committee, Mr. ENGEL.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I rise in strong support of his bipartisan resolution and strong support of the people of Israel in their fight against terrorism. It makes no difference where terrorism rears its ugly head, whether its planes going into the World Trade Center or the Pentagon, or innocent people being blown up on trains in India, England or Spain, or the bombs falling on Haifa or the innocent children being blown up on a bus in Tel Aviv. The fight against terrorism is our fight. Israel's fight is our fight.

Iran and Syria are fighting a proxy war against Israel using Hezbollah and Hamas. It has been pointed out that Israel withdrew from Lebanon 6 years ago, so the myth of any kind of occupation is not there. Simply speaking, Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as Iran and Syria, want to, as Iran's President has said, wipe Israel off the face of the Earth.

We should let Israel finish the job. There should be no precipitous calls to a cease-fire before Israel could rid itself of a terrorist threat. We should fully implement my bill, and I was happy that our Democratic leader mentioned it, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, and President Bush should implement those sanctions which are available to him against Syria.

I care very much about Lebanon. Our bill was called Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. The people of Lebanon are suffering. When this is over, we should do everything we can to help them rebuild their country.

But the people of Lebanon have suffered by having this terrorist group, this poison, in its midst, this poison, this militia that is a lawless militia, and that Security Council Resolution 1559, which called for the Syrians to leave Lebanon.

I thank my colleague who is my partner in the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. She knows that when the Syrians finally left Lebanon, the world community failed to implement the other part of Resolution 1559, which called for all militias to give up their arms. Hezbollah continued and, shamefully, even won some seats in the Government of Lebanon.

My friend and colleague, Mr. ACKERMAN, spoke before and reminded us that Israel was born out of the ashes of the Holocaust. The leader of Iran, while denying the Holocaust, threatens to unleash a new one on Israel. There is only one country that constantly stands with Israel, and that is the United States of America.

We ought to be proud of the bipartisan support that we have shown for Israel through the years. Israel's fight against terrorism is our fight. We need to support the brave people of Israel in their struggle. Terrorism over there and terrorism over here is the same thing. Support the resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I appreciate, first, the leadership of Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. LANTOS on this important issue of leadership, not just this critical time, but throughout the years.

Yes, I strongly support the resolution, but listening tonight I think there has been some odd debate. To suggest, as some did, that Israel and America have somehow conspired to encourage this attack on Israel as an excuse to invade or attack Iran, to me, is absurd.

□ 2145

It is a dangerous claim, and at this important and critical time in history has no real place in this important debate on this floor in this Chamber in this democracy.

We reaffirm America's support for the State of Israel. We support Israel's right to take appropriate action to defend itself not only in Israel, but in the territories of those who would threaten it in accordance with the international law.

We condemn Hamas and Hezbollah for cynically exploiting civilian populations as shields, then locating their equipment and bases of operations in civilian areas.

We recognize Israel's long-standing commitment to minimizing civilian loss.

We demand the Governments of Iran and Syria to direct Hamas and Hezbollah to immediately and unconditionally release the Israeli soldiers which they hold captive.

And we condemn the Governments of Iran and Syria for their continued support of Hezbollah and Hamas in these armed attacks against Israel.

Make no mistake, an attack against Israel is an attack against the peace and security of America. Israel's fight is America's fight. America will stand with Israel.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), my good friend.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, let me first thank Mr. LANTOS for yielding; also just to say to him that I appreciate the respect and the space that you provide for all of us who may have a different point of view, but who all support peace and security and Israel's right to defend itself. I also have tremendous respect for Mr. LANTOS just in terms of your work and your long history as a champion of human rights not only on behalf of the State of Israel, but throughout the world, and so I thank Mr. LANTOS for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I join with those who condemn the recent kidnapping of Israeli soldiers and the rocket attacks into Israel, and also, I rise in support of Israel's right to protect and defend itself from attacks in accordance with international law, including Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

However, this resolution goes much further than that, and it also omits any mention, and I think this is so critical at this stage, it omits any mention of how and why the United States should exert its leadership in stopping the violence. Too many people, Israelis, Lebanese and Palestinians, have been killed, and there is no end in sight. Very seldom do I cast a "present" vote, but in this instance I will, and let me explain why.

This resolution reaffirms our support for Israel, demands that the Government of Lebanon do everything in its power to find and free the kidnapped Israeli soldiers and to gain control of its borders in order to prevent future attacks. It also condemns Hamas and Hezbollah for killing Israeli soldiers and for indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilians, and it recognizes the plight of the families of the innocent victims. These provisions warrant our strong support and certainly sends a strong message in support of Israel, in behalf of Israel and on behalf of Israel.

But on the other hand, there are provisions in this resolution that are totally unfinished or missing and leave this resolution very much incomplete.

Such a course of action, I believe, ought to make it clear that in no uncertain terms will the United States support a strategy of the use of force against Iran or Syria. This resolution leaves the door open for this.

This resolution ought to make it clear that the only way to remove the threat to Israel and to the larger region is to resolve these issues through an immediate cease-fire and commit the United States, through the cease-fire, to high-level and sustained diplomacy. We need to be doing that right now in support of many of the initiatives such as the road map. This resolution does not really address how to end the escalating violence that really, quite frankly, does more violence and harm to Israel's long-term interests and living in peace and security with her neighbors.

This resolution should offer concrete steps on how to achieve peace and security for Israel and the region, and the resolution says nothing about the peace process.

The bottom line is there is absolutely no military resolution to the issues confronting the Middle East, notwithstanding the acts of self-defense to which Israel is entitled in accordance with international law.

If we do not put a stop to all of the hostilities today, what is to stop future violence with more technologically advanced weapons systems, rockets with even longer ranges? Where does it end? Is war the only answer?

Israel's security and a sustained peace that includes a two-state solution cannot be achieved militarily. The only option, and the only hope, is a political solution to this crisis and for a sustained peace.

That is why, Madam Speaker, it is imperative that all parties return to

internationally recognized borders and for all parties to resume urgent, multi-lateral diplomatic efforts, including a return to the road map and a full engagement by the quartet.

What we should be doing today is imploring all sides to agree to a ceasefire, insist on the return of the hostages, and agree to an international security force.

If we can reach the end of that road that we are walking down right now, then our ally, I believe, Israel will find the peace and security that she and her people rightfully deserve.

So, Madam Speaker, I intend to vote "present" on this resolution because, while I believe there are some provisions that warrant our support, I do not believe it goes far enough in addressing the immediate security needs and the violence that is taking place right now in the Middle East.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am so pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for allowing me the time to speak on behalf of this resolution, and I will be very brief.

Madam Speaker, whether we understand it or not, tonight the world faces an evil, poisonous ideology that threatens the peace and freedom of humankind. This ideology is not new, Madam Speaker. It is the same one that murdered Israeli athletes in 1972, that took American hostages in Iran, that murdered marines in their barracks in 1983, that bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, Riyadh in 1995, the Khobar Towers in 1996, the embassies in 1998, the U.S.S. *Cole* in 2000, and then, Madam Speaker, that same ideology massacred nearly 3,000 Americans on September 11.

And tonight, Madam Speaker, that same dark, insidious ideology is launching rockets into Israel to slaughter innocent, freedom-loving civilians. This is why Israel's war is our war.

If there is hope for peace and freedom in this world, free peoples across this planet must unite with Israel to defeat this hellish ideology. The battle Israel fights tonight is a battle to protect all of humanity. May the people of Israel take comfort knowing that America stands with you in these difficult days. May you come to victory, and may the light of God's peace shine down on the streets of Jerusalem forever.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, once again I thank my great friend from the State of California for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I rise to speak out in strong support of a democratic nation under attack by terrorists, a nation that has been under attack every day for 58 years of its existence.

As we debate this bill, over a quarter of a million Israelis are in bomb shelters or awaiting to rush to safety from missiles being launched specifically at civilian targets. Think about that. As we are debating this evening, a quarter of a million Israelis are seeking cover, launched by a terrorist organization, funded by Syria and Iran waging a proxy war in Israel.

I take some exceptions to some comments made by a colleague earlier tonight, and that is about the accuracy of rockets being launched by Hezbollah. The goal of Hezbollah is to inflict as many civilian casualties as possible, end of story.

Yesterday I read a report from Human Rights Watch that called the missile strikes on Israel possible war crimes. The rockets launched against Israel, and specifically in Haifa, contained metal ball bearings that have limited use against military targets. They probably will not even destroy a building in and of themselves. They can do incredible damage to civilian populations, tearing people's bodies apart.

Hezbollah fires these inaccurate Katyusha rockets that do not differentiate between Jews, Arabs or Christians or whatever they may be in Israel. In fact, one of these missiles killed two Israeli Arab children today when it struck the city of Nazareth, an ancient Christian city with a majority of Arab inhabitants.

I am saddened by all loss of civilian and innocent life, but I strongly support Israel's right to defend itself by removing the threats against her, wherever they may be.

This conflict was preventable. Our allies in Europe and the Middle East must know that the operation in Lebanon is not an act of war, but an act of self-defense. Israel is not looking for this fight, but Hamas and Hezbollah created the events we have been watching by murdering and kidnapping members of the Israeli Defense Forces and launching over 800 deadly missiles into Israel over the past week.

Israel must do everything in its power to protect all of its citizens, and I am proud that this Congress stands with our friends and our allies in Israel by passing this worthy resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, before yielding to my colleague from Florida, I would like to thank Mr. Dan Freeman, our parliamentarian of the House International Relations Committee who has steered us correctly through this debate; and Dr. Yleen Bobb, who spent so many hours drafting this resolution; and, of course, our staff director for the committee Dr. Hillel Weinberg, who has been working so many hours as well.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), who is ever patient.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I rise in support of this resolution, and I commend the authors,

Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. HYDE and Mr. LANTOS, and the staff involved in drafting it.

I stand to urge our continued support for our ally Israel and to condemn the actions of terrorist organizations Hamas and Hezbollah, as well as the complicit Governments of Syria, Iran and Lebanon.

We must clearly understand what is really going on here, the motivations underneath the surface of these attacks.

As I stated last week in the House, the actions of Hamas and Hezbollah involve the kidnapping and killing of Israeli soldiers. This is an act of aggression against our ally Israel, and now they have widened their continued attacks on innocent civilians with their rocket attacks.

What is particularly troubling in the case of Hezbollah is that it is part of the Government of Lebanon, which not only failed to dismantle the terrorist group, but incorporated the terrorist group into the nation's official government.

