

The Jewish people, as I say—the Israeli people—which includes, of course, people who are not Jewish by heritage, have had the only democracy in the area for the longest time. And they have been surrounded by people who want nothing less than the destruction of Israel, and they don't make any bones about it.

Support in this Congress—support in the United States—for Israel has for these seven decades always been bipartisan. And it breaks my heart—and I think it should come as a shock to all Americans—that bipartisan support seems to be fracturing on the other side of the aisle among my Democratic colleagues.

It is a shame that the Vice President of this country—the Vice President of the United States, KAMALA HARRIS—declined to fulfill her duties to preside over the session. She found an excuse in another State to be at a meeting that could easily have been rescheduled. It is a shame that our Vice President—that the future nominee of her party for President of the United States—would make that statement that she was unwilling to preside over a joint meeting addressed by the Prime Minister of Israel.

The President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate refused to attend. Many Members of this body on the Democratic side of the aisle and many Members of the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives boycotted this speech by our steadfast ally of 70 years or more.

I noticed, when the Prime Minister of Israel came down through the center aisle there in the House of Representatives, shaking hands on both sides, and he rounded the corner, and the majority leader of this body, the senior Senator from New York, Senator SCHUMER, declined to extend his hand to the Prime Minister of this, our steadfast ally.

We also need to remember, as my colleagues have stated already, that in the region where Israel is the only democratic government, in the Middle East, exists the Islamic Republic of Iran. They are a sworn enemy of Israel, and they are a sworn enemy of the United States of America. “Death to America” is what they say. And they want to start with “Death to America” by pronouncing “Death to Israel.”

More than that, they have proxies—at least three proxies—that we have been talking about recently: the Houthis in Yemen, Hezbollah to the north of Israel, and Hamas, the terrorist group that perpetrated the October slaughter on people near Gaza.

Hamas has one reason to exist—one stated, admitted reason and one reason only: the complete destruction of Israel. And they demonstrated their ruthlessness on October 7: rapes, beheadings, babies being burned, unspeakable acts of violence. And Prime Minister Netanyahu was correct to point out that people protesting outside this building on behalf of Hamas

should be ashamed of themselves in protesting on behalf of a group that was so violent.

Hamas uses civilians as human shields. That is a violation of international law. By contrast—contrary to what people have been told in the press—Israel is doing the best job that any combatant has ever done in protecting civilians while trying to root out terrorist groups.

I am calling on people on both sides of the aisle, in conclusion, to return to our bipartisan support of the right of a people to exist somewhere and to have one place on the face of the Earth where they know they can be safe in their own beliefs, in their own population, and, for the first time in centuries and millennia, to be safe and have their own homeland.

So I congratulate the Prime Minister of Israel. I congratulate the Members of Congress who received him well. And I invite my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to remember the importance of bipartisan support for Israel.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from Wyoming.

ISRAEL

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, the Prime Minister of Israel, Binyamin Netanyahu, just delivered a historic speech to Congress. This is the fourth time the Prime Minister has spoken to the U.S. Congress. That is more than the late Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill.

Like Prime Minister Churchill, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu spoke about a battle between freedom and evil. He shared with us welcome news, and that news is that freedom is winning.

Israel is committed to bringing home the hostages, to protecting its citizens from the atrocities that occurred on the October 7 attack.

Meanwhile, the Hamas terrorist network is under more pressure than ever. Half of its senior leadership is dead. Its military chief has likely been eliminated.

Remember, Hamas is a terrorist group. It governs through fear and through violence. Hamas violently rejects the right of Israel to exist and the right of the Jewish people to live in Israel. Hamas hides behind civilians. It uses them as human shields.

Hamas stores its military weapons designed to kill in hospitals, in schools, and in homes. It has stolen billions of dollars of humanitarian aid to build its terrorist tunnels all around the area of the Gaza Strip. This is the same tunnel network where, for 9 months and counting, 116 hostages, including 8 American hostages, have been held by Hamas terrorists.

I stand firmly with Israel as Israel fights to finish the war and defeat Hamas. Sadly, supporting Israel has grown more divisive in this country than I have ever seen it before.

Today, Democrats are abandoning our greatest ally in the Middle East.

They are calling to put conditions on aid to Israel. The Biden-Harris administration has delayed the delivery of war-winning weapons.

The Senate Democrat leader meddled in Israeli politics. He proclaimed in no uncertain terms on the floor of this very body that Prime Minister Netanyahu should step down.

The senior Senator from Vermont went even further. Last month, he declared that Prime Minister Netanyahu is a “war criminal.” That accusation is disturbing, it is damaging, and it is dishonest.

If that weren't bad enough, Vice President HARRIS skipped the Prime Minister's speech entirely. The Vice President typically presides over joint sessions of Congress. With her snub of Israel, Vice President HARRIS is leading the Democrats' Bibi boycott.

Catering to the pro-Hamas wing of the Democratic Party is not serious leadership—not at all.

The Vice President now wants to be Commander in Chief of the United States of America. Yet she refuses to put politics aside and work with our indispensable ally. Her actions send a defeatist message—a defeatist message to our enemies and a defeatist message to our allies alike.

This is a time when it is so critical for us to restore confidence in America. Here is what we need to do and how to do it: You do it with peace through strength, with strong, steady, and serious support for Israel and for Israel's right to exist.

What is the approach of President Biden today? What is the approach of Vice President HARRIS? What is the approach of the Senate Democrats, Members of this body? Is it to continue to appease our adversaries and at the same time abandon our friends? This is a dangerous world. It is more dangerous under the failed policies of the Biden-Harris administration.

