

bother to keep track and connect the dots.

To be continued.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

ISRAEL

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today as Israel is at war. They are at war in response to a genocidal assault by the Iran terrorist group Hamas, an assault against Israel and against America and against the citizens of dozens of other countries.

The numbers are staggering: over 1,400 Israelis killed, thousands more wounded and tortured, over 199 kidnapped—alongside them, 30 Americans killed and about a dozen kidnapped, by far one of the deadliest attacks against Americans in history. And so our Israeli allies are rightly going to war to eradicate Hamas.

We often hear that Israel and the United States share the same interests and the same enemies, that when Israel fights for its own security, they are also fighting for ours. Rarely in history has that been so explicitly, horribly true.

And let us be clear about what they are fighting against. What we saw on October 7, in the early hours of Saturday, October 7, was pure evil unleashed, genocidal, exterminationist violence, Nazi tactics in pursuit of Nazi aims. Entire Israeli families were murdered in door-to-door horrors. Israeli babies were brutally slaughtered, burned, and decapitated. Women and young girls were systematically raped.

In some homes, children were shot right in front of their parents. In other homes, parents were shot right in front of their children, and then the children were kidnapped—husbands and wives murdered in front of each other, holocaust survivors massacred. In one home, Israelis found the burned remains of an adult and a child who died hugging each other in terror as they were murdered. They were burned to death, clutching each other in their home. And throughout these atrocities, Hamas terrorists gleefully filmed themselves in ecstatic joy. There are harrowing videos of Israeli babies and toddlers in the hands of Hamas terrorists after they were kidnapped.

Why were these crimes committed? Because the victims were Jews in Israel, because Hamas and the Iranian regime—which arms, funds, and controls Hamas—because both are committed to the eradication of Jews. It was the biggest mass murder of the Jewish people in a single day since the Holocaust.

At the Supernova music festival—which was billed as a celebration of friends, love, and infinite freedom—young Israelis were dancing when Hamas assassins paraglided in, raining terror from the skies. They shot at defenseless Israelis, murdering 260 of them. They systematically raped survivors. They shot those who were too brutalized to be moved, and they kidnapped others.

At kibbutz Be'eri, 120 people were murdered. Hamas terrorists infiltrated the kibbutz from several directions, and they went home by home murdering people.

One of the victims was Tom Hand's 8-year-old daughter Emily, who was at a sleepover with her friends. Tom is a single father. His wife, Emily's mom, had passed away earlier from cancer. On that Saturday morning when Hamas invaded the kibbutz, Tom, thankfully, was able to get out alive. Emily was murdered.

In another kibbutz, 16-year-old Rotem Matias was with his parents Deborah and Shlomi when Hamas terrorists came into their home. The terrorists shot Shlomi in the arm, blowing his arm off. Deborah, heroically, shielded Rotem with her body to save him. Both of Rotem's parents were murdered.

At kibbutz Nir Oz, Yarden and Shiri Bibas, along with their 3-year-old son and their 9-month-old son, were all hiding in their home when Hamas terrorists entered. They took Shiri and her sons, and they kidnapped them. No one has heard from Yarden. Shiri and her sons are now hostages in Gaza as well as Shiri's parents.

These were all by design. We know from documents discovered on terrorists' bodies that their goals were to "kill as many as possible" and "capture hostages." We know they sought out specifically children, and they went specifically to children's rooms.

In the face of this evil, Israel must and Israel will defend herself.

America's policy should be absolutely unequivocal: to ensure that Israel has the military and the diplomatic support to utterly eradicate Hamas, for as long as it takes.

I want to repeat that last part: for as long as it takes.

I give you my word that I will do everything in my power and ability and use every resource at my disposal to ensure that that is indeed America's policy.

So what do we do immediately? We know what Israel needs in the short term. Our Israeli allies need air defenses, and they need weapons. We must make sure together that they get them.

If we can get those things from prepositioned weapons we keep on their soil, the war reserve stock, that is where they will get them from. If it needs to be shipped to them, we will ship it to them. And if the President needs more authorization or more money, Congress must find a way to give it to him.

Over the last week, we have heard objections from various parts of Capitol Hill about arming Israel. There have instead been calls for withholding support and pressuring Israel into an immediate ceasefire. These people draw a moral equivalency between our Israeli allies and these Hamas terrorists.

This is a battle between good and evil. Anyone who draws a moral equivalency between Hamas and Israel is shamefully lying.

This is an existential fight for Israel. As Golda Meir once said, "If the Arabs put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons, there would be no more Israel."

That is as true today as it was when she said it.

Hamas uses human shields as standard practice. Israel does everything it can to minimize civilian casualties. They are polar opposites.