Hezbollah has dragged all of Lebanon into its unfounded quarrels with Israel. Unfortunately for Lebanon's other factions, Hezbollah's attacks on Israel will cost the entire nation of Lebanon much, but they should have thought of that before allowing Hezbollah a seat at the governing table.

Hezbollah has launched hundreds of rockets at Israel since 2000. It also has thousands of Iranian- and Syrian-supplied rockets ready to launch against Israel in the future.

Israel is justly taking strong measures in response to Hezbollah's aggression, as they have done with Hamas' attacks, in order to deter further attacks against its soldiers and civilians.

A U.S.-designated terrorist organization, Hezbollah is fully backed by the Iranian and Syrian regimes. Not only have all of the G-8 countries condemned Hamas and Hezbollah and blamed them solely for the current crisis in the Middle East, but the Arab League, while characteristically condemning the Israeli attacks, noticeably failed to support Hezbollah in its attacks on Israel.

Why is this? Because the members of the Arab League, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and others, are increasingly concerned about the growing threat of Iran and the amount of influence that Iran has in Syria and Lebanon and in the region generally.

We should not look at this current crisis as just another page in the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

□ 2200

This now involves an Iranian regime and the Syrians that are fomenting this, supporting this financially. I support this resolution and I again commend the authors of the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding, I would like to offer an opportunity to Mrs. LOWEY to ask for a unanimous consent.

(Mrs. LOWEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LOWEY. I thank the outstanding chairman for his leadership on this issue.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. It is a powerful statement in support of Israel and the Israeli people during this difficult time.

Let us be clear about what is happening in the Middle East. Israel has been dragged into battle on two fronts to defend itself against terrorists who target Israeli civilians and seek the destruction of the Jewish State. The current hostilities were initiated, in both cases, by incursions of terrorists across recognized borders and the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers. As we know all too well, these battles are merely the latest chapter in a war that has been waged against Israel since its establishment in 1948.

I join all those who yearn for peace in praying for an end to the hostilities. I also recognize that the fighting can only be stopped by the terrorists who initiated it. I believe the U.N. should play a role in ending this conflict, but the deployment of another force with the same, weak mandate as UNIFIL will not get the job done. The U.N. and the international community need to unite to demand an end to this reign of terror and full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559. The Lebanese government must establish sovereignty over its own territory instead of allowing Hezbollah and Iranian Guards to operate freely. And we must keep the focus on Iran and Syria—the root causes of this conflict.

The last several weeks have demonstrated beyond all doubt why Israel must maintain its qualitative military edge in the region. Any action taken by the international community must respect Israel's right to protect its own citizens and must be aimed at disarming Hezbollah and Hamas and terminating their ability to attack Israel.

Israel seeks peace and has taken risks to achieve it time and time again. Sadly, its sacrifices have been met only with escalated threats and violence.

Israel withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000 in compliance with U.N. resolutions. In return, it has been continuously threatened by Hezbollah terrorists on its northern border, allowed free reign by a reckless Lebanese government with Syria and Iran calling the shots in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559.

Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005. In return, it is faced with a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority that supports attacks against civilians and competes with exiled Hamas members over who can be more extreme.

This latest violence confirms that Iran currently poses the single greatest threat to regional stability. It has the motivation and resources to stage a methodical campaign of terror and violence throughout the Middle East, concentrating on fomenting sectarian violence in Iraq and supporting Hezbollah in Lebanon. Syria continues to shelter Hamas leaders and is widely acknowledged to be complicit in the kidnapping of Corporal Shalit. Both countries are transit points and suppliers of weapons to terrorists. The current hostilities are mere symptoms of the disease Iran and Syria have brought on the region. And our policies and those of the international community must respond accordingly.

We have potent tools to deal with Iran and Syria that we have ignored. The Iran Freedom Support Act passed the House of Representatives overwhelmingly but has been held up by the Senate leadership and the Administration. The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act became law in 2003, but the Administration has largely ignored the instruments it provides to pressure Syria. Sending Secretary Rice to the region may indicate our concern, but developing a strategy to join with like-minded nations to force Iran and Syria to abandon their campaigns of terror should be our ultimate goal. Until we have such a strategy in place, a high-level visit will accomplish nothing.

I join my colleagues in Congress in standing in solidarity with Israel during this difficult time. The American people understand what it feels like to be targeted on our own soil. As children in Haifa, Safed, and Nahariya remain trapped in bomb shelters, we reaffirm our support for Israel's effort to defend itself against terrorists stationed on its borders.

I urge support for this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, a distinguished member of the International Relations Committee, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak and for his hard work on this resolution.

I attempt to carefully examine the terminology and the nuance in such efforts because I want to make sure the United States' policy is carefully reflected in terms of our long-term interests, the security of Israel, and those of peace. And I think this resolution meets that test.

The attacks on Israel by Hezbollah are both unjustified and unprovoked, particularly given Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon 6 years ago.

Since the initial raid across the Israeli-Lebanese border, in which Hezbollah killed eight Israeli soldiers, took two others hostage, they have continued indiscriminately targeting Israeli civilians with increasingly sophisticated weaponry.

It is in this context that Israel has exercised its right of self-defense, which I completely support. I am, of course, I hope we all are concerned about the impact on the actions that deal with innocent Lebanese civilians. But as I cringed a little bit when I saw one of my colleagues look at the minority, and talked about shortcomings in the resolution, because I know Mr. LANTOS had offered up on behalf of the minority specific language of concern for innocents which, sadly, is not in the resolution. But I do think it is a good starting point.

Even the Saudis and the Egyptians have recognized the responsibility for the current crisis lies with Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, as well as with Lebanon's inability to disarm Hezbollah as called for by Security Council Resolution 1559.

We should not seek to impose a cease-fire that returns the region to the status quo without ensuring that

Hezbollah is no longer a threat to Israel or Lebanon.

This resolution is a strong signal of support for Israel. It is a signal to people who are playing their terrorist politics with innocent lives, of the United States' intentions. It is a signal to governments on the sidelines that they need to step up and help.

Nothing has been more vexing to me during my tenure in the House than this continuing conflict with Israel. I don't pretend to know the answers, but I do know it does start with support for Israel and this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, before yielding my time to Mr. LANTOS, I would also like to recognize the work of Jen Stuart, the foreign policy advisor to the majority leader, who has spent so many hours working on this resolution.

And with that, Madam Speaker, I will be glad to yield the remainder of our time, minus 1 minute, so we can close, to Mr. LANTOS.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss McMORRIS). Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized.

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my good friend for yielding.

I am delighted to recognize a distinguished member of the committee, my good friend from Nevada, Ms. SHELLEY BERKLEY.

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Thank you, Madam Speaker, and a very special thank-you to my very good friend from California, Tom Lantos, for his leadership on this issue. I rest better at night knowing that he is our leader. And I am very proud of him and very delighted to be here today.

I am not going to take all of the time, which is uncharacteristic for me. I just couldn't have a resolution of this magnitude on the floor of the House without coming here and lending support. Two minutes could never be enough for me to speak on this issue, and I am afraid even 2 hours might not be long enough for me to express my feelings and my views.

I grew up in a family where the very existence of Israel changed our lives. I was born in my grandmother's apartment on the Lower East Side of New York, and grew up hearing stories of what their lives were like in Europe before they came to this country and how important Israel was to the survival of the Jewish people. And while the Jewish people were people of the diaspora and had managed to survive without a nation for 5,000 years, the very existence of Israel gave each of us a tremendous sense of confidence and well-being, knowing that we had a homeland of our own.

I was not alive in the 1948 war, or the 1956, when Israel was attacked again by its Arab neighbors. 1967, I was more

aware, and 1973, of course. What I find incomprehensible and something I simply cannot understand, that here we are, so many years after the creation of Israel, after the aftermath of the Holocaust and the very reasons that Israel was established, and we are still debating throughout the world whether Israel has a right to exist.

I am so proud of my colleagues for introducing this resolution. I think it strikes the exact right note at the exact right time in our world's history.

We cannot allow this to continue. Israel has a right to exist, have secure borders, and lead a life for its citizens. And I think the time has come for the world body, led by the United States of America, to step up to the plate and say enough is enough. And this resolution is a remarkably good start. I thank everybody for supporting it.

I am very proud of the speeches that my colleagues have made, and I look forward to voting for this, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support for the resolution.

The current crisis in the Middle East was caused by an unnecessary, ill advised, and unprovoked attack on Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah by terrorist organizations who have called for the elimination of Israel.

There are victims of these terrorist attacks innocent Israeli soldiers and citizens and there are perpetrators of these terrorist attacks—Hamas and Hezbollah. There is no moral equivalency in this struggle.

To those who incomprehensibly condemn Israel or who attempt to find some equivalency, let me state the obvious.

Every sovereign nation has a right and responsibility to protect and defend its people.

For those who think that Israel overreacted—if I was the mother of a 19-year-old soldier peacefully guarding my country's border and my son was kidnapped by a terrorist organization, I would expect my government to do everything in its power to bring my boy home. An Israeli mother should expect and get no less. If I was living on the border of my country and a terrorist group was continuously lobbing rockets into my town where I live, where my children play, I would demand that my country do whatever they had to to eliminate the threat—Israel should.

There should be no mistake about who is behind this crisis, Iran and Syria. Iran's president pledged to wipe Israel off the map and he refers to Israel as an "illegitimate nation." Syria's troops occupied southern Lebanon illegally until 2005.

This is a strictly defensive action on the part of Israel.

There is an internationally recognized border with Lebanon. Israel unilaterally completed its withdrawal from Lebanon over 6 years ago. For 6 years, the Lebanese government has done nothing to step-in and establish control over part of its country.

They did nothing, and left a power vacuum, filled by Hezbollah, in the southern third of Lebanon. Hezbollah uses southern Lebanon to lob katusha rockets into Israel with the hope of killing someone, killing anyone. They are not there to build a nation, protecting a people, laying a foundation for a better Lebanon—they are there to kill Israelis.

Israel did everything it could possibly do to avoid a conflict in Lebanon—asking time and again that the government of Lebanon take control and police their territory. Unfortunately, these requests went unanswered and the terrorism continued to grow.

On its border with Gaza, Israel also faces unrelenting terrorist attacks. After years of waiting, and praying, and hoping for a peace partner, Israel chose to unilaterally withdraw from Gaza.

It uprooted families who created beautiful settlements. These families built homes from nothing, farms from dirt. Three generations were removed, some forcibly, from the only homes they had ever known.

I know. I was there.

I saw Israeli soldiers carrying Jewish settlers in their arms across the border out of Gaza.

