

going 83 miles an hour in a 70-mile-an-hour zone that was soon by a curve going down to what should have been a 30-mile-an-hour zone.

Again, I hope when the NTSB comes out with recommendations for safety on our rail in the United States, that the Congress will act accordingly and perhaps pass legislation to make our trains safer. In the meantime, again, my heart and our hearts go out to all the victims of this horrific tragedy.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Mr. GARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to welcome to the House of Representatives five selfless individuals, courageous reformers who have made a tremendous sacrifice to raise awareness for the need of immigration reform. They are truly deserving not only of our applause, but also of our admiration.

After fasting for over 3 weeks, these committed reformers have successfully drawn attention to the pressing need to pass immigration reform. As Members of Congress, we cannot ignore the steadfast devotion of these advocates through further inaction.

Along with the majority of this country and the majority of the House of Representatives, these tremendous leaders know we need comprehensive immigration reform now. Unfortunately, the House leadership continues to irresponsibly block commonsense, bipartisan reform by refusing to let the full House vote.

Mr. Speaker, these leaders need more than applause. They deserve a vote, and they deserve it now.

THE DISTURBING AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I think there has been a lot of things going on in the world in the last few weeks and a lot here domestically, things that have not been going well on the administration's agenda. Those have been well documented and are not the reason that I rise tonight.

The purpose for my rising tonight is an issue that seems to want to distract from issues at home, and that is a very disturbing development with Iran and the administration's agreement that has been announced.

□ 1945

These are disturbing for many reasons. Tonight we rise, and I rise bipartisanship tonight, to talk about this because I want the people of Israel and I want the American people who are

great friends of Israel to be assured that there are plenty of Members of Congress committed to this alliance, I am proud to be one of them.

I also join with my friend from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER), and I am excited to be a part of this and discuss for what will be a discussion of what we believe are the values that we share together.

I would go ahead and yield for a brief opening here before we get started, Mr. SCHNEIDER, as we go forward tonight.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. It is an honor to be here with you to join you in this discussion. The world has watched anxiously as the P5+1 had a series of negotiations that culminated 2 weeks ago in an interim agreement.

As we join here tonight to talk about some of the issues in this agreement, what we will be looking for is to ensure that whatever happens, Iran is not allowed to achieve nuclear capability, and that our allies in the region, including Israel, Saudi Arabia, and others, are protected from the prospect of a nuclear Iran.

I yield back.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I agree, and I appreciate the gentleman so much.

I believe that it is certain in our foreign policy, as much as anything, America needs to speak from a position of strength that we have; that we should not deny our position of strength and our power to enforce what we believe are standards that need to be looked at across the world. Tonight I want to bring that attention to the floor of the House of Representatives and also to the Nation.

My dedication to the U.S.-Israel alliance brings me to the floor tonight with an urgent message for our President: Don't fall for Iran's public relations campaign. In the words of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his recent speech before the U.N., newly-elected Iranian President Hassan "Rouhani thinks he can have his yellowcake and eat it too."

President Rouhani is orchestrating an unprecedented charm offensive to reduce sanctions on his country. Over the last 5 months—this is amazing—his campaign has included tweeting "Happy Rosh Hashanah" to Jews across the globe celebrating their New Year, condemning the use of chemical weapons in Syria after the August 21 attacks, making diplomatic overtures to President Obama through personal letters.

Mr. President, tell Rouhani that mere words won't ultimately improve relations between the U.S. and Iran.

Most recently, two rounds of nuclear negotiations have occurred. A truly disturbing deal between the West and Iran materialized, which puts Israel in a very difficult position.

Much like negotiations with North Korea over its nuclear program, the U.S. is being duped. The deal allows Iran to maintain its nuclear program, while the U.S. sanctions are lifted for 6 months. This deal benefits no one but Iran. There are bipartisan measures

currently in the House and Senate to maintain sanctions and to continue to hold Iran accountable for its actions.

Mr. President, I ask you carefully review President Rouhani's record before moving further with more sanctions relief.

To really understand President Rouhani's intentions, let's look beyond his words to his actions.

On September 19, an op-ed by President Rouhani was published in *The Washington Post*. In the piece, Rouhani spoke against glorifying "brute force" and in favor of ending "unhealthy rivalries" that drive nations apart.

Forty-eight hours later, President Rouhani presided over the Iranian military parade showcasing over 30 missiles, all with the capability of striking Israel. During his speech, he said, "In the past 200 years, Iran has never attacked another country."

It gets better. Of course Iran doesn't have to attack because its proxy, Hezbollah, carries out its foreign policy. Hezbollah has continuously attacked Israel over the decades, and is instrumental in fighting the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces. The NCSRO is a rebel group which the U.S. recognizes as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people.