America cannot continue down the Democrats' path of war and weakness. Keeping America safe requires that America and Israel work together. We heard that today in the joint session of Congress.

Republicans believe in Israel's mission to defeat Hamas. We understand fully what is at stake, and our support is firm. We must unite and bring back peace through strength.

Now more than ever, the American people need to stand with Israel, and I am one of those people who will continue to stand with Israel.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Madam President, Israel is our strongest and closest ally in the Middle East. It is in our mutual interest to provide Israel the support they need to be able to destroy the terrorist group Hamas and secure the release of the remaining hostages. I am committed to doing that. My colleagues joining me today are committed to doing that.

Yet the Biden-Harris administration has repeatedly appeased the radical pro-Hamas elements of their base. In fact, President Biden had to be pressured to put a meeting on the calendar with the Prime Minister. That should have been a no-brainer.

Vice President KAMALA HARRIS, whose only constitutional duty is to preside over the Senate, didn't even attend today's speech. She has one job—and I understand that being the presumptive nominee is new, but she does have a day job. Instead, she chose a petty snub of our closest ally in the Middle East and a democratically elected leader. This is not how America should treat its allies.

Sadly, this is one part of a larger pattern. The Biden-Harris administration has consistently undermined Israel's democratically elected government. After taking office, this administration gave \$730 million to UNRWA, an organization that has been described as essentially being a branch of Hamas. President Trump had ended their U.S. taxpayer funding. President Biden and Vice President HARRIS brought it back. Their actions caused American taxpayer dollars to directly support Hamas terrorists in their attacks on our ally and our citizens.

At least 12 UNRWA employees, funded in part by Biden-Harris, directly participated in the barbaric terror attack on October 7. Over 100 UNRWA employees have ties to Hamas or other Islamic jihad entities. Over 1,200 Israelis were killed, including nearly two dozen American citizens. Many were taken as hostages. Eight Americans are still being held hostage today somewhere in Gaza 291 days after October 7.

We need to stand with Israel until Israel completes its mission to free the hostages, bring justice to the terrorists, and restore peace. That is the best solution for the Israelis. That is the best solution for the Gazans. That is the best solution, period.

The Biden-Harris administration has also pressured Israel toward a ceasefire with the same barbaric Hamas terrorists who want to kill Jews and have pledged to continue to perpetrate atrocities like October 7. Meanwhile, Biden and Harris have repeatedly withheld or delayed critical shipments of weapons needed to destroy Hamas. They have attacked the legitimacy of Israel's democratically elected leader. So much for "ironclad."

Americans stand with Israel. My colleagues and I stand with Israel. We are proud to stand with Israel. The Biden-Harris administration should do the same.

Thank you to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu for his comments earlier today. They reminded us why it is so important that Israel is successful in destroying Hamas. They will be doing the world and civilization a favor in doing so.

Thank you to my colleagues for joining me today on the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 702, Adam B. Landy, of South Carolina, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Alex Padilla, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, John W. Hickenlooper, Christopher Murphy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Adam B. Landy, of South Carolina, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 85, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 216 Ex.]

YEAS—85

Baldwin	Fischer	Peters
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Reed
Bennet	Graham	Ricketts
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Booker	Heinrich	Rosen
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Braun	Hirono	Sanders
Britt	Hoeven	Schatz
Brown	Johnson	Schumer
Budd	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Butler	Kelly	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Capito	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Lankford	Stabenow
Carper	Lujan	Tester
Casey	Lummis	Thune
Cassidy	Manchin	Tillis
Collins	Markey	Van Hollen
Coons	McConnell	Warner
Cornyn	Merkley	Warnock
Cortez Masto	Moran	Warren
Cotton	Mullin	Welch
Cramer	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Crapo	Murphy	Wicker
Daines	Murray	Wyden
Duckworth	Ossoff	Young
Durbin	Padilla	
Fetterman	Paul	

NAYS—12

Cruz	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Ernst	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Hagerty	Marshall	Sullivan
Hawley	Rubio	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—3

Lee	Menendez	Vance
-----	----------	-------

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). On this vote, the yeas are 85,

the nays are 12, and the motion is agreed to.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Adam B. Landy, of South Carolina, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 551, Margaret L. Taylor, of Maryland, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

Charles E. Schumer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Alex Padilla, Christopher A. Coons, Christopher Murphy, Chris Van Hollen, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Jack Reed, Peter Welch, Jeff Merkley, Catherine Cortez Masto, Margaret Wood Hassan, Sheldon Whitehouse, Tim Kaine, Richard Blumenthal, Brian Schatz.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. I ask for up to 5 minutes, equally divided for myself and Senator CARDIN, prior to the rollcall vote.

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

NOMINATION OF MARGARET L. TAYLOR

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Margaret Taylor to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

While serving as general counsel at USAID, some USAID contractors and partners repeatedly promoted abortion overseas in violation of clear U.S. law. The legal office is responsible for interpreting how, when, and where U.S. laws are applied across the full range of U.S. diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance programs.

Given her negligence in applying longstanding, clear-cut laws restricting abortion advocacy at USAID and the lack of enforcement, I have zero confidence in her willingness and ability to manage this enormous responsibility at the Department of State.

In addition to these concerns, I have an even additional reason for that, and that is the fact that the State Department refuses to share the information about Rob Malley's suspended security clearance. Mr. Malley was U.S. Special Envoy to Iran and was engaged in back-channel talks with the regime. Last April, his security clearance was suspended without explanation.

For over a year now, I and Democrats have asked for information on the suspension: Can the Department confirm