

the distinguished gentleman from the Third District of South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), had submitted a success story that he wanted to be known by people of the United States. And I can identify with that, because I have been a volunteer with Habitat For Humanity.

This is about Contessa from the Third District of South Carolina. "When I was on welfare, I forgot that I was a valuable person, that my life mattered. I really did not have the proper esteem when I was on welfare. Things are so much better now that I am employed and my self-esteem has improved."

A former welfare recipient, Contessa, like thousands of other Americans, has made the transition from welfare to work. Hired as a receptionist who was told that "There is little chance of opportunity for you," Contessa has continued to move up, and today is a paralegal at a prominent law firm in neighboring Greenwood.

One of the dreams that she has achieved is the ownership of her home. That is the American dream. Contessa has taken that bold step forward. I end with this quote: "I have now purchased a home through the Home Authority Stepping Home Program, where a portion of your rent goes into an escrow account for the downpayment on a home. Becoming a homeowner really changes your whole outlook, as does the change from welfare to work."

I would like to thank my colleagues who have participated tonight. We look forward to the discussion about the creation of jobs, the creation of opportunity with the welfare reform reauthorization.

THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SULLIVAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I join with a group of colleagues, and I hope and expect more to join us as the evening progresses, to talk a little bit about the conflict in the Middle East, but also to talk about the Middle East and talk about the state of Israel.

In Israel today, it is Israel Independence Day, the 54th anniversary of the modern state of Israel. I am joined this evening on the Republican side. Sharing the time with me is the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), as well as a number of colleagues, Democrats and Republicans.

I mentioned the 54th anniversary of the creation of the modern state of Israel, and there is a time line that is relevant that hopefully all Americans have a perspective of, because I think the time line gives us a sense of the issues that Israel is dealing with today.

There has been continuous Jewish occupation in the land of Israel from historical times, from the start of the

common era, from the time of Jesus. In 1917, though, in terms of the modern state of Israel, the Balfour Declaration by Great Britain was issued. As this map shows, it was a mandate that the League of Nations had given to the British empire at that time. Saudi Arabia did not exist.

I think one of the best charts that I have seen, presented by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) when we did a special order last week, was talking about the years the different countries were created. Saudi Arabia was a group of nomadic tribes at this time, and Egypt did not exist as a modern country. It was part of the British mandate. Iraq was part of the British mandate. Syria was part of the French mandate.

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

Mr. DEUTSCH. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. It is not shown on the gentleman's map, but I think it is important to point out that Iran did not exist, either. That was ancient Persia at that time.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Absolutely correct. I think it is important just in terms of the issue of why is Israel there as a modern state. I keep referring to it as the modern state of Israel.

The British in 1922 actually divided the mandate that they had along the Jordan River, so there is a line straight from the Jordan River. On the eastern side, they created trans-Jordan, and on the western side, Palestine. Now, trans-Jordan has become modern-day Jordan, and Palestine, let me shift the map and get to what really is the next map, was a partition plan of the United Nations in 1947.

I think this is also a significant map for people to understand and actually to look at, as well. It is significant for a number of reasons. It is significant because, first of all, the Jews that lived in Israel at the time accepted that map. The Arabs that lived in Palestine did not. In fact, in 1947 or 1948 when the British withdrew from Palestine and Israel declared independence 54 years ago, five surrounding Arab countries and their armies, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, invaded.

The Israelis were outnumbered five to one at that point in time, basically with no outside direct support, and the United States obviously, as most people know, recognized Israel as soon as it declared its existence, but this boundary was accepted by the Jews in the state of Israel. In terms of the five countries that invaded and the Arabs that lived in Palestine, they did not accept the partition.

Let me just follow up with another map, which is a map of Israel today. The significant part of this map, in a sense, is from the last map to this map is four wars: 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. The areas in the West Bank and Gaza and the Golan Heights were acquired by Israel in 1967.

Again, the history of that point in time I think is also very significant. It

is significant because it was not a war that Israel sought, it was a war of defense. I think what is also significant, just to understand the context, the historical context, is that the area of the West Bank and Gaza, which effectively, I think, all parties now understand will in fact become a Palestinian state at some point in time, when those areas were controlled by Jordan and Egypt, neither Jordan nor Egypt wanted there to be a Palestinian state. There could have been a Palestinian state at any point in time between 1948 and 1967 if Jordan, Egypt, or the Palestinians in that area would have agreed to a Palestinian state living side by side with the state of Israel at that point in time.

