

the distinguished Senator from Colorado, now our Interior Secretary designate, was present. Senator Pell came to the event. He was very disabled, and he came in a wheelchair. I went over to greet him. Senator SALAZAR—I say to the Presiding Officer, you will remember this—also came over to greet him. He took his hand, and he told him: Senator, my brother and I went to college because of the Pell Grant Program. Now here I am standing in front of you as a Senator, thanks to the vision and foresight you showed years ago—your vision that every American should have the dream of higher education at their disposal. I say to the Presiding Officer, you were then in your first term as a newly elected Senator.

It was an unforgettable moment, I say to the Presiding Officer. It happened because Senator Pell understood the difference that higher education could make in the lives of America's young people—from a young KEN SALAZAR from rural Colorado, to toddlers across this country now who will seize the opportunities of America in years to come because of this man.

Senator Pell knew that the arts, too, could transform lives. He authored the landmark legislation that gave rise to the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities. These institutions have secured a place for the culture and the arts in the public life of this Nation. Over the years they have helped bring poetry, drama, dance, painting, sculpture, song, literature, and history to millions of Americans.

Of course, we New Englanders are deeply indebted to Senator Pell for his passion for public transportation and in particular for his long fight to develop for the Northeast corridor a transit system to support the cities of today and tomorrow. As we face the challenges of rising energy costs, economic recession, and urban stresses on our congested highways, Americans will rely more heavily than ever on systems such as Amtrak. Senator Pell's foresight again has served us well.

Here in the Senate, Senator Pell is remembered for his big ideas. In Rhode Island, we remember him also for his gentle, generous spirit. He had lived all over the world. He had been honored with medals from at least 18 different nations. But Newport, RI, was always home. In both his personal and his political life, he was a consistent model of civility and kindness to his fellow Rhode Islanders—always, without fail—even sometimes at his peril.

For example, in his final bid for reelection in 1990, Senator Pell reportedly insisted on warning Congresswoman Claudine Schneider, his Republican opponent, every time he was about to air a new television ad. He told his campaign staff that he would not permit a self-promoting press release to go out, chiding: "No, no, no, we never boast."

In a debate I remember watching, he was given two huge political softball

opportunities. One, he was asked to criticize his opponent, to critique her capacity to defeat him and serve in the U.S. Senate. The only thing he had to say was she has been a very fine Congresswoman. Then he was asked what his most significant legislative achievements had been during the previous term that had helped Rhode Islanders. He said:

You know, I really can't think of one right now. My memory is not as good as it should be.

One would think those answers would be lethal politically, but Rhode Islanders loved it and they loved him for it because he was as genuine and as authentic as a man could be. I guess one of the great lessons of his life is that voters don't want you to be perfect; they want you to be you. They want you to be authentically who you are and from there to fight for them, and he certainly lived that. For his authenticity and gentleness of spirit, Claiborne Pell was beloved by all of us in the Ocean State who were privileged to know him or work with him or learn from his example.

We all will miss him deeply. To his wife Nuala, to his children, Toby and Dallas, and their families, and to the families of his departed children, Bertie and Julie, I know I join my distinguished senior Senator and all in this body and indeed all of America in holding them in our thoughts and prayers.

As his family reminded us last week, Senator Pell summarized his role as a Senator with seven simple words: Translate ideas into actions and help people. Would that all of us could have ideas as big as Claiborne Pell's and the strength, grace, persistence, and courage to translate them into action.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, would it be in order for me, before I begin my remarks, to compliment the Presiding Officer for his nomination to be Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior, and wish him very well before the Senate in being confirmed and serving in that position? I guess that question doesn't need a response. I certainly hope it is in line for me to be able to say that.

GAZA RESOLUTION

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I hope—and I am joined here by Senator LIEBERMAN—that the Senate will have an opportunity to consider before this week is out a resolution we believe has been drafted by the majority leader and the minority leader that deals with the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip and that we believe needs to express the will of the Senate. We believe as well that a similar resolution would be voted on in the House of Representatives to express the will of the House. So then the whole world—and certainly

the administration—would know of this body's strong support for the State of Israel and our support for the actions Israel is taking right now. We hope that vote can occur before this week is out. I wish to commend Senator LIEBERMAN for his considerable leadership on this issue.

We support this resolution. The first thing the resolution does is to remind people why the State of Israel had to act.

Last February, on a trip to the Middle East, I visited the Israeli town of Sderot, which is about 3 miles from the border of Gaza, and I learned from the town's mayor of the toll taken on the residents of this town and neighboring cities from more than 8 years of rocket attacks by the Hamas terrorists. At the police station, I saw rack after rack of these spent rockets, the remains of the rockets that had been launched by Hamas against the civilian population of this city. In fact, about 15 minutes after we departed the city, one of these Hamas launched a Qassam rocket—identical to the hundreds we had seen at the police station—which fell on an Israeli home in town, destroying it. Thankfully, no one in that attack was harmed.

