

CONDEMNING THE RECENT AT-
TACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF
ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 921. I strongly believe that the State of Israel has the right to defend itself and its citizens from attacks from Hezbollah. No country in the world would long tolerate the capture of its soldiers or the continual rain of deadly missiles and rockets onto its cities, towns, and villages without retaliating.

Mr. Speaker, I also support the statements by President Bush and the leaders of the other G-8 nations that Israel should exercise the utmost restraint in its military actions in Lebanon. It is crucial that Israel seek to minimize the loss of civilian lives and the destruction of the civilian infrastructure of Lebanon, as well as the destabilization of the Lebanese Government.

Moreover, thousands of Americans are currently trapped in Lebanon. Many of these Americans have family ties to my State of Michigan. I urge the State Department and the Department of Defense to evacuate these American citizens swiftly and safely. I am also pleased that the Bush administration has agreed to not charge the American citizens for the costs of their evacuation from Lebanon.

Mr. Speaker, the United States is the only superpower in the world. We should work closely with the United Nations and the international community to help find a lasting solution to Israel's conflicts with her neighbors. As the G-8 leaders said in their statement on the Middle East, the root cause of the problems in that region is the absence of a comprehensive Middle East peace. America should be leading the way to such a comprehensive peace between Israel, Lebanon and the Palestinians. In the near term, an immediate cease fire would allow desperately needed humanitarian assistance to reach the people of Lebanon, and would allow the Israeli residents of northern Israel to return to their homes and lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on the legislative day of July 10, 2006 the House voted on two measures under suspension of the rules. H.R. 5061, the Paint Bank and Wytheville National Fish Hatcheries Conveyance Act and H.R. 2563, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct feasibility studies to address certain water shortages within the Snake, Boise, and Payette River systems in Idaho. On rollcall votes No. 358 and No. 359, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

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SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution to express unwavering support for Israel as it faces a campaign of violence perpetrated by Hezbollah; express strong support for the Israeli government, which has evoked its unequivocal right to self-defense; and express support for the Israeli people, who are not alone. America stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel in its ongoing, 58-year struggle for security and peace.

Israel has been victimized by attacks on its sovereign land, and the international community must join us in decrying these horrific acts. Make no mistake—Hezbollah is not Israel's problem alone. In the past few years, Hezbollah has acquired advanced weaponry from Iran and Syria that threatens the security of Israel, the stability of the region, and American interests in the Middle East. The world cannot afford to remain on the sidelines as Israel fights to eradicate this global threat.

Two years ago, the United States and France joined together in passing U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559, which asserted the sovereignty of Lebanon and demanded the disarmament of Hezbollah. While Syria withdrew its troops from Lebanon, the Lebanese government was negligent in failing to disarm Hezbollah. During this time, Hezbollah strengthened its arsenal while continuing to serve as a terrorist proxy for Syria and Iran.

Today, I call on the international community to assist the Lebanese government in fulfilling its obligations outlined in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559. I call on the European Union to add Hezbollah to its terrorist list. I call on the United Nations to hold Iran and Syria responsible for arming, financing, and supporting Hezbollah. And I respectfully call on President Bush to implement the full range of U.S. sanctions against Syria and renew U.S. sanctions against Iran. As Israel's strongest ally and friend, the United States must exhaust every effort to restore stability and security to the Middle East.

As we reflect on the violence unfolding as we speak, we are reminded of the resilience and perseverance of the Israeli people, who have never sacrificed the dream of peace. It is my wish that the vision of hope embodied in Israel's national anthem—Hatikva—may come to fruition, and that Israel will succeed in defeating Hezbollah and creating a lasting peace.

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SPEECH OF

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I offer my heartfelt condolences to the families who have

lost loved ones in the recent escalation of violence in the Middle East. I am pleased that H. Res. 921 expresses Congress's "condolences to all families of innocent victims of recent violence."

The United States is faced with a harsh reality that peace in the Middle East has been so elusive. Yet we cannot, we must not, stop trying to broker peace. The U.S. cannot turn its back on the families in the Middle East and must not conclude that constant war is inevitable. The U.S. must step up to the challenge of engaging the Israelis, Palestinians, and Lebanese and all the Middle East nations who want a lasting peace. I am not willing to give up hope that peace in the region can be achieved and nor should this administration.