There were tears in the eyes of the settlers and there were tears in the eyes of the soldiers.

One would have thought that the Palestinians would have used this opportunity to demonstrate to the world that they were capable of self-governance. Instead of building homes, schools, and infrastructure, they have used Gaza to launch thousands of Kassam Rockets at innocent Israelis.

The international community must ensure that Hamas and Hezbollah are disarmed.

The international community must ensure that Iran and Syria end their support for Hezbollah's and Hamas's terrorism.

Hamas must renounce its charter that calls for the destruction of the State of Israel or be cut off from the rest of the world.

Syria and Iran must be punished for their support of Hezbollah.

The 3 Israeli soldiers must be returned—alive and unharmed.

Congress must pass this resolution condemning the attacks on Israel—they are indefensible and unacceptable—and supporting its unconditional right to defend itself, which every nation on this planet has the right to do.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2½ minutes to a distinguished member of our committee, Mr. SCHIFF.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and of our friend and ally, the State of Israel.

In May of 2000, Israeli forces withdrew from southern Lebanon, ending an 18-year presence that was intended to stop guerilla attacks on civilians living in northern Israel. Last summer Israeli settlers and military personnel left Gaza and part of the West Bank and turned over administration of those areas to the Palestinian Authority.

The withdrawals were conciliatory gestures to Israel's Arab neighbors, and Israel and the international community expected the Lebanese Government and the Palestinian Authority to see them as opportunities to stabilize a region that has seen too much blood and tears over the last 60 years.

Instead, successive Lebanese governments, hobbled by the oppressive presence of Syrian troops and intelligence officers, never made a concerted effort to reassert control in the south, and effectively ceded this area to Hezbollah,

a radical Shiite militia trained, supplied, and directed by Syria and Iran.

In Gaza, a corrupt and calcified Palestinian Authority would not make the necessary efforts to dismantle the infrastructure of terror that allowed terrorists to rain down Qassam rockets on Israeli civilians. When Hamas, a radical Islamist party that has never budged from its calls for Israel's destruction, swept into power in parliamentary elections in January of this year, it made no secret of the fact it would embrace a rejectionist policy towards Israel.

Nevertheless, the Government of Israel and a majority of her citizens were determined to continue efforts to withdraw from large parts of the West Bank. It was this plan that was the centerpiece of Ehud Olmert's campaign for Prime Minister and which the new Prime Minister was seeking to implement in the coming months. Instead, in what can only be seen as a coordinated effort, Hamas and Hezbollah crossed Israel's internationally recognized frontiers to murder and kidnap Israeli defense force personnel on Israeli territory.

□ 2210

At this stage four things are clear: First, these acts were not undertaken by rogue elements of Hamas and Hezbollah, but were the result of meticulous and lengthy planning.

Second, while the attacks were launched from Gaza and Lebanon, the Governments of Syria and Iran were involved in their planning and execution, especially in the case of the Lebanon attack.

Third, the murder and kidnapping of Israeli military personnel on Israeli territory by armed forces operating from a neighboring state or political entity is the root cause of the present violence.

And, fourth, Israel has the legitimate right to take military action necessary to defend its citizens and its territory from attack.

We mourn the loss of life. Lebanese, Israeli, and Palestinian, they are all the victims of Hezbollah and Hamas. I hope that Secretary Rice and her international counterparts will be able to pressure Iran and Syria to rein in these terrorist organizations and establish a legitimate Lebanese Army force to patrol the border with Israel.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Kentucky, our distinguished colleague on the International Relations Committee, Mr. CHANDLER.

Mr. CHANDLER. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. LANTOS for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply troubled by the recent violent events in the Middle East. The United States must stand with Israel and recognize their right to defend their people and country from unprovoked acts of terrorism.

As we know, innocent civilians are losing their lives right now as a result of extremist religious terrorism. Take

the heartbreaking story of Monica Seidman as an example. Forty-two-year-old Monica, a mother of two, moved to the Israeli town of Naharia from Argentina 3 years ago. Last Wednesday as she was sitting on her porch having coffee, a Hezbollah-fired rocket made a direct hit on her building, instantly killing her.

Monica was the first civilian killed in this conflict. How can this be explained to her children? How will they ever understand the meaning of this attack?

I believe the United States must call on Syria and Iran to stop all support of Hezbollah. The Israeli people do not want violence. They want peace. They want to be able to go about life without causing harm to anyone else and without fearing for their own safety. Israel's voluntary withdrawal from southern Lebanon 6 years ago is proof of their desire for peace and stability in the region.

It is my hope that Israel will be able to secure its border quickly and facilitate a safe return for its soldiers captured by Hezbollah and Hamas, and that is why I fully support this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to my friend from Florida, Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, the first duty of the government is to protect its citizens, and I stand by Israel's right to defend herself against Hezbollah's aggression.

This bipartisan resolution sends a powerful message that the United States Congress and the American people support our friend Israel at this critical hour. Hezbollah's capture of Israeli soldiers was unprovoked. I call on the Governments of Iran, Lebanon, and Syria, who have influence over the fate of the captured Israeli soldiers, to secure their immediate and unconditional release.

Hezbollah must be disarmed to prevent a similar conflict in the future. A simple cease-fire will not accomplish this goal.

Any nation that refuses to act against terrorist networks simply stands as a willing accomplice. The actions of Hezbollah and the complicity of Syria and Iran demonstrate that former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir was right when she said, "Peace will come when the Arabs love their children more than they hate us."

I strongly support this resolution and stand by Israel in her pursuit of peace and security.

As an American mother, I wish that mothers around the world, Iranian, Syrian, and mothers universally, spend the time that I have spent talking to my twin 7-year-olds and will teach my almost 3-year-old girl, when she is old enough to understand, that we are all equal. We are all equal under the eyes of God.

My 7-year-old daughter is here with me this week, and she asked me about

what we are debating here tonight. She asked me, "Mommy, why don't some people like us?" And that question broke my heart, Madam Speaker, because the only answer I could give her was because we are Jewish and because we have different beliefs.

Please let us not have another generation of our children grow up knowing hatred. Israel and her children need the world to stand with her in support of her right to defend herself and in support of peace.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding, I want to express my appreciation to the chief of staff on the Democratic side, Dr. Bob King; Mr. Alan Makovsky; and to all other members of our staff who worked so hard on this measure.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to my friend from Pennsylvania, Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz.

(Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and in support of our friend and ally Israel.

September 11 was a defining moment for our country. It forced Americans to confront a new reality, that terrorists could cause massive destruction on our soil, and that all of us are at risk. Israelis have been living with this reality for decades. Well-armed, well-financed, and sophisticated terrorist organizations backed by Syria and Iran surround her. They have carried out thousands of attacks on Israeli soil, and they will stop at nothing to accomplish their one common goal: the destruction of Israel.

Just as America does, Israel has a right to defend herself. Israel has a right to better security for its borders and its security and its future. A secure Israel cannot exist with Hezbollah controlling the territory directly to the north, and a secure Israel cannot exist with Hamas in control of the Palestinian Authority.

Israel is at war with terrorists, and we must stand with her. We have a moral obligation to stand on the side of democracy and freedom against terror and radicalism, and we must do so because, left unchecked, these terrorist organizations will continue to destabilize the region and will use it as a base to foster global instability and to undermine our national security.

With passage of this resolution, we will send an unequivocal message to the world that terrorist organizations, Hezbollah and Hamas, backed by Iran and Syria are responsible for this violence; that Israel has a right to defend herself; and that the United States will stand with Israel in its fight against terror.

We must also do so because this conflict is not just about Israel, but it is about America's national security. Since the 1980's, Hezbollah has been behind dozens of terrorist attacks targeting western nations, including the United

States. In 1983, they killed 241 American servicemen in an attack on a military barracks in Lebanon. In 1994, they killed 86 civilians in a bombing in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In 1996, they killed 19 U.S. airmen at a U.S. military barracks in Saudi Arabia. Left unchecked, Hezbollah and these terrorist groups will continue to destabilize the region and use it as a base to foster global instability.

By passing this resolution with strong bipartisan support, we will send an unequivocal message to the world—Hezbollah and Hamas are responsible for this violence, Israel has a right to defend itself, and the United States will stand with Israel in its fight against terror. I am confident that Israel will prevail in this fight. And, it is my hope that their strong actions against terror will ultimately lead to the peace and security that so many in the region desperately seek.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2½ minutes to my good friend from North Carolina, Congressman PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I address my colleagues tonight in support of H. Res. 921, but acutely aware of some of its shortcomings.

Let me stipulate two things from the beginning. First, Hezbollah attacked Israel without provocation, and it now threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent Israelis in the range of its rockets. Such a situation is intolerable for Israel. It would be intolerable for any country. And a robust response is necessary to protect Israel's sovereignty and its citizens.

Secondly, we must fully acknowledge the human toll of this conflict on innocent civilians in Lebanon and Israel and on our own citizens caught in the crossfire. As Israel meets the imperative of self-preservation by disabling Hezbollah, it must also do all it can to obey the moral imperative of protecting the innocent, though it is an imperative we know is wholly disregarded by Hezbollah.

The Lebanese people are not the enemy of Israel, nor is the Lebanese Government, which is led by a reform coalition that is fighting against Syria domination. Our ultimate need is for a stronger, not a weaker, Lebanese Government. And Israeli strategy should take that, too, into account. The real enemy here of both Israel and Lebanon is Hezbollah.

With those stipulations the question before us is how can our Nation play a productive role in bringing a swift and just end to this conflict? The resolution offers little insight into this; so I want to use the limited time I have here to urge my colleagues to consider this critical question.

I recently returned from a mission to Beirut with the House Democracy Assistance Commission, which is working with Lebanese parliamentarians as they seek to establish an independent and effective representative body. We met with many of the reformers who won a majority of seats in the Parliament in the 2005 Cedar Revolution.

Democracy has a foothold in Lebanon, and we must find a way to empower those Lebanese leaders who seek reform and democracy in their country.

To bring about such a resolution, the United States must dramatically increase its engagement in the region. Secretary Rice should go there sooner rather than later, work with the international community toward a resolution of the conflict. I am not talking about a settlement that leaves Hezbollah intact and merely postpones the fight. We must have a resolution that guarantees Israel security, that permanently disarms Hezbollah, and supports the development of democracy in Lebanon.

□ 2220

If we are truly to support Israel, we must do far more than the resolution before us suggests.

Madam Speaker, I address my colleagues in support of H. Res. 921 but acutely aware of its shortcomings.