Let us not forget Iran's intrusion on U.S. soil. The Iranian hostage crisis of 1979 began with an attack on and subsequent occupation of the U.S. Embassy. Fifty-two Americans were held hostage for 444 days. The attack had the support of Iran's then-leader Ayatollah Khomeini. The attack was a clear violation of international diplomatic protocol.

President Rouhani has made several claims that Iran's nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. He says Iran's only desire is to diversify its energy production capability.

Yet, Iran has not only refused to reverse course on enriching uranium but has 1,000 new generation centrifuges that enrich uranium faster and are more durable than previous versions.

As we say down in Georgia, a slap on the jaw and a kiss on the cheek don't send the same message.

Recently, freshman members of the Foreign Affairs Committee sent a bipartisan letter to President Obama telling him to be vigilant in his diplomatic actions with Rouhani.

Any negotiation with the Iranian regime should only come after Iran has stopped enriching uranium and neutralizes the quantity it currently possesses. Congress has let its will be known with the passage of the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act this summer in the House.

Congress and the American people do not trust the Iranian regime. The White House needs to sign the latest set of sanctions. These sanctions go further than previous ones by targeting the profiteering of black market goods. Sanctions target regime members who are guilty of human rights violations.

Congress is sending the message that not only do we highly discourage the development of nuclear weapons by the regime but detest how select citizens are subject to torture and restrictions on speech and political persecution. It is amazing what is going on right now.

The President needs to realize that the Middle East is not a chessboard, and we shouldn't play games with Iran. This is a time to stand up and be decisive. We must stand with Israel and other rational actors in the region and not capitulate on the development of a nuclear Iran.

With that, I want to yield to my friend as we share back and forth tonight on different aspects as we go forward.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. I want to again thank Representative COLLINS for holding this important conversation tonight to talk about the dangers and long-term implications of a nuclear deal with Iran.

I think it is both timely and necessary that Congress continue this conversation and push hard to convince the Senate that further action is required to help prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Personally, I remain most skeptical that the Iranian regime has the ability or willingness to live up to the tenets and the terms of the Geneva agreement reached with the P5+1.

We have worked diligently over the years, over a decade, to maintain a robust sanctions regime that brought Iran to the negotiating table, but it was not to come to the table that the sanctions were put in place. These sanctions were put in place to ensure or achieve the end of Iran's nuclear program; to ensure that Iran is not a nuclear-capable country.

In July, as was mentioned, this body passed, by a vote of 400-20, the most sweeping sanctions to date in order to address the ongoing threat of a nuclear Iran. That legislation must be taken up in the Senate to hold Iran accountable, to ensure that Iran fully understands the implications of not completing a deal in 6 months that will eliminate its nuclear threat.

However, there are several points about the deal reached with Iran that are particularly worrisome. First, this interim agreement cannot be allowed to become the permanent agreement. The so-called joint plan of action is fraught with dangers, including allowing Iran to continue enrichment at the 5 percent level; allowing Iran to continue construction at the Iraq plutonium reactor, which has no purpose other than for military uses; allowing the ongoing enhancement of Iran's technical capabilities.

This agreement does not address Iran's ongoing program, its long-term activities. It doesn't require Iran to fully disclose all of its activities. This agreement does not address any covert sites which are not yet discovered or disclosed by Iran.

This deal, as I said, is fraught with dangers, and our purpose in Congress

and the United States and with our allies must be to try to navigate the joint plan of action to a permanent agreement that will ultimately freeze Iran's activities, roll them back, and require Iran to dismantle Natanz, Fordow, Arak and other facilities and, ultimately, and most importantly, permanently block and permanently close any path Iran has to a nuclear capability.

That includes no enrichment, no plutonium reactor, full transparency, full disclosure, unlimited and unfettered inspections.

With that, I will yield back to Mr. COLLINS.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate my colleague. You know, you brought up a great point there, and I want to continue to go into the history here because I don't want individuals who may be watching tonight or watching this later to simply look at this in a vacuum as saying that we are just disagreeing with the policy, and there was a diplomatic outreach that was given and we are not giving it an opportunity.

I think, from where I am from and I know you are as well, the past is prologue to what happens now, and I think what we have got to understand is the regime has not inherently changed. The regime in Iran still has just core issues with the West and especially with Israel.

I think you hit it perfectly and, before I continue, you brought it up again. The idea of these negotiations were not to find a placated middle. The desire is to find an end to the Iranian nuclear regime because we just don't trust them, and I think that's the inherent problem.

Let's look at it here from a perspective. President Rouhani was recently afforded a great opportunity to show a stark contrast between himself and the former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Mr. Rouhani was asked whether he believed the Holocaust was a myth. Rouhani answered: I am not a historian, I am a politician.

