

Israel, and another is foreign assistance. Since 1976, Israel has been the largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance. Over the past 10 years, Israel has annually received about \$3 billion in economic and military grants, refugee settlement assistance, and other aid, from the United States.

Recently, we have seen a movement to gradually reduce that level of aid, beginning with the declaration by Prime Minister Netanyahu that Israel should reduce its dependence on the United States when he addressed a joint session of Congress two years ago. Negotiations have since been conducted with the goal of reducing the overall level of American assistance and to gradually phase out economic aid while increasing military aid.

Specifically, the Clinton administration and the Congress are currently reviewing an Israeli proposal to reduce the \$1.2 billion in U.S. *economic* assistance to Israel to zero over 10 years, and to increase U.S. *military* aid to Israel from \$1.8 billion to \$2.4 billion per year. I am intrigued by this idea, and am glad to see Israel taking the lead in this regard. Israel has recognized that in its 50-year history, it has made enormous strides in economic development and, as a result, now boasts a relatively healthy economy. At the same time, Israel recognizes—as I think we all do—that it still faces a substantial security threat, and so must maintain a robust military and access to state-of-the-art weaponry.

The proposal to change our aid relationship reflects this reality. It is an Israeli plan, and as such reflects Israeli priorities, including a desire to decrease its dependence on the United States, and boost its own self-sufficiency. I am concerned about potential unintended consequences of hasty action by the Congress, and so, I, along with others in this body are still considering our legislative response. But by and large I believe these are worthy goals that we should support, just as we have supported Israel in the past.

Ben-Gurion envisioned many achievements for Israel, including one I mentioned earlier, the idea of building a successful nation by marrying scientific advances with ancient Hebrew traditions. He believed that by drawing on the strength, wisdom and skill of a nation of faith and accomplishment, Israel could build a lasting peace with its neighbors.

Israel deserves that peace at last.

Just over 100 years ago, the First Zionist Congress convened in Basel, Switzerland. Under the leadership of Theodore Herzl, the participants announced their desire to reestablish a Jewish homeland in the historic land of Israel. Herzl once said that "If you will it, it is not a dream."

Israel is a testament to the will of a people who believed those words and proved them true.

It would be 51 years until the dream expressed at the First Zionist Congress would become reality, until Holocaust

survivors and other Jews persecuted around the world could have a homeland where they could seek refuge and build a life. And 50 years after that founding, Israel has taken root in the desert soil and it has thrived.

The United States has built an alliance and friendship with Israel that has enriched American life and helped Israel thrive, and I hope that partnership will continue for the next 50 years and beyond. But as Israelis well know and all of us must recognize, the dream of those at the First Zionist Congress and of other Jews for centuries, to have a homeland, cannot be truly fulfilled until peace is attained.

Violence and conflict are a constant threat to the people of Israel, and to the Nation of Israel itself. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the birth of Israel, we have every right to wish for something more. Not just for a Jewish homeland, but a homeland at peace.

As Theodore Herzl said, "If you will it, it is not a dream."•

#### TRIBUTE TO THE FLOYD COUNTY EMERGENCY AND RESCUE SQUAD: FORTY YEARS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN EASTERN KENTUCKY

• Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the recent anniversary of the Floyd County Emergency and Rescue Squad. Forty years ago, this squad of volunteers was formed to help the people of Eastern Kentucky in times of emergency and disaster, and have been doing so ever since.

The Floyd County Emergency and Rescue Squad was founded on April 27, 1958, as a result of a tragic accident in Prestonsburg, Kentucky, in which a school bus plunged into the Big Sandy River, killing 26 students and the driver. As a result of this tragedy, dozens of community members came together to form the Squad and the late Graham Burchett became the first Captain, a position he held for twenty years.

Since that time, over 300 community members have served on the Squad—doctors and lawyers, coal miners and factory workers—people from all walks of life have worked side-by-side in volunteer service to their community. The Squad operates without any public support. The members are all volunteers and all their equipment is paid for through private donations and grants.

The Squad currently maintains a roster of thirty active members and dozens of reserve members. The Squad is called on for auto extrication, water rescue and drowning recovery, lost or missing persons, and assistance to coal mine rescue teams. In the last month alone, they have assisted in the evacuation of flood victims, recovered a drowning victim and have assisted on four auto accidents.

Despite the fact that the Squad must labor mightily for every dollar they get, they have managed to secure ultra-modern equipment, and are

called frequently to assist in recovery activities outside the county and even outside the state.

Mr. President, I hope all my colleagues will join me in offering our congratulations to Captain Harry Adams, Co-Captain Richie Schoolcraft, Treasurer and Secretary Brian Sexton, First Lieutenant Derek Calhoun and Second Lieutenant Lee Schoolcraft and all the volunteers of the Floyd County Rescue Squad. They carry on the Squad's rich tradition of volunteering their time and risking their lives to help the people of their community, and they are all worthy of our admiration and thanks.●

#### ANTI-SLAMMING AMENDMENTS ACT

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, yesterday, Senator McCAIN and Senator HOLLINGS proposed a managers' amendment, Amendment No. 2389 to S. 1618, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934. The amendment significantly improves the protections for consumers against "slammers," persons who deliberately deceive consumers and change their long distance carrier without proper authorization. The manager's amendment included two of my amendments which were cosponsored by Senator DURBIN and Senator GLENN.

The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations held a hearing recently on slamming. At this hearing, we became aware of the fact that slammers intentionally used names like Phone Company and Long Distance Services to deliberately deceive customers on their phone bills. Usually local telephone companies or billing agents precede an itemized list of long distance calls by printing the name of the long distance service provider. When deceptive company names are used, customers are not aware that their long distance service provider has been changed. My intention was to remedy this situation by requiring the billing companies to specify the long distance provider using a statement like, "Your provider for the following long distance service is———". If that type of statement were made conspicuously and clearly stated on a consumer's phone bill before the itemized long distance charges, consumers would know if their long distance carrier had been changed.

Section 231 of the manager's amendment, entitled Obligations of Telephone Billing Agents, has language that differs from my proposed amendment. The language in the Manager's amendment is language that was suggested by the staff at the Federal Communications Commission.

I chose not to use the FCC language because my staff contacted several telephone companies and learned that if we used the FCC language several problems could be created which may result in potential increased costs to consumers. GAO has advised my staff that some of the requirements in the