A significant thing happened in 1974, and really, under the American auspices, the American involvement, in terms of the peace process that really began in 1974. But the real significant event in modern times, or prior to this year, is 1977 when Anwar Sadat visited Jerusalem and made a clear show to the Israeli people of his commitment towards peace. If there were any two peoples who were as diametrically opposed, who had fought very vicious, competitive wars with each other, the Egyptians and the Israelis were those two people.

As we know, under the guidance of President Jimmy Carter, Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed the Egyptian treaty at Camp David in 1979. Just moving forward past 1979, I think there are some interesting dates. As opposed to Anwar Sadat, Chairman Arafat's actions in 1982, because of terrorist attacks on Israel at that time, Israel invaded southern Lebanon. In fact, what happened was Arafat ended up getting expelled from southern Lebanon to Tunisia. The Israeli troops remained in the security zone for a period of time.

In 1991, as the chart points out, Chairman Arafat supported Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War. In 1994, another positive step occurred in that King Hussein and Prime Minister Rabin signed the Israel-Jordan peace treaty with President Clinton.

In 1997, the Hebron Accords were signed; in 1999, the Wye River Accords; and in 2000, the Camp David attempt by President Clinton had its auspices. Again, as we know, the offer that was on the table of 97 percent of the West Bank, parts of Jerusalem, significant parts of Jerusalem, an independent Palestinian state, was rejected by Chairman Arafat.

□ 1945

I give this as a historical background, and I look forward to my colleagues' statements.

So I would yield first to my colleague sharing the time who has taken a leadership roll and serves on the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for

yielding the time and also for organizing this special order, because I do think it is extremely important that we in America set an example and let it be known worldwide that we stand behind Israel's right to defend herself, and we truly believe that the time for that statement is now on this day of Israel's independence of 54-year anniversary.

Just to think about a nation of 5 million people compared to America, 281 million, we are a little less than 60 percent the size of Israel, and on that horrible day of September 11, when 3,000 Americans were killed, that equivalent to Israel would be about 50 people, and last month alone Israel lost that many. So she has the right to defend herself.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time for one second, I am going to grab a chart, if I can, which is showing the numbers. Actually in the month of March alone it was not 50. It was 150 Israelis that got killed. So in fact, in the month of March, just this past month Israel sustained the equivalent of three 9/11s, and I think if we can just imagine what the United States, God forbid, that would have occurred to us, what we would do, I think the world has seen what we did with one 9/11.

Mr. KINGSTON. Absolutely, and when one considers that the attacks are so random, in a coffee house, in a theater, in a crowded street, anywhere there is a group of people, the whole nation is truly under attack. It is not just the people in the Gaza, the West Bank, but it is anywhere.

I have a number of folks on my side of the aisle who want to speak, and I wanted to yield a few minutes to them if that is appropriate.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I think we have a lot of Members here this evening. I think what I would like to do, normally in special orders we do not limit time, but maybe if we could limit time to 5 minutes per Member and have a discourse.

If I could yield to the senior Member in this Chamber right now, one of the senior members on the Committee on International Relations, and there is no gentleman who is a more significant leader in terms of his record, in terms of peace in the Middle East, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding to me. It is very good to be here with all of my colleagues, and I do not have a prepared comment. I just want to make a few points and then yield back to my friend from Florida and the others who took this special order.

First, to thank the gentleman for taking this special order. I am getting a lot of comments from my colleagues in this Chamber, I am getting a lot of mail and phone calls from my constituents who are watching television, who are seeing pictures and reading stories and are very distressed by what they have seen in these past few weeks, and I thought it would be good to come back to a couple of very basic points.

For me, as a Member of Congress, one of my priorities is to work for the survival and the security of the State of Israel, and I say that and I do that with no embarrassment because I very much believe that that position is a position that is strongly in the interests of the American people, and I think that as we look at the context of this conflict, some of the points illustrated by the gentleman from Florida with his maps remind us of several critical points.

The first point is that every single time that the people of Israel have been presented with an option which involves compromise on their part and the hope and promise of peace, they have chosen that option rather than pushing for maximalist demands and a continuation of conflict.

It started in 1948 with the partition plan sponsored by the United Nations where Israel and the people of Israel accepted far less than they hoped to get in that partition plan, and as the gentleman from Florida pointed out correctly, the Arab neighbors of Israel rejected that partition plan and went to war.

It occurred again in the wake of Anwar Sadat's statement that he would make peace with Israel if they would withdraw from all the territory that they had occupied as a result of the 1967 and 1973 wars. Within an instant, Israeli public opinion rallied around the call by this courageous leader of Egypt for peace and set through a process to withdraw from the entire Sinai peninsula, to uproot settlements and to pull back just in the hope that they could engage in a lasting peace with the country of Egypt.