Is there any doubt that if the United States were suffering an attack from just across the border similar to this, that we wouldn't react to stop that from happening? I think there is no question that we would act to stop this terrorism. It is our hope that the resolution would express our acknowledgment that a nation has the right to defend itself, that Israel has had to respond to this, to more than 6,300 rocket and mortar attacks on its citizens since it fully withdrew from Gaza in the year 2005. In fact, this town has been suffering for over 8 years from these attacks.

The second point the resolution makes is that there is no equivalency between the actions of Hamas and Israel in this case. Israel conducts its military operations to spare innocent life. They have specifically targeted Hamas command centers and security installations and rocket-launching sites, weapons stockpiles, and weapons smuggling tunnels. They have tried very hard to avoid civilian casualties. In fact, Israel has transmitted very specific warnings to Gazans. They have dropped leaflets and made phone calls to targeted areas to warn citizens to leave because an attack is imminent. This, of course, even means they lose the element of surprise and potentially put the lives of Israeli soldiers at risk. But Israel believes it is important where possible to avoid jeopardizing innocent life—quite the opposite from Hamas, which deliberately and cynically fires rockets from civilian areas to make it more difficult for Israel to target the terrorists and to increase the likelihood of civilian casualties when Israel does take action.

Hamas has ignored a plea by U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on April 28 that:

Civilian areas in Gaza should not be used as a base from which to launch its actions against Israel.

Dozens of mosques in Gaza have been turned into weapons storage facilities and Hamas command centers. In fact, an airstrike on a mosque in the Tel El Hawa neighborhood of Gaza City last Wednesday set off numerous secondary explosions caused by the arms that had been stockpiled in the mosque.

Finally, Hamas openly admits that it uses women and children as human shields. A leading member of Hamas told Al-Aqsa TV on February 29, 2008:

For the Palestinian people, death has become an industry . . . This is why they have formed human shields of the women, the children, the elderly, and the mujahedeen, in order to challenge the Zionist bombing machine.

While targeting terrorists, Israel works to avoid a humanitarian crisis for ordinary Gazans as well. During the first week of Israel's operations, it facilitated the delivery to Gaza of 400 trucks loaded with more than 2,000 tons of food and medicine. This is not easy when you are in the middle of military operations. Ten ambulances and two thousand blood units were transferred to Gaza just in that week. More than 80 Palestinians have entered Egypt for treatment, in addition to a dozen or more who have entered Israel. On January 5, more than 93,000 gallons of industrial diesel fuel and gasoline for vehicles was transferred into Gaza from a fuel depot in Israel. By the way, that fuel depot comes under constant attack from terrorists in Gaza, as does the place where the electricity is generated for Gaza, which, of course, makes absolutely no sense.

Finally, this resolution speaks to calls for a cease-fire. Many voices in the so-called international community have been heard pleading for an immediate cease-fire, although I think it is instructive that one never hears those voices condemning rocket attacks by Hamas terrorists.

I believe the path to a halt in the violence is clear. A cease-fire is appropriate if and when it is durable and sustainable. A cease-fire, on the other hand, that would allow Hamas to rearm and rebuild its support in Gaza is, of course, not acceptable. Hamas cannot be given a cease-fire that only serves to provide it breathing room to regroup and then a month or 2 months or 3 months from now start firing its rockets and missiles again.

The United Nations could play a constructive role, but it must resist the temptation that it all too often falls into, and that is that of moral equivalency. I point to the press statement of the Security Council on December 28 which, among other things, said the parties should "stop immediately all military activities." This is dangerous moral equivalency. Only one party to the violence carries out "military activities." The other party—Hamas—terrorizes and murders innocent people. That is why the only Security

Council resolution that could be acceptable in this situation—and I say this with the understanding that the Security Council is meeting as we meet here today—is one that affirms Israel's right to defend itself and calls on Hamas to immediately stop its terrorist activity.

I add that a Security Council resolution should look to all of those who support Hamas—primarily and most significantly Iran. For years, Iran has been the source of money, training—including training at the facilities of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in Iran itself—and weapons to Hamas. Hamas's relationship with Iran is so close that the Egyptian President said this past May that Hamas rule in Gaza means that Egypt has a "border with Iran."

Since Israel launched its military operation against Hamas, Iran has announced stepped-up arms shipments. Senior Iranian clerics have organized recruiting drives to send Iranians to Hamas's aid. Just yesterday, a senior Iranian cleric announced that it had recruited 7,000 Iranians to join the cause of Hamas. Yet the international community has taken no action to counter Iran's support of Hamas terrorists.