It is imperative to remember that this region is very complex, and that there are forces working for peace and forces that crave war. Benjamin Franklin once said, "There was never a good war or a bad peace." It is time for this administration to remember these important words. The Middle East conflict has largely been pushed to the back burner by this administration with serious repercussions for U.S. national security interests. The U.S. must stop performing band-aid diplomacy and focus on long-term solutions to move toward peace. History should have taught us that violence only begets more violence and all actors involved need to recognize the mutual benefits of peace.

We are faced with a vital question—where can we go from here? First and foremost, Hezbollah and Hamas must disarm and recognize Israel's right to exist. Armed political parties that use brute force do not foster peaceful solutions. Israel has survived five major wars since its inception. This country lives in constant defense mode because terrorist organizations surrounding it still harbor hope of its destruction. The U.S. must continue its steadfast support of Israel, and all countries in the region must abide by U.N. resolutions that promote a two-state solution.

The loss of civilian lives in the Middle East is tragic and continued violence makes the challenge of achieving peace more difficult. The U.S. must renew a serious diplomatic effort in the region.

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SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with very strong and mixed feelings on H. Res. 921. This resolution condemns the recent attacks against the State of Israel. The State of Israel has two intractable enemies, Hamas and Hezbollah. Presently, Israel is engaged in military operations in Gaza and Lebanon. I cannot over-emphasize that I am vehemently and unalterably opposed to the attacks undertaken by Hezbollah against Israel. At the same time, I cannot and will not support other language in the resolution which I consider to be harmful to the interests of peace, diplomacy, security, and the protection of civilians in Lebanon and Israel.

Let me say at the outset, I support the right of Israel to exist and to defend itself from attack. I cannot support the level of retaliation it is using against the civilian population that did not provoke the attack. Hezbollah is the guilty party, and their attacks were egregious, without merit, and provocative. Israel must direct its campaign against confirmed Hezbollah strongholds. Given the sophistication of current surveillance technology and intelligence-gathering, I am convinced those strongholds can be effectively eradicated, without the current and ongoing loss of life and casualties to innocent civilians.

This resolution on first glance would appear to be easy to support, but on further review, it poses serious philosophical problems for me. Hezbollah provoked the attacks by capturing and killing Israeli soldiers. Indeed, in some instances, Hezbollah is using Lebanese civilians as shields.

The resolution declares that the House affirms its support for Israel. I believe that offering unconditional support to Israel's response sends the signal that the House supports the continuing and increasing carnage that is taking place in Lebanon. I fully recognize that lives have been lost in Israel too. All of these deaths are tragic and deplorable. This resolution does not even offer counsel to Israel to aggressively pursue the course of minimizing civilian loss of life. Furthermore, the resolution recognizes Israel's commitment to minimizing civilian loss of life. To date, Israeli military operations have resulted in excess of 300 civilians killed, with an estimated one-third of them being children. I do not see Israel's actions being consistent with a commitment to minimizing the loss of life.

The resolution also cites Israel's right to take appropriate action to defend itself, including conducting operations in both Israel and in the territory of nations which pose a threat to it. At the present time, Israeli military bombing operations are completely dismantling the infrastructure of Lebanon. Bridges, roads and buildings are being destroyed. Once the campaign wanes, the country will consist of rubble.

I am also concerned by the language that commends the President for fully supporting Israel. The language and the message state explicitly that the House supports the way he has handled the current crisis. I strongly disagree with this premise and statement.

I want to state that I am mindful that although the focus of our current attention is on the plight of the citizens affected in Israel and Lebanon, we must not forget the other component of the equation—the situation in Gaza involving the Palestinians.

In Gaza, a cordon has been set up by the Israelis, and Palestinians are suffering under unbearable conditions. My concern rests with the humanitarian plight of civilians in Gaza and Lebanon that are pawns in a struggle by terrorist organizations. Both organizations, Hamas—Sunni—and Hezbollah—Shia—provide vital social services such as education and medical care to civilian populations, while simultaneously engaging in terrorist activities. In fact, their efforts and ideologies have created desperate political and military scenarios. In the case of Hezbollah, their efforts are contributing to instability in the region.