Netanyahu responded: It doesn't take a historian to recognize the existence of the Holocaust; it just requires being a human being.

Rouhani is captive to the religious zealots in his country and the policies of the Supreme Ruler Ayatollah Khomeini. Rouhani is so beholden to the regime's ideology that when the White House offered the opportunity for the newly-elected Iranian President to shake hands with our President, Rouhani's staff declined because of the fear of how it would be perceived in Iran.

Now, think about that a second. If a handshake can be turned into political gangrene for the Iranian President, how can we believe that any of Iran's diplomatic overtures will result in any real change?

I don't want the U.S. to go down the same path with Iran that it did with North Korea. In 2005, it was then seen

as a landmark deal. North Korea agreed to abandon its nuclear weapons program in return for economic security and energy benefits. Twelve months later North Korea tested its first nuclear weapon.

Let's not forget the immortal precept: Fool me once; let's not be fooled twice.

I would like to take time to highlight a few points from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech before the U.N. This speech occurred nearly a week after Rouhani spoke before the international body.

But before doing so, I want to yield back to my friend from Illinois as well, and just as we continue this conversation, again, history matters and what has gone on in the past, I believe, is very crucial into understanding why many of us on the Hill, bipartisanly, do not trust the Iranian regime.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you. I think it is critical to emphasize the bipartisan aspect of the support in Congress for a strong sanctioned regime, and the security and protection of our allies, in particular, Israel.

As my colleague mentioned, in October, I, with LUKE MESSER, authored a letter to the President calling on him to push forward with sanctions. There were 78 members of the freshman class who signed on to that letter, Republican and Democrat, shoulder to shoulder, standing together, saying we must be strong.

Again, the interim agreement cannot move to anything near what is a permanent agreement. More importantly, it cannot lead to the collapse of the sanctions regime. We have worked too hard and come too far to let that happen.

In my opinion, I think we need to ensure that the architecture of the sanctions are reinforced, are broadened, are deepened and hardened, so that 6 months from now, if Iran fails to live to up to its commitment and the consequences are sufficiently severe, Iran understands that the likelihood of further action, all actions on the table, including a credible military threat, remain, so that ultimately Iran understands this is the moment, this is the time to abandon their nuclear aspirations.

This is why the sanctions are put in place. This is why it is critical for the Senate to pass the bill we passed in July and make sure Iran understands that not adhering to the agreement, not abandoning its nuclear program, will have dire consequences in 6 months. With that, I yield back.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman. Again, it is a matter of now. This has been going on for a while. This has not built up over the last couple of weeks that we discovered this problem. This has been a problem with Iran for, you know, going on years now that they have been building this program and really bunkering this program now, which I think your call for

transparency really highlights the need that—it is amazing now that all of a sudden they want to be open, but, yet, they only want to be open in a way that they control. But they do want the money.

□ 2000

I mean, I think it goes back to—we can sort of go back here to a quote from an American film, “Show me the money.” When you show me the money, you show me Iran’s intentions at this point. Because they want the money that has been held up by the sanctions. Why? Because the sanctions have worked. This administration needs to understand: the sanctions have worked. They have worked in a way that we have not seen before. It is not time to abandon those.

But as I mentioned just a few minutes ago, I wanted to take some time to highlight a few points from Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’s speech. And if you haven’t had a chance to hear it—I know my colleague has—many times, we can talk about problems but we don’t offer solutions. And I think what he did is to not only highlight the problems with this administration and Iran, but also to engage in solutions as well. So I want to look at it for just a moment.

Netanyahu started his speech discussing the rich history that the Jewish and Persian nations share. For those who remember—in my case, from Sunday school class—over 2,000 years ago, the Babylonian Empire released the captive Jews to develop a homeland of their own. This historic friendship lasted until a radical regime came into power in Iran in 1979.

Netanyahu quickly pointed out how unlikely it is that Rouhani is truly a moderate. Rouhani was one of six candidates selected by the regime to run for office. That is six out of 700 candidates who desired to run. I think there is a little bit of picking going on here.

Rouhani led the Iranian version of the CIA and the NSA. During his time leading Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, 85 people were murdered at a Jewish community center in Argentina by Iranian henchmen. Iran has its fingerprints on the bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 American soldiers. Rouhani was the chief nuclear negotiator between 2003 and 2005.

This “moderate” Iranian developed a strategy encouraging diplomatic engagement but never changed its approach to increasing its nuclear proliferation abilities. Netanyahu cites a book Rouhani wrote in 2011 in which he wrote:

While we were talking to the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment in Isfahan.

Isn’t that a telling thought right there?

Rouhani touts his negotiation skills by saying:

By creating a calm environment, we were able to complete the work in Isfahan.

