

adherents, also supplied by Iran, have been purposefully shelling private cargo ships as well as targeting U.S. naval vessels in the Red Sea to disrupt global trade in this conflicted region. Russia's role in exacerbating resurgent unrest was made clear when top Gen. Sergei Shoigu recently visited Iran. And a Hamas delegation was in Moscow not long after it attacked Israel.

Across the Middle East, a spiderweb of terrorism is hastening, hell-bent on evil. Iranian drones and missiles are being used against Ukraine, Israel, the United States, and our allies in Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and Jordan. North Korean missiles are likewise in use against Ukraine. The global distinction between tyranny and liberty could not be clearer. The world community of nations must not allow terrorist forces enabled by Iran and Russia to foment unrest and carnage. The sacred boundaries of nations must be respected, defended, and enforced.

The history of the Middle East instructs that former adversarial nations can make peace among themselves. For nearly five decades, dating back to my days of service in the Carter administration, proposals for a two-State solution have been advanced for Israel and Palestine.

Ironically, the depth and brutality of this present conflict may create an opening for a far-reaching solution. If the world community could spend as much money on peace as it has on war, both the Israelis and Palestinians could have thriving homelands.

To move forward, I propose that the United Nations, or a coalition of willing nations, begin to negotiate a "Gaza-Palestinian Protectorate." The parties involved should aim to negotiate a long-lasting solution to the conflict in Gaza, address challenges in the West Bank, and divide the contested territory securing their existence with an International Multilateral Security Force to separate warring factions.

If the civilized world could achieve this with a divided Korea, why not with Palestine and Israel?

The goals of the Protectorate would be fourfold:

(1) an international coalition of nations should be assembled and involved in organizing its administration and staffing;

(2) Gaza would be demilitarized of weapons, war, tunnels, and fortifications;

(3) Hamas would have no role, politically, administratively, or economically;

(4) Palestinians from Gaza should be involved in the administration of the Protectorate's on-site operations, including its police forces.

The Protectorate would have three immediate tasks. The first would be to quickly secure resources and provide food, water, shelter, and medical care to the almost 2.3 million people of Gaza.

The second is to provide an international military coalition that can demilitarize Gaza as quickly as possible. Gaza must never again be a threat to its neighbors.

The third is to physically separate Gaza and Israel, by creating a demilitarized zone between the two, that is virtually impenetrable, as is the DMZ between North and South Korea. As part of the separation, the infrastructure to provide water, sewage treatment, and energy needed by Gaza should be located in Gaza and staffed by the people of Gaza.

One of the long-term missions could be to rebuild what is now a destroyed area under a new vision of peace and prosperity. Gaza has many undeveloped resources, the primary of which is its land and location. While small in size, Gaza is located in one of the most attractive parts of the Mediterranean, with miles of undeveloped, beautiful beaches that could become a recreational center of the region.

With peace and stability, Gaza could become a financial and economic hub that attracts capital and businesses from around the world. Gaza and the West Bank have the thousands of workers needed to rebuild what has been destroyed along with necessary staff to renew the economy. A "Gaza Development Authority" as part of the Protectorate could create and administer a long-term development plan to bring prosperity and transparency that would forestall the corruption that so often accompanies unfettered development.

Hope must arise from this cruel war. Old diplomacy, and old solutions should be shelved. They should be replaced with a forward-looking approach that could bring peace, justice, and prosperity to this war-torn region. Succeeding would give hope to a civilized world that hungers for peace in these troubled lands.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL, UKRAINE, AND TAIWAN

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, the skullduggery of the Speaker of the House was on display today. He has no real interest in helping Israel. He has interest in scoring political points with Donald Trump. He used Israel to do that today, and he did it a month ago.

A month ago or so, he said he would support aid to Israel if it was set off with \$13 million or \$14 million in cuts to the IRS, which would have only benefited the wealthiest tax cheats in our country. To condition aid to Israel on helping out rich tax cheats is despicable, and the skullduggery today was to separate Israel from Ukraine, a country similar to Israel that is being invaded by Russia to try to deny its territorial integrity and to commit a genocide, just as Hamas has tried to commit a genocide in Israel.