I fully recognize the gravity of the situation that is presented by the unconscionable and provocative behavior of Hezbollah. I also have grave reservations about the level of the re-

sponse by Israel to Hezbollah's actions. The competing complexities and mixed messages presented by the language in the resolution preclude me from offering my support to H. Res. 921. Therefore, I will cast a vote of "nay" on this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO CHIKAMING
TOWNSHIP

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 150th anniversary of the founding of a storied community in Southwest Michigan, Chikaming Township. This Saturday, members of the community will come together to celebrate the township's sesquicentennial.

The earliest known residents of Chikaming Township were the Miami Indians, who were first encountered by the European explorer, Father Jaques Marquette, in 1675. By the early 1820s the land was ceded to the U.S. Government and Chikaming was formally established on March 6, 1856. The first pioneers to settle there were lumbermen who harvested trees that were used to build the piers that extend out into Lake Michigan—a source of great pride for all Michiganders who reside on the lakeshore. As time passed, the first of many successful farmers and growers in Southwest Michigan took advantage of the soil and climate of Chikaming by harvesting a variety of fruits and vegetables. The magnificent weather and scenic beauty of the land attracted families to vacation on the lake's shores and continues to be a popular summer escape today.

Chikaming Township has also long been an important center of commerce for Southwest Michigan. Forestry and agriculture are only two of the many industries that have strengthened Southwest Michigan's economy. The beautiful beaches and friendly residents have been bringing generations back to the township for years.

I would like to congratulate the residents of Chikaming on their sesquicentennial. Know that your vital community will continue to be a blessing and an asset to our corner of Southwest Michigan for many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND S.L.
ROBERSON

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the tremendous works of Reverend S.L. Roberson, of Ypsilanti, Michigan as he marks his 52nd year of service to his church and his community.

Born in Moundville, Alabama, Reverend Roberson moved to Ypsilanti when he was two years old and has remained there since. He attended school in Ypsilanti and went to Eastern Michigan University for his undergraduate degree and continued his education at Detroit Bible College, ultimately earning his Doctorate of Divinity at Urban Bible College.

While honorably serving his country in the United States Marine Corps, the Reverend formed the unique perspective he has on the world, one that would help him in his decision to serve his fellow man. After his military service, Mr. Roberson went to work for Ford Motor Company in their Labor Relations and Personnel Services of Industrial Relations Department ultimately staying for 33 years. Through this position, he was able to help many individuals find employment, in turn bettering their own lives. The Reverend's other services are numerous, including posts as Treasurer of the Huron Valley District Association and President of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission.

In 1954, Reverend Roberson heard the call to service and became the Pastor of the Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church in Ypsilanti. He has stayed with Metropolitan Baptist for 52 years and by every account his service has been productive. He provides leadership and moral guidance for his congregation, in turn leading the community through his example. His tenure has been so successful that he has received the Lawyers Association's Liberty Bell, the Ypsilanti Police Department's Honor Award, the Washtenaw Community College's Service Award and the city of Ypsilanti has designated December 14th as Reverend S.L. Roberson day. His faith also led him to serve as Chaplain of the Ypsilanti Police Department.

Reverend Roberson is a man of faith who embodies the characteristics of service, love and decency. I am glad and fortunate to know the Reverend and the people of Ypsilanti have truly benefited from such an upstanding and committed civic and spiritual leader. I thank the Reverend for his service and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

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SPEECH OF

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, I am proud to come to the floor today to voice my support for this resolution.

Since the year 2000, Israel has demonstrated a willingness to act unilaterally in the name of peace; only to have their enemies respond with more acts of violence.

In 2000, Israel withdrew their forces from southern Lebanon, only to be followed by Hezbollah and their missiles.

In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza, only to be replaced by the militant wing of the Hamas party.

As a sovereign and independent nation, Israel has every right to defend itself from these constant attacks led by groups with the expressed purpose of destroying Israel.

There is agreement in this House and in the world community that there be peace in the Middle East, so that all families, whether they be Israeli, Palestinian, or Lebanese, can live without fear.

But there will be no peace so long as these terrorist organizations insist on the destruction of Israel.

There will be no peace, until Hamas agrees to curtail acts of violence and aggression and