It occurred again in 1993 in the context of Oslo where all Israel got for all the compromises that they agreed with and the process that they agreed to go through and the compromises that they subsequently made, all they got was the promise that the dispute between Israel and the Palestinian peoples would be resolved through negotiations, there would be an end to terror and that a series of steps would be taken, all of which involved Israel withdrawal, Israel retreat, and in the context of Oslo, the Israeli government did things that they had indicated they would never do.

They indicated a willingness to negotiate with Yasser Arafat, a position no Israeli government had ever taken before. They indicated a willingness to recognize the PLO as the organization representing the Palestinian people. They agreed to Yasser Arafat's return to the Palestinian areas, first the Gaza, then to Jericho and finally the headquarters in Ramallah.

They agreed most incredibly to the arming of 50,000 Palestinian police under the direction of the Palestinian Authority to maintain order as they pushed out of every area of major Palestinian population and, again, without even getting into the details of the willingness of Israel, to opt for with-

drawal from the Golan Heights in the context of trying to get a peace with Syria or their unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon, notwithstanding the continued barrage that Israel was facing from Hezbollah forces, supported by Syria and Iran, against not only their Armed Forces, but against the civilian population of northern Israel.

Finally, with the offer Ehud Barak made in the American-mediated Camp David process where a whole series of positions that no one ever thought they would see a leader of Israel offer were made at that table, only to be spurned by the Palestinians.

For a long time, 20 years now, I have believed that in the context of obtaining this peace and the right solution, there would have to be compromise. I want a Jewish homeland and I want it to be a democracy, and if for no other reason than the demographic facts, I recognize that in a context where Israel's survival and its security could be maintained, there would need to be land, but I believe that that is the position of the vast majority of the people of Israel as well as the vast majority of American supporters of the state of Israel.

So when we see the present images and the consequences of the Israeli effort to deal with the sources of terror that have taken so many lives, the homicide bombings that have continued relentlessly, the clear unwillingness, notwithstanding his words of Chairman Arafat to end terror as a tool of the efforts to provide for the aspirations of the Palestinian people, the uncovering of the documents that indicates top Palestinian authority approval for the funding of explosives and bombs and weaponry of very significant magnitude.

This is no longer the intifada of 1988 and 1989, an intifada of stones. This is of mortars and explosives and bombs and rockets. When we see all of that, when we learn that as a result of the Israeli efforts, dozens of bomb factories have been uncovered, huge caches of weapons have been uncovered, all to be used notwithstanding the promises under Oslo and the commitments made to try and settle this issue through force, I think my colleagues have to understand that context to understand what Israel feels it needs to do.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, this is actually a list of weapons that were uncovered or captured by the Israelis since April 1 in their incursions into places like Jenin and Ramallah, and it is an amazing list from April 1. Weapons obviously in violation of Oslo agreements and sniper weapons, telescopic rifle weapons, bomb factories, things that there were agreements not to have, to prevent from having, and in fact, the question which is really raised is why did the Israelis even incur the incursions into these areas. The Israelis, I do not think, want to be there anymore than the Americans want to be in Afghanistan.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, that illustrates the point I was making, and I will just conclude because we have some very knowledgeable people on the floor tonight to speak to this issue, and to say that I ask my colleagues and I ask those people who care about Israel's survival and security, to understand the context in which this present incursion is taking place, the critical importance of it being completed in a fashion that enhances survival, and understand that when presented with a true opportunity for a true peace, be it with the Palestinians or a comprehensive peace, I have no doubt that the Israeli people and its government will be able to make the compromises necessary to make that happen.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I would yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida and I would ask him to yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida for taking out this special order. I understand actually we will be back to back, two special orders tonight, and I wanted to come down to the floor, Mr. Speaker, because it is important that this special order be bipartisan, and it is important that the clear message go out, not only to our colleagues, but to everyone around the world within the sound of our voices, to make it clear that on a bipartisan basis, Republicans, Democrats, the House and the Senate, this Nation supports the country of Israel, the only really true democracy in the region, a steadfast friend and ally of the United States for over half a century, and that message needs to be stated in unequivocal bipartisan terms in this House of Representatives tonight.