I support Israel. I also support helping with humanitarian aid the people in Gaza who have been hurt, injured, or killed. I also support helping Ukraine for having Russia do the same thing. I also support Taiwan.

I do not support the Speaker. He is a man without good faith.

PRAISING ILWACO COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

(Ms. PEREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PEREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in praise of the resilience of my community in southwest Washington.

Last month, a fire broke out at one of two seafood processing facilities near the Port of Ilwaco in my district. In the aftermath of the catastrophic fire, the unity and support demonstrated by the Ilwaco community have been remarkable.

Whereas lesser men would have seen an opportunity for competitive advantage, these folks chose to stand together and see each other as neighbors,

lending out crab pots to each other, which they didn't have to do.

I am incredibly grateful to come from a community that supports each other in the wake of a tragedy. Their community spirit is a competitive advantage that money cannot buy and natural disasters cannot shake.

I extend my thanks to the brave first responders who responded to the fire. Several of them were treated for heat exhaustion, a testament to their tireless effort in combating the blaze for hours.

I also recognize the folks in Ilwaco who stepped up to help local crabbers, dropping off sandwiches and shipping up crab pots from as far as California and Alaska.

Rebuilding and recovery will take time. They will never get back those hours of sleep, the heartache, or the monetary loss, but their moral fiber has been revealed in a way that is durable and will strengthen the community. It is its own reward.

Madam Speaker, I stand with them in their fight, and I am so grateful for their leadership.

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FUNDING FOR ALL IN NEED

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, the American people might wonder just what happened here today.

Well, first of all, the southern border deal never got anywhere, and all of the logistics and all of the cloak and dagger and what was going to be in it failed to even get the attention of the Speaker of this House or any of the Republican Members.

Yet, all of a sudden, an unfounded legislative initiative that was allegedly to advocate for the needs of the people in the Mideast wound up on the floor of the House. You wonder what we did today. It wound up on the floor of the House with no conscience, no thought, no commitment, and that is why I was not able to vote for it.

I was willing to join an amended initiative to ensure that all of the people that are in need in the Mideast would be taken care of; that we would have the funding for Israel; that we would have the funding for the Palestinians and the aid that is needed in Gaza and the ability to deal with the crisis of debt that they have been facing; that we would have the money for Taiwan; and, yes, that we would have the money for Ukraine.

I have been to the border of Ukraine. I have seen the violence against the children. I have seen Russia steal children. I have seen parents die in the streets. It is necessary that we do this right, and that is funding for all of those that are in need, and do it now.

The Speaker of the House needs to work in a professional way for the

American people to show we care about the nations and we care about the Midwest.

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HAGEMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, 6 years ago, I held a Special Order on a subject matter that I think is extremely important to this country and the developed world, the issue of growing inequality. It has been 4 years since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and it is more relevant now than ever because, unfortunately, it has gotten worse.

The concentration of wealth in the United States of America is not fair, it is not American, and it is driving multiple social and behavioral health issues that more and more research points to and verifies.

The pandemic has laid bare the deep disparities that exist in the United States and worsened the gap between the richest and poorest Americans, and it has helped eviscerate in many ways the American middle class.

The President has tried his very best and, in the 2 years that Democrats had control of both Houses and the President was in the White House, we did much to begin to change this rising tide of inequality. Rising inequality incurs costs that harm us all, but not just those at the bottom of the income distribution; it hurts America.

Next to me is a statistical diagram of the Gini quotient that is accepted by economists around the world as the best statistical measurement for inequality. As you can see, just since 1993, it has steadily gone up with the pandemic at the end.

I am pleased to have a couple of my colleagues and friends to be here to speak on this. I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) to make a few comments.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I am pleased to join you because this is such an important topic and a topic that I have been talking about for a long time.

The income inequality in our country has grown and grown, and the tax cuts of Donald Trump, which I voted against, contributed to it greatly—tax cuts that gave the wealthy much more money, corporations and individuals,

and did not help the poor and didn't really help the middle class much.