Nearly two years ago, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the disarmament of all armed militias in Lebanon. As Lebanon's Cedar Revolution has brought new pro-democratic forces into power, one group has defied the world's mandate: Hezbollah. Hezbollah has justified its defiance by claiming to be a legitimate resistance against Israel's occupation of a small parcel of land in Syria, adjacent to Southern Lebanon, called Sheba Farms. It has tried to straddle the fence, claiming political legitimacy by participating in democratic elections and the Lebanese government, yet refusing to disarm and adding to its arsenal of rockets and other weapons.

Hezbollah's decision to kidnap two Israeli soldiers and kill three others—without provocation—and to launch rockets deep into Israel belie its claims to legitimacy and reveal its true mission: fighting not for Lebanon, but for its own interests and those of its patrons in Iran and Syria.

No nation should be expected to tolerate a situation in which a terrorist organization bent on its destruction has free rein to ignore established borders through ground attacks or air strikes. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis are living in constant fear of deadly rocket attacks. I join with my colleagues in strongly supporting Israel's right to defend its sovereignty and its citizens.

The human toll of this conflict has also been frightful on the Lebanese side of the border. Dozens, perhaps hundreds, of innocent lives have already been lost. Hundreds of homes housing innocent Lebanese citizens have been destroyed, and tens of thousands of families have been displaced. The Lebanese people, like the Israelis, are living under a dense cloud of fear and danger.

Our own citizens, too, have suffered from this violence. Over the last few days, I have received calls from tearful fathers with young daughters stuck in the hills of Lebanon with no way out; from families stuck in Beirut on vacation; from relatives with Lebanese family members killed in the conflict. We must remember the suffering of these innocent citizens, caught by chance in the storm of war.

As Israel faces the imperative of disabling Hezbollah, it must do all it can to obey the

moral imperative of protecting the innocent, though it is an imperative we know is wholly disregarded by Hezbollah. The enemy here is not the Lebanese people. And the enemy is not the Lebanese government, which is led by a reform coalition that continues to fight against Syrian domination. The real enemy here is Hezbollah.

Our ultimate need is for a stronger, not weaker, Lebanese government. What sense does it make, for example, to demand more vigorous action against terrorists by the Lebanese Army, and then proceed to destroy that Army's barracks?

Our country's role must be to work for an end to this conflict that is both swift and just. Let us harbor no illusions: a cease fire that allows Hezbollah to remain intact and merely postpones this fight until another day is not an acceptable option. We must require Hezbollah to disarm permanently and guarantee that Hezbollah will no longer threaten Israel or Lebanon. That will likely require the establishment of an international peacekeeping presence.

We must also work for a resolution that preserves the promise of the Cedar Revolution and empowers those Lebanese leaders who seek reform and democracy in their country. I recently returned from a mission to Beirut with the House Democracy Assistance Commission, which is working with Lebanese Parliamentarians as they seek to establish an independent and effective representative body. Our Commission met with many of the reformers who, in a stunning victory, won a majority of seats in the Parliament in the 2005 Cedar Revolution. While key positions in the government, including the Presidency, are still controlled by those who would do the bidding of Syria, democracy has a foothold in Lebanon—the most significant foothold for democracy in the entire Middle East, outside of Israel. We must not allow the current conflict to destroy that foothold.

To bring about such a resolution, the United States must dramatically increase its engagement in the region. As the conflict has unfolded, we have watched the international community react with promising diplomacy. The United Nations, our allies in Europe, and key actors in the region—Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia—have come forward with mediators, cease fire proposals, and calls for international peacekeepers. Even the Arab League, too often silent in the face of past attacks against Israel, is working to convene an emergency summit to deal with the crisis. But where has our own Administration been? As one commentator recently wrote, "the world's sole superpower is also its only no-show."

With so much at stake for our national security interests in the region, the Bush Administration's lack of engagement is troubling. But it is not surprising. This Administration has taken a hands-off approach to the area, at great cost to the prospects for peace. It has allowed the Road Map for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to wither on the vine. It has failed to sufficiently support the moderate Palestinian leader Abu Mazen, watching as Hamas capitalized on his political struggles. And, after trumpeting the gains of the Cedar Revolution, it has done too little to actually support the fledgling reform movement in Lebanon. With the Administration's gaze still fixed on Baghdad, the tensions that have led to the current conflict mounted unchecked.

Madam Speaker, the current crisis demands decisive leadership. Secretary Rice should go to the region sooner rather than later, working with the international community toward a resolution to the conflict that guarantees Israel's security, permanently disarms Hezbollah, and supports the development of democracy in Lebanon. If we are to truly support Israel, we must do far more than the resolution before us suggests.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, the recent unprovoked attacks on Israel are particularly notable because of the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 and from Gaza in 2005. Israel, as it has so often been urged to do, gave up land for the hope of peace. Yet what happened? From the day Israel withdrew, Hamas fired rockets at Israeli cities and villages every single day, followed more recently by Hezbollah rockets.

Can you imagine what the United States would do if terrorists rained down thousands of rockets on American cities from Canada? We would tell the Canadian government to stop it immediately. And if the reply was we don't want to stop it, as with Hamas, or we can't stop it, as the government of Lebanon says it cannot stop Hezbollah, we would not hesitate to bomb whatever targets were necessary and to invade whatever territory was necessary to stop the bombardment, and we would not cease until we had destroyed or disarmed the terrorists.

Similarly, we must not demand a cease-fire that leaves the Hezbollah or Hamas weapons and infrastructure intact.

This recent violence, this war, is the penalty we pay for looking away and urging restraint on Israel as Hamas and Hezbollah flouted peace agreements and built up terrorist infrastructures and arsenals of thousands of rockets as they openly proclaimed their intentions to destroy Israel and murder her people.

The Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, a Hamas leader, wrote in the Washington Post just last week that what matters are not the issues of 1967, but the issues of 1948, that is, the very existence of Israel. But the existence of Israel is not negotiable. But many seem not to have learned the lessons.

The European Union criticized Israel's response as disproportionate. What would the EU do if European cities were attacked as Safed, Haifa and Nazareth have been? How is Israel's response against strategic Hezbollah targets disproportionate to Hezbollah's intentional attacks against Israeli civilians? And since when do we demand that responses to naked aggression and intended genocide be proportionate? It was Colin Powell who said that military responses must be of "overwhelming force."

The violence can end only if Hamas and Hezbollah are disarmed. Otherwise,

Israel will have to defend itself against future terrorist attacks, and innocent Israeli, Palestinian and Lebanese civilians will continue to die.

There is a role for diplomacy in the Middle East, but only when Hezbollah and Hamas are forced to stand down and Hezbollah forces are moved away from the Israeli border.

I extend my sympathy to the families of the victims of the attacks in Israel and in Lebanon, and I pray for the safe return of those captured. But I know that because the United Nations and the international community have failed to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure by diplomacy, Israel must be permitted to dismantle that infrastructure by force of arms if the killing is not to go on indefinitely. We must not stop her from doing so.

I strongly support the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from California.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. Almost 1 year ago, in August, I stood on the border of Gaza. I watched a gate descend. I watched the last Israeli leave Gaza. Israel said to the Palestinians, we will take a risk for peace. Build something here. Provide security. We want peace.

And what did they do with that? What did the Palestinians do with that offer? They fired Kassam missiles on Israeli civilians. They elected a terrorist regime sworn to the liquidation of Israel. They dug a tunnel. They snuck through the tunnel, they showed up on Israeli soil, they kidnapped a 19-year-old soldier and snuck him back. Israel took a risk for peace, and this is how it was rewarded.

Israel took the same risk in Lebanon. They left Lebanon. They said provide security here. We will take a risk for peace, and let's have it together. What happened with that offer? Hezbollah was allowed to dominate southern Lebanon. And just last week, Hezbollah terrorists infiltrated a border, snuck across an undisputed border, murdered some Israelis, kidnapped others, murdered some more, and snuck back across.

Every time Israel has taken a risk for peace, that risk has been answered with violence, and that is not acceptable.

What would we have done? It is exactly what we did do on 9/11. When terrorists infiltrated our borders, we responded robustly to protect innocent civilians.

Israel has the right to do the same. There can be no double standard. There can be no moral relativism. This resolution simply says that Israel has taken risks for peace. Those risks ought to be answered with reciprocity, and not missiles; with good faith, security, and not kidnappings. Israel has done what we have done, and this resolution reaffirms that.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and of Israel's right to defend itself from terrorist attacks.

The world community has a responsibility to support Israel during these difficult times. Israel has complied with international demands by withdrawing from both the Gaza Strip and from Lebanon. Unfortunately, it seems like the governments in both of these areas are not interested in peace.

Lebanon in particular has failed to abide by UN Security Council Resolution 1559, which requires the disarmament of Hezbollah and other militias and the deployment of the Lebanese army along its southern border. Israel has simply requested that Lebanon comply with this resolution and that Hezbollah end its attacks and return of its kidnapped soldiers.

There has been little effort on the part of the Lebanese or Hezbollah to actually meet any of these requests however, and that is why it is critical that the United States and the world community stand behind Israel and condemn the actions of Hezbollah, the Lebanese government and Hamas.

As we condemn these acts we must recognize the connection between Hezbollah and its international backers, Iran and Syria. It is clear that both of these nations are aiding Hezbollah with funding, munitions and even direct military advice, which is why Israel felt compelled to impose the blockade on Lebanon.

We must ratchet up the pressure on Syria and Iran to give up their support for organized terrorist groups like Hezbollah. That is why I joined many of my other colleagues in calling on President Bush to fully implement all of the sanctions available under the Syria Accountability Act, which we passed during the last Congress. Syria is continuing its support for terrorism, and we must demonstrate the consequence of such actions.

Madam Speaker, as Israel continues to defend itself, we should stand in support of her by putting greater pressure on nations who support terrorist attacks against her. We should do nothing less and expect nothing less of our allies if we were in such a situation.

I urge my colleagues to pass this important resolution, and I urge the Bush administration to do more to hold accountable those countries who support terrorism against Israel.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. HYDE, the chairperson, and I thank my friend Mr. LANTOS, the ranking member.

Madam Speaker, I want peace for both Palestinians and Israelis. I want justice for both Palestinians and

Israelis. And I support House Resolution 921 condemning the recent attacks on Israel and supporting Israel's right to defend herself.

Madam Speaker, Hezbollah has killed more Americans than any other terrorist group, save al Qaeda: 257 Americans killed in the 1983 bombings of the U.S. embassy and barracks in Beirut; 19 Americans killed in the 1996 bombings of the Khobar Towers.

