

reckless push toward a future run by electric vehicles.

If they have integrity, they will stop burying evidence and come clean about the electric vehicle record on environment, on safety, and on human rights. And if they have good judgment—well, they will tap the brakes on this climate charade.

Electric vehicles are ridden with problems, as any developing technology is. The problem is not so much electric vehicles as it is this administration's blind insistence on electric vehicle mandates that harm Americans and that harm the environment.

The White House is forcing electric vehicles on our country in a hasty, overzealous political play. And they are spurning the science, the facts, and the reality: Americans don't want the electric vehicle revolution and for good reason.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

ISRAEL

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the situation in the Middle East and the war between Israel and Hamas.

Five months ago, Hamas brutally attacked Israel, killing more than 1,200 people and taking 240 hostages. Hamas militants terrorized the Israeli people, committed unspeakable acts of torture and mutilation against innocent men, women, and children. This tragedy was the single deadliest day in Israel's 75-year history and the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

In the wake of these horrific attacks, the United States has stood by its democratic friend and ally Israel, as it has since the very beginning when Harry Truman stood up as the first world leader to recognize the State of Israel.

I personally traveled with a bipartisan group of my colleagues 2 weeks after the attacks to mourn with the people of Israel and support the defense of Israel, to ensure that they knew the United States was with them.

In my meetings in Israel and with Jewish leaders from Rhode Island, it is clear to me that this attack has had a profound impact on Israelis and Jewish people everywhere. This attack has touched the deepest nerve, reopened the wounds of the past, and left many wondering not how but if Jews will ever be safe from persecution because of who they are.

As I have continued to make clear, Israel can and must defend itself against the military threat from Hamas. Any nation that is attacked in this manner has the inherent right to self-defense.

The United States will continue to support Israel as it works to degrade and defeat Hamas, but I must also say I have deep reservations about how this war is being conducted. I believe good allies, good friends stand together; and we stand with Israel. But great allies, great friends are willing to speak hard

truths and hold each other to the highest standards, especially around the conduct of war and issues of national security.

I want to echo the majority leader, the senior Senator from New York—a truly devoted pro-Israel champion who is spiritually and emotionally connected to Israel unlike very few of us, if any, in this Chamber, who has been a friend to Israeli leaders across the political spectrum, and who is unafraid to speak truth to power.

It is clear to me, now 5 months into this war, that Israel's strategy to defeat Hamas is in peril. While the IDF has made important progress in rooting out Hamas in Gaza, I do not see a clear endgame or metrics for success coming from this Israeli Government. There is no plan for the day after the fighting stops.

We know that more than 30,000 Gazans are dead. The millions of Gazans who have survived have largely been forced to flee south toward Rafah and the crossing there with Egypt. They have little access to food, water, shelter, or medical care. Those remaining in the north are facing dire humanitarian conditions. More than 2 million Gazans are at risk of starvation or famine. Enormous portions of the Gaza Strip have been completely destroyed and left uninhabitable, and the West Bank is teetering on the brink of chaos.

There are regular exchanges of fire in the north with Hezbollah, who are ensconced in Lebanon. This has forced nearly 100,000 Israelis to move from their homes to escape these attacks emanating from Lebanon. Lebanese noncombatants are caught in the crossfire between IDF forces and Hezbollah. The region stands at the precipice of being engulfed in an all-out war.

Today, as chairman of the Armed Services Committee of the U.S. Senate, as a friend and longtime supporter of the Israeli people, it is my duty to say clearly that this war has veered off course. There must be a fundamental course correction for the national security interests of Israel, America, and our allies and partners throughout the world.

I do not come to this conclusion lightly. There are two factors that we must understand and come to terms with. First, Israel should learn from the United States' hard-earned strategic and tactical lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan. And, second, as Leader SCHUMER courageously argued here on the Senate floor last week, Israel and its allies must acknowledge that Prime Minister Netanyahu's failed policies and desperate pursuit of power created much of the tragic situation we are witnessing today.

There are actual steps Israel can take to address these issues. We should start by recognizing lessons from America's war in Iraq. We, too, suffered a national tragedy on September 11, 2001, and immediately sought to defend ourselves. We launched our campaign

to degrade and defeat al-Qaida and Afghanistan, and the result of that war showed early military success. But the anguish of 9/11 affected our ability to make clear strategic decisions; and we, despite my opposition, mistakenly invaded another country, Iraq, which had no role in the attacks on that horrific day of September 11. National grief and political fury can cloud the thinking of even the shrewdest military tacticians.