I am so glad and encouraged, my colleague from California mentioned that there are a lot of knowledgeable people about this issue. I do not know that I would count myself as one of the overly knowledgeable people among my colleagues, but I have been to Israel, and I have studied the history, and I am very, very pleased that my friend from Florida started out his remarks with a very detailed history of the region. Because of the importance of the first map that he brought forward, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to bring it over to my side of the aisle, and once again, point out to my colleagues a bit of the history of the area.

I think there are some people watching this issue around the Nation and also around the world who might believe or have us believe that somehow the lines of the nations were drawn and set in concrete back during the time when the super powers of this world decided to impose an Israeli state or a Jewish state upon the region, and that everybody was all set and we kind of came in with Israel and upset the apple cart there in the region.

As this map demonstrates, nothing could be further from the truth. Back during the time of the British Mandate, 1920, post-World War I, as this map indicates, there was no Lebanon. Syria was part of the French Mandate. Iraq was part of the British Mandate. Saudi Arabia was not yet recognized as a Nation at the time, and we had this area that is described here as Palestine or the British Mandate, and then my friend from Florida described how that was divided by the very tiny Jordan river.

If my colleagues have ever been to Israel, they know it is just really not much more than what we would call a small creek where I come from, but it was divided there into Trans-Jordan, which later became the nation of Jordan.

So everything was in flux at the time the country of Israel was being anticipated there.

□ 2000

They have a right to exist. The international community has recognized for over half a century that Israel has a right to exist, and we need to acknowledge right here on the floor of this House of Representatives that our friends, the Israelis, are under attack at this very moment, have been since a year and a half ago, and their very existence is being challenged by those who would like to wipe them off the face of the Earth.

Mr. Speaker, we need to make the strong statement on a bipartisan basis that this country is going to resist those terrorists who would not even acknowledge the right of Israel to exist as a nation.

I am happy to stand with Republicans and Democrats tonight on that principle. Israel is a democracy. Israel has become a driving economic miracle in the desert over the past half century, and they are due a lot of credit. They have been our friend and we have been their friend, when this country has needed it and when Israel has needed it.

If there is one signal that we need to send as a matter of foreign policy, it is that this Nation is steadfast in supporting its friends, and we count Israel as among those friends. I appreciate my colleagues acknowledging that while Israel has a right to exist, there will be a Palestinian state under the right conditions, and that compromises will have to be made. But tonight we are making the strong statement of support for Israel.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I meant to point out that the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) as a member of the Committee on Appropriations has supported consistently economic and military aid to Israel.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) who, before he was in Congress, was intimately involved in issues regarding the Middle East.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on

this critical issue in helping Congress recognize and helping the American people recognize one fundamental and indisputable fact: Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, and a strong Israel means a secure America.

About a year ago I had an opportunity to meet with the King and Queen of Jordan, King Abdullah and Queen Rania, and with other Members of this body we sat at a table and asked the King when would there be peace in the Middle East. He talked about his hopes for peace in the Middle East.

He said when my father used to meet with the President of Syria, they would talk about violence and rivalry and conflict. But when I meet with the new young president of Syria, we talk about how we are going to modernize our financial services industries and how we are going to get the Internet into every household in our country.

He said as a new young generation of leaders take shape in the Middle East, there will be peace; and since then, thousands of Palestinians and Israelis have lost their lives.

I have come to the sobering conclusion that King Abdullah is right, that peace is a generational issue, and that is a fundamental part of the problem. The gentleman has talked about this and taken the leadership on this issue. The fact of the matter is that all of the diplomatic accords, the peace treaties, the Camp Davids, the Wye Rivers, the Madrids, the Oslos, the grip and grins, all of the diplomatic treaties in the world are not going to be successful as long as a young generation of Palestinians in second grade classrooms are taught that there is no alternative to the destruction of Israel and the destruction of the United States.

Think about it. What possesses 15 young Saudis to board American planes and destroy and murder thousands of New Yorkers, and take their own lives in the process? What possesses young children in the Middle East to strap explosives to their chests and blow up pizza parlors and bar mitzvahs and Passover seders, and elderly people and children and women?

Mr. Speaker, what possesses them, they are being indoctrinated in their classrooms and not educated. Let me share some specific examples. They are taught hatred in the text "Modern Arab History and Contemporary Problem Part 2," which on page 49 teaches Palestinian children that Zionism is "a political, aggressive and colonialist movement, which calls for judaization of Palestine by the expulsion of its Arab inhabitants."

They are taught in the book "Our Country Palestine" by a banner which appears on a title page of volume 1 reading, "There is no alternative to destroying Israel."