The Israeli Government asks innocent civilians to get out of harm's way. They go so far as to send texts to Palestinians warning them to evacuate. They do things like if they are going to bomb a building where they know Hamas rockets are stored or they have terrorists hiding, they will send a text to every person in that building and even drop a dud bomb on top of the building that lands with a thud that doesn't explode—designed to warn the civilians to evacuate the building because the next bomb to take out the weapons or take out the terrorists is going to explode. And then, no doubt, they will level the building because they are trying to get rid of murderers. No other military on Earth goes to such extraordinary lengths to avoid civilian casualties. And there is no moral equivalency here—zero—between Israeli soldiers protecting civilians and Hamas monsters targeting babies. Much more needs to be done and can be done to counter the use of human shields by Hamas and other Iran-controlled terrorist organizations.

In 2014, I was proud to author a resolution in the Senate, cosponsored by Democrat Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND from New York, condemning the use of human shields by Hamas as a war crime. That bipartisan resolution passed the Senate 100 to nothing.

Later, in 2019, I wrote and passed language that imposes sanctions on Hamas, on Hezbollah, on any other terrorist group that uses human shields. Now, that was a much tougher fight because sanctions always are, but by working in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion, we passed that law as well. Since 2019, there are new groups that are using human shields that need to be added, especially the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the law itself needs to be extended and strengthened. I intend to work in a bipartisan way to do exactly that in this Congress.

Unequivocal support from the United States is critical. We are already seeing pressure from across the world and from far too many places here in Washington for our Israeli allies to stand

down. It is, unfortunately, well known—predictable—that as soon as Israel begins to defend itself from terrorists, from the very beginning, a clock starts ticking until pressure on them to stand down becomes immense. It is a surreal, disquieting, and shameful spectacle. This time, the calls for Israel to stand down began while Hamas terrorists were still on Israeli territory as the attack was ongoing.

And I am saddened to say, they came, among other places, from within the Biden administration itself.

As the Hamas invasion was becoming horrifically public, as the first reports of atrocities were being published, here is what the Biden State Department tweeted out:

We unequivocally condemn the attack of Hamas terrorists and the loss of life that has incurred. We urge all sides to refrain from violence and retaliatory attacks. Terror and violence solve nothing.

Now, to be clear, that was a message to the Israelis from the U.S. Department of State: Refrain from violence and retaliatory attacks. Terror and violence solve nothing, so do nothing against the terrorists who were then murdering over 1,000 Israelis. That was from the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs of the U.S. State Department.

They sent this tweet out at 3 a.m., DC time, literally as these murders, as these rapes, as these brutal assaults were happening. I caught it within about an hour, and it was obvious what they were trying to do. So I made it clear what I intended to do, and I publicly responded to that tweet by saying:

This is disgraceful, and every . . . person involved in drafting and approving this tweet should be immediately expelled from the U.S. government.

So their first instinct was to tell Israel: Your country is being invaded, terrorists are murdering your civilians, your citizens are being kidnapped, infants and children are being murdered, and the position of the U.S. State Department is, Israel, please do nothing. Do not engage in retaliatory strikes. Just sit there and allow the terrorists to murder your citizens.

Within the hour, the State Department deleted their tweet. Later that day, they apologized. They said the tweet was unauthorized, and it didn't reflect their policy—except they weren't done.

A few hours later, the Twitter account of the Secretary of State Antony Blinken posted a note saying the Secretary of State was encouraging an immediate ceasefire. Understand the word "ceasefire" is not directed at the terrorists; it is directed at Israel. They are saying: Israel, do not defend yourself. Do not kill the Hamas terrorists.

I, likewise, denounced that tweet, and for the second time in 24 hours the Department of State had to delete yet another tweet. That is in the first day that this attack proceeded.

This is not a time for partisan disagreements. We should be standing to-

gether with Israel. And I will be the first to admit that much of what President Biden has said himself since then has been welcome. His first major speech on this crisis was very strong in parts.

The problem is that this administration—this White House, this Department of State—is filled with passionate opponents of Israel, and every time President Biden has spoken in support of Israel, he has been undercut by staffers before and after.

The President just traveled to Israel yesterday in what was an unprecedented trip. I am glad the President went to Israel. That was a strong statement for him to be physically there on the ground during this war. But on the way there, literally on the plane, a White House spokesperson said the purpose of the trip was to have the President ask the Israelis "tough questions." Even on the night before his speech last week, Biden's Deputy National Security Advisor had gone on MSNBC and warned the Israelis that "[i]t is our advice that this war be conducted based on the principles of international law."

(Ms. HASSAN assumed the Chair.)

Madam President, what does that mean?