Isfahan is a facility where the uranium ore called yellowcake is converted into an enrichable form. Since 2002, Iran has built two secret facilities to further its nuclear ambitions. Several years later, it was caught building a uranium enrichment station underground.

If Iran is only seeking peaceful nuclear energy, why is it building structures in a clandestine way? Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the obvious answer there is clear.

Netanyahu also asked why Iran is trying to develop intercontinental ballistic missiles if not to further its nuclear ambitions. ICBMs are purposefully designed to be transportation vehicles for a nuclear weapon. As Netanyahu pointed out:

You don’t build ICBMs to carry TNT thousands of miles away.

The Prime Minister is clearly troubled in light of the U.S.’ history with North Korea.

Just like North Korea before it, Iran professes to seemingly peaceful intentions. It talks the talk of nonproliferation while seeking to ease sanctions and buy more time for its nuclear program.

He understands that America has been at a similar negotiating table and blinked. Instead of offering mere rhetoric or hollow gestures, as the Iranian President has done, Netanyahu offers a solution. He lays out steps the Iranian regime can make to show a willingness to negotiate and possibly have sanctions lifted.

Netanyahu proposes four steps for Iran, some that we need to look at as well:

Number one, ending all uranium enrichment;

Number two, removing its inventory of enriched uranium, similar to Syria’s handing over of its chemical weapons;

Number three, dismantling its infrastructure for nuclear breakout capability; and

Number four, stopping all work at the heavy water reactor in Iraq aimed at the production of plutonium.

These steps would cease Iran’s nuclear weapons program and eliminate its ability to conduct a nuclear strike.

Netanyahu does not just leave the ball, though, in Iran’s court, but asks the international community for assistance to ensure Iran’s compliance. He laid out a three-point strategy:

First, keep up the sanctions. If Iran advances its nuclear weapons program during negotiations, strengthen the sanctions. That is sort of the way it works. I know, you know, when I need something and I get out of line, you get pulled back in. You don’t get more freedom just by saying you are going to do something more. I know your children and my children, alike, in dealing with that, as you look ahead, there are more restrictions if you don’t do something right. That is a great first step;

Second, don’t agree to a partial deal. A partial deal would lift sanctions that have taken years to put in place in ex-

change for cosmetic concessions that will take only weeks for Iran to reverse;

Third, lift the sanctions only when Iran fully dismantles its nuclear program.

Netanyahu concludes his speech in a somewhat conciliatory tone. He said:

I am prepared to make a historic compromise for genuine and enduring peace, but I will never compromise on the security of my people and of my country, the one and only Jewish State.

Considering Israel’s hostile neighbors, I understand the Prime Minister’s vigilant tone. The U.S. has strongly supported Israel’s resolve in the past, and I hope this administration will not relent. Israel has the most to lose if Iran gets a bomb, and that is something we can’t ever forget.

With that, I yield back to my friend.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you again.

And you hit on a crucial point. For Israel, a nuclear Iran is an existential threat. It is life and death at the front lines. But also as you touched on, Israel has no greater a friend than the United States, and that relationship is a strategic relationship for both parties. We have no better ally. Israel is the only stable democratic country in the region. Israel is reliable. Israel is our friend, and we will always remember that.

I think it is also important to understand the breadth and scope of the Iranian program. You touched on that Iran is seeking to control the nuclear fuel cycle, from mining to yellowcake to enrichment to, ultimately, weapons grade. And that is a program that has spread throughout the country, from Isfahan to Natanz and Fordow and, ultimately, in the weaponization area at Parchin.

The second piece is weaponization. It is one thing to control the fuel cycle; it is another thing to turn that into a nuclear weapon. Iran is working aggressively to do that, and this deal does not address their weaponization programs.

And finally, once you control the fuel cycle, once you are able to have a weapon, it is delivery. And Iran, with their intercontinental ballistic missiles, ICBMs, is working to develop a capability to deliver such a weapon of mass destruction not just in this region but throughout the world.

Iran, for Israel, is an existential threat. But Iran, for the region, and Iran, for the world, is as extreme a threat as it is for Israel. We must prevent a nuclear Iran not just because Israel is our ally, but because a nuclear Iran is a threat to the whole region—a threat to nuclear destabilization, a nuclear arms race among other countries in the region—and that is what we are focused on. That is why it is so critical at this moment, as Iran is months away from the capability of having a nuclear weapon, we focus aggressively on closing the pathways—freezing, reversing, dismantling, and, ultimately, permanently blocking any pathway Iran has for a nuclear weapon.

With that, I yield back to my friend from Georgia.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I thank the gentleman.