Hezbollah has more than 13,000 rockets capable of hitting Israeli cities and towns and killing innocent persons. Does anybody think that these rockets will just go away? Hezbollah wasn't getting weaker. Hezbollah was getting stronger.

□ 2230

Israel must defend herself or there will be no Israel to defend.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to support this resolution, and indeed in saying that I wish this resolution did not have to be. For surely I am also convinced that the people of Israel and many of the people in Lebanon and in the Palestinian Territories wish it had not to be, but it does.

Why does it? Because you cannot have peace if you are negotiating with yourself. If individuals will not even acknowledge the right for the State of Israel to exist, how can you have peace? And if you are put in that position, then you have no choice but to defend yourself.

The thing that we must not think that Israel is doing in having to defend itself and using the force that it has to use is they are doing it with glee. That is not what they want to do at all. They wish that there was peace. But when people do not acknowledge your right to exist, and there are 14,000 rockets aimed at you, I just ask you the question, I think of myself. Suppose you are in your home and you have got people that are outside, and they are pointing weapons at you and your family. What would you do? Would you just say, let them continue to point them and shoot them until there is damage to you or your family?

What we are talking about here is simply a matter of defense. And indeed, we would dream of having the day where we do not have to have these resolutions on the floor, dream of the day when there is no innocent people on any side of the lines in the Middle East who are dead or would be killed or anything of that nature, dream of having peace.

The only way to have it, though, is to have partners, to have somebody that is going to stand and say, we will fight, along with Israel, to make sure that all of its people are safe. We need to have the day when, in fact, we know that the terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah, who is holding hostage an entire region for their bad reasons, are wiped out.

And if they will not go away, then Israel must defend itself.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I do thank Mr. LANTOS and his good leadership and his history. It is reflected in what I think is both a potent, important and very directed resolution. It draws upon all of the voices that we have heard this evening.

Might I acknowledge Ms. ROSELEHTINEN for her patience and leadership, along with Chairman HYDE as well as and the leadership of this House.

This weekend I will go home and meet with members of the Jewish community, and as well meet with members of the Muslim and Arab community. I believe it is important for Members to be forthright, and in doing so, it is to understand that we stand here promoting peace, and to say to the Palestinians, those of good faith, and President Abbas, we will stand with you to rid yourself of those who believe that their basic existence is for the nonexistence of Israel.

And to Lebanon, we will stand with you, so that you will have the courage, the fortitude and the leadership to free your nation, for it to be the shining pearl, the financial site of the Middle East of which it has the potential to be.

I want to offer to those who have lost their lives, their families, my deepest sympathy. To the innocent civilians in the Gaza strip, in Palestinian, in Lebanon, in Israel, all who have lost their lives, we offer the deepest sympathy.

But, Madam Speaker, let me simply say, Israel fully complied with Resolution 425 in 1978, and wants us to know that they have removed themselves from Lebanon, and Secretary Kofi Annan said Israel has withdrawn, in full compliance with the Security Council resolution, as well it has withdrawn from the Gaza Strip.

And so today I am interested in a cease-fire. I am interested in engagement. But I am also interested in making sure that we have permanent peace in the region, that we do not allow those who would perpetrate terror against innocent individuals to be able to survive and to continue their violence.

I would ask Syria and Iran to be forthright with the world and to give away their continued intrusion into Lebanon and fueling the fires of those that would perpetrate terror in the region. I also ask that our refugees, if you will, Americans who are stuck in Lebanon, be fully brought home safely and quickly.

So as I close, Madam Speaker, might I just say this evening that I will be voting for this resolution, but I will be continuing to press for engagement. I will continue to press for resolution.

And I will continue to ask that the Arab States become engaged, and that Syria and Iran stand down, and that there is peace, and that the existence of Israel is reaffirmed, and our Arab neighbors live freely and peacefully for all the world to see.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 921, condemning the recent violence in the Middle East. I remain dismayed at the fact that, once again, violence is poisoning and engulfing the Middle East.

This resolution condemns the recent attacks against Israel, holds terrorists and their state-sponsors accountable for such attacks, and supports Israel's right to defend itself.

This resolution is a very strong statement. While we must acknowledge the culpability of the perpetrators of violence, we must always stand for a solution that engages all parties.

The conflict is between those who wish to end the violence and those who do not. All involved have created a sense of victimization, and turned away from the most important goal: protecting their people, abating violence, and stabilizing the region.

With this bill, we denounce terrorist acts, and we recognize the right of all sovereign nations—including Israel—to exist, and to defend itself. In addition, if Hamas is going to lead the Palestinian Authority to participate in the international community, it must accept Israel's right to exist and eliminate its violence against Israel.

This past January, I visited Israel prior to the Palestinian elections, and visited with the emerging leadership of Kadima on the eve of a new era of Israeli diplomacy and security policy. I have traveled extensively in the region, and I have witnessed first-hand the promise of the Holy Land, as well as the devastation of long-term strife. Although Prime Minister Olmert has only held this position of leadership for a few short months, he has led his nation with strength and clarity.

We acknowledge Israel as a democratic and strategic ally, and we look to Israel for regional leadership. No cause should ever warrant aggressive terrorist acts against others who have not sought to initiate any acts against the offending party. It is an absolute necessity that kidnapped soldiers be returned, that soldiers stolen from their own country, from their own land, must be returned to their homeland. Israel was not the aggressor.

Hezbollah has committed acts of war, and Israel responded in kind. Hezbollah has yet again demonstrated its easy familiarity with terrorist tactics, and tensions continue to rise. Over the last several weeks, we have seen the situation crumble. Accusations of blame and responsibility fly like shrapnel.

Last week, the Lebanese government briefly called for a ceasefire after Israel blockaded the country by air and sea in an effort to distance itself from the Hezbollah faction. In a statement, the Lebanese government said that all means must be used to end this “open aggression.”

When both aggressors are acting in defense, the only result is destruction.

We must immediately engage Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, and any other stakeholder willing to take action to protect the people and cease this swift escalation. We must engage them in multi-party negotiations, and the United States must send a high-level delegation to meet with the leaders in the re-

gion. The desecration of life and the disrespect of boundaries in the last few weeks are offensive, yet must be surmounted, and the violence must end. The U.N. Resolution 1559 must be complied with by Lebanon—to fully disband and disarm Hezbollah.

I commend Israel for its willingness to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza. I remain hopeful that the Palestinian Authority will soon be able to assert itself and secure the Gaza Strip for its citizens, and stop the invasion into Israeli territory.

I wish to relay to the Lebanon Government that America is their friend, we support their independence, and we need them to assert their independence and sovereign authority. Because of their independence, Lebanon is well positioned to be an integral part of long term negotiations and an eventual settlement to this terrible crises.

I urge decision-makers in Israel, Lebanon, and the PLO to observe a ceasefire, and that the terrorist be brought to justice.

I also urge neighboring nations, such as Syria, to stop harboring terrorists and to participate honestly in negotiations, to pursue a mutually beneficial resolution without violence, and to respect the sovereign Lebanon.

Violence is not the only thing to fear. We must do everything within our power to prevent further escalation. We must silence the rumbling of bombs and the screaming of missiles and restore at least the semblance of peace.

We must condemn the poor response that the Administration has exhibited in rescuing Americans. It is not befitting of the most powerful nation, and we must expedite the rescuing of American citizens. The President must also take to the airwaves to speak to Muslims and Arabs to assure them that America remains their friend, and the friend of all freedom-loving peaceful citizens of those nations. We do not condemn all because of the missteps of some individuals or governments in the region.

It is increasingly important that we immediately begin negotiations to resolve this aggression on the northern and southern border, observe ceasefire, and the United States must act urgently yet fairly, and remain steadfast to bringing peace to the region.

We must do everything we can to assuage the fear and devastation of the last two generations, and take decisive action to ensure that today's children, and their children's children, can live in peace and safety at last.

This past Saturday, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and several Persian Gulf states, chastised Hezbollah for “unexpected, inappropriate, and irresponsible acts” at an emergency Arab League summit meeting in Cairo. At last, perhaps we will see the larger international community—including the Arab League—denounce terrorism and terrorist tactics and commit to securing first calm, then peace, for the region and for the rest of the world.

The Middle East is at a crossroads, and Israel needs a partner for peace. The new governments of Israel and the Palestinian Authority must overcome the burden of history and begin writing the textbooks anew. Palestinian and Israeli children should begin to learn that their neighbors are good, peace-loving people, and that the region is capable of coexistence and friendship.

I hope that soon all people in the Middle East, Jewish or Muslim, Israeli or Arab, can

look to God with thankful, not pleading eyes. May the words of our tradition inspire our decisions, as it says in Proverbs 34:14: "Seek peace, and pursue it."

Before we can have peace, let us pray for calm.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I thank our leader Mr. LANTOS for his leadership on this issue, and so many others in this Congress. I rise, as did Ms. JACKSON-LEE and others, in support of the resolution.

I would like to cite an article by Charles Krauthammer, who gives some history that I think is useful as this debate draws nearer to a close, from the Washington Post this last Friday.

I quote. "Israel withdrew from Lebanon completely in 2000. It was so scrupulous in making sure that not 1 square inch of Lebanon was left inadvertently occupied that it asked the United Nations to verify the exact frontier defining Lebanon's southern border and retreated behind it. This 'blue line' was approved by the Security Council, which declared that Israel had fully complied with resolutions demanding its withdrawal from Lebanon."

"Grievance satisfied. Yet what happens?" Krauthammer writes, "Hezbollah has done to South Lebanon exactly what Hamas has done to Gaza, turned it into a military base and terrorist operations center from which to continue the war against Israel."

"South Lebanon bristles with Hezbollah's 10,000 Katyusha rockets that put northern Israel under the gun. Fired in the first hours of fighting, just 85 of these killed 2 Israelis and wounded 120 in Israel's northern towns."

Mr. Speaker, we should stand with Israel, we should vote for the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I just want to thank you for your patience. I want to thank my dear friend from Florida for her extraordinary graciousness. And I want to thank all of my Republican and Democratic colleagues for a serious and substantive debate. I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of our time.

Madam Speaker, I also would like to thank the gentleman from California, our ranking member of the International Relations Committee, for handling this debate in such a skillful manner. We want to thank our majority leader Mr. BOEHNER, who was one of the authors of this resolution; and, of course, our esteemed chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE.

I would like to thank all of the Members who participated in this debate, in this very civil debate on a very important topic.

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution. As

we speak, the security situation in the Middle East continues to evolve.