Mr. Speaker, they are taught in the text "Our Arabic Language for 7th Grade Part A," in which one exercise for students reads as follows: "Subject for your composition: How will we liberate our stolen land? Make use of the

following ideas: Arab unity, genuine faith in Allah, most modern weapons." That is on page 15.

In Syria, fourth grade textbooks label Zionism a colonial analogue of Nazism. A tenth grade textbook labels Jews "a menace that should be exterminated." The fact of the matter is this: for as long as children are not taught science but are taught hatred, are not taught math but are taught destruction, are not taught technology but are taught how to strap bombs to their chests and blow up innocent civilians, for as long as they are not taught literacy and job creation and job expansion, and not given the tools to expand the middle class and bring prosperity into their own communities, for as long as those lessons of hatred are taught, there will not be peace in the Middle East.

I am a strong supporter as a Democrat of this administration's policies in Afghanistan, and I am hopeful that the administration will also realize that our allies, our so-called allies in the Middle East have to be judged not by meetings with Arafat, not by treaties, not by cease fires, but what they achieve in second grade classrooms. That will be the measure of success, and that should be the obligation of our Arab allies in the Middle East.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) knowing that he is going to introduce the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). I believe there is no one in this Congress who is more personally committed to Israel's survival than her, and I have traveled to Israel with her and I have seen her action, her feeling. And especially from someone with her background who knows what terrorists have done and can do throughout the world.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those comments because I think as an American of Cuban descent, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is in a unique position as the gentleman said to have dealt with many of these issues that are difficult in a changing nation and changing people, and terrorism and assaults to a different part of the globe.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and it was my great privilege to be on a trip to Israel with my dear colleague from Florida. We certainly had an insightful look at the military operations, the anti-terrorists and intelligence operations. There is a lot that is going on and a lot of positive things that are going on in Israel right now. It is a shame that the economy is suffering so much because of the terrible acts of the PLO against the peaceful Israeli people.

It is with great honor that I join all of my colleagues here today in celebrating Israel's independence day. This day marks the establishment of the State of Israel, a day when a people found a homeland and fulfilled their destiny. On this day we stand with the

people of Israel to celebrate the memory of all who lost their lives to achieve Israel's independence and those who continually work to ensure its existence.

As the State of Israel faces enduring changes and challenges, it is our moral obligation to pay homage to their continual struggle for full recognition and render our unequivocal support to our only democratic ally in the Middle East, and that is Israel.

The United States has a shared tradition of democracy with Israel, creating a long-standing history of mutual support and enduring friendship which has helped us overcome many difficult moments.

As Israel has always stood by our side before the international community, at the U.N. and at the region, we must now ensure that our friend feels that support throughout these turbulent times in her history.

While Israel engages in rooting out terrorism at home, it has encountered nothing but distorted criticism around the world. As we stand here, such actions are taking place at the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Day after day, item after item, debate after debate, Israel is berated and targeted by some of the world's most repressive regimes. It has been particularly troublesome to see the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, engage in this process referring to well-known terrorist organizations as humanitarian or human rights entities, legitimizing their violence against the peaceful Israeli people rather than providing a balanced and objective presentation of the situation on the ground.

Such behavior does not further the goal of peace and only serves to undermine the great efforts by President Bush, Secretary Powell and others to secure an end to the current violence.

Throughout, the United States has spoken clearly and loudly to ensure that the principles of justice and fairness are upheld, to ensure that Israel could be heard, and that the truth, not hyperbole and not incendiary rhetoric, would guide the actions of the international community.

Mr. Speaker, the struggle for democracy and the protection of civil liberties is a difficult one which the Israeli people have endured and have embraced.

Like them, my native homeland, the Cuban people are still struggling for the same, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH) pointed out, the similarities between those two states.

Ironically, today, April 17, also marks the anniversary of the failed Bay of Pigs event to bring freedom and democracy to Cuba. After that ill-fated moment in Cuban history, the terrorist regime in Havana went on to provide training camps for Israel's enemies and sent Cuban soldiers to fight against Israel during the Six Day War. They did so because the Six Day War, according to Cuba's then U.N. ambas-

sador, Ricardo Alarcon, was an "armed aggression against the Arab people by a most treacherous surprise attack in the Nazi manner."

Mr. Speaker, 7 years later Yasser Arafat was enthusiastically received in Havana and given Castro's foremost decoration, the Bay of Pigs Medal.