I worry that the mistakes of America's war in Iraq are being made again by Israel in Gaza.

Similar to the power vacuum that the United States created when it dismantled Saddam Hussein's government in Iraq, Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 contributed to the extremist violence we see today. The rise of Hamas, a terrorist group whose stated goal is the destruction of Israel and the Israeli people, assumed control of the Gaza Strip. But instead of using that opportunity to build lifelines for the people of Gaza, Hamas built a 500-mile tunnel network to terrorize Israel. Instead of providing education, healthcare, and basic services for Palestinians, Hamas stockpiled and unleashed thousands of rockets against Israel through the course of the years.

Now, in the wake of October 7, Israel's stated goal is to destroy a terror group capable of guerrilla-style warfare in a large urban territory with the aid of a massive underground tunnel system. This mission would be daunting for even the most highly trained and advanced militaries.

As it pursues this goal, Israel should consider lessons from the United States' tactical experiences in Iraq. In particular, the battle of Fallujah in 2004 provides a painful case study in counterinsurgency warfare in an urban environment. After a violent, grinding fight through that city, the United States significantly failed to achieve the objectives of clearing the territory from insurgents. As the Modern War Institute at West Point assessed:

Senior political leaders should not react emotionally in war and direct immediate action against a densely populated urban area when conditions for success are not present.

In contrast, operations in Gaza may be more successful by following the model of the battle of Mosul in 2016 and 2017, where the United States worked with coalition forces in Iraq to wrest Iraq's third largest city back from ISIS militants. And I had the opportunity to visit, on the ground, our forces leading a coalition of Iraq forces against ISIS.

The operation was conducted with patience and precision, and ISIS was successfully eliminated in Mosul. Even then, success was arduous and costly. As the Financial Times characterized it:

The mission to clear the city of jihadi militants was ultimately successful. But the fighting was intense, took three times longer than planned, left 10,000 civilians dead, and killed more coalition soldiers than expected.

In prosecuting its current war, Israel must do a better job of following the

lessons of successful counterterrorism campaigns. At times, Israeli forces have conducted heavy bombing campaigns using weapons with large payloads, rather than more targeted operations that yield more successful, albeit slower, results.

The IDF's willingness to bomb heavily populated areas to pursue Hamas leaders has changed both the perceptions and realities of this war. Protecting the civilian population is a strategic imperative in counterterrorism operations and the law of war. You want to separate the insurgents from the population and gain the trust of the population to continue to successfully conduct your operation against an increasingly isolated terrorist group. But, simply put, Israel's current strategy risks creating more terrorists than it is eliminating. Can you think of a 15-year-old who has lost his youngest sibling, his mother, his father, his grandparents? Where will his rage and fury and profound sadness be directed? That is a question I think we should all contemplate.

The second issue we have to understand is the broken, polarized political environment that badly weakened Israel's national security before October 7. Prime Minister Netanyahu returned to power in 2022, facing charges of corruption and a criminal trial. His narrow political coalition is the most far right, conservative government in Israeli history. He has continued to make clear that he will never support a two-state solution.

In a desperate attempt to stay in power, Netanyahu has emboldened the most far right members of his coalition. He has not only allowed extreme positions to be the stated goal of his administration, he has provided far right members of his coalition with ministries by which they can enact their agendas. His Minister of Finance, Smotrich, has fought his entire career to expand settler control in the West Bank and now has control over restarting payments to the Palestinian Authority. His Minister of National Security, Ben-Gvir, has been convicted on at least eight charges, including supporting a terrorist organization and incitement to racism.

In facing his own criminal charges, Netanyahu worked to significantly weaken the Israeli judicial system for his own benefit. He did this despite hundreds of thousands of Israelis protesting in the streets. And we were there when those protests were going on last February. And he did this over the objection of his Israeli military reservists, who, at that point, said they would refuse to report to duty in protest. And he did this despite warnings from Defense Minister Gallant that the IDF would be weakened as a result.