One of the things that amazes me in what you just said is that we are so close and are getting closer every day for their capability to be, for the lack of a better term, perfected. They have been working at it. They have been hiding. They have been doing those things. And now to come at this last moment and get ready to give an infusion of cash, which is what they are going to be getting, to the tune of billions of dollars and to continue to allow the enrichment process is just really disturbing here.

I am not seeing, as I said earlier, the end game except that, from my perspective, there was the old philosophy. There was the old foreign policy of one of my party's heroes, one that I believe served this country well, and it was Ronald Reagan when he said that the foreign policy was, if we win, you lose. And I think, at this point, what is concerning me is that in this deal, if we lose, they win, and rest of the world is put in jeopardy.

And you made a great statement. Not only is Iran an existential threat to Israel, but as I often hear, well, why do we worry about Iran? That is another country. Why do we need to get involved? Because it is a direct and immediate threat to the U.S. as well.

We have troops within missile range. We have troops that are in international waters that could be literally affected by the military force in Iran, and I think those are issues that we have got to address as we move forward.

It is not something that we can just put in this little corner. Iran, in some ways, is much different than North Korea, with their assets and with their capabilities, and we can't deny where they are in the world. And I think that is the concern that I have with this administration. That is why we are here tonight talking about this. And I want to discuss some more about this, but I will yield back to my friend.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you.

As you said, the question, why do we care about Iran? It is actually a question I don't hear that often in my district because I think a lot of the people in my community understand that, when someone makes a threat to annihilate another country, you listen to the threat.

When we were in Israel—37 Democratic Members traveled to Israel in August, followed by a comparable sized group of Republican Members. On our trip, we had a chance to hear from a former chief of intelligence, Amos Yadlin. And he made the statement that the only existential threat to Israel is the marriage of ideology of destruction with nuclear capability. We face that threat now. That is why we are here having this conversation. That is why, over the last decade, we have worked diligently to create the archi-

ture of the sanctions regime that did, indeed, bring Iran to the negotiating table.

This joint interim agreement keeps the sanctions regime in place. But over the next 6 months, it is our responsibility—the United States, the United States Congress, our allies—to make sure that that sanctions regime not only stays in place, but stays robust and becomes stronger so that, again, Iran understands the challenges.

I have said many times that history is going to judge us with one question on Iran: Did we prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon? This moment in history faces us at this moment in time. This agreement must not be allowed to be permanent. The United States and our allies must ensure that Iran does not further move down the path to nuclear capability.

Iran is estimated to be months—at most, a year—away from a nuclear weapon. The next 6 months, if we are going to enforce this agreement, must make sure that Iran doesn't get any closer—not one moment, not 1 month, not 1 inch. This agreement has to be put in place in such a way that we can guarantee Iran is not moving forward.

What do some of those actions require from us? What I hope to do in the Foreign Affairs Committee and together with my Republican colleagues is to try to create a specific understanding of the timetables for implementation. The joint agreement doesn't lay that out. I want to know: What are the milestones? What are the expectations and deliverables that Iran must arrive at at each milestone? What is the proof we are going to require of Iran to demonstrate that they have achieved the specifications of the agreement at the specified time? And most importantly, what are the consequences if Iran doesn't achieve its milestones, if Iran uses its agreement to even start or try to delay?

We need to make sure we stay vigilant and we stay diligent to ensure that Iran can't move forward on its aspirations for a nuclear weapon.

With that, I yield back to my colleague.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. You are exactly correct in how we move forward. Again, when you just put aspirational goals out there, you are going to get aspirational results sometimes, and that means nothing. And I think that is really where I see this agreement right now.

But I want to take, again—I believe that not only do you have a “what” and the reasons, but there is also sort of the “why” factor. And I have talked about that a lot from both sides of the aisle. Many times, we might not talk about the “why” a lot.

But I want to talk just for a moment about some of things that we are doing as well, about Israel and our relationship just from a “why” perspective, why this matters so much and the history that we have, for some who may be listening.

The U.S. and Israeli relationship really goes back to after World War II, and it had become apparent to the international community that the Jews needed a homeland of their own. In 1948, President Harry Truman recognized the State of Israel.

During the cold war, Israel was a key ally in stopping the spread of communism in the Arab world. The U.S. and Israel had a joint strategic interest in defeating aggressors in the Middle East seeking to influence their neighbors and disrupt the status quo, especially if they had Moscow's backing.

President John F. Kennedy told Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir:

The United States has a special relationship with Israel in the Middle East, really comparable only to what it has with Britain over a wide range of world affairs.

Since that bonding experience, the U.S. and Israel have approached their strategy to the region as a team, as a team. Of the five major Arab-Israeli military conflicts that have occurred over the decades, the one that highlights the U.S.-Israeli union the most is the Yom Kippur War. In this conflict, Israel was fighting the usual suspects—Egypt to the southeast along the Sinai Peninsula and Syria in the north along the Golan Heights.