These are just some of the bonds that the United States and Israel share, a history, a struggle, a commitment to freedom, to democracy, which have forever intertwined our destiny. May this anniversary of Israeli Independence Day mark an end to violence and to the suffering on all sides and usher in a new era of peace, stability, security and hope. May that be the case for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his time. I also had the pleasure to visit Israel with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), who will speak shortly; and he has been to Israel many times, and it was our pleasure to tour many of those sites of destruction with him, if that can be said to be a pleasure. It was a very moving time in Israel's future and in Israel's presence, to be there where those terrorist acts took place and to lay a wreath in memory of the fallen civilians and soldiers who have given so much so that their homeland could remain free. I thank the gentleman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH), for the time, as well as the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. Again, the commitment of the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is so heartfelt and so real. For all Israelis who met her, I believe they felt that at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN), who has proven himself as perhaps the most articulate Member of Congress in giving a historical and complete perspective, and those comments come from members of my immediate family.

□ 2015

I can even say that those comments come from members of my own immediate family.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield, I have to say that my mother, who is certainly my biggest fan, told me after last week's special order that she thought the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) did a much better job than I did.

Mr. DEUTSCH. I did not want to mention which member of my family, but it was as close as your mother as well.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN).

Mr. ROTHMAN. I thank both the gentlemen, my friend from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH) and my dear friend from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing us to have this time tonight to further discuss this issue with our colleagues in the House and those watching at home.

Today we celebrate two anniversaries, one a very happy one, and one a very, very sad one.

The happy one first. Here is the nation of Israel, this orange little sliver on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Tiny little Israel. I know on maps on television, sometimes you see just a little portion and you think Israel is this huge country. Take a look, my colleagues and friends. This is Israel. This is Saudi Arabia. This is Iraq, Syria, Egypt here, Iran here, Oman, Yemen, Kuwait. Do you see how small Israel is compared to the rest of the Persian and Arab world? Absolutely tiny, is it not? They are outnumbered more than 30 to one.

Today is the 54th anniversary of Israel's founding. How did Israel come to be founded? A long time ago, Turkey in the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman Empire of Turkey was aligned with Germany in World War I. When the Germans lost World War I, despite the help of their friends in the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman Empire lost all its territory to the Allies, the Americans, the British and the French. The Ottoman owned much of the Middle East, including this whole area. The British were given control of what is now Israel and Jordan, the French were given Syria and Iraq, the English were given Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

A lot of people say, well, maybe Israel is some new country and that it just started in the 20th century after World War I but, hey, those Arab nations and the Persian nation of Iran, they must have been around for centuries. So Israel must be some stranger to the region, some interloper. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Saudi Arabia used to be called Arabia, until the English gave it to the Saud family in 1932, and then it became Saudi Arabia in 1932. Iran, established in 1925. Iraq, established 1932. Syria, established 1946. Lebanon established 1943. Egypt 1922. Jordan 1946. Israel 1948. So they were all established about the same time.

Israel since it was founded in 1948, recognized by the League of Nations as the Jewish homeland, the British said they wanted it to be a Jewish homeland after World War I in the Balfour Declaration, the League of Nations said it should be a Jewish homeland. The United Nations in 1948 said it should be a Jewish homeland. So when all these other countries were created, they created the country of Israel in 1948. Happy anniversary, happy birthday, Israel, America's best friend, most strategic ally in the Middle East. America's forward battleship of military intelligence, cultural values, democracy.

What is the sad anniversary that we celebrate today? A year before 1948, there was another offer made. You notice you do not see Palestine or the Palestinians on this map of the Middle East. But was there ever a country called Palestine? Never ever in the history of the world. Was there ever a

kingdom called Palestine? Never ever in the history of the world. Were there ever people who called themselves the rulers of the Palestinian people? Never ever in the history of the world, until Yasser Arafat came along, almost at the end of the 20th century.

The anniversary that is so sad is that in 1947, a year before the United Nations decided to create the Jewish homeland of Israel, they had already divided their mandate and created Trans-Jordan with two-thirds of the land that they were going to give to the Jews, they took two-thirds of it away and created Trans-Jordan, which is now Jordan.

Two-thirds of the land they were going to give to the Jews. Did they give it to the Palestinians, or the local inhabitants in Jordan? No, they gave it to the Hussein family who came from Arabia and they put them in power in Trans-Jordan. Anyway, they did that in 1946.

Anyway, in 1947, the United Nations says, "Let's have two states. We took two-thirds of the land away we were going to give to the Jews, let's take the third we were going to give to the Jews and divide that in half." And they said, "Let's make Palestine," the area in gray, which goes from the top here of the present State of Israel all the way near to the bottom. Jerusalem was not to be Israel's capital as it is today. It was to be an international city. The yellow here and here and here was to be Israel.