Has Israel ever not fought its wars based on the principles of international law? Why is that something they are publicly lecturing Israel on? And even if it did come up in discussions with Israel, why lecture them publicly?

I remember well September 11, the horror of the greatest attack on the United States in American history. And I don't recall any American ally publicly lecturing America: Follow international law. I don't recall any foreign heads of state traveling here to ask us the tough questions: Are you going to dare retaliate against the terrorists? Instead, our friends said: We stand with you. Period.

After President Biden's speech at the White House, the White House officials stated:

We support Israel taking necessary and proportionate action.

Understand that word "proportionate." You are going to hear it again. You are going to hear again from the enemies of Israel who are already preparing to attack and undermine each and every step Israel takes to eradicate the Hamas terrorists. They are going to say: It is not proportionate.

What is a proportionate response to the beheading of babies? What is a proportionate response to the systematic murder of entire families? For that matter, what is a proportionate response to a genocidal campaign?

The Biden administration's ideological, partisan reaction day after day to all of this is tragic. They see these terrorist attacks, and their immediate reaction is: I hope Israel doesn't respond by killing the terrorists too much.

Why? Well, because I think at least some in the Biden administration feel

a need to appeal to the radical leftwing base, which includes BLM, which includes the Democratic Socialists of America, which includes the anti-Semitic Squad in the House, as well as the woke university students at Harvard and other so-called elite universities.

At Harvard, 35 student groups, in the aftermath of Hamas's attack, blamed Israel. These organizations and these elite universities, sadly, have become venomous pits of anti-Semitism and hatred for Israel. The 35 student groups at Harvard put out a joint statement by the Harvard Palestinian Solidarity Group, and I want the American people to know what they said.

They said:

We the undersigned student organizations hold the Israeli regime entirely responsible for all the unfolding violence.

That is the opening sentence of their statement. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas terrorists are raping women and young girls in the street. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is mutilating babies and kidnapping them and holding them hostage. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is using toddlers as human shields. They believe it is Israel's fault that Hamas is targeting and murdering civilians, indiscriminately going house by house by house. That sentiment is sick and twisted and wrong.

Now, I also worry that, in addition to the knee-jerk, partisan, ideological reaction, the Biden administration also has a very real interest in dampening Israel's response, because every day that the war goes on, people will ask: Where does Hamas get the resources to keep fighting?

The answer is obvious. This massacre—this horrific assault on Israel—was funded by Iran. Hamas and Hezbollah are both Iranian proxies. They work for Iran; they work under the direction of Iran; and they are funded by Iran. Without Iran, there would be no Hamas.

When it was first reported that these attacks had been planned or signed off on by the Iranian Government, the usual Iran echo chamber went to work defending the regime. They said there was no evidence. The administration and an awful lot of congressional Democrats said they weren't sure either. But do you know what no one denies? Do you know what makes these denials so strange? No one denies that Hamas is armed and funded and directed by Iran.

The game these people are playing is, they say: Well, we can't be sure. We don't have video evidence. We don't have an audio recording of the Ayatollah looking at a map and telling Hamas where to breach the border fence. So we can't be sure. We have to look into it more.

What utter nonsense.

Why are they so defensive? Well, because, since President Biden took office, this White House has been responsible for nearly \$100 billion flowing to

Iran, and much of that money has gone directly to Hamas and directly to Hezbollah.

You know, now everyone acknowledges the \$6 billion in ransom money that Joe Biden paid to get five Americans out of Iranian custody. I am glad that now Democrats have joined what I and many others said was a tragic mistake that put a bounty on Americans. It set a price: \$1.2 billion is what the Biden administration will pay you if you kidnap Americans. At the time, I said more Americans will be kidnapped, and Iran will kidnap more Americans. I am very sorry to say that prediction came true in just a matter of weeks.

My Democratic colleagues would not stand with us to cut off that \$6 billion when it was paid initially. Now we have Democrats willing to do so. That is a step in the right direction. But understand the \$6 billion is only the tip of the iceberg. It is only a tiny portion of the money that this administration, the Biden administration, has flooded Iran with.

A few weeks before the \$6 billion deal, Biden made available \$10 billion related to electricity that Iraq bought from Iran, and both of those—the \$16 billion—pales in comparison to the tens of billions of dollars—as much as \$80 billion—that Iran has made from illicit oil sales under Biden. Understand, when Joe Biden came into office, the Iranian regime was on its knees. The economy was in shambles. Why? Because the Ayatollah gets its principal revenue from selling oil.

When Donald Trump was President, I spent much of the Presidency urging President Trump to vigorously enforce the oil sanctions, to cripple their oil sales. Iran had been selling a million barrels a day of oil. President Trump agreed with me and vigorously enforced the sanctions. Those oil sales were crushed, and the Iranian economy collapsed. That is what President Biden inherited—an Iran in shambles economically.