A U.N. Security Council resolution sanctioning Iran for its assistance to Hamas would send an important message and would be a good place to start, as would unilateral sanctions by the United States.

Let me conclude by quoting the Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer, who recently wrote one of the most precise and succinct observations on the situation in Gaza that I have read. He wrote:

Some geopolitical conflicts are morally complicated. The Israel-Gaza war is not. It possesses a moral clarity not only rare, but excruciating.

The Reid-McConnell resolution we expect to be introduced shortly will be an important reaffirmation of the bond between Israel and the United States. It is one forged on the basis of common values and the tragically shared experience of terrorism. By passing this resolution, we are saying to the Israeli people: We stand with you, and we support you in defending yourselves against terrorist attacks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish first to thank my friend and colleague from Arizona, Senator KYL, for the statement he has just made, which was characteristically straightforward, clear, principled, and passionate, about what is involved in the current crisis in Gaza and the opportunity this Congress has to not just stand with our ally, Israel—which is critically important at this moment—but to take yet another stand against terrorism for the rule of law, for democracy, and for the peaceful settlement of disputes. I could not agree more with everything Senator KYL has said. I wish to add just a few words in this regard.

As Senator KYL has indicated, the United Nations Security Council was to convene shortly after 5 this afternoon, about an hour ago. I presume it has convened to hear speakers and consider resolutions on what is happening in Gaza today. Secretary of State Rice has gone there to speak on behalf of the United States, which indicates the importance of these deliberations. She will carry with her the policy of our Government since the outbreak of conflict in Gaza that I think has been strong and principled and consistent with the best of American values and, of course, consistent with our national security interest in the global war on the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11 because what is happening in Gaza is yet another battle front in the larger war against Islamist extremism and terrorism. It is, in another sense, also another battle front in the conflict going on within the Muslim world between the extremists and fanatics and terrorists and the majority of people who are more moderate, more law-abiding, obviously not violent and want to live a safe and a better life.

The Government of the United States has been very clear in articulating a policy which I presume and have confidence will be expressed in these Security Council deliberations tonight and the days to follow. No one wants to see violence occur. Yet, as Senator KYL has said so eloquently, when a country such as Israel has been attacked literally thousands of times with rockets fired from Gaza at innocent civilians over a period of years, a cease-fire is negotiated and it goes on for approximately 6 months—negotiated with great help from Egypt—and then Hamas breaks the cease-fire and begins firing rockets again, the Government of Israel, our democratic ally, essentially said: Enough is enough; we are not going to tolerate this anymore, coming as it is from Hamas which is an openly avowed terrorist group with the aim of destroying the State of Israel.

In response to the violence, there is a natural reflex reaction heard often in world councils, and undoubtedly will be heard at the United Nations Security Council at this hour and the hours to follow, that there ought to be a cease-fire. I think we all have to ask ourselves: What is the end of a cease-fire? Of course, we don't like to see violence occurring, but let's remember this is being done by Israel in the exercise of the right of self-defense.

The Government of the United States—being President Bush and everyone else who has spoken—has made very clear that, yes, the United States wants a cease-fire in the conflict between Israel and Hamas regarding Gaza but not just a cease-fire for the sake of a cease-fire that one side may follow and the other may not and that simply leads nowhere but back to the conflict that has been occurring.

The U.S. Government has been very clear and principled about the fact that the cease-fire our Government seeks is

one that is durable and sustainable; in other words, that represents a real resolution of some of the issues in conflict and that also deals with the smuggling into Gaza of additional weapons which are being used to attack innocent civilians in Israel.

I know Secretary Rice will be expressing exactly this position. Yes, America wants a cease-fire but, no, not one that leads nowhere. We want a cease-fire that is durable and sustainable and will include a ban on smuggling, activities to carry out a ban on smuggling of weapons by Hamas in Gaza.

I am very pleased, very encouraged that as the initial action of this Senate this year, the majority leader, Senator REID, and the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, are working together in a bipartisan way—totally bipartisan way—to bring before this body, hopefully in the next day or two, a resolution that does exactly what Senator KYL has said: to express our unwavering commitment to the security, well-being, and survival of the State of Israel and recognizing its right to act in self-defense to protect its citizens against terrorism, that will reiterate again that Hamas must end the rocket and mortar attacks against Israel and hopefully do what the Palestinian Authority has done, which is to accept the right of Israel to exist and renounce terrorism and to begin to work toward a two-state peaceful solution.