Adding to this toxic and destabilizing mix was Netanyahu's strategy for dealing with Hamas. For years, he purposely propped up Hamas as a means to ensure that his two-state solution would never come to fruition. As far

back as 2012, Netanyahu told Israeli press that "it was important to keep Hamas strong, as a counterweight to the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank." It was not just a counterweight. He knew that having Hamas in power in Gaza meant that a two-state solution would never be possible. This strategy to prop up Hamas also included allowing Hamas to receive suitcases full of cash coming from Qatar and other places. A former Defense Minister for Netanyahu, Avigdor Lieberman, blamed this tactic as one that directly paved the way for the October 7 attacks.

Netanyahu's long, relentless pursuit of political survival and power are now fueling his strategy for war in Gaza—and it strikes me that it is his strategy, not Israel's direction; his future, not Israel's future that is the foremost factor at play.

These factors add up to several hard truths that must be spoken from one ally to another, just as Leader SCHUMER did last week, with courage and principle.

Most importantly, Israel can't use military force alone to reclaim peace and security for its people. Military force is used as a means to a political end. Military force itself will never provide the final answer.

A political solution will take hard bargaining and diplomatic negotiations. Working with the United States, Qatar, Egypt, and other allies and partners, the Israelis must reach a temporary cease-fire that allows for the safe return of hostages, expansion of humanitarian assistance, and capacity to safely deliver assistance to the people of Gaza. The ongoing airdrop campaign and seaport efforts are a step in the right direction, but Israel must do more to ensure that the increase supply of food and other desperately needed supplies can reach the people of Gaza.

There must be a realistic plan for day-after operations in Gaza. There needs to be a return to a framework for a two-state solution, where the State of Israel and a demilitarized Palestinian State exists side by side in peace and security. This plan will require buy-in from all—Israel, the Palestinian people, the world community, Arab neighbors. Israel should not and will not find the long-term security and peace it wants by indefinitely reoccupying the Gaza Strip.

Finally, while it is a decision that will ultimately be made by the Israeli and Palestinian people, like Leader SCHUMER, I believe it is time for new leadership for both the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Palestinian President Abbas is almost 20 years into what was supposed to be a 4-year Presidential term, and finding a successor for the Palestinian Authority is long overdue. A new Palestinian leader must recognize that the only path to peace, security, and prosperity is to renounce terror, to work with Israel, to work with regional part-

ners for a path to statehood which is stable and peaceful.

New leadership, as I indicated, also includes Prime Minister Netanyahu. Polling indicates that more than 75 percent of Israelis believes he should step down, and I agree with Leader SCHUMER that Netanyahu represents an obstacle to long-term peace in Israel.

I have long been a friend and supporter of Israel's. I traveled there in the early nineties and have traveled there periodically since. More importantly, the United States has been Israel's closest ally for 75 years.

In 1948, when the Israelis declared their independence, the world was not particularly accepting except here in the United States, where, to his immense credit, President Harry Truman stood up and said that we will recognize and support the State of Israel. That profound bond exists today and, in my view and in my hope, will always exist. We can't have anyone break that bond.

Great allies must hold each other to high standards, share hard truths when needed, and the U.S.-Israeli alliance is no different. So I urge Israel to change course in Gaza immediately, to work with all of us to establish ultimately and enduringly, we hope, a secure and peaceful Israel and the protection of its people, as well as a just, secure, and safe place where all people of that region can live safely.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Kansas.

FARM BILL

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, first day of spring, National Ag Day, a perfect time—a fitting time—to address the Senate on something that I think is really important and something that is frustrating to me and to the people I represent. American agriculture is at a crossroads, a pressure point. Things are really challenging for those who provide our food, fuel, and fiber. There is record-level volatility in the farm economy, and farm income is falling by the most significant amount of all time.

We ought to be providing certainty to those who provide our food. I was troubled to read a report that the Senate Committee on Agriculture—its chair—indicated that there is a level of comfort with scrapping negotiations for a new farm bill and continuing with the outdated, now at least 5-years-old, policies from the past. In that same article, surprisingly, disappointingly, Secretary Vilsack expressed his support for that decision.

Our farmers deserve and, even more importantly, they need better. Agriculture is an incredibly difficult industry, as farmers and ranchers face challenges from weather events, economic shocks, and supply chain shortages. Added to these challenges are the inflationary policies that have raised the prices on farmland and, ultimately, at the grocery store. This includes soaring input costs, which are up nearly