And what did the Biden administration do immediately? It ceased enforcing oil sanctions. It said, in effect: Sell all of the oil you can. And do you know what? The Ayatollah heard him, because, right now, Iran is selling 2 million barrels a day of oil—the same level they were selling before the sanctions ever passed, more than double what they had been selling before the vigorous enforcement of the oil sanctions under President Trump.

Why is it that so many Democratic politicians hate oil and gas production in the United States and are willing to kill jobs here at home, but when it comes to theocratic, homicidal, genocidal maniacs, they are perfectly happy with letting them reap \$80 billion by selling 2 million barrels a day of oil primarily to communist China? That is madness.

So let me say, I am glad the President gives speeches saying: We are standing with Israel. That is great, but

actions speak louder than words. If the President wants to stand with Israel, stand up tomorrow and say: We are vigorously enforcing oil sanctions, and we are going to end these oil sales.

To the Democrats in this body who are giving speeches saying we stand with Israel, great. Then join me in saying: We are going to take away the billions of dollars that are flooding into Iran; that are funding Hamas; that are funding the death squads; that are funding the rockets; that are funding the murders of Israelis.

But it wasn't just money to Iran that went to Hamas. The Biden administration also poured money into Hamas areas directly. As soon as they came into office, the Biden administration began flooding money into the Gaza Strip. At the time, I led a coalition of 19 Senators in urging the Biden administration: Do not send money to Gaza. Why? Because Hamas controls Gaza, and if you send hundreds of millions of dollars to Gaza, Hamas will use it to commit acts of terrorism against Israelis and Americans.

At the same time that 19 of us urged the administration "don't fund Gaza because it will fund Hamas terrorism," 145 House Democrats sent a letter to the Biden administration, saying: Do fund Gaza even though it will fund Hamas terrorism.

And what did the Biden administration do with these dueling letters from Congress? We now know because the internal government documents of the Biden administration are now public; and the Biden Treasury Department determined there was a "high risk" that Hamas would potentially derive benefit from the money they were sending.

Now, ordinarily, that would end the matter because, in their existing U.S. anti-terrorism sanctions, the laws say, if you know there is a high risk it is going to terrorism, you can't send money to do it. Did the Biden administration take that step? No. Instead, they exempted themselves from American laws against funding terrorism. They wanted, as a political matter, to send the cash so much that they were willing to look the other way to, in their own words, the "high risk" that that money would go to Hamas to carry out acts of terrorism.

Here is the full quote from the Biden administration document:

Due to its overall strength and level of control over Gaza, we assess there is a high risk that Hamas could potentially derive indirect, unintentional benefit from U.S. assistance to Gaza.

These atrocities in Israel were the direct result of political decisions made by the White House to dismantle pressure and to pour money into Iran and into territories controlled by Iranian terrorists. When you send billions of dollars to people who hate us and want to murder us, we should not be surprised when they use those billions of dollars to murder us.

Not to support Israel in this time of need—not to support them fully for as

long as it takes—would be a grave moral failure. This fight is civilization against barbarism. It is good versus evil. The differences between the two sides are as stark as light and darkness. The light and goodness, I believe, will prevail if we stand with Israel.

I want to say something also.

In the last 2 weeks, I have spoken with many of my friends, in particular, many of my Jewish friends. It has been astonishing the number of my Jewish friends in Texas and all across America who have family members or who have close friends in Israel. It has been truly breathtaking the number of American Jews I know well who either lost a loved one in these terrorist attacks or who have relatives or close friends who have been called up to the IDF, who are facing the most significant war in Israel in the last 50 years.

I have spent much of the last 2 weeks reaching out to those friends and just telling them: Heidi and I are praying for you. We are lifting you up. We are lifting your family up. We are lifting the people of Israel up, encouraging them. This has been a frightening time for every Israeli and for a great many Americans.

I hope that, in the face of evil, we see the same solidarity we saw in the wake of September 11. Just as the world rallied to our side when radical Islamic terrorists committed a grotesque act of terror against the United States, now is the time for the world to rally to Israel's side, and now is the time for this body to come together.

There have been policy differences in the past, with some Members of this body and leaders of this administration believing that it is a good idea to send tens or even hundreds of billions of dollars to Iran. That policy has been proven catastrophically wrong.

So I hope that we come together and that we stand as one, united, to tell the people of Israel: America stands with Israel for as long as it takes.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions submitted earlier today: S. Res. 414, S. Res. 415, and S. Res. 416.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, in two criminal cases pending in Federal district court in the District of Columbia and arising out of the events of