This joint Arab initiative garnered the military support of Jordan and Iraq, while Egyptians received military hardware from the Soviet Union. Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on October 6, 1973, which was Israel's most holy day, Yom Kippur, the day of atonement.

The war inflicted heavy initial losses on Israel's army and air force, and by October 8, Israel's military prowess was in serious jeopardy. A quick call was made to Washington. The operation to resupply Israel began, code name Operation Nickel Grass.

□ 2015

By the end of Nickel Grass, the U.S. had shipped 22,395 tons of material to Israel. Israel received between 34 to 40 fighter bombers, 46 attack airplanes, 12 C-130 cargo planes, 8 helicopters, 200 tanks, and tons more of missiles and artillery pieces. It was one of the largest airlifts in U.S. history. The total cost of the military hardware delivered is estimated to be \$4.14 billion.

The airlift was a major shift in U.S.-Israeli relations. It brought about a greater U.S. involvement in Middle East affairs. After the Yom Kippur War, the United States quadrupled its foreign aid to Israel and replaced France as Israel's largest arms supplier. The doctrine of maintaining Israel's “qualitative military edge” over its Arab neighbors is said to have originated from this war.

This is where you and I, my colleague, stepped in.

I find this commonsense doctrine very important and aim to strengthen it with the legislation that we introduce, the Israel QME Enhancement Act. My bill requires the President to

report to Congress every 2 years the status of military sales to Middle Eastern countries other than Israel. H.R. 1992 ensures Congress is able to maintain its oversight of weapon sales in the region.

Furthermore, the legislation expands the scope of QME to bring to attention cyber and asymmetric warfare, something QME doesn't currently cover. During the Yom Kippur War, Israel was in need of conventional weapons. In the 21st century, war is being increasingly fought in cyberspace. Large conventional armies are less likely to mobilize, and countries are under siege from foreign terrorists, as we saw in Kenya.

Israel has stood out as the only country in the Middle East that promotes democratic, free market principles. Much like the U.S., Israel has an independent judicial system that protects the rights of individuals. Israel is governed by the rule of law and safeguards the freedoms of speech, press, and religion. As the U.S. has attempted to encourage Arab nations to espouse the tenets of a transparent society, they need to look no further than their democratic neighbor.

I want to pause right there and again yield to my friend as we continue this conversation and move forward on why this matters and bringing up these ideas of a relationship that is deeply rooted in history and of mutual sharing, and not one seemingly behind the back of the other.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. You talk about the relationship. As you noted, Harry S. Truman was the first to recognize the new state of Israel in 1948, after the British left the mandate. Immediately upon its declaration of independence, Israel was attacked by five nations. Throughout its history, Israel has faced hostility from its neighbors throughout the region.

Since 1973, the Yom Kippur War, as a 12-year-old boy I remember vividly coming out of synagogue that day, sitting in the back seat of my parents' car, listening to the radio, and not knowing if Israel was going to survive. It was an existential threat.

The United States and Israel have had an unbreakable relationship that continues to be to this very day an unbreakable, critically important relationship. Right now, the relationship between the United States and Israel has never been better across a whole variety of aspects: sharing of intelligence and sharing of military expertise. The United States has helped and jointly developed with Israel David's Sling, the Arrow system, and most recently helped fund the Iron Dome, which proved to be a game-changer in Israel's war in Gaza exactly a year ago this month. In that war, you will recall, rockets rained down on southern Israel from Gaza. Yet the Iron Dome system was able to intercept virtually all of those rockets, allowing Israel to avoid having to invade Gaza by land, achieving its goals and saving countless lives on both sides of the border. It

is the U.S.-Israel relationship that allows the development of such systems as Iron Dome and others.

I am also proud that we were able to work together—and I thank you for your support—for the Israel Qualitative Military Edge Enhancement Act. What used to take 4 years of review, at a time when changes in military capabilities are accelerating at an unprecedented pace, this act reduces to 2 years.

As you said, what used to be focused on strictly conventional weaponry, we understand that the current conflicts are taking place as much in cyberspace as airspace and ground. It is critical that Israel maintain its critical advantage, its qualitative military edge, in all aspects of that.

I was particularly proud that the Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously voted that bill to come to the floor, and I hope we will take it up here shortly as well.

The relationship between the United States and Israel is far more than military and security. We share values. We share understanding in science, developments of new medical technologies, medicines, and developments in agriculture.

The relationship between the United States and Israel is so strong because we share so much, and we understand that even on the security level, as much as Israel relies on the United States, the United States has benefited from Israel's security measures as well.