This resolution really will, in essence, I think, say, as Senator KYL has said, in this hour of crisis to the people of Israel, our allies, that we will stand with you, and also say to the peace-loving Palestinian people that we stand with you, too, and we continue to support a two-state solution—Israel and a Palestinian state—living in peace one against the other, but the Government of the United States—the Secretary of State, the President, but the Secretary of State who is at the United Nations is not speaking simply for the executive branch of Government but that the Senate, and we have reason to believe our colleagues in the other body, the House, will have an opportunity to say to not just the Israelis we stand with you, but to say to the world community that we as the representatives of the people of America, across party lines, stand together with Secretary Rice as she expresses the position of our Government: Yes, a cease-fire, but only one that is sustainable and durable and deals with the smuggling of additional weapons into Gaza. This will be critically important.

I thank our leaders on both sides. I thank Senator KYL for the work he has done. Again, it has been a privilege to work with him.

I also say in a larger context that there is a lot of speculation about why Hamas broke the cease-fire and initiated the rocket fire against Israel deeper into Israel than they have ever done before. I do think, as Senator KYL suggested, that the answer to that

question probably comes as much or more from Tehran than it does from Gaza City and Hamas; that Hamas has become an agent of the Iranian Government. It is trained and supplied by the Iranians and secondarily by the Syrians. Therefore, there is a larger conflict being played out.

Iran is noted by our State Department to be the most significant state sponsor of terrorism. The leaders of Iran regularly not only call for the extermination of the State of Israel, but also lead tens of thousands in Tehran and elsewhere in Iran in chants of “death to America, death to America.” We have long since learned from the lessons of history that you cannot simply ignore statements that seem so extreme and fanatical that they are unbelievable because very often the people making them do believe them, and given the chance, as we have seen from Osama bin Laden in recent times, who told us throughout the nineties exactly what he intended to do—he happened to have done it on 9/11, but he did it earlier in other places—we have to take these threats seriously.

I want to say that a precipitous cease-fire simply for the sake of a cease-fire will allow Hamas to claim a victory. A victory for Hamas is not simply a victory for Hamas; it is a victory for Iran. And a defeat for Hamas, which is in reach if we allow the Israeli action to continue, is a defeat for Iran and a victory for the United States and for the forces of democracy as against terrorism and for the forces of moderation and the rule of law in the Islamic world as against fanaticism and violence.

This is all that is being played out. This is why I am so encouraged this resolution is coming forward. It is, yes, a statement of support for our ally Israel, but it is also a statement of policy for the Members of the Senate, across party lines, and I hope with an overwhelmingly positive vote that says the security of the United States is on the line in how this conflict ends. We cannot let it end in a way that strengthens Hamas and Iran.

I repeat, there has been a lot of speculation: Did Hamas break the cease-fire because of the end of the Bush administration? There has been some interesting speculation that has said the best thing that could happen for the incoming Obama administration is that Hamas be defeated here because then whatever happens between the new administration and Iran, Iran will not approach that next chapter with a sense of triumphant, but the country would have seen one of its major clients and agents of terrorism defeated.

We have the opportunity to speak to all that on this resolution in the days ahead. Most immediately, I hope we will speak to the Members of the Security Council and in the most direct way say: We stand with President Bush; we stand with Secretary Rice. This is not simply the position of a few people at the top of the executive branch of our

Government. This position the American Government has taken with regard to the crisis in Gaza is the position embraced by an overwhelming majority of Members of both parties of both Houses.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PAROCHIAL SPENDING

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I would like to be recognized for a period of time. The majority leader has been very gracious to offer me an opportunity to have some discussions about some amendments that he is going to possibly allow on a bill that he is going to introduce this evening.

I wanted to take some time now rather than later so that we would not keep staff here, and that way we could be efficient with our time. I want to talk about several things. I want to preface it with a statement, that I have been very pleased to see a man I respect a great deal, even though not in office as of yet, but the President-elect, be very firm in the principles he outlined as he ran for President and now is about to be sworn into that office.

One of the themes that has characterized his campaign and has characterized him ever since I have known him has been the idea of hope and change. So I, like many other Americans, look forward in great anticipation to the leadership that will be brought forth in the next few weeks and what that means to the millions of Americans who are going to look to Washington this month with a level of hope and excitement that we have not seen in this country in decades.

While most of the attention is going to be focused on the White House, the institution at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, this Congress, will arguably have a greater role in determining whether President-elect Obama's invocation of change is remembered as an election slogan or a true new era in American politics. My hope and prayer is it is a new era.

While many commentators have noted, with some justification, the concepts such as hope and change were never defined much and were not given a specificity during the campaign, I believe the American people have already defined those concepts very clearly in their hearts and minds.

I believe what hope, change, and optimism represent to the average voter is very simple: It is a real expectation that Washington will be different. Voters have not undergone an ideological