The aggressive, unprovoked acts of violence against Israel by Hezbollah and Hamas are revealing. It is clear they don't want peace, but rather seek the ultimate destruction of Israel. This is why we must support Israel's right to defend itself against these armed attacks.

Each and every day, Israel's very existence is at stake. Since its first day as a nation, Israel has lived under a cloud of aggression from militant extremists and hostile neighboring governments. Most recently, terrorist forces have captured Israeli soldiers and fired rockets into Israeli cities—both unprovoked. These acts of aggression deserve the rapid and decisive response they received.

The United States and Israel have a unique relationship based on our mutual commitment to democracy, freedom, and peace. Therefore, just as our commitment to these principles must be steadfast, so must our support for Israel.

The enemies the United States and Israel face are the same. Their nature is brutal, oppressive, and inspired by hatred. The rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East has real security implications, not only for Israel, but also for the United States. The same ideologically malevolent forces working to destroy Israel are working to destroy our cherished political values.

The United States did not choose to fight Islamic extremists. These terrorists chose to fight our way of life. They chose to challenge our existence.

We as a Nation have endured heartbreak, tragedy, and occasional setbacks, but we are resolute in taking the fight to the enemy and winning. We cannot afford to lose. The stakes are too high; the price too great. And because we face the same enemy, we will not ask Israel to respond differently. The consequences of not responding are too great.

This resolution simply says Israel has the right to defend itself. This includes conducting operations both inside its borders and in the territory of nations that threaten it, which is in accordance with international law.

Furthermore, it is incumbent upon Lebanon, Syria, and Iran to rein in Hezbollah and Hamas. We know Iran and Syria are helping Hamas and Hezbollah. That is why this resolution reaffirms our support for President Bush as he seeks to use the most effective range of political, diplomatic, and economic sanctions available.

We are clear in our purpose and our resolve. We are committed to peace, democracy, freedom, and prosperity. We will work with those who want these values, and we will use all means at our disposal to stop those who seek to destroy them.

I urge my colleagues to join me in sending a strong message of support to Israel, and I urge all to support this resolution.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 921.

Let us be very clear from the outset of this debate: the current conflict was caused by the violent attacks of two terrorist organizations on Israel, in Israel. Israel has the sovereign right and responsibility to protect and defend itself from these terrorists.

The roots of this problem must be addressed if there is to be any true cessation of

violence. Iran and Syria must cease their financial and military support of terrorist organizations. Hezbollah must be disarmed and no longer be allowed to operate. U.N. Resolution 1559 must be fully implemented. The government of Lebanon must be allowed to govern the whole of its territories. President Abbas must guarantee peace, exercise full control over the Palestinian-controlled territory and the Hamas terrorist attacks originating in Palestinian-controlled territory must be permanently stopped. This latest violence only confirms what we have known since 9/11: the forces of extremism and terrorism must no longer be allowed to terrorize peoples and countries who desire to live in peace and freedom.

The approach taken by President Bush has been appropriate. Without an end to terrorist operations by Hamas, Hezbollah, and other enemies of Israel, there will be no hope for peace.

The United States should not negotiate with terrorists and neither should Israel. Despite the recent set-backs, however, we should continue to try to promote peace in the Middle East because it is vitally important to the safety and security of America. We must continue to encourage peace, but all parties must be willing to truly accept Israel's existence and come to the table if peace is to have a chance. Unfortunately, without an end to terrorist operations against Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah, there is no hope for a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, the United States has a long history of supporting the state of Israel and the strong example of democratic values it has brought to the Middle East. The recent events that have enveloped the region will not waiver the resolve of our relationship.

Israel has found itself strained on two fronts. It is battling both Hamas and Hezbollah, backed by Iran and Syria, nations known to sponsor terrorism and dedicated to the destruction of Israel. While the ferocity of Israel's response to the kidnapping of its soldiers by these terrorist groups may be in question, Israel has only acted to defend its way of life and the intrinsic right for a nation to defend its very existence.

Easing tensions in the region will require that neighboring nations take an active role to stabilize the conflict. Egypt and Lebanon must have the fortitude to take a leadership role to pursue regional stabilization. They must grasp this opportunity to demand that immediate steps are taken to resolve the conflict and work to bring peace to the region.

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution.

For generations Hamas and Hezbollah, which are committed to the total destruction of Israel, have indiscriminately targeted Israeli civilian populations and military forces. In recent days, these terrorist organizations have kidnapped Israeli soldiers and singled out Israeli citizens for arbitrary relentless rocket fire.

Hamas and Hezbollah, as dangerous and destructive as their actions are in the current conflict, are mere puppets. Hamas and Hezbollah are supported by Iran and Syria. With their financial and military support—including providing the missiles that today are raining down on Israeli towns—the Iranian and Syrian governments are co-conspirators in the ongoing terrorist attacks against Israel.

The world community of nations must hold Iran and Syria accountable for their actions.

Their active support of terrorist nations not only threatens Israel but also all nations in the Middle East and those throughout the world who are waging the ongoing global war on terror.

In the face of these terrorist attacks, we must resolve that Israel has the absolute right to defend itself—just as the United States did following September 11, 2001.

The time has now come for Congress to reaffirm our commitment to Israel and the Israeli people, their absolute right to existence and their absolute right to defend themselves.

Israel is one of the United States' strongest allies. In the last 50 years, our two nations have forged strong economic, military and educational connections. Our bonds have never been more important than today in our shared fight against terrorism.

Today, let us stand in firm resolve against terrorism and with Israel.

I encourage my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 921 and specifically in support of Israel's right to defend itself against the murderous actions of Hamas and Hezbollah.

The terrorist attacks on Israel and India and the recent July 4th, 2006 ballistic missile launch by North Korea are stern reminders that the United States and world must remain vigilant against radical extremism. It is not enough that America and her allies guard against weapons of mass destruction, but we must also remain prepared to deal with acts of human destruction. Terrorist acts on any sovereign state can not and must not be tolerated.

I am pleased that the House of Representatives and our President has remained firm in support of the people of Israel. While I am hopeful that a stable peace in the Middle East will be established, no arbitrary time limit should be placed on Israel's actions to defend itself. Neither should a time line be imposed on bringing to justice those who commit unjust acts.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 921 and in strong support of our oldest ally in the Middle East, the State of Israel.

Today the Middle East is a region filled with contradictions. It is a place where progress and regress have both taken root and are thriving. Iraq is no longer ruled over by a tyrant named Saddam Hussein, who terrorized people inside and outside his country with unimaginable brutality. Today, a democratically elected government has been empowered by the Iraqi people to improve security, build infrastructure, and move forward. Admittedly, there is still turmoil in Iraq; but the progress there is undeniable.

In the countries that border Iraq to the east and northwest, one encounters a far different Middle East. It is in these two countries—Iran and Syria—where international terrorism has found all too willing hosts and official state sponsorship. And it is this state sponsorship of terrorism, fueled by the desire of the Tehran and Damascus regimes to project influence across a broader region in order to stifle democracy and freedom, which has led us to the current crisis in Lebanon and Israel.

This is not the first time that Israel has been forced to engage in military operations in Lebanon to secure its northern border and protect its citizens. As many of my colleagues will re-

call, Lebanon could not control its border with Israel in 1978, and after numerous terrorist attacks against Israel were launched from southern Lebanon, the Israeli Defense Forces intervened. The Israeli Defense Forces withdrew in June 1978, but were forced to return four years later due to further attacks from Lebanese territory. In 1985, Israel withdrew its forces from all of Lebanon, save for a security perimeter on their common border. In 2000, Israel withdrew its remaining forces from the security zone. Immediately thereafter, Hezbollah militia members moved into the former security zone, and claimed credit for the Israeli withdrawal.

Beginning in 2005, the Lebanese people have made significant progress in their mission to push their Syrian occupiers out of their country. In the midst of Lebanon's movement towards true freedom and independence from Syria, Hezbollah terrorists crossed the border into Israel, then killed eight Israelis and took two Israeli soldiers as hostages. This was likely done in coordination with Hamas terrorists in Gaza.

That was July 12, 2006; just one week ago, Madam Speaker. Since then, Israel initiated military operations to prevent further attacks and once again secure its border with Lebanon. Hezbollah's response has consisted of daily rocket attacks that have hit Haifa, Israel's third largest city. It is estimated that Hezbollah has an arsenal of at least 12,000 rockets some of which are Iranian weapons, and many of which have reached Lebanon via Syria.

The United States Department of State has designated Hezbollah as a foreign terrorist organization, and its main sponsors are Syria and Iran, both of which are state sponsors of terrorism. The Lebanese government may protest Israel's current military actions, but these actions are essential to Israel's national security, and essential to Lebanon's prospects for true sovereignty. Former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri spoke out against Syrian domination of Lebanon and was assassinated on orders from the highest levels of the Damascus government. Unless we allow Israel to destroy the terrorist network and infrastructure in Lebanon, and drive its agents back into Syria and Iran, neither the Lebanese people or Israeli people will have the opportunity to live in peace.

The Government of Lebanon cannot secure its own border, and has not prevented the terrorist organizations—sponsored by foreign agents—from using its soil to launch attacks into Israel. Israel has a right to her own national defense, and is exercising that right in striking terrorist targets inside Lebanon. On the other hand, Hezbollah is reigning down rockets on civilian targets in Haifa, Galilee, and Nazareth.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has laid out specific criteria for peace: the return of the abducted Israeli soldiers; cessation of the rocket attacks and other raids on Israel; expulsion of Hezbollah from southern Lebanon and the deployment of the Lebanese Army to that region, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory. Short of these criteria being fulfilled, Israel must take it upon herself to unilaterally provide security for her territory and people.

Madam Speaker, Israel is the oldest democracy in a region not known for liberty, and is our oldest ally in a region with many agents

that are hostile to America and our interests. We must strongly support our old friend in this time of crisis. We also must condemn Hamas, Hezbollah, and their Iranian and Syrian sponsors in the strongest terms possible for their terrorist attacks on innocent Israelis. As we know all too well, we must hunt down and eradicate terrorists wherever they find sanctuary and assistance, and Israel is doing just that; Israel is taking the fight to the terrorists.

Madam Speaker, this situation proves that Syria and Iran are dangerous agents acting on behalf of and in concert with fundamentalists, extremists, and terrorists. Hezbollah and Hamas have absolutely no remorse for the damage they are inflicting on the Israeli people or the Lebanese people, and the clerics in Tehran and tyrants in Damascus are encouraging continued carnage.