My district is in Memphis, Shelby County and Tipton County, just north of Memphis. Because of that, I am no stranger to high levels of poverty and inequality.

According to the 2023 Poverty Fact Sheet by the University of Memphis, 21.4 percent of Memphians live in poverty. The overall poverty rate for Black and Latino Memphians is almost double that of White and Caucasian residents; roughly 27 percent for Black and Latino residents, compared to 10 percent of Whites.

The child poverty rate is 32.7, a number that has been declining in recent years due to the child tax credits, but still far too high, and we don't know how much the child tax credits will be available to people this coming year.

In 2022, the child poverty rate in African-American and Latino communities was three times that of White families, 30 percent to 10. What hope does that give young African-American and Latino children?

The root causes of poverty often come down to access and opportunity. Childhood poverty is directly related to the financial status of the children's parents.

Many young adults in Memphis have parents and grandparents who are prohibited from buying houses in certain areas, redlining, which is still a practice in Memphis, and has been highlighted recently when one of the banks in Memphis was charged with such and pled guilty to such, I believe. That has restricted access to home loans and mortgage protections, as well.

Because of redlining, many families did not have the opportunity to buy desirable houses. These policies were legal until 1968, so it is not ancient history.

The impact of redlining continues as many families were unable to build generational wealth.

Now, poor families need access to services like citywide internet, subsidized childcare, and supportive mortgage rates.

And we tried to do some of those things, but unfortunately, it has not been a bipartisan effort. It has mostly been an effort by Democrats.

Tennessee is nationally ranked as a low-tax State, but that is not the case for the poorest families. The taxes are regressive. It is a sales tax-dependent State that taxes the poor in the most regressive manner.

The poorest 20 percent of Tennessee residents pay a significantly higher percentage of their income in State and local taxes than any other group in the State.

Low-income families are paying high amounts of taxes, while at the same time receiving lower levels of access to services and opportunities for economic mobility. Tennessee remains one of the 10 remaining States that have not expanded Medicaid. That is truly sorrowful and immoral.

If Tennessee were to expand, as 40 other States and the District of Columbia have, lower earning workers would have access to affordable healthcare, and their families would worry less about the impacts of seeking treatment for an illness.

A billion-plus dollars a year have been turned down by our State legislature because they don't care about taking care of the poor.

Matthew 25 talks about healing. I saw people that were naked, and I clothed them. I saw people that were hungry, and I fed them. I saw people who were sick, and I healed them.

Some people say they live by the Bible. If you want to know where my politics are just look to the Bible. Well, some of those people who speak it the most don't know Matthew 25.

Measures combating childhood poverty and closing the income/wealth gap among diverse groups are vital in my district, enough to make more progress on the issue.

I will continue advocating for the child tax credit, which Ms. DELAURO has championed, encouraging Tennessee to expand Medicaid, seeking additional funds for education and job training, and supporting other policies to help those in need.

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. DESAULNIER for having the moral courage and the will to bring this Special Order to the people that are watching. It is an important issue, and it pains me to see our country becoming more and more divided.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I will now yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), who was someone who spoke at my first effort at this, the very esteemed ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman so very much for yielding. I so appreciate what he is accomplishing here this evening as to shine a light on the issue of poverty in this Nation. You know, we have searched and searched and searched over decades for what the antidote is to poverty and, particularly, child poverty.

I am often reminded—this might sound a little nerdy, but the Nobel laureate in economics, Joseph Stiglitz—and this is a paraphrase of what he said—that inequality is not the result of globalization or modernization, but it is the result of policy choices.

This body that we are blessed to serve in deals with policy choices, which means that we can have a profound effect on poverty, child poverty, and reducing that in our Nation.

I suppose I will just reflect and pick up a little on what Congressman COHEN said. The House passed a tax bill last week that would continue to exacerbate child poverty in the United States—public policy choices.

Madam Speaker, I say thank you to Mr. DESAULNIER for bringing us together tonight. As I stated last week,