One must think no further than the Iraq war and go back to 1981, when Israel, against world condemnation, attacked the nuclear reactor at Osirak. One can only think what would have happened when the United States had its own conflict with Iraq in 1991, or 2003, if Iraq had had nuclear weapons.

The U.S.-Israel relationship is critical. It has been that way for the 65 years of Israel's existence. It has been incredibly important since 1973. We wouldn't have the Camp David Accords of 1979 and the peace between Israel and Egypt if not for the U.S. engagement. We wouldn't have the peace between Israel and Jordan if not for the work of the U.S. administrations.

It is critical that as we stand here fighting so hard for America's security, fighting so hard to prevent a nuclear Iran, that we understand that the mutual relationship between United States and Israel is a critical component of all of that.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I thank the gentleman.

You have hit on it, and that is going back to this partnership. I think that is the best way to describe it. The partnership between U.S. and Israel, in so many ways, the values that we share and that you spoke of and the many things that have come about out of our relationship over the years not only benefit each country but the world around.

Most recently, Israel has been instrumental in assisting the U.S. in the

global war on terrorism. Since 9/11, U.S. and Israel have formed a strategic partnership to face a new and challenging world. The two nations are currently partners ranging from terrorism, proliferation, spread of radical Islamic ideology, narcotics, counterfeiting, weapons smuggling, and cyberwarfare.

There is cooperation on a wide range of intelligence-sharing programs that monitor terrorist and nation-state activities in the Middle East. Since 9/11, the U.S. and Israel have strengthened their homeland security partnership. The two nations have worked collectively on aviation, border and port, and mail and cybersecurity. This information and intelligence-sharing improves the security of both nations.

Israel has even provided tactical assistance in protecting U.S. troops as they fight terrorist organizations. Currently carried in any soldier's first aid kit is the "Israeli bandage," which acts as an immediate cauterizing agent upon contact. As someone who served in Iraq and in part of our Air Force and has worked with our Army and others, this is something that I have seen save lives. It is, again, a bonding between our two countries.

The Israelis developed the Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System used by the U.S. Air Force and Navy and several aircraft. It allows pilots to aim sensors and weapons wherever the pilot is looking.

An Israeli manufacturer specializing in add-armor has provided protection for U.S. Army vehicles currently being used in Afghanistan. The armor combats against rocket-propelled grenade attacks.

Several U.S. tactical ballistic missile systems use subcomponents developed and tested in Israel. These subcomponents are used in Patriot missiles. Another Israeli innovation saving American soldiers' lives is a radio frequency device that detects IEDs. As someone who saw the horror of an IED and the result thereof, that is something that I hold in great esteem.

You have already mentioned the Arrow antiballistic missile, David's Sling, and the Iron Dome. All of these have paid off. Our two militaries come together in missile defense training, including the biannual Juniper Cobra exercise in which they integrate tactics to counter the growing threat of ballistic missiles and long-range rockets. During 2012, this drill was combined with "Austere Challenge," the largest joint bilateral exercise ever conducted between two allied forces.

But our relationship is not just linked by defense and security operations. We are also engaged in cooperative efforts concerning energy, which is often not talked about. This is why this is so important to me, and important, I believe, to the world. It is not just a one-sided relationship; it is a partnership that we both can benefit from.

Both countries realize the hazards of being too dependent on oil. In 2008, a

cooperative agreement was signed between the two countries to produce alternative energy sources. This agreement brought together the U.S. Department of Energy and Israel's Ministry of Energy and Water Resources.

The joint venture has generated \$20 million in private sector investment in such areas as smart grid management, solar technology, and alternative fuels. The investment in this joint program has yielded greater revenue than the congressional investment of \$6.3 million. Israel has matched Congress' appropriations dollar-for-dollar. It is truly an equal partnership.

BrightSource Energy, a company that operates in the U.S. and Israel, is constructing the largest solar thermal energy project using technology developed in Israel. When the solar plant in California's Mojave Desert is operational, it will produce enough electricity to power 140,000 American homes.

Recently, a large natural gas field was discovered off Israel's shore. Noble Energy, a Houston-based energy company, has partnered with Israel's energy companies to develop its offshore fields. These opportunities strengthen the existing bond and create a less oil-dependent U.S. and world.

The U.S.-Israeli economic partnership is one of the most unique for the U.S. Our first free trade agreement was with the nation of Israel in 1985. In the past quarter of a century, U.S.-Israel trade has grown by 500 percent and exceeds \$78 billion daily. More Israeli companies are trading on the NASDAQ than any company outside the United States and China.

U.S. firms such as Intel, Microsoft, Google, and Apple select Israel as one of their top destinations for international research and development. The free market environment in Israel is such that it attracts businesses seeing potential to invest and grow.