In response, this Congress—as representatives of the American people—must set an example and stand on the side of freedom, democracy, and sovereignty in the face of this challenge. It is the latest confrontation in the Global War on Terror, and it is a battle that we as Americans cannot afford for Israel to lose. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, it is a tragedy that we have come to this point today, watching the spiral of hostilities between Israel and its neighbors.

Although Israel withdrew completely from Lebanon in 2000, and the U.N. Security Council certified the withdrawal to internationally recognized borders, Hezbollah still refuses to accept peace.

Although Israel has removed all its settlers from Gaza and has been working with President Abbas to negotiate additional concessions, Hamas is still unwilling to lay down its weapons, accept Israel's legitimate existence, and come to the table to negotiate the creation of a peaceful Palestinian state.

When Hamas and Hezbollah leaders were elected to be part of the emerging democratic governments, some hoped they would focus on leading the Palestinian and Lebanese people to fulfill their aspirations of a stable and prosperous future.

Instead, the terrorists have pursued only their own aspirations of regional instability and the destruction of Israel.

Kidnapping soldiers does nothing to promote the welfare of the Lebanese and Palestinian people. Missile attacks don't develop the economy or expand freedom of movement or provide access to health care and education.

Terrorism has only brought suffering to the people of Gaza and Lebanon, and these attacks serve no one but the terrorists and their state sponsors.

We must recognize the role of Syria and Iran in this conflict, and the threat they pose to Israel, the United States, and the entire Middle East.

Though it has been unwilling or unable to do so, the world must insist that the Lebanese government take control of its borders and disarm the terrorists within them as required by the Road Map and the U.N. Security Council.

Israel has made every effort to avoid civilian casualties, and those that have occurred are tragic. But Israel's best efforts to spare civilians stand in sharp contrast to the terrorists' deliberate efforts to target Israeli civilians as they drink their morning coffee or head off to school and work.

Acts like these leave Israel no choice but to break down the terrorists' capacity to carry them out. Israel has targeted stockpiles of missiles procured from Syria and Iran and blocked the routes through which the terrorists would rearm. It is ramas and Hezbollah who have cruelly decided to place these stockpiles among civilians, again putting the political and strategic needs of terror above those of the people they claim to represent.

Israel is not the source of instability and danger. Israel withdrew from Lebanon and Gaza in pursuit of peace. The terrorist regimes in the region have pursued other ends. Israel has every right as a sovereign nation to defend its cities from unprovoked cross-border attacks and to seek the safe, swift, and unconditional return of its soldiers.

Mrs. CAPP. Madam Speaker, I am voting for this resolution because I absolutely condemn Hezbollah's senseless, unprovoked cross-border attacks on Israel, and the murderous rain of missiles it has unleashed on Haifa and other northern cities. Terrorist groups like Hezbollah, whose actions have caused the death and misery of hundreds of innocent Israelis and Lebanese, deserve no sympathy and no mercy. Hezbollah needs to be disarmed, for the sake of Israel's security and, indeed, for the stability of the entire region.

And I also join my colleagues in condemning the actions of Syria and Iran for their support and arming of Hezbollah. We see the true nature of these regimes when we see the tragic results of their support of terrorist groups like Hezbollah.

But I would have hoped for a different resolution to come before the House. I would have hoped for a more comprehensive resolution that respects the complexity of the issues unfolding in the area, and the necessity for direct U.S. involvement in the unfolding tragedy.

A more appropriate resolution would recognize the fundamental difference between Hamas and Hezbollah. Of course, Hamas should be condemned for its actions and the kidnapped Israeli soldier must be returned unharmed. But Gaza and Southern Lebanon are two separate situations and this resolution confuses that.

The Palestinian people have legitimate grievances and a solution to these grievances can and must be found through negotiations. Hamas exploits those grievances, but we must not allow Hamas's actions to delegitimize the aspirations of the Palestinian people. Hamas's actions do not negate the reality that we simply must resolve the humanitarian crisis now engulfing Gaza and the West Bank.

I believe Israel's security depends on forging a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians that will ensure the safety and security of both peoples. And while I respect Israel's right to defend itself, I am deeply concerned that Israel's response to Hamas' actions is only prolonging the suffering of the Palestinian people and putting off resolution of this decades long problem.

Conversely, Hezbollah has no legitimate grievances with Israel.

Hezbollah seeks nothing more than the destruction of Israel and there is no negotiating with it. Only through Hezbollah's complete disarmament will we be able to remove its threat to the region.

I am also troubled by the unqualified praise in this resolution for the President and his Ad-

ministration. The President has done little to stop the meltdown of the Middle East that has occurred under his watch. Unlike previous Administrations, including that of his father and President Clinton, he simply hasn't been engaged. And his response here is tragically inadequate, again.

The U.S. must engage immediately to bring about a cease fire and help drive a long term solution for the area. Every major Arab-Israeli crisis over the years has ended with U.S. involvement—at the highest levels—because the players rely on intermediaries to broker agreements.

We may not like it, but that's the reality of the situation. And given that the stability of the region plays so large a role in our own national security interests, we must continue to engage forcefully if we are committed to bringing about peace in the region. Waiting another week before dispatching the Secretary of State is not a viable response.

Finally, I would note that every day this crisis continues brings a greater risk of direct involvement by Syria and Iran. As bad as this situation is now, direct involvement from either Syria or Iran would be much, much worse. Immediate, hands-on U.S. involvement is critical to keep the situation from spiraling even further out of control.

Madam Speaker, the situation in the Middle East grows graver every day. Dozens of Israelis and hundreds of innocent Palestinians and Lebanese civilians have already died. Beirut, which has only recently been restored to its historic splendor, is in ruins. A key ally in the area is threatened and our national security interests are as well.

I urge the Administration to help bring peace to the region.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 921, condemning recent terrorist attacks against the state of Israel.

Israel has the absolute right to defend itself against terrorist attacks. The United States stands in solidarity with Israel at this critical moment. I condemn the premeditated kidnapping and killing of Israel soldiers by Hezbollah and Hamas, which are both U.S. designated terrorist organizations. Israel has a right to launch operations to try to free its kidnapped soldiers that are being held hostage. Israel also has a right to defend itself and try to prevent ongoing rocket attacks by Hezbollah, which are being launched from Lebanese territory and which land in Israeli territory.

I also condemn the use of civilian populations as human shields by Hamas and Hezbollah, which only increase the suffering of innocent persons in this conflict. Israel, on the other hand, is taking significant steps to minimize and prevent additional civilian casualties in both Israel and Lebanon.

Even though Israel unilaterally withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, the Lebanese Government has permitted Hezbollah to operate at its border and to repeatedly launch attacks against Israel. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, passed in 2004, calls for all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon, directs that all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias should be disbanded and disarmed, and urges the Government of Lebanon to exercise control over all its territory. We need to fully implement this United Nations resolution.

Both Syria and Iran have continued to provide funds and weapons to the Hezbollah ter-

rorists, which have resulted in numerous Israeli civilian casualties. All parties in the region must take immediate steps to prevent the operation of terrorist activities on their soil and to abide by previous peace agreements. The President should use his authority under the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 to impose additional sanctions on Iran.

I also call on the Bush Administration to take a more aggressive diplomatic role in the conflict in the Middle East, including the appointment of a high-level U.S. envoy to the Middle East as soon as possible. The Bush Administration should also put pressure on all parties in the region to stop terrorist attacks and prevent the flow of money and weapons to terrorist organizations.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and stand in solidarity with Israel at this critical moment.

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, Palestinian militants in Gaza kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit and later, Hezbollah agents crossed the border, killed seven Israeli soldiers, captured two others, and continue to hold them captive. Hamas, and Hezbollah, specifically, have long relied on Syrian and Iranian support and funding. Now, Iranian and Syrian made and purchased Katyusha rockets rain down on Israel from Lebanon in the north and Qassam rockets are launched from over the border from Gaza in the south. Despite having withdrawn from Lebanon in 2000 and from Gaza last summer, Israel is under attack.

I stand by Israel during these troubled times and I strongly support H. Res. 921, to be voted on today, which pledges our solidarity with this nation under fire; I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

After the terrible attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush declared that we are engaged in a War on Terror and countries across the globe stood up in support of and behind the United States. Now we are called upon to stand with Israel during her time of need as she defends her borders and her citizens from unprovoked kidnappings and attacks.

Madam Speaker, the international community, led by the United States, must ensure the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559, which passed unanimously in 2004, and calls for disarming Hezbollah, removing all foreign forces from Lebanon and deploying the Lebanese army to secure the border with Israel. What we are seeing today in the region is the consequence of the Lebanese government allowing Hezbollah to join its parliament and cabinet while the international community did little to exert pressure to force them out.

Israel, the Jewish state, is defending its citizens, much as this nation would if we were under attack. Any innocent civilian deaths—Israeli, Palestinian, Lebanese, or other—are awful and should be minimized in every possible way. But responsibility lies with Hezbollah and Hamas who brought Israel's retaliation upon not just themselves but the communities they live in by launching unprovoked attacks, and by purposefully planting themselves in civilian population centers where innocent men, women, and children are used as swords and shields.

We must continue to stand behind Israel and to show her our solidarity against those that continue to do her harm. Additionally, the international community, led by the United

States, should now ensure that Hezbollah is finally disarmed, that Iranian influence is forced out of the region, and that Hamas recognizes Israel so that we may finally put an end to the cycle of violence.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I have grave concerns about what the future holds for the Middle East. The violence in Israel and Lebanon, which began with Hezbollah rocket attacks on an Israeli town and a military incursion into Israel and abduction of Israeli soldiers, threatens to engulf the entire region. Unless swift action is taken by the international community, further escalation and bloodshed will soon be upon us.

As we consider this resolution, H. Res. 921, civilian lives hang in the balance. Hezbollah's rocket attacks against innocent Israelis are indiscriminate tools of terror against a civilian population. Reports indicate that Israeli retaliations have resulted in the loss of innocent lives.

It seems clear that Hezbollah has raised—or lowered—the suicide attack to a new level: they have dragged the entire nation of Lebanon and all its people into harm's way because of the group's attacks on Israel.

I wish that this resolution made more mention of these innocent Lebanese civilians and innocent Israeli civilians who are caught in the middle here. They are the ones paying the price.

I wish that this resolution made more mention of the urgent need for the U.S. to step forward, use its considerable influence, and take diplomatic action immediately to try to end the bloodshed affecting millions on both sides of the border.