What did the Jews say when they were presented in 1947 by the U.N. with this two-state solution? The Jews said, yes, we will, even though we were supposed to get all of Jordan and all of this, you took two-thirds of the land away for Jordan and you want to divide this land in half, okay. We just want a homeland. And we will take half, the half that you have set forth.

What did the Palestinians and the whole Arab world say in 1947 when they were offered a Palestinian state? They said, no, we don't want to live next to a Jewish state even though there is no other Jewish state in the world, let alone in all of Arabia. Look at little tiny Israel. They said, We don't want to live next to a Jewish state, and they said no. So a year later, the U.N. said, okay, then we will make the whole thing the Jewish homeland, the state of Israel.

And what happened in 1948, the anniversary of independence for Israel we celebrate today? All of the armies surrounding Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq invaded in 1948. They told their Arab brothers and sisters who were living inside the land, "Leave. Flee. We'll drive the Jews into the sea. You'll have the whole thing to yourself. You won't have to have a two-state solution. It will all be yours." A miracle happened. The scrawny bunch of Jews that were there with no arms but only the will to fight defeated all of those armies. The 800,000 people, the Palestinians who left, were they ab-

sorbed by the surrounding Arab countries and welcomed in brotherhood and sisterhood? No. They were kept, these refugees from 1948, in squalid refugee camps. That was 55 years ago. They have still kept them there.

By the way, in 1948 when Israel was established, in 1948, do you know how many Jews were expelled from the Arab world? The same number. 800,000 Jews from all over the Arab world, and there were Jews living in those lands for centuries. When Israel was recognized as a state by the U.N., as the Jewish state in 1948, 800,000 Jews from the region were expelled and thrown out of their countries and they made their way to Israel.

What did Israel do? Did Israel put them in refugee camps, squalid little camps to fester and be betrayed for 55 years? No. Israel said, you are our brothers and sisters, even though your lands were dispossessed and you were thrown out of lands where you have lived for centuries, we will take you in and make you our citizens and take care of you. Meanwhile, the Palestinians still rot in their refugee camps their Arab brothers and sisters have kept them in all over the Middle East.

What happened next of significance? In 1967, all the Arab nations surrounding Israel invaded Israel again. They said to their Palestinian brothers and sisters, "Don't worry, we'll drive the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea. You'll get that Palestinian state. You won't have to live next to the Jews." In 1967, another miracle. Jews, outnumbered again, they survived.

And what happened in 1967 after the war of defense, Israel said, "You know what, we want to live in peace, Palestinians. Let's negotiate so you can have your own state." What did the Palestinians say in 1967 after they had rejected statehood in 1947? They said, "We won't live with you. We don't want a two-state solution."

The next significant event, not 1967, 1973, all the Arab armies around Israel again, 1973, invade Israel, they are going to drive the Jews into the sea. What happened then? Another miracle, the Jews survived.

Go back to the year 2000. Bill Clinton brings Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Barak from Israel to Camp David where Prime Minister Barak says, "You know what, we're going to try again, Palestinians. We're ready to give you your own state on the West Bank and the Gaza. We're ready to give you your capital in Jerusalem, two-thirds of East Jerusalem." They are willing to give the Palestinians 97 percent of what they wanted or what they said they wanted. Remember, for the first time in human history a losing army, who lost four wars, gets offered 97 percent of what it tried to get illegitimately.

What did Yasser Arafat say to such an offer in the year 2000 at Camp David? He did not say a word. Not only did he not accept the deal of 97 percent, he did not even present a counteroffer.

He left the negotiations, went back to his home in Gaza and ordered the suicide bombing to begin, still in the belief, 55 years later, after an offer of a Palestinian state for the third time, if he had to live next to a Jewish state of Israel, he did not want the deal. Get rid of Israel altogether or no deal. He did not care if his Palestinian people suffered or not, how many children he sent to die with bombs strapped to their back, how many hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees now multiplied in numbers over 55 years were going to rot in Palestinian refugee camps around the Middle East. He did not care. He would not live in peace next to the Jewish state of Israel.

That is where we are today, except they intensified their suicide bombings so that the Israelis have lost the equivalent in American people, given the difference in population, small Israel and big United States, of about 25,000 people in the last 18 months. Can you imagine, God forbid, if America lost 25,000 people to terror in the last 18 months, what we would do? That is what Israel is doing now, going into the areas controlled by Yasser Arafat, getting his weapons, getting his explosives.