Even Berkshire Hathaway invests in Israel. When asked about why Warren Buffett invests in Israel, he answered that the economic spirit of both the U.S. and Israel is what makes it a no-nonsense investment.

Investment isn't one-sided. Between 2000 and 2009, Israeli companies have invested more than \$50 billion in the U.S. Israel is one of the biggest providers of investment in the United States. More than 15 U.S. States maintain offices in Israel.

Also, not just economics, not just military, but humanitarian aid as well. Assistance was provided by Israel to victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, as well as to the refugees in Rwanda. Israel established field hospitals there, and several doctors and nurses were sent with medical supplies and vaccinations. Israeli humanitarian groups provided water desalination equipment in Sudan. In all, Israel provided \$7 billion in humanitarian aid.

Haiti received a comprehensive hospital team from Israel. Eighteen tons of supplies and a medical team were

sent to Japan in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake. A friend in the region, Turkey, received a total of 50 mobile structures and 80 housing structures to aid the victims of its 2011 earthquake.

When you look at this kind of cooperation, when you look at this kind of partnership, it is still hard for me to believe that we are here talking tonight about an agreement that has the potential for such great harm to not only ourselves, but to such a good ally and a partner.

With that, I yield to the gentleman, Mr. SCHNEIDER. As we wrap up, let me just again express my sincerest gratitude for allowing me to participate this evening with you to talk about really two critically important issues: our unbreakable, special relationship with the free, independent Jewish state of Israel, and our necessary commitment to ensure that Iran never, ever is allowed to get a nuclear weapon capability. These two things come together at this moment in a crucial way.

I am reminded, as we close, of a famous saying by a rabbi and ancient scholar. Because, as you touched on, the United States and Israel share more than just a security arrangement. They share more than technology, even though a lot of the companies you mentioned—Apple, Intel, and Google—have more research dollars invested in Israel than any other country outside the United States.

Both countries, I am proud to say—the United States and Israel—have a sense of an obligation to give back to the rest of the world, to lean in to make a difference in peoples' lives.

You have talked about Haiti. One of the stories I have always loved is that one of the first relief ships to make it to Haiti was an Israel field hospital. There is a story about a woman who was giving birth shortly after the earthquake. She named her child Israel in honor of the doctors who flew in from Tel Aviv immediately after the earthquake—because they understand the need for emergency care and emergency times.

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But they were joined there by efforts of our own soldiers, United States soldiers, who understood in our own hemisphere and also around the world the need to give help, to lend a hand, when people are in need. We saw the same thing in the Philippines after the tragic typhoon. We saw American ships coming from nearby, and we saw Israelis and Americans coming from far away. Those are the types of things that unite us.

As Rabbi Hillel said:

If I am not for myself, who will be? But if I am only for myself, what am I?

The third line of his saying, I think, is crucial at this moment as we look to Iran:

If not now, when?

We need to make sure that the United States, that the P5+1 and that

our regional allies can come together and guarantee that Iran does not become a nuclear-capable country. We need to make sure that the regional security is maintained and that the nuclear weapon is prevented. That is our role, and that is how history will judge us. That is why we are here talking tonight.

So, again, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I thank you for the work we have done together. It is a privilege to work with you, and I look forward to working together on other issues, including this.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate my friend for being here tonight as you have added so much to this debate, but I also appreciate your time here in standing up for what we both feel is a very important role in the American-Israeli relationship.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I believe that Israel is an ally well worth protecting. We recognize and understand the serious threat posed to Israel from nation-states such as Iran as well as from radical Islamic terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda. U.S.-Israel cooperation helps ensure that Israel will remain a shining example of what democratic ideals and a freedom-loving society can achieve.

I agree with my friend. Iran cannot be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. That is not a negotiating point. That is just a fact. When we understand that, I will support real solutions, with real triggers, with real time lines in order to dismantle a program that has not been based on a freedom-loving people just wanting an energy source but one that has been based on deception, that has been based on deceit, and that has been based on an underlying hatred of the West and especially of Israel. We cannot let that happen.

I pray that this administration and the others that have joined in this agreement do not fall victim to a pretty PR campaign. Israel has been a beacon of liberty despite the reign of despots all around them. Israel has never allowed a threat of attack to shake their recognition that the best way to thwart extremist ideals is to stay free. Now is the time for America to renew its commitment to Israel.

God bless this union and the United States.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois, my friend, for being here and for the work that we have done together, and I do look forward to the QME bill's coming to this floor, of its passing in the Senate, and of seeing the President sign it as a good faith effort to show that his commitment is there for Israel as well. I look forward to that day being with you as that happens.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS' HOUR OF POWER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). Under the Speaker's