The finding in paragraph 4 of this measure asserts that Israel is making every effort to prevent civilian casualties. And while I am a staunch supporter of Israel's right to defend itself, it is disturbing that some sources report that over 300 Lebanese civilians have been killed due to the violence. I hope that Israeli forces truly are making every effort to prevent civilian casualties, as indicated by this measure.

Finally, I want to tell you how deeply saddened I am that recent events have reduced the power of moderates in the region and dimmed prospects for long-term peace. The earlier abduction in Gaza came just as talks among Palestinian officials seemed to be reaching a point that may have allowed Hamas to open negotiations with Israel. And the attacks across the Israeli-Lebanese border will undoubtedly serve to diminish and muffle—now and in the immediate future—the voices of moderation who would otherwise call for peace.

It is my hope—no, my demand—that moderate voices in the international community, including the United States, will promptly work to quell this crisis. Clearly, Madam Speaker, right now we need solutions and not just condemnations.

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support for H. Res. 921, condemning the recent attacks against the State of Israel. With this resolution, the United States of America reaffirms its steadfast support for the State of Israel, denounces the use of terrorism as a tool of influence, and condemns those states that encourage its use. Iran and Syria's support for the terrorist organization, Hezbollah, does not go unnoticed. I urge the President of the United States to continue his

support for Israel, as it responds to the armed attacks against it, and I support bringing the full force of sanctions: economic, political and diplomatic, against these state-sponsors of terrorism.

Madam Speaker, Israel, as a sovereign nation, has the right to defend itself and protect its citizens by deterring further attacks by the terrorist organization, Hezbollah. Since its founding, Hezbollah has been actively supported by both Syria and Iran. These two countries are estimated at providing Hezbollah with \$100 million annually in addition to providing regular weapons shipments. These weapons range from rockets, mortars and small arms, to mines, explosives and anti-tank missiles. Hezbollah is by no means an innocent victim in an offensive war. Hezbollah is a terrorist organization, which has put the people of Israel, and the people of Lebanon, in harms way.

The United States of America knows all too well what drives this organization: the taking of innocent life. Before 9/11, Hezbollah single handedly killed more Americans than any other terrorist organization. In 1983, Hezbollah killed 257 Americans when it bombed the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Marine Barracks in Beirut. Between 1982 and 1992, more than 30 Westerners were abducted by this organization, some tortured and killed. In 1996, 19 American servicemen were killed in the bombing of a U.S. military housing facility in Saudi Arabia.

Madam Speaker, this resolution sends an important message: the United States of America will not stand by and silently accept terrorism as a viable option with which to negotiate. Terrorism is not a viable option; it is not an option at all.

The United States must continue to lead in efforts not only to keep a check on the danger presented by Hezbollah and its sponsors, Syria and Iran, but also to help achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East. I join my colleagues from both parties today in support of Israel's right to self-defense and in condemnation of Hezbollah's decision to put the people of Israel and Lebanon in danger. Madam Speaker, thank you for bringing this important resolution to the floor and I urge my colleagues to vote in its favor.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, in recent weeks, radical terrorist organizations have engaged in a number of unprovoked attacks on the State of Israel. I rise today in strong support of Israel's right to defend its citizens and its borders from acts of terrorism.

Most recently, Hezbollah military forces committed an act of war by crossing the border between Lebanon and Israel, attacking and killing several Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two Israeli soldiers. The integrity of the internationally recognized border between Lebanon and Israel must be respected in order for Israel to provide for its security. Hezbollah—a terrorist organization recognized by the U.S. Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO)—operates with impunity in many areas of southern Lebanon. Lebanon must accept responsibility for and bring an end to military attacks originating from within its territory. Iran and Syria also bear responsibility for the current crisis, because armaments used by Hezbollah have been traced to Iran and transferred through Syria for use by these Hezbollah forces.

This month, Hamas—another organization designated by the State Department as a

FTO—also conducted an unprovoked military attack on Israel, killing and kidnapping Israeli soldiers. This military invasion represents a small part of the Palestinian violence emanating from Gaza into Israel. Last August, Israel withdrew every settler and soldier from Gaza in hopes that Palestinians would establish a democratic state capable of living side-by-side in peace with Israel. However, Palestinian terrorists took this historic opportunity to begin systematically firing Kassam rockets at Israeli towns. Over 1,000 have been fired since Israel's total withdrawal from Gaza—and it is important to note that the rockets are fired into territory belonging to Israel before 1967 and universally recognized as being Israeli territory.

Israel has the obligation and the right to defend its citizens against attacks emanating from both Lebanon and Gaza. I support Israel's right to take the appropriate military action necessary to deter future attacks, and hope that Israel's neighbors will take this opportunity to control future terrorism within their own borders.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 921, a resolution expressing support for the security of the State of Israel.

Over the last few days, it has been hard to turn on the television without seeing disturbing images of the current conflict in the Middle East.

Many of us share serious concerns about future of the Middle East. It seems unfair that this area—which has suffered so much conflict already—now is confronted with yet another period of escalating violence.

The long simmering tension in this region has finally come to a boiling point. The capturing of Israeli soldiers and the attacks on innocent civilians by the terrorist organization Hezbollah is absolutely unacceptable.

The President was correct when he stated that Israel has a right to defend itself against the aggressions by Hezbollah. The U.S. must stand side by side with our friends in the Middle East—especially Israel—as they fight terrorism in and around their borders. Israel must have our support and prayers as they continue to fight against those who murder innocent civilians just to advance their political agenda.

The loss of innocent life in this region over the last few days is heartbreaking. The people of Israel and Lebanon deserve to live in freedom and peace, safe from violence and terror.

Madam Speaker, the source of this current conflict does not lie within Israel or Lebanon. To put it plainly, the violence in the region is rooted in Iran. The support of Hezbollah by Iran in countries like Lebanon only serves to encourage violence, unfairly damage the region's fragile democracies, and undermine the rights of citizens in that region to fair and uncorrupted government.

Iran has created and supported terrorism and continues to funnel money and weapons to Hezbollah and Hamas. In fact, missiles that have targeted Israeli forces over the last few days have been traced to manufacturers in Iran.

It is clear that a nuclear Iran puts the Middle East and all countries around the world in grave peril. Iran has repeatedly defied the international community and has progressed in its development of nuclear capabilities. If Iran continues with its rogue nuclear programs, it will not be long before these weapons fall into

the hands of terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

If we want to address the future security and stability of the Middle East, the U.S. must work to curb extremism and violent political activism nurtured by the Iranian government. The U.S. and the international community must come together behind a united front and stand with unwavering strength against the Iran's state-sponsored terrorist organizations and activities.

Here at home, it is now more important than ever that we realize that our own safety and security depends on the destruction of terrorism in the Middle East. This isn't just a Middle East problem—the attacks in London, Madrid, Bali, and now India show us that this is world terror. And, as we saw first hand on 9/11, America is not immune to terrorists who seek to destroy freedom and democracy.

Although the conflict in the Middle East can seem distant and unrelated to our daily lives, it is vitally important that we remember our past, present and future is intrinsically linked with this region. As the situation continues to unfold over the next days and weeks, let our thoughts and prayers be for a true and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for H. Res. 921 to show solidarity with Israel in their quest for security and peace, and to show our commitment to defeating terrorism around the globe.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 921.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss McMORRIS). In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ACTION IS OVERDUE ON DRUG PRICING REFORM

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Recently, the United States Senate voted 68–32 to adopt an amendment that would stop the government from seizing safe, effective, affordable medicine imported from Canada. The House passed a responsible bipartisan prescription drug importation bill 3 years ago this month. I was pleased to lead the House Democrats in support of that bill.

We were not able to get it sent to the President's desk for only one reason: Senate Majority Leader FRIST never brought it to the Senate floor. His own Republican Caucus never demanded a vote. They never stood up. They never

demanded action to break the drug industry stranglehold on the American market. They never demanded an end to the multibillion-dollar annual tax of skyrocketing drug prices it imposed on American business, and it imposed on American families.

At long last, the other body has begun to act. That vote should be the start, not the end, of this effort. I challenge the Republican leadership in both Chambers to give us an open debate, an honest vote on comprehensive drug importation legislation, before the anniversary of the House bill's passage 3 years ago. Three years is long enough to wait for independence from the drug industry.

ENERGY INDUSTRY OCCUPANCY PROTECTION ACT

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Energy Industry Occupancy Protection Act of 2006. Tomorrow in the House Judiciary Committee we will hold a hearing. We will have the opportunity to listen to a victim, victims who have been forgotten, victims who were engaged in America's warfare protecting America in the 1940s and 1950s, when they worked around nuclear radioactive material, and were not told by the contractors that they, in fact, were subjecting themselves to radioactive impact.

These families, these individuals, some of whom lost their lives, were never compensated. I know America can do better. Tomorrow in front of our committee, the Judiciary Committee, Immigration Claims Committee, we will have an opportunity to lay the record to establish that this government must respond to those brave Americans who stood on the front lines, providing the resources for our warriors in World War II and the Korean War, and yet were never compensated for their illness.

I do hope my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this legislation, pushing it quickly through the committee, through the committee, and ensuring that Americans are protected against this devastating impact of working on behalf of Americans and fighting on the front lines by engaging and providing nuclear materials for the wars that we were engaged in.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

OMAN TRADE DEAL COMPROMISES SECURITY OF U.S. PORTS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to go out of place and replace Congressman MILLER.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Only a couple of weeks ago, during the same week when the Senate rejected an increase in the minimum wage, meaning that for 10 years there has not been a minimum wage increase in this country, but there have been six congressional pay raises, that same week the United States Senate voted to approve a free trade agreement with Oman.

This agreement compromises port security, just what the Bush administration had been prepared to do earlier this year, with the Dubai Ports World case. You see, the Oman FTA, Free Trade Agreement, includes provisions allowing companies from Oman to take over land, so-called land-side port operations, operating the piers, loading and unloading cargo, exactly the sorts of things Dubai Ports World had sought to do.

In the case of Dubai Ports World, concerned legislators on both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats, demanded that the Bush administration back down, demanded that the administration block the deal, and ultimately the foreign company gave up. But the Oman Free Trade Agreement would weaken our ability to protect port security and actually allow it to back-door its way into this country.

If we tried to block an Omani company's control over critical port infrastructure, the Omani Government could sue us, could sue the United States for violating this trade agreement, and that case would not be heard by a U.S. court with judges confirmed by U.S.-elected officials and charged with balancing the needs of trade and the imperative security under U.S. law. It would instead be heard by an unelected, unaccountable, international tribunal whose mission is trade promotion, not security enhancement.

If we lost, the foreign ports takeover would go ahead, despite our security