Did the Israelis who have a great Air Force and all kinds of bombs drop bombs and destroy these villages entirely, men, women and children without regard? No. Could they have? Of course. They said, "We won't kill innocent civilians, even though they are killing ours." So they sent Israeli troops one by one, door by door to get specific terrorists. That is a democracy, with a moral sense, a moral code. And the number of civilian casualties in the Palestinian areas were minimized. Even though in America when we went into Afghanistan, unfortunately there were quite a lot of civilian casualties, but we did the same thing, tried to minimize them as well.

What is left for us now? What is left for us now is to have the Israeli people root out, as President Bush said, bring to justice, or to bring justice to those who have slaughtered their babies in school buses, in nursery schools, in pizza parlors, in cafes, on the streets and supermarkets.

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Twenty-five thousand, the equivalent of American lives in the last 18 months alone. Yet the Israelis get the ammunition, the terrorists, put them in jail, get the explosives, clean up the area, and, then, finally, hope that the Palestinian people will finally accept an offer that they have rejected since 1947: accept your own state next to the Jewish State of Israel. Have your people live in peace and prosperity. Just say you will live in peace.

Mr. DEUTSCH. If the gentleman would try to wrap up, we will have some more time. I know there are a couple of other gentlemen.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman will yield, I will certainly say we will

be honored to yield to the gentleman more time when we have it, which will be in a few minutes. If I do not, my mother will kill me; and I understand that Mr. DEUTSCH's dad might get a little irritated himself. You are going to conclude, but you are not going to leave.

Mr. ROTHMAN. I will not leave.

Any nation that has said to Israel we are ready to make peace with you, Israel makes peace with them. Even a nation that attacks Israel and Israel defends itself, Israel gives back the lands. It happened to Egypt when they said they would make peace. It happened to Jordan, who invaded Israel several times and lost. They finally made an agreement, King Hussein and the Israelis. Now they live in peace.

What we need is a Palestinian leadership who wants to live in peace with the Jewish State. If they cannot do it, the Arabs and the Persians, the Iranians, they are not Arabs, they are Persians, so they tell me, and I accept their great culture, should have the Palestinian people take yes for an answer, and, after 55 years of rejecting statehood, accept statehood for themselves and for America's number one strategic ally in the Middle East, the only democracy in the Middle East, little tiny Israel. For Israel's sake, for the Palestinian people's sake, for the world's sake.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman. Again I would hope that the gentleman can continue to stay in the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and again want to commend the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) on his excellent job, as usual.

I would ask the gentleman from Florida to also yield the floor to a very strong pro-Israel advocate who is also a freshman this year, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Georgia for his leadership on this issue and certainly my colleague from Florida for his steadfast leadership and for the incredible wealth of knowledge of my colleague from New Jersey. I thank him as well.

It really is an honor for me to be here and to address this body on such an occasion. We stand here to congratulate and join in celebration with the people of Israel on the 54th anniversary of the creation of the Jewish State of Israel.

It is particularly apt that we are here as this country of ours, the United States, is picking itself up, putting things back in order, from the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11 that killed thousands of innocent Americans. On that day we realize that we shared a common enemy with the people of Israel, an enemy that is as despicable as any we have seen in our

land, one that is after our way of life, our freedom of choice, and our faith in our creator.

Mr. Speaker, the State of Israel grew out of the ashes of the Holocaust, a time in which the Jewish people suffered under an evil and a systematic wickedness that killed 6 million innocent people. To this day, Mr. Speaker, the people of Israel continue to endure the wrath and hatred of so many of its neighbors, as has been pointed out by my colleagues this evening.

The people of Israel continue to endure on a daily basis what the people of our country endured on September 11. The atrocities, the death, the carnage that they must face on a daily basis brings us here this evening in solidarity.

This great country, the United States of America, was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, and among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

As the legacy of those great 18th century Virginians who put forth those principles, we stand here tonight united in saluting our brethren in the State of Israel, those individuals who never cease to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AKIN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Speaker for recognizing me and want to immediately recognize my friend from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH). We are doing this hour on a bipartisan basis tonight. The subject will continue as it did the past hour on our support for Israel's right to defend itself.

With that, let me yield to me friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH).

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate this. I know in the last hour several additional colleagues have joined us, and I look forward to hearing from them over the next hour.

One colleague who has been very patient is one of the most knowledgeable Members in the Congress on the Middle East, again someone who has been active in Middle Eastern issues and concern far before he entered the Congress, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Georgia for once again organizing this.

There is a period of time between the commemoration of the anniversary of